

**Question for written answer E-008302/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Ratification of the Treaty of Marrakesh

In 2014, the Commission proposed, on behalf of the EU, ratification of the Treaty of Marrakesh, which facilitates the access of blind and visually impaired people to reading books and other published works. This treaty will enable the cross-border exchange, not just in the EU but also in third countries, of copies of Braille or large-print books, e-books and digital audio books with special navigation tools, produced under copyright exceptions.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that 285 million people in the world suffer from visual impairment: 39 million of them are blind and 246 million have low vision. The World Blind Union reports that, in Europe, only 5 % of published books are available in an accessible format for visually impaired persons, while in developing countries this rate is as low as 1 %.

It has been reported in the media that several countries have been opposing this process, preventing the Council from ratifying the Treaty of Marrakesh.

Can the Commission confirm this situation, which countries are doing this and what the current play is regarding this situation?