



PRESS RELEASE

FACE: EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR HUNTING & CONSERVATION

Commission misleads European Parliament on firearms

Quoting unsubstantiated and out of context statistics, the European Commission tries to hijack the debate on firearms in the European Parliament, pushing it towards a restrictive approach

May 27, 2016, Brussels - According to Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 100,000 people were “murdered” with legally owned firearms in the last decade in the EU. During the IMCO Committee Meeting on 24 May 2016, Ms. Bieńkowska went on the record delivering these wrong and misleading statistics to puzzled MEPs ([link](#)).

This figure is ten times higher and not in line with the number of 10,000 firearms-related deaths previously used by the European Commission ([Link](#)).

FACE can only speculate that the statistics used by Commissioner Bieńkowska are taken from the June 2015 report by the [Flemish Peace Institute](#) titled “Firearms and Violent Death in Europe”, which has previously been used as a reference by the European Commission. The claim of “100,000 murders” with legal firearms is a gross exaggeration compared to the reported 81,556 deaths by (legal and illegal) firearms over 10 years ([European Detailed Mortality Database of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)).

According to the report, the 81,556 firearms deaths occurring over a period of 10 years can be categorized as follows:

- 60,000 of these relate to successful suicide attempts (i.e. ca. 75%).
- Approx. 10,000 are accidents and unspecified deaths.
- Approx. 10,000 deaths are cases of murder and manslaughter, from illegal and legal firearms.

Hence FACE (European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation) is urging the Commission to rectify its statement. Despite the repeated requests from MEPs and other stakeholders, the European Commission has not released any evidence to substantiate their proposal to amend the Firearms Directive.

FACE President Michl Ebner commented: “Commissioner Bieńkowska’s unfounded statement that 100,000 citizens were “murdered” by legal firearms does not contribute to the democratic debate on the revision of the Firearms Directive. The European Commission is adopting an incomprehensibly rigid attitude towards a serious piece of legislation, which is now risking to disproportionately affect legal firearm owners with no predictable outcome on terrorism and criminality”.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

FACE is the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation. Established in 1977, **FACE represents the interests of Europe's 7 million hunters** as an international non-profit-making nongovernmental organisation. FACE is made up of national hunters' associations from 35 European countries including the EU-28. FACE is supported by 7 associate members and is based in Brussels.

FACE is the largest democratically representative body for hunters in the world, with elections for its statutory bodies taking place every three years. Each country represented within FACE receives one vote.

FACE upholds the principle of sustainable use, has been a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1987, and more recently of Wetlands International. FACE works with its partners on a range of hunting-related issues, from international conservation agreements to local implementations with the aim of sustaining hunting across Europe.

More on www.face.eu.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS, QUOTES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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