

**Question for written answer E-002446/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)**

**Subject:** Merger of Taraclia State University with the State Pedagogical University of Chişinău in violation of a bilateral agreement between Bulgaria and Moldova

The Moldovan Government has decided to merge Taraclia State University with the State Pedagogical University of Chişinău, in violation of the 'Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on Assistance to Taraclia State University, Republic of Moldova'.

Article 8 of that Agreement expressly states that, subject to the mutual agreement of both parties, the Agreement may be amended and supplemented by separate protocols forming an integral part thereof.

It should be stressed that there are around 100 000 Bulgarians living in Moldova, with Taraclia as their natural centre. A host of cultural and educational institutes and schools operate thanks to the good relations between the two countries. Unfortunately, in recent years there have been attempts at centralisation that do not take into account the interests of the Bulgarian community. I have already reported the preparations being made for an administrative change that will deprive the Bulgarian community of Moldova of self-government.

The role of Taraclia University is bound in with the preservation of the cultural identity of the Bulgarian community. In recent years this higher education institution has been one of the centres of Bulgarian science, where various types of Bulgarian-centred research are being actively conducted. This merger decision will harm the image and role of the university.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it does not consider this to be a violation of Bulgarian rights?
2. What action it will take to defend the interests of the Bulgarian community in Moldova?