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## [Antievolution petition rebuffed in Serbia](#) [3]



A recent controversial petition challenging the teaching of evolution and calling for the teaching of creationism in the schools and universities of Serbia is apparently going to be ignored.

[According](#) [4] to *Nature* (May 10, 2017), the May 3, 2017, petition, signed by about 170 Serbian academics and intellectuals, was accompanied by a letter addressed to the education, science, and technological development ministry as well as to the education, science, technological development, and information committee of the National Assembly. The letter complained that there is no scientific evidence for evolution and blamed the acceptance of evolution on "globalists and atheists."

Ljiljana Colic, a professor at Belgrade University who [lost her job](#) [5] as minister for education in 2004 after ordering the removal of evolution from the high school biology curriculum, agreed with the petition, [according](#) [6] to Radio Free Europe (May 14, 2017). But the dean of the biology department, Zeljko Tomanovic, retorted, "It is the old creationist ideas that are totally anachronistic and unscientific. There is no scientific knowledge that supports the aforementioned claims [of creationism] and that deny

evolution."

The Serbian Biological Society, together with a number of Serbian scientific societies and the science faculty at a number of Serbian universities, sent a letter dated May 9, 2017, to the ministry and the committee. The letter described evolution as "the backbone of modern biology," observed that the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences endorsed the [IAP Statement on the Teaching of Evolution](#) [7], and warned that the goals of the petition were inappropriate for a secular republic such as Serbia.

Subsequently, the Serbian state news agency Tanjug (May 10, 2017) [reported](#) [8] that Mladen Sarcevic, the minister of education, science, and technological development, said that the ministry will not comply with the petition.

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