

**Question for written answer E-003446/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Lack of recognition for the Italian sign language

The Italian sign language is a genuine language with a specific morphology. It is a natural language for deaf people because its visual-gestural method enables it to be learnt spontaneously by deaf children, who move through the same learning stages as in the spoken language.

The importance of sign language has been recognised at EU level, including through the European Parliament resolutions of 17 June 1988 and of 23 November 2016.

Will the Commission say:

1. Is the Commission aware that although Italy has, by means of Act No 18 of 3 March 2009, ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 21 of which provides expressly that States Parties shall accept and facilitate the use of sign languages), it has still not recognised officially the Italian sign language, and this at a time when nearly all European sign languages have already been acknowledged by their respective countries, and are even recognised in the Constitution in Austria, Finland and Denmark?
2. What tangible steps does it plan to pursue, in light too of the new European Disability Strategy presented by Commissioner Helena Dalli and its goal of making the EU an international example for the rights of people with disabilities?