

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003058/25
to the Commission
Arkadiusz Mularczyk (ECR)
(23 July 2025)**

Subject: Proscription of the Union of Poles in Germany and the consequences of this

The Union of Poles in Germany (ZPwN) was created in 1922 as a legal representation of the Polish community in Germany. The organisation actively strived to maintain Polish national identity and safeguard the civil rights of Poles in Germany. In 1940, ZPwN was proscribed by decree from Hermann Göring, while its assets were confiscated by the Nazi authorities. Although 80 years have passed and Hitler's regime has long since fallen, the organisation was never formally reinstated and did not receive the status of an organisation representing a national minority.

Given the above:

1. Is the Commission aware that the ZPwN, legally operating since 1922, was illegally proscribed by decree of Hermann Göring in 1940 and has never been formally reinstated nor received the status of an organisation representing a national minority? Will the Commission take action against Germany to restore the organisation's rights and address the consequences of historical injustice?
2. In the Commission's opinion, does the failure to formally reinstitute the organisation's rights and its assets, alongside the refusal to grant Poles minority status despite the community's historical presence in Germany, align with European standards on protecting cultural heritage and the rights of national minorities?

Submitted: 23.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(12 December 2025)**

The respect of the rights of persons belonging to minorities is one of the founding values of the EU explicitly mentioned in Article 2 of the Treaty on the EU.

However, the EU lacks the competence to mandate changes in the political, administrative and institutional framework existing in the Member States regarding the status of national minorities. In fact, it has no general power to legislate as regards national minorities as such, in particular over issues relating to the recognition of the status of such minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the regime governing the use of regional or minority languages.

It is primarily a Member State's responsibility to deal with the sensitive and complex issue of addressing the horrors and crimes committed in the past by totalitarian regimes. Within its competence, the Commission can facilitate the process of remembrance by encouraging discussion and sharing of experiences, as well as promoting best practices.
