

**Question for written answer E-003374/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Angel Dzhambazki (ECR), Andrey Slabakov (ECR)

Subject: Attack on the 'Boris III' Bulgarian cultural centre in Ohrid, North Macedonia

Once again, thanks to anti-Bulgarian propaganda from politicians and the media in North Macedonia, aggression has come about. This time, a man armed with an axe attacked the newly-opened 'Boris III' Bulgarian cultural centre. This happened just a few days after its official opening, which was accompanied by a protest by the DPMNE [Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity] and Levitsa political parties, whose representatives threw eggs and stones at it.

The whole of this anti-Bulgarian hysteria has been supported by the Prime Minister of North Macedonia and leader of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), Dimitar Kovachevski, whose speeches have called the opening of the centre 'a provocation' and declared that this centre was intended to put Bulgarians off Macedonia.

It is not acceptable for politics and propaganda in a state that is a candidate for EU membership to be run on hatred for Bulgarians. I insist that the European Commission be prompt in taking a more serious attitude to such acts of hatred.

In view of this:

1. Will there be an investigation into instances of aggression against Bulgarians in North Macedonia?
2. Is the Commission intending to monitor respect for the rights of Bulgarians in North Macedonia?