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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on the promotion of multilingualism in the European Union

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the promotion of multilingualism in the European Union¹

1. Multilingualism has been an official EU policy since the Barcelona European Council in 2002. Poor language skills and the exclusive promotion of a particular language can be a factor in Europe's current social crisis, i.e. by increasing intolerance and prejudice, leading to the rise of extremist political parties.
2. There are over 50 million speakers of regional, minority and non-official languages in the Member States and some 40 million immigrants using non-European languages, such as Turkish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.
3. Language rights, both individual and collective, are fundamental human rights, which promote equal opportunities for all citizens.
4. Language competence is a crucial factor in professional competence and in fostering mobility. Border regions have special needs and merit particular attention.
5. By promoting multilingualism and the use of minority and non-official languages the EU is protecting and promoting cultural diversity, which is a key European value.
6. The Commission is hence called upon to raise awareness of the benefits of multilingualism and multiculturalism among European institutions and citizens, and to adopt a systematic approach to the preservation and protection of minority languages and cultures.
7. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.