

**Question for written answer E-008633/2016  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Education reform in Ukraine which restricts the use of minority languages

In Ukraine, an article in the Education Law which concerns the language of education is being amended. At first reading, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a draft law which is opposed to the possibility of national minorities being taught in their mother tongue. Under the legislative amendment, students belonging to minority ethnic groups will have the right to education in their mother tongue in addition to Ukrainian – although this is not guaranteed to them – and only in those places where the national minority in question lives in a block, and this provision applies to preschool, primary and secondary education, so that in higher education minority languages cannot be used.

By means of the above legislative amendment, Ukraine is infringing the constitutional right of Ukrainian citizens who belong to national minorities to be taught in their mother tongue, so this constitutes discrimination and action contrary to the wishes of the national and linguistic minority concerned.

This planned measure is contrary to Paragraph 34 of the Copenhagen Document, Article 4(3) of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and Recommendation 1201 of the European Council, which Ukraine has undertaken to respect by means of various international agreements.

The above proposal breaches the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens of Ukraine who are not ethnic Ukrainians, and calls into question the genuineness of the country's expressed desire to join the European Union.

What view does the Commission take of the disregard for commitments given by an associate country seeking membership of the European Union?

What steps can the Commission take to defend the use of minority languages in education?