

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2326/04
by Rolandas Pavilionis (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: Linguistic reforms required by the use of the word 'euro' and equality of all the official languages of the EU

The decision to use the word 'euro' in official EU documents, without adapting the word so that it complies with the grammatical structure of Lithuanian and Latvian, would entail a linguistic reform of those languages. As things stand, it is quite impossible to use the word 'euro' in those languages because the final 'o' does not exist in the nominative singular in the Baltic languages. Accordingly, the (English) word 'euro' must be rendered as 'euras' in Lithuanian and as 'eira' in Latvian (which uses 'Eiropa' to render 'Europe'). If they are to meet the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No 974/98¹ and use the word 'euro' in official documents in their languages, Latvia and Lithuania will have to embark upon a linguistic reform. Normally, national experts adapt all foreign words so that they fit into the Baltic languages. But now the current grammatical structures of Lithuanian and Latvian will have to be changed so as to accommodate the foreign word 'euro'.

Is the decision to use the word 'euro' without reference to the peculiarities of several official languages of the EU, a decision which entails a linguistic reform in Lithuanian and Latvian, compatible with Article 314 of the EC Treaty and with Article 53 of the TEU which lay down that all the official languages are equally authentic? Why should some equally authentic languages have to be reformed so as to meet requirements related to the word 'euro' and others have not to be so reformed?

¹ OJ L 139, 11.5.1998, p. 1.