

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001504/24
to the Commission
Krzysztof Śmiszek (S&D)
(9 August 2024)**

Subject: Violation of LGBTQ+ rights by the Republic of Bulgaria

Bulgaria's parliament passed changes to its education law on 7 August 2024, widening its scope to ban LGBTQ+ 'propaganda' in schools. The amendment to the law passed by a large majority, with 159 votes in favour, 22 against, and 12 abstentions.

The law now bans the 'propaganda, promotion or incitement in any way, directly or indirectly, in the education system, of ideas and views related to non-traditional sexual orientation and/or gender identity other than the biological one.' In 2021, Hungary also passed a similar law, banning LGBTQ+ 'promotion' to minors.

This legislative change raises serious concerns about the violation of fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, particularly the rights to non-discrimination (Article 21) and respect for private and family life (Article 7). What is more, it is contrary to the Commission's LGBTIQ equality strategy.

In view of the above-mentioned, I would like to ask:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the compatibility of Bulgaria's new education law with EU law?
2. Does the Commission intend to initiate an infringement procedure against Bulgaria for this legislative change?
3. What measures will the Commission take to support and protect the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals in Bulgaria?

Submitted: 9.8.2024

**Answer given by Ms Dalli on behalf of the European Commission
(10 October 2024)**

As set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, equality and respect for human dignity and human rights are values common to the Member States on which also the EU is founded.

The Commission remains steadfast, within the limits of its competences, in its commitment to tackling discrimination, inequalities and challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) individuals, including in education, as outlined in our LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 ⁽¹⁾, of course including in Bulgaria.

The Commission is aware of the law adopted by the Bulgarian parliament.

On 13 August 2024, Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, sent a letter to the Bulgarian Minister of Education and Science, Mr Galin Tsokov, to request further information on the legislation. The Commission received the reply of the Minister on 3 September and is assessing it.

The Commission is analysing whether the legislation is aligned with EU law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Commission will use all the instruments at its disposal to protect the EU's values and will not hesitate to take the necessary actions within the limit of its competence.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0698>