

**Question for written answer E-002015/2017/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Daniel Caspary (PPE), Angelika Niebler (PPE), Herbert Reul (PPE) and Joachim Zeller (PPE)

Subject: Merging of Polish municipalities

Germany and Poland are linked by a close, special relationship above and beyond the German-Polish Neighbourhood Agreement. However, recent events give the present authors cause for concern about this relationship. At the beginning of the year the amalgamation of a number of municipalities near Opole came into force. In some of these the German minority comprised over 20% of the population. If 20% of the population declare themselves to be part of the German minority, the municipalities concerned can display and use their names in both German and Polish. The German minority is also entitled to subsidies for bilingual schools, the use of German as an official language and seats on local councils. With the amalgamation of municipalities with Opole, the German minority now comprises far less than 20% of the total population, which means many of these rights will disappear.

1. Does the Commission think this practice represents a flouting of the German-Polish Neighbourhood Agreement and/or the principle of the protection of minorities?
2. Does the Commission think action should be taken in this matter?