Priority question for written answer P-000886/2020 to the Commission
Rule 138
Maite Pagazaurtundúa

Subject: Educating Catalan speakers to speak Catalan, and not Spanish, to foreigners in Catalonia

For several months, the regional government of Catalonia has been promoting a public campaign called ‘No em canviis de llengua’ in order to reverse the practice of addressing foreign nationals in Catalonia in Spanish. The campaign aims to educate Catalan speakers not to switch languages when they believe – on account of one’s accent or physical appearance – that the person with whom they are conversing was not born in Catalonia.

The European Union rejects profiling, or actions based on physical appearance, in all types of public policies – including public security matters – because it supposes collective prejudice and atavism against individuals who, in a democratic, open society, are equal in dignity and rights.

This sociolinguistic campaign of intervention has racist and xenophobic undertones and is an attack on people’s freedom of expression and communication, in which public authorities have no right to interfere.

Articles 11, 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union safeguard these rights, which in this instance are being violated. In light of the above:

Will the Commission contact the regional government of Catalonia to request information about this campaign and, if necessary, ask for it to be stopped?