

## **Decision in case 1206/2016/PL on the failure by the Commission to answer correspondence in the language of the complainant**

Decision

**Case 1206/2016/PL - Opened on 12/09/2016 - Decision on 06/10/2016 - Institution concerned** European Commission ( Settled by the institution ) |

1. In July 2016, the complainant, a spanish citizen, sent to the Commission his contribution concerning the “Public Consultation on reduced VAT rates for electronically supplied publications”. He complained to the Commission that the consultation was available only in German, English and French while the accompanying questionnaire in English only. His correspondence to the Commission on this matter was in Spanish.
2. In August 2016, the Commission replied to the complainant, but in French. In its reply the Commission stated that it is committed to multilingualism and reminded the complainant that contributions can be made in all official languages of the EU.
3. In August 2016, the complainant turned to the Ombudsman complaining against the Commission’s failure to reply in Spanish.
4. The Ombudsman’s Office contacted the relevant service of the Commission. The Commission apologized to the complainant and explained why the correspondence had not been dealt with in Spanish initially. It informed the complainant of its intention to take adequate measures to avoid similar problems in the future. The Commission also provided the complainant with a Spanish translation of its previous reply.
5. As the complainant has now received the Commission’s reply in Spanish the matter is thus considered solved. The Ombudsman, therefore, closes the case.

Lambros Papadias

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Strasbourg, 06/10/2016