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Focus on Europe’s minorities, national communities and languages

EFA MEPs support new European Parliament Intergroup

A new group has been set up in the European parliament that will be a focal point for discussion on the issues facing Europe’s minorities, national communities and languages.

Europe’s rich linguistic, national and regional diversity is one of its greatest strengths, but significant challenges still exist for many groups.

It is hoped that the newly reformed *Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages* will help protect and promote cultural and linguistic diversity across the EU.

An ‘Intergroup’ is a cross-party group of MEPs who come together to work on issues of common interest.

EFA MEP **François Alfonsi** from Corsica was elected Co-Chair of the Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages intergroup, alongside fellow MEPs **Kinga Gál** (EPP) and **Lóránt Vincze** (EPP). All three are well known for their support of minority rights in the European Parliament.

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The group counts 42 MEPs from 18 EU member states. EFA MEP Tatjana Ždanoka is also a member of the group.

At its inaugural meeting in Brussels recently, the group held a broad discussion on its possible work programme, focussing on the challenges facing Europe's minorities.

They considered how linguistic and cultural diversity could be further encouraged and promoted across a range of existing EU programmes. They also identified the need to raise awareness of the unique contribution made by Europe's minorities to social and economic development as a priority.

An early priority will be the Minority Safe-Pack - a citizen's initiative calling upon the European Commission for concrete actions to protect and promote the rights of minorities in the European Union.

Co-Chair **François Alfonsi** commented: *"Re-establishing the European Parliament's Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages offers a platform for a wide range of issues related to minorities to find a voice at the European Parliament. We will be a forum for dialogue on minority issues both within the parliament and with other partners."*

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François Alfonsi

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