

**Question for written answer E-003656/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)

Subject: Ban on entry of Bulgarian nationals to the Republic of Serbia

6 November 2022 is the 102th anniversary of the illegal occupation of the Western Bulgarian borderlands, including Bosilegrad, Tsaribrod (Dimitrovgrad) and parts of Kulsko and Trunsko. To mark this occasion, the Bosilegrad Cultural Information Centre and the Western Borders Association are organising a commemoration and a cultural programme.

Organised groups of pupils, students and other members of the public are travelling from Bulgaria for the event to support their fellow citizens on the other side of the border. Without any rational explanation, the border authorities are refusing to admit them to Serbia, and 20 people have had their passports 'black stamped'.

For over 100 years, Serbia has been systematically working towards the assimilation and physical eradication of Bulgarians from the Western borders, so it is also doing its utmost to obstruct links between people on each side of the border. It is unacceptable that a country that is a candidate for EU membership, and in the process of negotiating this, should violate one of the fundamental values of the Union – the free movement of persons.

In view of this:

1. What will action will the Commission take to protect the rights of citizens who have been refused entry to the Republic of Serbia?
2. Is Serbia violating the rights of European citizens by imposing an entry ban on them without any real justification?

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