

Resolution on the polarisation and increased repression in Serbia, one year after the Novi Sad tragedy

2025/2917(RSP) - 22/10/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 457 votes to 103, with 72 abstentions, a resolution on the polarisation and increased repression in Serbia, one year after the Novi Sad tragedy.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, Renew, Green/EFA groups and Members.

As a reminder, on 1 November 2024, a newly renovated concrete canopy at Novi Sad railway station collapsed, killing 16 people and injuring others. One year after the tragedy, the investigations have not progressed. The incident triggered extensive protests across Serbia, led initially by students, demanding transparency, accountability for the infrastructural failure, and broader democratic reforms.

Parliament expressed condolences to the victims and called for an independent, transparent investigation, including a technical review of the structural failure (especially as the canopy collapse may have been linked to negligence and corruption). In this regard, the resolution also highlighted China's presence and influence in Serbia which has significantly increased in recent years through large-scale infrastructure investments, raising concerns about transparency, adherence to EU standards and environmental compliance.

Expressing concern over the deepening **political polarisation** in Serbia, Parliament called on all political actors, civil society representatives and relevant stakeholders in Serbia to engage in constructive dialogue, free from external pressure or interference, with the aim of reducing political and social polarisation, building trust among institutions, and finding a sustainable path forward for the country. Parliament also condemned in the strongest terms the wave of state-influenced violence, intimidation and indiscriminate arrests against peaceful protesters, journalists, civil society organisations and opposition representatives in Serbia.

Members hold the Serbian leadership politically responsible for normalising violence, undermining democratic institutions, and failing to safeguard fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, assembly and media pluralism. They strongly condemned the unlawful arrests and expulsions of EU citizens who made statements in support of protesting students.

The resolution called on Serbian authorities to:

- complete the investigation into the Novi Sad tragedy swiftly and transparently and ensure that those responsible are held to account;
- release all peaceful protesters currently detained or under house-arrest, stop politically motivated prosecutions and stop the use of the criminal justice system for silencing dissent;
- guarantee media freedom and pluralism, end harassment and attacks on journalists and civil society;
- undertake reforms to address entrenched corruption, improve oversight of state contracts and infrastructure projects, and strengthen independent institutions.

The resolution called on the EU institutions and Member States to support civil society and peaceful protesters in Serbia, to condition further enlargement/association support on measurable democratic and ruleoflaw progress, and to step up monitoring and accountability.

The Commission and the Member States are called on to closely monitor the implementation of **reforms** through the EU accession process and the Reform Agenda adopted under the Reform and Growth Facility. The Commission is invited to launch an initiative for targeted individual sanctions to be imposed against those responsible for serious violations of law and human rights in Serbia, in line with the EU global human rights sanctions regime.

Lastly, the resolution supports the prompt deployment of an ad hoc EU fact-finding mission to Serbia, with the participation of the European Parliament, to assess the situation on the ground, including the state of democracy, the ongoing protests and repression against the participants.