

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4844/06

by Patrick Louis (IND/DEM) and Margie Sudre (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Monolingual poster campaign, violating the law of the host country

Recently, numerous posters have appeared on the Commission's buildings in Brussels which are only in English, although the numbers of people who speak certain languages in the European Union are as follows: German - 90 million, French - 68 million, with English only in third place (61 million).

1. On what basis is the Commission promoting this monolingualism in a city where, incidentally, the mother tongue of 92% of the inhabitants is French? Does the Commission consider that it can claim to be complying with the law in force in the territory of the host country concerning languages?
2. Does not the Commission consider that, out of the most elementary respect for citizens' rights, posters should primarily be displayed in the three official languages of Belgium – Dutch, French and German – and then also in English for practical reasons?
3. If the aim is to inform the public in the most congenial way, is the right way to go about this by communicating with them in a foreign language, with impunity and without considering their sensibilities?
4. By acting in this arbitrary fashion, is the Commission not running the risk of perverting the European ideal yet more in the eyes of the public?
5. Might this simply be an error of communication strategy?