

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002786/25
to the Commission
Pina Picierno (S&D)
(9 July 2025)**

Subject: Concerns about public demonstrations of fascist sympathies in Croatia

Last weekend, Croatian singer Marko Perković — whose stage name is ‘Thompson’ — held a concert in Zagreb before an audience of some 500 000 people. The artist is known for his ultra-nationalist rhetoric and his frequent references to the Ustasha regime, a Croatian fascist movement active during the Second World War and responsible for grave crimes against humanity.

During the event, numerous highly concerning incidents were documented. These included the repeated use of the salute ‘Za dom spremni’ (‘For the homeland — ready!’) the official motto of the Ustasha regime, which is now banned under Croatian law because of its link to the extermination of hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, Roma and political opponents in the Jasenovac concentration camp ⁽¹⁾.

Such demonstrations cannot be deemed to constitute artistic or cultural expression, but rather pose a genuine threat to the democratic cohesion and founding principles of the Union.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. Whether it intends to propose, as part of the EU strategy to combat extremism and racism, more binding measures to limit the spread of symbols and slogans associated with totalitarian regimes?
2. Whether it plans to step up monitoring and coordinated-response measures, including through its relevant agencies, to combat the spread of neo-fascist ideologies in Member States?

Submitted: 9.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(8 September 2025)**

It is the competence of national authorities and courts to address individual instances of hate crime and hate speech and to establish if the use of specific symbols, represents an offence from a national criminal law perspective.

The framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia ⁽¹⁾ obliges Member States to criminalise the public incitement to violence or hatred by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, and specifically the public condoning, denying or grossly trivialising of the Holocaust when likely to incite to violence or hatred.

The Commission will continue to support projects across Europe to address the history of totalitarian crimes and encourage remembrance actions on the causes of totalitarian regimes.

The EU Agenda for preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, set out in the ProtectEU Strategy ⁽²⁾, planned for 2026, will propose ambitious EU action reflecting the fast-evolving threat landscape.

¹ <https://www.euronews.com/culture/2025/07/07/croatian-right-wing-singer-marko-perkovic-and-fans-make-pro-nazi-salutes-at-record-breakin>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008F0913&from=EN>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0148>. This strategy will succeed the 2020 Counter Terrorism Agenda, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0795&qid=1754899118045>.