



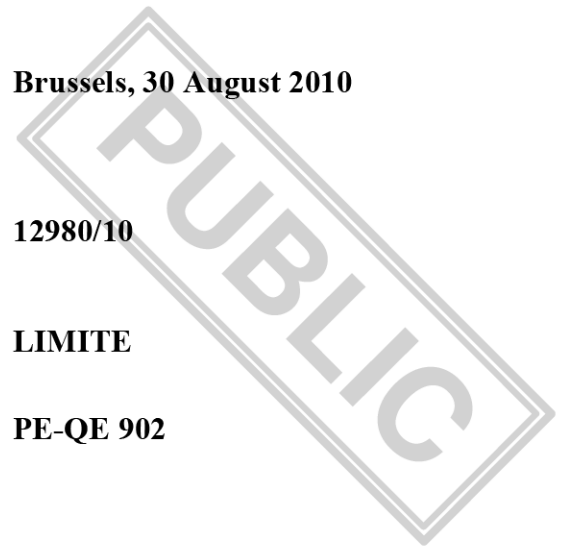
**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 30 August 2010

12980/10

LIMITE

PE-QE 902



**PRELIMINARY DRAFT REPLY TO WRITTEN QUESTION
E-5561/10 put by Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)**

from : General Secretariat of the Council
to : Permanent Representations of the Member States
Subject : **"Italian and Spanish excluded from European patent languages"**

1. Delegations will find attached:
 - the text of the above Written Question;
 - a preliminary draft reply prepared by the General Secretariat.

2. If no comments have been received from delegations **by 17.00 on 15 September 2010**, this preliminary draft reply will be submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) and to the Council for approval.

Any comments received will be examined by the Working Party on General Affairs.

**Question for written answer E-5561/2010
to the Council**
Rule 117
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)

Subject: Italian and Spanish excluded from European patent languages

The Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Michel Barnier, recently announced a proposal that would cut European patent costs by using only three languages, English, French and German.

At the EU Competitiveness Council in December 2009, Italy's Minister for European Affairs, Andrea Ronchi, defended the need for Italian to be included among the languages employed in granting European patents. However, the Commission's proposal only envisages three languages, to the detriment of Italian and Spanish. The Commissioner has referred to our firms being less competitive than US ones, but preferring to have just three languages only benefits some European firms, while others are put at a disadvantage. It does not make the whole of the EU competitive. The existing linguistic parity between Member States must be maintained if all the citizens of the EU are to enjoy the same opportunities. There are micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in many Member States that will not be able to bear the costs of translation into English, German or French.

What is the Council's position on this matter?

Does it think it should endorse Commissioner Barnier's proposal to remove Italian and Spanish from the list of languages permitted for the grant of European patents?

REPLY

to Written Question E-5561/10

put by Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)

The examination of the proposal for a Council Regulation on the translation arrangements for the European Union patent¹ has just begun within the Council.

The Council does not yet have a position on this proposal.

¹ 11805/10