

**Question for written answer E-002326/2014  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Dangerous and ageing waste depot in Pazardjik municipality, Bulgaria

The waste depot in Pazardjik municipality in Bulgaria, opened in 1964, was planned to be in operation for 20 years. Half a century later, however, it is still in use. Today, it is a mountain of waste that is continuously releasing toxic gases into an area that includes the town of Bratzigovo and the villages of Kapitan Dimitriev, Aleko Konstantinovo, Glavitza and Byaga. Local residents are suffering from cancer caused by the clouds of toxic gases. After the latest incident – the death in November 2013 of a woman from Kapitan Dimitriev – local people started a protest against the pollution, demanding that the toxic depot be closed.

In the 2007-2013 period the EU provided the funds needed for the construction of modern waste depots in Bulgaria. Pazardjik municipality did not apply for such a grant. According to environmental protection activists in Pazardjik, the municipal authorities are not interested in constructing a modern waste depot with EU money, but rather in building a private waste treatment plant. The activists suspect that corruption lies behind the municipal authorities' lack of interest in applying for an EU grant for a new waste depot.

What steps will the Commission take to urge the Bulgarian Government finally to halt the operation of the ageing waste depot in Pazardjik municipality, rehabilitate the area and protect local people from further health hazards?