



Radio Broadcasting in Regional or Minority Languages

Conference Report by Dr. Davyth Hicks, CEO Eurolang, Secretary-General ELEN
on behalf of Dr. Inaki Irazabalbeitia MEP





Foreword

On the 11th September 2013, just a few weeks prior to this conference, the European Parliament approved with an overwhelming majority the report on 'Endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union', for which the rapporteur was the Corsican MEP François Alfonsi.

The Report is important for two different reasons. Firstly, for its political significance because it was unanimously approved in the Culture and Education Committee and that 92% of MEPs supported it at the plenary vote. Secondly, it is the first document supported by an EU institution stating both strategies and guidelines for a sound linguistic policy for endangered languages throughout the Union. Even if the Report is not a piece of legislation, it may be considered as a reference with moral force that can be used as the EU's policy framework by activists and authorities alike in dealing with minority language protection and normalization. In that sense it is a unique document as the other main European benchmark, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, was issued by the Council of Europe, which is not an EU institution.

In that context, point 13 of the Alfonsi Report clearly underlines that language revitalization policy must be based on long-term, coordinated and diverse efforts developed in various fields. Among those pointed out, mass media, and more precisely radio broadcasting, are mentioned. Therefore, our conference coincides with the policies stated by the EP in this Report.

I hope that the conclusions of the Conference will help us, Members of this Parliament, to design and drive forward adequate policies and legislative proposals for improving the role of radio in the field of language normalization. Furthermore, radio stations and other civil society actors will also find a set of positive proposals to advance towards the normalization of broadcasting in minority languages. Nevertheless, this Conference will serve to set up a European level network between the different agents acting in this field.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who helped organize the Conference: the Greens-EFA group for financing the Conference, the group staff and AMARC representatives for their commitment, and my fellow MEPs François Alfonsi, Nils Torvalds and László Tökés for their participation. I would like to thank specially Agus Hernan, who proposed the idea, Davyth Hicks for the Report, and my assistants Olga Perez and Argitxu Etxandi for their work in dealing with all those little but important details.

Inaki Irazabalbeitia, MEP

Glossary

CoE Council of Europe
RML Regional or Minority Languages
FCNM Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
ECRML European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
EChFR European Charter of Fundamental Rights
ELEN European Language Equality Network
AMARC World Association of Community Radios

On the 16th October 2013 participants gathered in the European Parliament from across Europe and the globe to discuss 'Radio broadcasting in Regional or Minority Languages'(RMLs), to examine the challenges that many RML community radio stations face, and to propose solutions for the future. The conference was organised and hosted by Inaki Irazabalbeitia in partnership with AMARC Europe, Eurolang, and the European Language Equality Network (ELEN), and supported and sponsored by the European Free Alliance.^{1 2}

Overview

The conference was held in the context that half of the world's estimated 6,000-plus languages are likely to die out as community languages by the end of the century unless there are urgent and substantive efforts to protect these communities and their languages. This is the evaluation of United Nations independent experts, who also note that, "Language is particularly important to linguistic minority communities seeking to maintain their distinct group and cultural identity, sometimes under conditions of marginalization, exclusion and discrimination."

The protection of linguistic minority rights is a human rights obligation and an essential component of good governance. It prevents tensions and conflict, and leads to the construction of equal, politically and socially, stable societies. UNESCO has said that translation into, and promotion of, local languages supports linguistic and cultural diversity and serves as the foundation for all social, economic, and cultural life.

¹ <http://www.e-f-a.org/home/>
² <http://efa.greens-efa.eu/>

Today, globalization is having a direct and detrimental impact on regional or minority languages and linguistic diversity, as global communications and marketplaces require global understanding and language uniformity. Nevertheless, community media in Europe is a tool that reinforces pluralism and diversity not only through radio content production, but through participatory and democratic processes that support and reinforce European identity and cultural wealth through the use and promotion of regional or minority languages in Europe.

European Language Equality Network (ELEN)

The European Language Equality Network is today the chief Europe-wide NGO that works for the protection and promotion of European lesser-used languages. Established in 2011 it replaced the former European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL) and to date represents 42 languages in 21 European states.

