

**Question for written answer E-001836/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**François Alfonsi** (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Violation of fundamental rights in Bulgaria

On the evening of 4 February 2023, the premises of a Macedonian cultural club in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria were attacked. This racially motivated criminal act represents an alarming escalation: from verbal attacks against ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria to physical intimidation and violence.

- 1) Given the Bulgarian authorities' failure to protect the community, what can the Commission do to prevent future attacks on members of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria and their properties?
- 2) Regarding the rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has repeatedly stated that 'associations aiming to achieve the recognition of the Macedonian minority' in Bulgaria 'should not be refused registration'. Is the Commission concerned that, despite these calls, Bulgaria is still not implementing the binding judgments and such applications are still being routinely denied by the Bulgarian authorities?
- 3) Will the Commission consider proposing a freeze on funds for Bulgaria in response to these serious rule-of-law concerns? If not, how else does it propose to assist Bulgaria in improving the rule of law and upholding the fundamental EU right of respect for cultural and linguistic diversity?

Submitted: 7.6.2023