

**Question for written answer E-000604/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew)

Subject: Criteria for the assessment of the knowledge of languages in European civil service recruitment procedures

A court ruling in Vitoria-Gasteiz (Basque Country) this week annulled the outcome of an open competition on the grounds that the Basque language was 'very difficult to learn'. The conditions for the competition were known and accepted by those who applied, as is the case for hundreds of similar procedures. This requirement is common in similar procedures, so that this unusual decision violates the rights of those who have learnt that language and passed the corresponding tests. We therefore hope that it will be overturned at a higher instance. What is particularly striking is that, by way of justification, the decision refers to a classification, the existence of which this Member was previously unaware, which ranks the Basque language as 'the fifth most difficult to learn in the world'. Considering the experience of the Community institutions in competitions in which multilingualism is an essential factor, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. Do the Community institutions employ any classification such as that seemingly used to justify this ruling?
2. Is there a precedent where the 'extreme difficulty' of a given language led to the cancellation of a competition at Community level?
3. Is a weighting applied to the degree of 'difficulty' when assessing the knowledge of a particular language in Community competitions?