

EU: Flag and Anthem

1. Lord Pearson of Rannoch asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is the legal status of the European Union flag and anthem (a) in the United Kingdom; and (b) in the rest of the European Union. [HL1989]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): The EU flag and anthem have no legal status in UK or EU law.

The EU flag originated on 25 October 1955 when the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly took the unanimous decision to adopt a flag as its emblem. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted it as the European flag on 8 December 1955.

25 Apr 2008 : Column WA325

In 1985, the European flag was adopted as the official emblem of the then European Communities by the heads of state and government. EU institutions have been using it since 1986.

Similarly, the Council of Europe adopted Beethoven's Ode to Joy as its anthem in 1972. It was adopted by the Heads of State or government of the then European Communities as the official anthem in 1985.

2. Lord Tebbit asked Her Majesty's Government:

When they first became aware of the status of the European Union flag in the United Kingdom and the rest of the European Union. [HL2904]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): The EU flag has no legal status in UK or EU law.

The EU flag originated on 25 October 1955 when the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly took the unanimous decision to adopt a flag as its emblem. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted it as the European flag on 8 December 1955. In 1985, the European flag was adopted as the official emblem of the then European Communities by heads of state and government. EU institutions have been using it since 1986.

3. Lord Tebbit asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by Lord Malloch-Brown on 25 April (WA 325), why the European Union flag is flown over public buildings and is present at some public ceremonies. [HL3476]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's guidance on flying flags

advises that the European flag should be flown on Europe Day, 9 May, on government buildings with two or more flag poles, provided they are flown alongside the Union flag with the Union flag in the superior position.

Lord Tebbit asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by Lord Malloch-Brown on 25 April (WA 325), when they first became aware that the European Union flag has no legal status in United Kingdom or European Union law. [HL3477]

9 Jun 2008 : Column WA82

Lord Malloch-Brown: As set out in my Answer of 25 April, the European flag was adopted as the official emblem of the then European Communities by the heads of state and government in 1985. EU institutions have been using it since 1986. The legal status of the EU flag has not changed since then.