

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001869/24
to the Commission
Jordan Bardella (PFE)
(30 September 2024)**

Subject: Early departure of Luis Miguel Bueno, the EU's Arabic spokesperson for the Middle East and North Africa

Luis Miguel Bueno, the EU's Arabic spokesperson for the Middle East and North Africa, left his post early on 31 July 2024. This was in the wake of growing controversy surrounding ambiguous statements on his part and his Islamist tendencies. On 24 July 2024, Commission Vice-President Josep Borrell defended Mr Bueno, deeming his statements to be in line with the role assigned to him as an EU official. Some of Mr Bueno's most controversial posts have nevertheless been removed from his official social media channels.

Luis Miguel Bueno made a particular splash in December 2023 with a video shared via ICESCO, an organisation influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood⁽¹⁾, in which he stated that 'Arabic has become a European language. The Arabic language and Arabic and Islamic culture are an integral part of the European Union and of European history and culture'.

1. Is an internal investigation on the cards to establish the reasons behind Mr Bueno's early departure?
2. What means is the Commission using to protect itself against entryism on the part of Islamist movements within the European institutions?

Submitted: 30.9.2024

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles on behalf of the European Commission
(13 November 2024)**

The function of the Regional Media Officer (RMO) is to communicate externally to Arabic-speaking audiences in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in order to build trust and improve perception of the EU as a relatable partner through a combination of soft content (people-to-people approach) and more institutional and policy-related messages.

Similar models in like-minded partners are the United Kingdom Government Arabic Spokesperson for the MENA region, the Arabic Spokesperson for the United States State Department, Germany's Arabic Spokesperson or France's Arabic Spokesperson.

Mr Bueno's departure from the RMO position is in no way precipitated and is an ordinary move in the career progression of any member of the EU staff.

The Commission's reply to Written Question E-000250/2024 has already clarified that the reference to alleged participation of the RMO in a video shared by 'an organisation influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood' is incorrect.

As part of his engagement with regional audiences, the RMO was invited to an event organised by the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation⁽¹⁾, an intergovernmental organisation not affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

His video message on the occasion of the United Nations-designated Arabic Language Day⁽²⁾, which was screened during the event, recognises, *inter alia*, the significant role the Arabic language has played in developing European scholarship, with hundreds of scientific terms borrowed from Arabic across European languages.

The EU, together with its Member States, is actively engaged⁽³⁾ in the prevention of radicalisation and extremism, as well as the promotion of a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity.

EU officials carry out their duties solely with the interests of the EU in mind, as foreseen in the Staff Regulations⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.revuedesdeuxmondes.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/R2M-2020-12-109-119.pdf>.

⁽²⁾ <https://unesco.org/en/>

⁽³⁾ The United Nations has designated Language Days for each of its six official languages: <https://www.un.org/en/our-work/official-languages>

⁽⁴⁾ Strategic orientations on a coordinated EU approach to prevention of radicalisation for 2024-2025, European Commission: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/a4bd65f1-4987-4213-851c-df5b2d071d49_en?filename=Strategic%20Orientations%202024-2025_en.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ Regulation No 31 (EEC), 11 (EAEC), laying down the Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/1962/31\(1\)/2024-01-01](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/1962/31(1)/2024-01-01)