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Call for action on minority language radio

EFA Press release from Inaki Irazabalbeitia MEP

A conference at the European Parliament this week organised by Basque MEP **Inaki Irazabalbeitia** has recognised the importance of radio broadcasting in supporting minority languages.

Organised in conjunction with AMARC Europe and ELEN, the conference echoed previous calls for the European Commission to consider boosting financial support for minority languages in the period 2014 - 2020, including for minority language radio.

The conference concluded with the publication of guidelines for measures to be taken for the effective development of radio broadcasting in minority languages.

Contributors included MEP Francois Alfonsi, who drafted the European Parliament's recent report on Europe's endangered languages. Both Alfonsi and Irazabalbeitia addressed the event in their native languages - Corsican and Basque respectively - and interpretation was provided into other European languages.

Opening the conference, **Sally Galiana**, President of AMARC Europe, the umbrella body for community radio stations, said:

"A language is a way to see the world, and when a language dies, a part of the world dies."

Inaki Irazabaleitia MEP said:

"We have seen the vital role of community radio in supporting minority languages.

"Having a presence in the media is crucial for the survival of lesser used languages. It offers not only a chance to hear and use the language, it is also important in maintaining the status of a language and wider culture.

"The recent report by my colleague Francois Alfonsi has set out the dangers faced by some European languages. Media, including community language radio, will have a key role in ensuring the survival or not of some languages over the coming years.

"The EU has made a commitment to linguistic diversity. In this spirit, I urge the European Commission to look at the possibilities available to support minority language radio in the coming years.

"After substantial discussion and consideration, we are publishing a set of guidelines for measures to be taken for the effective development of radio broadcasting in minority languages."

Speakers also included:

- François Alfonsi, MEP, rapporteur on Europe's endangered languages
- Venus Jennings, UNESCO
- Nils Torvald, MEP
- Davyth Hicks, CEO Eurolang, ELEN Vice-President, European Language Equality Network (ELEN)
- Mikel Bujanda, Euskalerria Irratia
- Fergus O'Hir, Radio Failte
- Laszlo Tokes MEP
- Nils Torvalds MEP
- Agus Hernan, Antxeta Irratia

Ends

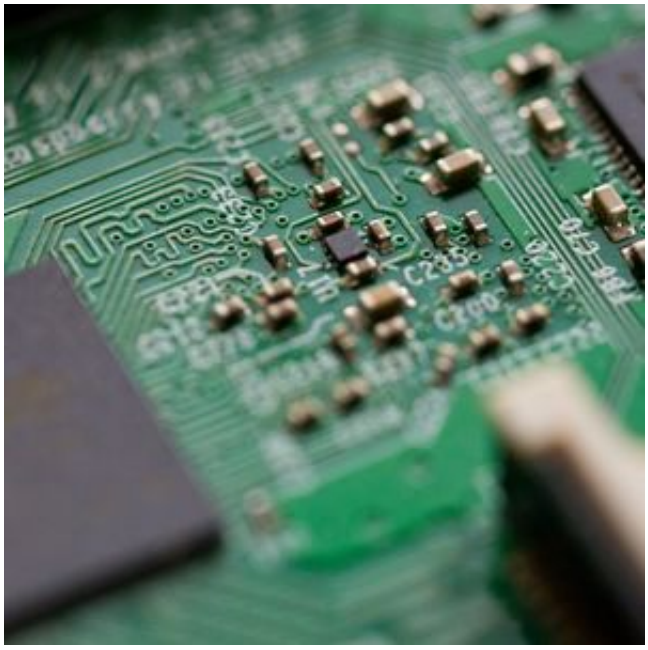
The conference can be viewed here http://greenmediabox.eu/archive/2013/10/16/radio-broadcasting-in-minority-languages/

More information: http://www.greens-efa.eu/radio-broadcasting-in-minority-languages-10572.html

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