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Europe's media action plan does not live up to today's challenges

Press release from EFA MEP Diana Riba

European Free Alliance (EFA) MEPs have welcomed the European Parliament's adoption of a report today on *'Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An action plan to support recovery and transformation'*.

The report gives the European Parliament's view on the European Commission's proposals to support the media sector across the EU over the coming years, as we emerge from the Covid pandemic and its effects.

Whilst there is much to be welcomed in the report, EFA MEPs felt that the Commission's proposals fell short, particularly in failing to fully appreciate the challenges facing regional and minority language media.

Speaking after the vote, EFA MEP **Diana Riba** said:

"The pandemic has shown the need for structural changes in both the European news media and the audiovisual sector. From crisis to crisis, small media disappears, seriously affecting pluralism and diversity in both the news media and audio-visual sector, hitting particularly hard media that create content in regional and minority languages and increasing 'news deserts'."

"We welcome the fact that the Commission recognises the need to provide support, but we feel that the proposals set out so far do not go far enough."

"Smaller media organisations, and regional media need substantial support and we want to see the Commission deliver on that."

"This is why we call on the Commission to consider language as a unit of analysis in the design of audio visual policies, promote cross-border co-productions together with subtitling and dubbing and ease up cross-border access of audio-visual content. We also believe cross-border cooperation of news media outlets together with the compliance of the rule of law conditionality for access to EU funds can help address disinformation problems stemming from interference arising from governments, powerful interest groups or third countries and strengthen diversity in media markets."

"It is also particularly important for us that any recovery funding earmarked for the media is conditional on support for independent journalism, and that this should be properly monitored."

"As we emerge from Covid, our media and creative sectors – which have suffered enormously during the pandemic – will need European support to help them recover. It will be vital to ensuring media plurality and diversity moving forward."

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Diana Riba i Giner

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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