

**Question for written answer E-001860/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Ethnic incidents in Vojvodina

In recent months the security situation in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, an ethnically mixed region of Serbia, has deteriorated. In addition to risks to the safety of individuals and their property, ethnic incidents have also multiplied which endanger mutual trust and the possibility of peaceful coexistence in the province. All this is happening in a candidate country which is awaiting the start of EU accession negotiations.

It is sadly characteristic of the investigation of these ethnic incidents by the authorities that they are treated not as criminal offences but simply as regulatory infringements. In many cases no reference is made to the ethnic nature of the acts committed, and the police reports are often incomplete and contradictory. In judicial practice instances also occur of the application of double standards regarding complaints received.

1. What measures does the Commission propose to take to prevent the recurrence of the incidents that have become frequent in recent weeks, in which young Hungarians are in many cases the victims?
2. What can the Commission do to ensure that the Serbian police enforce public order without regard to ethnic or national identity and take appropriate measures to safeguard the security of citizens, prevent strain on inter-community relations and protect minorities?
3. Does the Commission plan to mention these ethnic incidents in the country report on Serbia it is due to issue in the autumn?