

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2825/03
by Nelly Maes (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Linguistic diversity

The Action Plan for 2004-2006 promoting language learning and linguistic diversity makes repeated reference to the learning of 'regional' and 'minority' languages as well as of the more widely spoken languages. It states that national and regional authorities are encouraged to give special attention to supporting language communities whose number of native speakers is in decline from generation to generation. After all, these languages also form part of the European cultural heritage.

Should the protection of these languages be left up to the goodwill of Member States?

Does the EU itself not have to take an active role in supporting teacher training activities and schools that take on this task?

What instruments are available to the EU to encourage Member States to take action if they are currently failing to support this part of our cultural heritage?