



## European Ombudsman

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European Ombudsman

Mr Fausto Parente  
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Strasbourg, 15/07/2019

**Subject:** Invitation to comment on the Ombudsman's draft practical guidelines on 'The use of EU official languages when communicating with the public' (SI/98/2018/TE)

Dear Mr Parente,

Citizens regularly turn to my Office with concerns about the use of EU official languages by the EU institutions. I have conducted inquiries in recent years on the languages used in public consultations, websites, web interfaces, press releases and administrative procedures.

In an effort to help the institutions in this difficult area, we have drafted the attached practical guidelines to identify, in a succinct and easily understandable form, the key elements that should guide the use of languages by the EU administration when communicating with the public. The guidelines seek to strike an acceptable balance between linguistic diversity and administrative and budgetary constraints. The guidelines draw on the results of a public consultation carried out by my Office last year.<sup>1</sup>

With a view to drawing on other's experience and knowledge, I am now inviting comments from all EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies on these draft guidelines. A final version of the practical guidelines will be adopted in the second half of 2019 and made available online in all EU official languages.

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<sup>1</sup> A report on the consultation was published on the Ombudsman's website in February 2019: <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/correspondence/en/110186>



Comments should be sent to [EO@ombudsman.europa.eu](mailto:EO@ombudsman.europa.eu) by **30 September 2019**. Should your staff require any further information, they can contact Ms Tanja Ehnert, Case Handler at the Ombudsman (tel: +32 2 28 46768).

The draft guidelines are currently available in English, French and German. Comments can be submitted in any of the 24 official languages of the EU and the final version of the guidelines will be published in all 24 official languages.

Please note that I may decide to publish the comments received online.

Yours sincerely,

Emily O'Reilly  
European Ombudsman

Enclosure:

- Draft practical guidelines on the use of EU official languages when communicating with the public (DE, FR, EN)