

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0403/02

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to the Commission

Subject: Residence permits

Despite the much celebrated article in the Treaty of Maastricht providing for the creation of European citizenship, and despite the much heralded arrival of the single currency, Italian citizens in Europe, and in Belgium in particular, still suffer blatant discrimination.

Belgian legislation, like that of many other European Union countries (Germany, Netherlands, etc), does not allow the issue of a national identity card but still provides merely for a residence permit as the valid identity document for all Italian citizens resident in Belgium and Europe.

Will the Commission:

- remove the residence permit requirement for Italian citizens in Belgium and in all other Union countries;
- make representations to the authorities of all European Union countries to ensure that Member State citizens are issued with a national document and that such documents are recognised as being valid throughout Union territory;
- introduce practical measures to make the principle of Union citizenship a reality?