

ASSOCIATION

DESCENDANTS OF THE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM THE TERRITORY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA AND FRIENDS

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Sofia, 1 July 2025

TO:
DAVID MCALLISTER, CHAIR OF THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT FOREIGN COMMITTEE

COPY TO:
KAJA KALLAS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMISSION, HIGH
REPRESENTATIVE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
SECURITY POLICY

ALL MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF THE FOREIGN COMMITTEE OF THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CONCERNING WORDING IN THE PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

DEAR MR MCALLISTER,

On 24 June 2025, the Foreign Committee of the European Parliament (AFET) adopted a report on the progress of the Republic of North Macedonia on its path towards membership of the European Union. The report notes the need to continue reforms, including in the fight against corruption, and to implement the commitments made. This report contains formulations on 'Macedonian identity' and 'Macedonian language' that are absent from previous reports of the European Parliament and in the opinions of the European Commission. On the basis of Art. 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, Art. 11, Paragraph 4 of the Treaty on European Union, Art. 227 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour of the European Parliament and Art. 209 et seq. of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, we request a written answer from you, in your capacity as Chair of the Foreign Committee, to the following questions:

1. Since the European Commission's opinions on the Republic of North Macedonia from 2023 and 2024 do not contain any references to a "Macedonian identity" or "Macedonian language", we ask: what prompted the inclusion of these categories in the 2025 report of the

European Parliament on the same subject, and what is their significance and relevance to the assessment of the country's progress?

2. Is there any other act of the European Parliament that recognizes or mentions any identities? If such documents exist, what has required this mention/recognition and what are the legal consequences of such a mention in an official EP document?

3. In modern scientific literature, several different main types of identities are considered:

- Personal (individual) identity
- Social identity
- Cultural identity
- National identity
- Ethnic identity
- Political identity
- Religious identity
- Regional and local identity
- Often when violence is applied, hidden, transient or multiple identities can exist.

In modern science, identity is perceived as a construction, not as a fixed entity – it is dynamic, multi-level, contextual and can be multiple. Since the Republic of North Macedonia occupies about 37% of the geographical area of Macedonia, and the remaining 63% are located in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania, Macedonian identity can refer to a sense of belonging to a specific geographical region and falls at the intersection of regional, political, national, ethnic and other identities. In this context, the phrase 'Macedonian identity', if not precisely defined, can be subject to ambiguous interpretation and cause diplomatic or inter-community tensions. What kind of 'Macedonian identity' did the Commission have in mind when including it in the report? Why it is not specified whether it is a national, regional or other identity?

4. Why, when the 2025 progress report of the Republic of North Macedonia contains formulations recognizing the 'Macedonian identity', does the same document not mention or recognize the identities of the other ethnic communities living in this country? This question is particularly relevant with regard to the representatives of the Bulgarian community, whose constitutional recognition is a condition set by the European Union for the opening of membership negotiations for the Republic of North Macedonia. Do you think that such selectivity in the approach to identity categories is in accordance with the principles of equality, non-discrimination and objectivity enshrined in EU law?

5. In view of the complex and multi-level nature of the concept of 'identity', did the Foreign Committee of the European Parliament consult established specialists in the field of identity and interdisciplinary studies when preparing the 2025 progress report on the Republic of North Macedonia, and if so, who were they?

6. In view of the complex historical evolution of the concept of the 'Macedonian language' and its codification only in 1945, followed by attempts to impose it through external propaganda, we would like to know: Which linguists and language policy specialists did the Commission consult when formulating this part of the report?

Our reasons for asking this question are attached in a separate historical summary.

Your answers will be of great importance in the future consideration of the 2025 Progress Report of the Republic of North Macedonia in the EP, because any formulation referring to identity characteristics should be clearly defined, scientifically argued and legally justified, especially when:

- It has consequences for interstate relations, reflecting on the security and stability of Europe;
- It affects the self-awareness of other communities;
- It is contrary to the principles of objectivity, impartiality and factual accuracy in the reports of the European Parliament.

Unclear or incorrect use of identity categories can be interpreted as taking political sides in sensitive regional issues, which is not in line with the role of the European Parliament as a mediator and guarantor of balanced dialogue.

As citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria, we will request that all Bulgarian representatives in the European Parliament closely monitor the process of examining this official inquiry.

Respectfully,

CO-CHAIRMEN:

Prof. Trendafil Mitev, DSc	Assoc. Prof. Spas Tashev, DSc	Ilija Stojanovski
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SECRETARY:

Dimitar M. Dimitrov

This official inquiry is also supported by the New Political Emigration of Macedonian Bulgarians, represented by Blagoy Shatorov and Goran Serafimov.

