

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002360/24
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(30 October 2024)

Subject: The need for Genocide Studies courses in the EU

Today, many EU countries are home to descendants of genocide victims, namely the genocides of the Armenians, the Greek Orthodox Christians of Thrace, Asia Minor and the Pontus, the Assyro-Chaldeans and the Jews. Systematic persecution practices — which fall within the meaning of genocide — against the Yazidis of Syria and Iraq, for example, the Christians of Nigeria, the Palestinians, and others, are still driving many today to take the decision to migrate to Europe.

Given that the Commission has declared matters of human dignity a priority, Genocide Studies should be an especially advanced field of study in Europe as such courses play an important role in preventing acts of genocide in the future.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following:

1. Is the EU funding any programmes to support courses that focus on the study and scientific documentation of genocides and on giving them prominence? If so, how much funding is available?
2. Is there an institutionalised process and a legal framework for the EU institutions to monitor the historical facts surrounding genocide and the prevention and punishment of such crimes?
3. Are there plans to provide training to European External Action Service (EEAS) officers on cases of past genocides and how to deal with the genocides taking place in various parts of the world today?

Submitted: 30.10.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(5 February 2025)

Fighting impunity, ensuring accountability and supporting transitional justice are priorities of the EU external human rights action, as reflected in the Multiannual Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020-2024 ⁽¹⁾, extended until 2027, and the thematic programme for Human Rights and Democracy that includes EUR 50 million for projects promoting fight against impunity ⁽²⁾.

Among others, the EU supports the civil society Global Initiative Against Impunity, the Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Court and the Eurojust European Network for investigation and prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes (Genocide Network).

Within the UN Human Rights Council, the EU and Member States support the adoption of the biennial resolution on the Prevention of Genocide ⁽³⁾.

In addition, the EU funds in-country projects to promote justice and accountability for core international crimes (including genocide). The EU supports the UN International Residual Mechanism of Criminal Tribunals and the national jurisdictions in the Western Balkans in war crimes investigations and prosecutions connected to the 1990s wars of former Yugoslavia ⁽⁴⁾.

The EU supports the Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Israel ⁽⁵⁾, as well as the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) Implementation Phase ⁽⁶⁾.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) organises regular human rights training sessions for the EU and Member States diplomats.

The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, that receives financial support through the Foreign Policy Instrument, periodically briefs EEAS and Commission staff on at-risk situations of mass atrocity.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-extends-its-action-plan-human-rights-and-democracy-until-2027_en

⁽²⁾ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/aa9340d0-7cc3-4f33-bb94-1b7da126e0d2_en?filename=aap-2022-2024-c2022-5452-human-rights-democracy_en.zip

⁽³⁾ Last adopted on 3 April 2024: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/059/80/pdf/g2405980.pdf>

⁽⁴⁾ There is also an educational programme based on resolved cases by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The ongoing support of EUR 3 million covers the years 2024-2026.

⁽⁵⁾ With EUR 20 million adopted between 2023 and 2024.

⁽⁶⁾ With over EUR 1.4 million from Horizon Europe. A Commission Decision is imminent to set up this infrastructure as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium. This legal form will contribute to the sustainability and recognition of EHRI. See: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101129732>