

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003000/25
to the Commission
Paolo Borchia (PfE)
(18 July 2025)**

Subject: Exclusion from EQUAL of persecuted Christians around the world

According to the figures compiled in 2024 by the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe, more than 2 400 hate crimes against Christians were recorded in Europe in 2023, an increase of almost 20% on the previous year.

Globally, according to the World Watch List 2025 by the NGO Porte Aperte/Open Doors, more than 380 million Christians experience a high level of persecution and discrimination for their faith, and that number is constantly growing.

Despite these alarming figures, the latest call for proposals for EQUAL, which is part of the CERV programme and 90% co-financed by the European Union, focuses its actions exclusively on racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred and discrimination against the LGBT+ community, excluding any reference to discrimination suffered by Christians.

Given the alarming figures and the EU's stated objective of furthering inclusion and equality, it is clear that victims are being treated inconsistently.

In the light of the above:

1. Why are hate crimes against Christians not included in the EQUAL priorities?
2. What does the Commission do to safeguard equal dignity and protection for all religious communities?

Submitted: 18.7.2025

**Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(24 September 2025)**

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-002861/2025 ⁽¹⁾. The Commission is committed to fighting racism, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance, combating any form of discrimination and protecting and promoting the rights and values as enshrined in the Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights ⁽²⁾.

The Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV) ⁽³⁾ is established by Regulation (EU) 2021/692 and implemented through work programmes adopted after consultation with the CERV Programme Committee, whose members are representatives of EU Member States and associated countries participating in the programme.

The 2025 work programme was adopted on 18 July 2024. Subsequently, the call for proposals 'EQUAL' to promote equality and to fight against racism, xenophobia and all other forms of discrimination was launched, aligning with the objectives of the programme's Regulation and the priorities outlined in the 2025 work programme. With its six priorities, this call has a wide scope and coverage which accounts for the diversity of the European society.

The Commission is determined to engage all relevant actors to work towards the common goal of achieving an open, inclusive and respectful European society, where no one feels excluded, threatened, discriminated or unsafe.

In this respect, a dialogue with religious and non-confessional organisations based on Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union has been developed and includes representatives of the main Christian Churches and organisations present in Europe, which are regularly consulted on the major political and policy developments at EU level.

⁽¹⁾ Answer for Question E-002861/25 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-002861-ASW_EN.pdf.

⁽²⁾ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, pp 391-407).

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/692 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (OJ L 156, 5.5.2021, p. 1).