

**Question for written answer E-000631/2021/rev.1**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Idoia Villanueva Ruiz** (The Left)

Subject:     Respect for autonomy and freedom of expression in Turkish universities

On 2 January 2021, the Turkish Government appointed Melih Bulu – a former AKP candidate in the 2015 elections – as rector of Bosphorus University (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi). To do so, it made use of the 2018 reform of the 2016 emergency decree, under which 10 000 professors were suspended from their posts and the democratic election of rectors was brought to an end and replaced with an indirect and non-transparent appointment by Turkey's Higher Education Council (the YÖK). This reform furthers the attack on university autonomy and brings to the fore the authoritarian tendencies of Erdoğan's government, which branded the professors and students who demonstrated against Bulu's election as terrorists.

1.   What measures has the Commission taken to promote respect for autonomy and freedom of expression in Turkish universities?
2.   What are the Commission's views on the specific case of Bosphorus University?
3.   In the context of EU-Turkey relations, what measures does the Commission plan to take to ensure that Turkey respects the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, which are still compromised as a result of the emergency decree?