Examples of member organisations are regional or minority language bilingual and immersion schools (Diwan), parent organisations such as Comann nam Parant (Scotland), umbrella organisations such as Kevre Breizh (Brittany), Kontseilua (Basque Country) and Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymru (Wales), large cultural organisations such as Acció Cultural del País Valencià (Valencia), and research institutes such as the Hungarian Szabó T. Attila Linguistic Institute (Transylvania).

ELEN's purpose is to represent the 50 million people, 10% of the EU's population, who speak a regional or minority language.

ELEN has as its goal the promotion and protection of lesser-used (i.e. regional, minority, indigenous, co-official and smaller state) languages, (RMLs), to work towards linguistic equality for these languages, and multilingualism, under the broader framework of human rights, and to be a voice for the speakers of these languages at the local, regional, national, European and international level.



General Assembly of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)

In 2010, the General Assembly of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) gathered in La Plata, Argentina to celebrate its 10th World Conference, unanimously adopted a resolution with the aim to enhance a specific work in the area of community broadcasters and minority languages.

In 2012 AMARC welcomed the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, issuing the Declaration: "Right to communicate, indigenous peoples and minority languages." AMARC stressed the need to, "express the support of the global network of community radio stations to thousands of indigenous community radios, to the indigenous peoples who suffer from the marginalization and the prohibition of their right to express themselves in their own languages."

For AMARC the defence of cultural diversity and the expression of minority languages or "legally hidden" languages is "a prerequisite for the effective recognition of the condition of those peoples and the right to self-determination, which will make the effective exercise of citizenship of the indigenous populations possible."

AMARC supports the notion that, "the effective exercise of the right to communicate makes the languages of each people a form of expression of the individual and collective identity right that makes the right to access to radio and television frequencies a preferential right for the less powerful groups that make up the cultural and ethnic diversity of all territories and peoples of the world."

AMARC also considers that, "any recognition of the dignity of indigenous peoples, in any part of the world will not be complete if it does not ensure the conditions for the full exercise of the right to communicate, because the full realization of this right is an essential part of cultural sovereignty, which allows for the full participation in the public space."

The European and International Legal Framework

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) ³

The ECRML adopted by the Council of Europe in 1992 has a menu-based system whereby States

are able to incrementally improve provision for the RMLs in their territories. It is worth reminding ourselves of Article 11 which deals with media and how states are expected 'move up' the menu. For example, states may choose Article 11. a), then they can choose either "i) to ensure the creation of at least one radio station and one television channel in the regional or minority languages;" or "ii) to encourage and/or facilitate the creation of at least one radio station and one television channel in the regional or minority languages," or "iii) to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages."

State Parties also, "undertake to guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in a language used in identical or similar form to a regional or minority language, and not to oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in such a language.

"They further undertake to ensure that no restrictions will be placed on the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in a language used in identical or similar form to a regional or minority language."

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) ⁴

The FCNM, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1995 forms, together with the ECRML, the benchmark treaties for minority protection in Europe forming part of the Copenhagen criteria which accession states have to ratify before gaining accession to the EU.

In terms of RML radio the relevant sections of the FCNM are: (Art 5.1) The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

(Article 7) The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

³ <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm>

⁴ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/1_AtGlance/FCNM_Texts_en.asp



The most applicable clause is Article 9:

1. *The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.*

2. *Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.*

3. *The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.*

4. *In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.*

It remains a subject of controversy that various EU member states such as France and Greece have continued in their failure to ratify both of these treaties that have become norms for European national and linguistic minority rights protection. Furthermore, their non-ratification has led to what is termed the 'Copenhagen dilemma' or the European double standards situation, whereby accession states have to ratify to accede to the EU, while 'older' member states continue not to comply.

European Convention on Human Rights

Article 10. Freedom of expression

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

The additional Protocol Number 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, states categorically that, "The enjoyment of the rights recognized by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other measures, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status."

