

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000572/26
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 February 2026)**

Subject: Inhumane conditions in North Macedonian prisons

The alarming situation in prisons in North Macedonia is well known. The UN Committee against Torture has reported chronic understaffing in the penitentiary system and raised suspicions of torture, coercion and excessive use of force against prisoners. In the 2025 Enlargement Report on North Macedonia, the European Commission mentions poor prison conditions and calls on North Macedonia to implement the recommendations of national and international institutions. However, this recommendation was also included in the 2024 enlargement report. No action was taken and the situation did not improve.

1. How will the European Commission ensure that these recommendations are implemented now and how will this be followed up?
2. How does the European Commission protect EU citizens who are trapped in these prisons and thus exposed to this known inhumane treatment?

Submitted: 11.2.2026

**Answer given by Ms Kos on behalf of the European Commission
(29 April 2026)**

The Commission has consistently drawn attention to the dire conditions in prisons in North Macedonia, including in its 2025 enlargement report ⁽¹⁾ and has raised the issue in the regular political dialogues, including the recent Stabilisation and Association Committee ⁽²⁾ and Justice Freedom and Security Subcommittee ⁽³⁾ meetings. The Commission monitors the situation closely together with partners such as the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture.

The EU provides concrete assistance to improve the conditions in prisons of North Macedonia. Consular assistance and protection for EU citizens detained in the country falls under the responsibility and authority of the relevant Member State. The Commission works closely with Member States on these matters.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SK/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52025SC0753>.

⁽²⁾ 19th meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Committee between the European Union and the Republic of North Macedonia — Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood, 13 February 2026: https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/19th-meeting-stabilisation-and-association-committee-between-european-union-and-republic-north-2026-02-13_en#x.

⁽³⁾ 20th meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement Subcommittee with North Macedonia on Justice, Freedom and Security, 19 March 2026: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/north-macedonia/20th-meeting-stabilisation-and-association-agreement-subcommittee-north-macedonia-justice-freedom_en?s=229.