APPENDIX

Facts related to the concept of ‘Macedonian language’

The term ‘Macedonian language’ began to be used in the second half of the 19th century within the framework of the Serbian national strategy for influence in the region, as part of a backup option developed in the doctrine of Macedonian nationalism. Until the end of 1944, such a written language did not exist, and the local Revival Period figures considered their native dialects as Bulgarian. At the same time, local cultural figures and revolutionaries used the literary Bulgarian language in their legal and illegal activities.

For the first time, the ‘Macedonian language’ was codified in 1945, with its alphabet – a modified version of the Serbian one – being adopted on May 3, 1945, and on June 7, the spelling was also approved. We enclose the first page of the protocol of the language commission in which it is written that ‘today's historical conference is unique in its importance because for the first time in the history of our nation the question of a Macedonian alphabet and a Macedonian cultural, literary language was raised’. A photocopy of this protocol was first published by the North Macedonian scientist Stoyan Ristevski in 2000 and he calls what happened ‘the creation of the modern Macedonian literary language’.

During the period until 1948, Yugoslavia, through communist propaganda, sent emissaries to region of the geographical area of Macedonia, located in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania, to try to impose the introduction of this new written language. However, the language project in question did not find support among the population and was rejected after 1948. For a certain period of time in Greece and Albania local dialects written in the Bulgarian alphabet were used, while in Bulgaria only the use of the standard Bulgarian language was restored.

The existing legal and illegal Macedonian liberation movement after 1944 never accepted the ‘Macedonian language’, but considered it a form of Serbianisation of the local Bulgarian population.

In view of these facts, for which there is an abundance of documents, it is obvious that the category ‘Macedonian language’ referred only to the Republic of North Macedonia and had nothing to do with the other parts of the geographical region of Macedonia. At the same time, by using only the definition ‘Macedonian’, intentionally or unintentionally, an association is made with the other parts of the geographical region of Macedonia in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania, which creates prerequisites for fuelling political claims and tensions, especially in the context of external influences from Belgrade, Moscow and certain circles in Skopje.

СТЕНОГРАФСКИ БЕЖИШКИ

од конференциите на филолошката комисија за установување на македонската азбука и македонскиот литературен јазик, одржани во време од 27 ноември до 3 декември 1944 година, во салата на Градскиот одбор во Скопје.

Првата конференција ја отвори повереникот за просветата на АСНОМ Епимионда Поп-Андонов, во присуство на следните филолози: македонскиот поет Венко Марковски, учителите по словенските јазици Ристо Проданов, Ристо Зографов, д-р Ѓорѓе Шоптрајанов, Даре Дамбас, Васил Илиев, д-р Михаил Петровски, д-р Круме Тошев, Мирко Павлов, Ѓорѓе Киселинов, Благо Колевски и д-р Милка Балванлиева.

Отворајќи конференцијата, повереникот на просветата Епимионда Поп-Андонов рече:

— Драги другари, ја отворам денешнава историска конференција, која е единствена по своето значење, оти за прв пат во историјата на нашиот народ се постави прашањето за македонска азбука и за македонски културен, литературен јазик. Нашиот народ, през долго вековното ропство, не бил третиран како народ и това само со намерение да биде плаќан од балканските империалистички и други клики, со намерение да биде експлоатиран од едни, други и трети и, на крајот на крајноштата, неговото живо народно тело да биде раскинато на три части, на три дела, за да може од тај што се пазариле околу него по лесно да биде експлоатиран. Во тај тенденција не се позволяваше на македонскиот народ да се нарече со своето име македонски народ. Тој беше или бугарин, или србин или грк, а никкој тоа што навистина беше: македонец. На македонскиот народ не му се даваше да има своја писменост, не му се даваше да има своји книги, не му се позволяваше дури да има еден лист за културни нужди. Културата, просветата и васпитанието на нашиот македонски народ беше во рацете на балканските империалистички клики и нашата интелигенција имаше да служи на едни или други империалистички клики. Но благодарение на Комунистичката партија, која во денешната тигантска борба прва подигна знамето за борба против окупаторите и за слобода на сите поробени народи, па така и за слободата на македонскиот народ, благодарение на војските на дотогавидниот наш омилан маршал Тито и специјално благодарение на нашата младеж,

First page of the protocol of the language commission for the creation of the Macedonian alphabet and the Macedonian literary language.