European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights ⁵

Article 11

Freedom of expression and information

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.
2. The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected

Article 21

Non-discrimination

1. Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

Article 22

Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity

The Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/charter/>

We are yet to see the full realisation of the benefits of the EChFR non-discrimination clauses. While it is EU primary law it only comes into force when EU law is being implemented. This conditionality remains a problem for national and linguistic minorities as competences on these subject areas are reserved to Member States, making it (so far at least) difficult to invoke the ChFR in cases of discrimination.⁶

OSCE Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities: Media

Although non-binding the 1998 OSCE Oslo Recommendations⁷ regarding the linguistic rights of National Minorities are useful:

8) Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to establish and maintain their own minority language media. State regulation of the broadcast media shall be based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria and shall not be used to restrict enjoyment of minority rights.

9) Persons belonging to national minorities should have access to broadcast time in their own language on publicly funded media. At national, regional and local levels the amount and quality of time allocated to broadcasting in the language of a given minority should be commensurate with the numerical size and concentration of the national minority and appropriate to its situation and needs.

10) The independent nature of the programming of public and private media in the language(s) of national minorities shall be safeguarded. Public media editorial boards overseeing the content and orientation of programming should be independent and should include persons belonging to national minorities serving in their independent capacity.

11) Access to media originating from abroad shall not be unduly restricted. Such access should not justify a diminution of broadcast time allocated to the minority in the publicly funded media of the State of residence of the minorities concerned.

⁶ However, the new Rule of Law initiative from the Commission (see http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-237_en.htm) may help national and linguistic minorities as it will enable greater implementation of the EChFR, providing Member States approve it. It aims to "fill the gap between infringement proceedings and the Article 7 procedure, taking full account of the need to treat all Member States equally and to address and resolve concrete and systemic threats to the rule of law."

⁷ <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/67531?download=true>

United Nations

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights 1966 (in force 1976)

Article 27. In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992)

Article 1.

1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.

Article 2

1. Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination.

2. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life.





Article 4

2. States shall take measures to create favourable conditions to enable persons belonging to minorities to express their characteristics and to develop their culture, language, religion, traditions and customs, except where specific practices are in violation of national law and contrary to international standards.

European Parliament Report on Endangered Languages in the EU ⁸

Francois Alfonsi MEP's recent European Parliament Report on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European (2013/2007(INI)), contributed to by Eurolang and ELEN, calls on the European Union and the Member States to pay more attention to the extreme threat of endangerment that many European languages face, and to commit wholeheartedly to a policy of protection and promotion that is up to the job of preserving the diversity of the Union's linguistic and cultural heritage by supporting ambitious protection policies within the language communities concerned.

The Report calls on the Commission and the Council to adapt EU policies and programmes so as to support endangered languages and linguistic diversity using EU financial support tools for the period between 2014 and 2020 and takes the view that a language revitalisation policy is a long-term effort that must be based on a diverse, coordinated schedule of activities in various fields such as the media, the arts, education (including pre-school education) and in all areas of public life.

Finally, the Report calls on the Commission to provide constant support, via its various programmes, for transnational networks and European-level initiatives and activities that are designed to promote endangered languages, and emphasises that active participation is needed in order to ensure that UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger remains a permanent fixture.

The objective of the public forum on RML radio is, therefore, to provide an overview of the work for the promotion of minority languages from the community media perspective, to discuss best practice in terms of media experiences of the third sector, and to examine the institutional framework put in place by International Organizations.

⁸ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2013-0239&language=EN>

The Conference

1) Opening

Inaki Irazabalbeitia MEP, Sally Galiana President Amarc Europe



Dr. Inaki Irazabalbeitia

Inaki Irazabalbeitia MEP launched the conference commenting that the event was happening at a good time given the recent overwhelming support by Parliament for the Endangered Languages Report. He underlined the need for coordinated planning for RML media and the need to ensure that specific policies for RMLs are developed in the Parliament. He stated that the conference will lead to a Report which will set out the road-map for further action.



