



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

The Director-General (acting)

Brussels, 27.07.2021  
JUST.C.2/AV/(2021)4483838s

Ms. Alexandrina Najmowicz  
Secretary General, European Civic Forum  
Co-chairwoman, CSOs Convention for the  
Future of Europe  
Email: [anajmowicz@civic-forum.eu](mailto:anajmowicz@civic-forum.eu)

Dear Ms. Najmowicz,

Thank you for your letter dated 3 June 2021 on behalf of several European and French civil society organisations engaged in the promotion and protection of the EU values with regard to the *projet de loi confortant le respect des principes de la République* currently being examined by the French Parliament. Vice-President Jourová, Commissioner Reynders and Commissioner Johansson, asked me to reply on their behalf.

You consider that the legislative proposal poses several doubts of compatibility with EU law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. You also draw the Commission's attention to the risk that, if adopted, that law would restrict the civic space. You ask the Commission to raise public awareness and engage in discussions with the French authorities.

We would like to thank you for bringing these issues to our attention. The Commission is closely monitoring the challenges experienced by civil society organisations in the Member States, including in France. Civil society organisations play a key role in upholding our common values, including fundamental rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Civil society organisations also play a crucial role in helping victims of fundamental rights violations, often those most vulnerable, to seek redress.

For these reasons, the Commission attaches great importance to having a vibrant civil society and ensuring an enabling, supportive environment for civil society organisations.

The Commission will continue to monitor the situation in the Member States, including by relying on the research and reports issued by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights<sup>1</sup> and on the information continuously provided by the civil society organisations as well as the Member States in the exchanges in view of the preparation of the Rule of Law report.

The Commission pays special attention to attempts to shrink the civil society space in any Member State and will continue to support civil society's work.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/cooperation/civil-society/civil-society-space>

In addition, the Commission intends to fight against any form of discrimination. In relation to the risks you signal in your letter in this respect, I would like to highlight the commitments taken as part of the ambitious anti-racism action plan 2020-2025<sup>2</sup> as well as the Commission's dedicated work on tackling anti-Muslim intolerance, hatred and discrimination<sup>3</sup>.

As regards specifically the French legislative proposal, the Commission is following the discussions in the French Parliament and will continue to closely monitor the legislative developments. If necessary, the Commission will assess the compatibility of the law, once adopted, with EU law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and with rule of law standards, including as regards its impact on civil society.

Please be assured that the Commission is firmly committed to defending the core values upon which the EU is founded and to upholding the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights. This includes ensuring an environment where civil society can thrive.

Yours sincerely,

*(e-signed)*

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025_en)

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-anti-muslim-hatred\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-anti-muslim-hatred_en)