

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000332/25
to the Commission
Silvia Sardone (PFE)
(26 January 2025)**

Subject: Ban on the use of hijabs in schools

Following an appeal by the families of three Muslim students from Flanders, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in May 2024 that the wearing of visible religious symbols at school, such as the hijab, can be banned. The same court also ruled in 2023 that, as part of a policy of neutrality, the use of symbols such as the hijab can be banned in public places. All too often we see girls in hijabs at schools in Europe, having been forced by their fathers to wear them, even though they have obviously not been through puberty yet. If, as they say, wearing a headscarf is a free and conscious choice, it is clear that it cannot be made by a child at nursery or primary school. Unfortunately, the hijab is increasingly often being used as an instrument to oppress and subjugate women.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission plan to pursue proposals to ban the use of hijabs or conspicuous religious symbols in schools?
2. Has the Commission proceeded with legislative and communication measures to limit the imposition of the Islamic headscarf and to defend the rights of Muslim women?
3. Why does it use the hijab in some official communications?

Submitted: 26.1.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(24 April 2025)**

Issues regarding the wearing of clothing, such as the hijab, in the public sphere, are a matter for Member States, subject to judicial control by courts.

The Commission is committed to promote and protect EU values and fundamental rights enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

These include pluralism, non-discrimination, and equality. The Commission has neither the competence nor the intention to take initiatives to ban the hijab in the public sphere.

The Commission has been working and continues to work on combatting discrimination. Directive 2000/78 lays down a general framework for combating discrimination in employment and occupation, including on grounds of religion or belief.

The EU strategy on the rights of the child ⁽¹⁾ states that ‘access to inclusive, non-segregated, quality education should be guaranteed, amongst others, through a non-discriminatory treatment regardless of racial and ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, nationality, residence status, sex and sexual orientation’. The Commission is committed to protecting women’s rights, as set out in the Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025) ⁽²⁾.

In its official communication, the Commission seeks to reflect Europe’s diversity in line with the values referred to above. Each service of the Commission has procedures in place to ensure that communication messages and visuals used on the Commission’s website, on social media and in any communication product are carefully selected and verified to ensure that they support the goals and achieve the intended effect of each communication action.

⁽¹⁾ EU strategy on the rights of the child (COM/2021/142 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0142>

⁽²⁾ A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 152 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=EN>