Ms Sally Galiana

Sally Galiana, the President of AMARC Europe, said that it's good to create synergies and how it's an organic process for people to use their RMLs. It's vital to save endangered languages because part of the world disappears when you lose a language, she said. She noted that only 1% of the EU's language budget is spent on RMLs, and that language loss leads to the weakening of social cohesion as indigenous people especially cannot always relate to the new incoming culture.

2) Regulatory framework for regional or minority languages in Europe

François Alfonsi MEP, Venus Jennings UNESCO, Nils Torvalds MEP



Mr François Alfonsi MEP

Intergroup Vice-Chairman Mr Alfonsi (EFA) said that there is no policy of protection for regional languages in France. Rather the opposite, in that the State implements policies against its regional languages. Referring to the Endangered Languages Report, for which he was rapporteur, he said it was not easy to have it adopted from the outset. In the final vote some French MEPs were strongly opposed, such as the Front National and UMP, as well as Jean-Luc Mélenchon a French Jacobin from the far Left.



The Endangered Languages Report was adopted with a large majority with 92% of MEPs supporting it. It has achieved a milestone in the European Parliament simply for the overwhelming cross-party support it had, and it means that the Commission's continuing position of not having any specific support for endangered language projects is no longer tenable. In addition, the report has motivated RML NGOs and other stakeholders, and raised an awareness of the role of the EU in this area. So now we must act, and radio stations are important stakeholders, they are the actors on the ground. The report will have two effects: firstly, more financial support for RMLs and their networks; secondly, it will motivate member states to take action because they can see that the issue had to go to the European level before anything happened. We have to turn the Report into concrete actions and for that we will need all the stakeholders, all the NGOs and activists, to work to have the Report implemented.



Ms Venus Jennings, UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Media and Society

Ms Jennings discussed international standard-setting instruments in favor of RML including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. In addition, she discussed the various international recommendations passed by the 12th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (ECOSOC, 2013, No.23).

She underlined that UNESCO promotes pluralistic media and freedom of expression and noted that mainstream media hardly reaches remotely located, marginalized, or minority language speakers unlike community radio. Enforceable policies and legislative provisions, however, are necessary for inclusive broadcasting to facilitate the implementation of international recommendations that support such communities.



Numerous minority languages are spoken in Europe and thousands of indigenous languages and dialects in Africa. In Central America, indigenous languages are spoken by the majority of people unlike by minority groups in Europe.

She quoted paragraph 43 of the recommendations by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which requests parliamentarians to establish legal frameworks; protect the rights of indigenous people and their means of communication against criminalization, and develop programmes and projects that build the capacity of indigenous communities particularly women. She also quoted paragraph 118 "strengthen access to information and draw greater attention to the issues of indigenous peoples in the media," as well as paragraphs that requested UN system organizations including UNESCO to develop and support projects that support the rights of indigenous people.

UNESCO supports community media through its regular program and through the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Examples include, training in the management of indigenous community information in South Sarawak, Malaysia; upgrading new information technology of local radio to strengthen participation of women and youth in public debate and content production in 7 Sub-Saharan African countries (Sida); Women's Networking Association of Community Radio Broadcasters in Central America. Specific to languages, UNESCO has produced an Atlas of Endangered languages which can be found online.



Mr Nils Torvalds MEP

The Swedish Finn MEP Nils Torvalds (ALDE), a former YLE radio journalist, reflected on his 100% Swedish-speaking childhood and pointed out that every language group must be able to decide themselves about what media they have. The youth need to hear their own language in pop music, he added. The treatment of RMLs is a litmus test of how we as Europeans perceive our rights and freedoms. The European Commission says it defends democratic values



which includes linguistic human rights, but there is no legal basis to fight for these values. This must be remedied .

3) Community Radios and Minority languages Davyth Hicks, László Tökés.



