

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-002560/25
to the Commission
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(25 June 2025)**

Subject: Ending the funding for Islamic cultural centres that are actually conducting religious activities

A number of EU Member States, including Italy, have different types of indirect public taxes, such as the ‘eight per thousand’ rule in Italy, whereby taxpayers devolve 0.8% of their tax to state-recognised religions, or the ‘five per thousand’ rule for third-sector entities.

It has become evident that many Islamic cultural centres, operating officially as cultural associations, can access the ‘five per thousand’ contributions while carrying out religious activities, including worship, preaching and proselytism.

These centres do not appear to be subject to the same transparency, oversight and control requirements as state-recognised religions, and in some cases they may be linked to foreign organisations or to ideologies that are incompatible with the fundamental values enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware that, in some Member States, bodies officially presenting themselves as ‘cultural centres’ can receive public taxes, even though they mainly engage in religious activities that are not subject to any specific regulations?
2. Some entities — officially described as cultural bodies — promote ideologies that run counter to the fundamental values of the European Union. Does it believe that public funding for such bodies could be a cause for concern in terms of consistency with the obligations stemming from the Charter of Fundamental Rights and pose a risk in terms of potential radicalisation?

Submitted: 25.6.2025

**Answer given by Mr Micallef on behalf of the European Commission
(24 September 2025)**

It is up to Member States to decide whether organisations, including those acting as cultural centres, may receive indirect public funding through national tax mechanisms.

These decisions fall under national jurisdiction, including the classification of organisations, oversight of their activities, and the enforcement of transparency and accountability measures.

While the Commission does not intervene in these national frameworks, it encourages Member States to ensure such funding is transparent and compliant with legal and ethical standards.

Moreover, Member States have significant autonomy to choose whom, what, when, and at what rate to tax as long as there is no tax harmonisation on the specific issue at EU level.

The Commission does not thus generally track what types of specific tax treatment various specific types of institutions or economic operators are subject to across the EU Member States.

The Commission encourages the use of public funds, both direct and indirect, to support activities and initiatives that uphold EU values ⁽¹⁾, such as respect for human dignity, democracy, and the rule of law.

The Commission does not discriminate on grounds of religion or beliefs nor classifying partner organisations based on religious affiliation.

Programmes like Creative Europe ⁽²⁾ allocate funding based solely on artistic, scientific, and cultural merit. Independent experts evaluate applications based on relevance, content quality, project management, and dissemination, without regard to religious or ideological affiliation.

⁽¹⁾ Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, OJ C 202/1, 7.6.2016; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12016M%2FTXT>.

⁽²⁾ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>.