

**Question for written answer E-000260/2021/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)**

**Subject:** Desecration of a national symbol and endangering of citizens on account of their national self-determination

The Bulgarian flag was publicly burned during a traditional carnival in the village of Vevchani in the Republic of North Macedonia. In addition, the perpetrator of that act was carrying a sign saying 'Bulgarian fascist invader' and had a Nazi swastika on his arm.

At the same time, lists of citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia who identify as Bulgarian continue to circulate. These lists are accompanied by calls for vigilante action against the 'traitors'.

Bulgaria was the first to recognise an independent Macedonia and the first to support it on the road to accession to the European Union, but instead of friendship and understanding it continues to be marked out as an enemy.

This is yet another manifestation of aggression and hate speech towards Bulgaria, and shows once again that the authorities in Skopje lack the will to take any action. The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has responded to the case. I would like to ask the following:

1. Since the Commission is responsible for the accession process, what action will it take to protect Bulgaria from this aggression?
2. When will the authorities of the Republic of North Macedonia be asked to explain what measures they plan to take to limit hate speech, both in the media and on the streets?
3. Specifically, how will the rights of the people living in the Republic of North Macedonia who regard themselves as Bulgarian be protected?