

**Question for written answer E-006278/2015/rev.1  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Morten Messerschmidt (ECR)**

Subject: Freedom of expression in Bulgaria

Freedom of expression is one of the fundamental rights safeguarded by international law, and one of the founding values of the European Union.

By being an EU Member State Bulgaria has slid from 51<sup>st</sup> place in the Freedom of Press index in 2007 to 106<sup>th</sup> in 2015<sup>1</sup>. According to a survey conducted by the Bulgarian section of the Association of European Journalists (AEJ), the majority of journalists surveyed rated freedom of speech in Bulgaria as 'bad' on a five-point scale that ranged from 'excellent' to 'very bad'. 72 % of the respondents had been direct witnesses to attacks on freedom of speech.

Is the Commission aware of the deterioration in freedom of opinion and expression in Bulgaria?

Does the Commission consider the situation of the media in Bulgaria to be a breach of fundamental rights?

If so, what action has the Commission taken, or does it intend to take, in accordance with Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), to guarantee the Member State's respect for the founding values of the EU?

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<sup>1</sup> Reporters without Borders. <http://index.rsf.org/#!/index-details/BGR>