

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001599/25
to the Commission
Loránt Vincze (PPE)
(22 April 2025)

Subject: Joint efforts to prevent and combat different forms of hatred against traditional national and linguistic minorities

A young man was recently attacked with a knife for using a minority language, Hungarian, in Bratislava, Slovakia ⁽¹⁾. A group of young local supporters were beaten for speaking Hungarian in Cluj-Napoca, Romania ⁽²⁾. Far from being isolated incidents, hate speech is present throughout Europe and it affects different communities from various regions. Hate speech and hate crimes targeting traditional national and linguistic minorities remain a serious concern in the EU. The Intergroup on Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages ⁽³⁾ has been informed of several such cases ⁽⁴⁾.

1. How can the Commission improve its actions to prevent and combat hate speech and hatred targeting, in particular, traditional national and linguistic minorities, and ensure their effective support at EU level?
2. As the Commission already pays particular attention to specific forms of hate speech and hate crime experienced by certain communities, would it consider focusing its attention on traditional national and linguistic minorities, who represent 10% of the EU population?
3. Would the Commission consider including the effort to combat hate speech and hate crimes against traditional minorities in the work programme of the High-Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime?

Submitted: 22.4.2025

Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(10 June 2025)

The respect for minority rights is enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union ⁽¹⁾. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ⁽²⁾ prohibits any discrimination including on grounds of ethnic or social origin, language or membership of a national minority.

The Commission is committed to ensure that there is no place for hate ⁽³⁾ in the EU. The 2008 Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia ⁽⁴⁾ requires Member States to criminalise public incitement to violence or hatred based on race, colour, religion, descent, or national or ethnic origin, when directed against a group of persons or a member of such group.

National authorities, including national courts, remain competent to determine whether a specific behaviour or act qualifies as hate speech or hate crime under applicable national law.

The High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime ⁽⁵⁾, which is in place since 2016, has contributed to develop widely used standards and guidance to support national authorities in their responses to hate crime and hate speech and the effective enforcement of national laws on the ground.

The High Level Group will maintain a comprehensive approach on all forms of hate speech and hate crime, in particular focusing on the grounds listed in the framework Decision, including ethnicity or nationality.

Enhancing the protection of individuals and groups at risk of hate victimisation based on these grounds may also bring protection for groups speaking minority languages, as relevant in specific national contexts.

¹ spectator.sme.sk/politics-and-society/c/man-attacked-by-knife-in-bratislava-supposedly-for-hungarian-origin.

² www.mikoinre.ro/en/young-man-attacked-by-cluj-ultras-for-speaking-hungarian.

³ www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/intergroup/details/7895/Intergroup%20on%20Traditional%20Minorities,%20National%20Communities%20and%20Languages.

⁴ For further cases of hate crime and hate speech committed against traditional national and linguistic minorities see: <https://minoritymonitor.eu/>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>.

⁽³⁾ Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council JOIN/2023/51 final on 'No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred' JOIN/2023/51 final.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32008F0913>.

⁽⁵⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-hate-speech-and-hate-crime_en.