

**Question for written answer E-002132/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Violation of the right to freedom of expression and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in Lithuania

On 17 July 2009 the Lithuanian Parliament adopted the Law on the Protection of Minors Against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information, which bans public information related to sexual orientation and gender identity from being made accessible to minors (Art. 4.2.16, 7.2 and 8.1). Parliament adopted two resolutions (on 17 September 2009 and 19 January 2011) expressing deep concern about the discriminatory nature of this law and the possibility that it might limit freedom of speech and expression.

The national broadcaster Lithuanian Radio and Television (LRT) decided that, in order to apply this law, the promotional video for Baltic Pride had to be classified as 'adult content', which may be aired only after 23.00. In an appeal made by the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) to the Lithuanian Office of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics, the decision to limit public broadcasting was upheld. On 16 September 2013 the board of national experts within the inspector's office delivered the opinion that 'the display of the slogan "For family diversity!" on the t-shirts of one of the models in the video possibly falls within the scope of the law on protection of minors'. Subsequently, on 23 September 2013, the Inspector of Journalist Ethics ruled that the LRT did not violate any laws when it decided to limit public broadcasting of the Baltic Pride 2013 promotional video.

1. Does the Commission think that classifying LGBT-related public information as 'detrimental to minors' is compatible with the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as enshrined in Article 2 TEU, and the right to freedom of expression and information, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union?
2. Does the Commission find it acceptable for expressions of support for 'family diversity' to be restricted by law in the EU in 2013?
3. What will the Commission do to express its concern to the Lithuanian authorities?
4. Considering these developments, will the Commission propose a European roadmap on the fight against homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in the EU in an effort to ensure that fundamental rights are protected, respected and promoted?