

**Question for written answer E-001415/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)

Subject: Desecration of Tsar Samuil monument in Skopje

In the early hours of 7 April 2022, the Tsar Samuil monument in Skopje was vandalised with the words 'Tsar of the Macedonians'.

He is one of the figures who proves that Bulgaria and North Macedonia share a common history. Tsar Samuil took over as ruler of the First Bulgarian Empire at a time when the Byzantine Empire had captured Preslav, the capital city at that time, and the incumbent ruler Tsar Roman had died while being held captive by the Romans. Ohrid, nowadays in North Macedonia, was designated the capital of Bulgaria.

According to writing on the Bitolya inscription, found in 1956 in the town of Bitolya (today in North Macedonia), Ivan Vladislav stated that he was a nephew of Samuil and referred to the work on the local fortress, which, according to the text, was built to save the lives of Bulgarians. He stated that he was Tsar of Bulgaria and Bulgarian by birth.

In North Macedonia, the history of that period is seen very differently and Samuil is a 'Macedonian Tsar'. In the EU there is no place for the falsification of history that serves the mythology of 'Macedonism' and inspires hatred of Bulgarians. That is why the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation establishes a Joint Multidisciplinary Expert Commission on Historical and Educational Issues.

I view of this:

1. How will the Commission protect historical heritage and ensure the correct interpretation of historical events in the context of the common history of Bulgaria and North Macedonia?
2. What information does the Commission have about the work of the Joint Multidisciplinary Expert Commission on Historical and Educational Issues?