

E-4115/09EN

Answer given by Mrs Vassiliou  
on behalf of the Commission  
(2.10.2009)

The TV advert the Honourable Member refers to was produced by the communication agency Ligaris in the framework of a contract (Help 2.0 campaign) managed by the Health and Consumers Directorate General of the Commission.

"Help 2.0" is a tobacco control campaign which targets primarily young people and young adults. The general motto is providing help and support "for a life without tobacco" by delivering comprehensive information on health and social problems related to tobacco consumption.

The advert is based on an idea proposed by a young person in a consultation of youth organisations on "tips" to convey tobacco control messages to the target group. Pre-testing of this TV advert by the survey agency IPSOS confirmed that young people understood that the use of a monkey is an "absurd tip" and that it is better to turn to professional help to stop smoking, which is the core message of the advert. The post test of the same advert, conducted in the 27 Member States, shows that 84% of respondents understood that there is help available to stop smoking, 76% that smoking is absurd and 84% that smoking leads to negative consequences. Furthermore, 88% recognised this advert delivers a worthwhile message, 86% that it uses humour to convey the message, 77% that it constitutes an incentive to look for information and/or help, and 91% that it is in people's best interest<sup>1</sup>.

Concerning the certificate, the explanation provided by the communication agency is that both a Macaque and a Brown Malpa were pre-selected for shooting the TV advert. The Macaque was finally chosen. It is unfortunate that the contractor referred to the Brown Malpa in its communication with animal protection organisations but a vet certification for the Macaque is also available.

Animal species, and in particular primates, should not be used in a way that could encourage their keeping as pet animals. It was clearly not the intention of the Commission or of this specific campaign to send such a message. This would only distract from the central message of the antismoking campaign, which is to rid society of smoking and in particular to encourage young people to quit and get effective help to quit.

The Commission attaches great importance to animal welfare and animals are recognised as sentient beings by the Protocol on Animal Welfare annexed to the EC Treaty.

Therefore, this particular advert will not be used in for the next phase of the Help 2.0 campaign to be launched in January 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: IPSOS-Health survey, July 2009.