

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1992/07
by Harlem Désir (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Expatriate Chilean nationals' voting rights

Although Chile will soon be celebrating 20 years since her return to democracy, participation in democratic life is still restricted for many citizens owing to the legacy inherited from the dictatorship. Chileans living abroad, who were regarded with suspicion by the Pinochet regime, still do not have the opportunity to vote in elections held in their country. Despite the principles set out in the Constitution, Chile has not established any procedures to allow them to vote as nationals living abroad.

Chile is one of the few South American States still in this situation. In total, there are nearly 850 000 Chileans in the world who cannot vote when ballots take place in their country. More than 125 000 Chilean citizens in Europe are affected.

However, under the 2002 Association Agreement with Europe, Chile is required to promote respect for human rights, democracy and the involvement of citizens.

What action does the Commission plan to remedy this situation, i.e. to move the Chilean Government to take measures that will allow its nationals living abroad to vote?