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[Press release](#) | 09.05.2023

The European Parliament votes in favour of audiovisual works to be available in regional and minoritaised languages.

An amendment introduced by EFA MEP Diana Riba in an important report on the European audiovisual services law calls for all audiovisual products to be available through dubbing, subtitling and audio description in the official languages of each territory.

The European Parliament has today approved the report that analyses how the member states of the European Union (EU) are implementing the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The text, which has a large number of amendments presented by the Catalan MEP, is a warning to the Spanish government due to the delay in applying this directive and the lack of inclusion of the co-official languages in the Spanish regulations approved last year.

The text criticises the "lack of will of some member states to transpose the Directive in time as well as the general hesitation of the Commission when initiating infringement procedures against these States". The text goes further and states that "the delay in its transposition undermines the effectiveness of the Directive".

A key amendment for linguistic diversity in the audiovisual landscape

The report is also particularly clear and concise when it talks about the fact that this directive

must have "a key role in the structuring of a European audiovisual ecosystem based on the protection of cultural and linguistic diversity". In fact, another amendment presented by Diana Riba EFA and approved today in plenary calls for "strengthen efforts to disseminate European works that represent all European linguistic diversity, taking into account both official languages and regional and minority languages".

Diana Riba EFA MEP and Greens/EFA rapporteur in the file said:

"It is good to highlight that the text says 30% of European work is a quota that indicates a minimum target and not a ceiling as interpreted by the Spanish State. It is important to increase this percentage as France or Lithuania have done, which would also increase the percentage of works produced in Catalan".

"The Spanish government has to act quickly to implement European rules in an appropriate way, especially those relating to linguistic plurality and diversity".

"The General Audiovisual Communication Law passed by the Spanish Parliament is clearly insufficient

and does not include, as it shows the report approved today by the European Parliament, the spirit of the European directive".

"The amendment where it states that accessibility through dubbing, subtitles and audio description, among other systems, in all the languages of the territory must be provided by the audiovisual media services is crucial, as it asks that, using the case of Catalonia as an example, absolutely all audiovisual content must be available in Catalan through different interpretation systems".

Ana Miranda EFA MEP said:

"It is very important that the European Parliament discusses the Popular Legislative Initiative promoted by A Mesa for linguistic normalisation called the "Xabarín Initiative", based on the historic children's and youth programme of TVG, which was unanimously approved by the Galician Parliament"

"This initiative explains that audiovisual broadcasting in Galician is less than 0.83% in quality programmes, refers to the work of independent production and demands equal treatment for the official languages in the territories of the European Union, as is the case of Galician in Galicia. We need to see and be seen, to hear and be heard, but above all, because of the existing discrimination, to have equality in the audiovisual sector as well".

"We regret the delay in the transposition of the European Directive in Spain and that it does not take into account the demands of the EFA. However, with today's approval of the Audiovisual Directive in the European Parliament, we are taking a step forward in support of the audiovisual sector in the Galician language, as defended by Marcos Maceira, president of A MESA and promoter of the Popular Legislative Initiative in the Intergroup of Languages held last April".

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Ana Miranda

Member



Diana Riba i Giner

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

Contact person



Valentina Servera Clavell

Media and communications officer

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