

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2342/04  
by Rolandas Pavilionis (UEN)  
to the Commission

Subject: Linguistic reforms required by the use of the word 'euro' and the grammatical competence of several millions of European citizens

The decision to use the word 'euro' in official EU documents, without adapting the word so that it complies with the grammatical structure of Lithuanian and Latvian, would entail a linguistic reform of those languages. As things stand, it is quite impossible to use the word 'euro' in those languages because the final 'o' does not exist in the nominative singular in the Baltic languages. Accordingly, the (English) word 'euro' must be rendered as 'euras' in Lithuanian and as 'eira' in Latvian (which uses 'Eiropa' to render 'Europe'). If they are to meet the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No 974/98<sup>1</sup> and use the word 'euro' in official documents in their languages, Latvia and Lithuania will have to embark upon a linguistic reform. Normally, national experts adapt all foreign words so that they fit into the Baltic languages. But now the current grammatical structures of Lithuanian and Latvian will have to be changed so as to accommodate the foreign word 'euro'.

The Baltic languages were not official languages of the EU on the day when Council Regulations (EC) Nos 1103/97<sup>2</sup> and 974/98 were adopted. As a result, no account was taken of the linguistic peculiarities of those languages.

If the linguistic reforms required by the introduction into Lithuanian and Latvian of the term 'euro' were to be implemented, speakers of Lithuanian and Latvian would automatically become less literate.

Is it up to the national governments themselves to find the funds required to mount a special campaign aimed at improving the grammatical competence of several millions of European citizens?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 139, 11.5.1998, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 162, 19.6.1997, p. 1.