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# One language dies every two weeks

## Press release from Francois Alfonsi MEP

One language dies on average every two weeks somewhere on earth.

That was the shocking statistic revealed in an expert seminar hosted at the European Parliament this week by Corsican MEP **François Alfonsi** in preparation for his report on "Endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union" for the European Parliament's Culture Committee.

This is the European Parliament's first detailed study of the issue of language diversity and protecting endangered languages in Europe in a number of years. There has been no major, in-depth international study into endangered languages since the 1990s.

François Alfonsi is the European Parliament's only Corsican-speaking MEP.  He is calling for the European Parliament and Commission to take stock of Europe's diverse linguistic tapestry, and propose measures to ensure language diversity can thrive.

The seminar heard from UNESCO who are involved in the global mapping of language diversity and from Meirion Prys Jones of the NLPD who spoke of the co-operation going on between different minority language communities in Europe.

Looking at where things are working well in Europe for minority languages, the Swedish speaking minority in Finland was held up as a good example. The Finish Government published a strategy for the national languages of Finland in December 2012 proposing concrete measures to help apply language legislation.

Speaking after the event, M. Alfonsi said:

*"The dangers and challenges faced by Europe's minority language communities are very real and very clear.*

*"Without concrete support at European, national and local level, we will see a further decline in linguistic diversity over the next decades.*

*"This will leave all of us culturally, socially and economically impoverished.*

*"The challenge now is to map out the current picture and identify what kind of support is needed and where.*

*"There are positive examples which we can build upon to create a more secure future for Europe's diverse mix of languages."*

The report will be considered by the Culture Committee later this year, and a plenary vote is expected before September.

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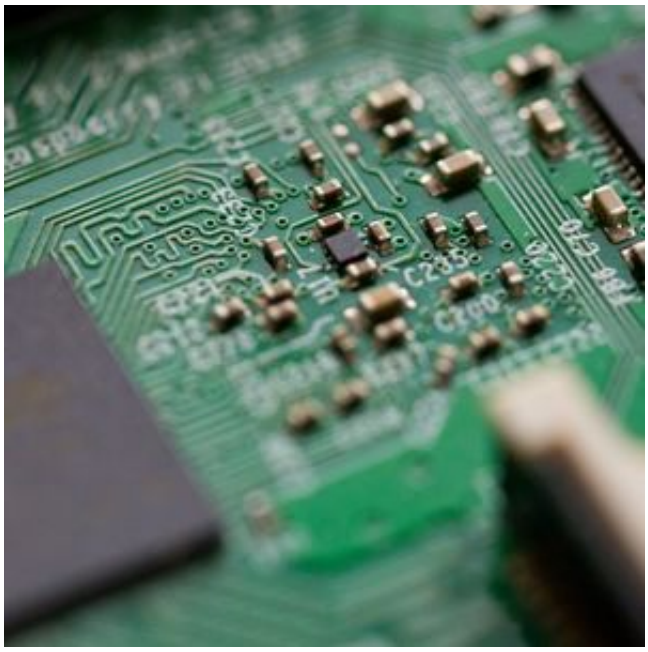


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