

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5356/08  
by Urszula Krupa (IND/DEM)  
to the Commission

Subject: Discrimination against other languages by the German child welfare agency ('Jugendamt')

A representative of the Polish Parents Association against Child Discrimination in Germany (contact details can be supplied on request) has asked for my assistance.

For many years this association has been seeking to highlight the discriminatory policy followed by the child welfare agency in Germany ('Jugendamt'), which is responsible for matters relating to child protection and for monitoring family courts in Germany.

According to the representative, when officials from the agency (who are responsible for enforcing political decisions) have to decide on the future of a minor in cases involving not only German citizens but also nationals of other countries (e.g. where one parent is a foreign national), they rule that the child should study and speak only in German. They restrict (and sometimes even totally prohibit) contacts with the foreign parent and his or her country of origin.

The association includes many Poles who have suffered from this policy. Statements made by German citizens of other nationalities and by French citizens confirm that this is so. There have been many television and radio programmes on the subject. Brigitte Zypries, German Minister of Justice, and Gesine Schwan, the German Government representative for cooperation with Poland, have given their views on the matter.

The parents are desperate and say that they are unable to find assistance in Germany or from the Polish authorities. I recently received an e-mail appeal for help on this matter.

The public authorities must tackle this issue. There can be no place in the European Union for discrimination against the language of either parent. Will the Commission therefore address this matter and take the necessary measures?