Dr. Davyth Hicks, Eurolang, Secretary-General ELEN

Eurolang, originally EBLUL's news service, is a NGO that advocates for RMLs at the EU and international level. In July 2011 a new civil society organization, the European Language Equality Network (ELEN), was launched comprising former EBLUL members, Eurolang, and individual language NGOs from across Europe. It replaces EBLUL and works to represent RML speakers. To date ELEN represents 42 language communities in 21 European states, with Eurolang working to represent ELEN at the EU level. There are approximately 60 regional or minority languages in the EU (see ECRML). Approximately 50 million people, 10%, in the European Union speak a regional or minority language.

Dr Hicks turned next to the the role of radio in language revitalization, with a short discussion on the success of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal. From 1985 onwards, the BBC Gaelic radio service, Radio nan Gàidheal, has steadily increased the amount of hours broadcast and broadened its geographical range. Programming now exceeds 65 hours per week and is accessible not only to the great majority of Scotland's Gaelic-speaking population but also to the great majority of the Scottish population as a whole (although the service is still unavailable in some parts of the country). Radio nan Gàidheal (RnanG) is also available worldwide via the Internet. RnanG has a very high level of audience penetration within the Gaelic community and (much more so than television) plays a key role in relation to the publicising and discussion of Gaelic affairs.

"It is radio, far more than television, which consistently succeeds in reflecting the richness and diversity of our small Gaelic world and the great variety of

individuals who inhabit it," said the writer Joni Buchanan, and if you visit the Western Isles today you can hear RnanG on in shops, garages, and pubs. Its all-pervading presence and content defines it as among the best in community radio.

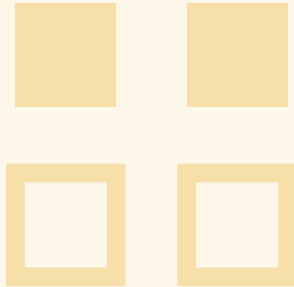
It is useful to outline the sociolinguistic role of radio in language revitalization:

- Supports successful revitalization of an RML language;
- Promotes language use and helps halt further language decline;
- Acts to support RML medium education;
- Builds awareness of language loss and inspires new language learners;
- Enables the ability to live your life in the RML;
- Serves as a source of alternative media;
- Acts to normalize usage of the RML across all age ranges;
- Strengthens RMLs by establishing new RML norms/ domains of usage.

However, today we are facing many problems across Europe. In the Spanish state Catalan is under threat in Valencia, Illes Balears, Aragon and Catalunya, as well as Galician in Galicia and Basque in Nafarroa. In addition, the Spanish state is constantly seeking to undermine the successful Catalan immersion education model in Catalonia itself.

In the French territories Breton, Occitan, Catalan, Basque, Corsican, Alsatian are all under threat and endangerment and the Government is yet to fulfil its promise to ratify ECRML. The situation is compounded by the lack of basic protection mechanisms for RMLs, no language acts, and no legal base or finance for language revitalisation and planning.

Furthermore, the Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Romania face constant problems, we've witnessed the Malinova case (where a young woman was beaten for speaking Hungarian) and the Slovak language law which introduced fines for speaking Hungarian with public sector services. ELEN not only wants to see Hungarian protected but revitalised, with an increase in the numbers of speakers, not steady decline.



Italy is yet to ratify the ECRML, but there may be some progress with a Bill in the Senate calling for ratification.

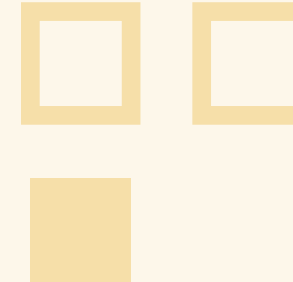
However, despite many problems for our member's languages, there are encouraging signs at the EU and international level. A 2012 Eurobarometer Report on language use found that 81% agree that all languages spoken within the EU should be treated equally, furthermore just as racial discrimination has become unacceptable, discrimination on the grounds of language is increasingly seen as having no place in 21st century Europe. There's also an increasing acceptance of the importance of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in all member states, and this is reflected in its prioritisation in EU programmes such as Erasmus Plus. Furthermore, the overwhelming, cross-party support for the Endangered Languages Report may reflect a sea-change in opinion after a decade of neglect by the EU.

ELEN is currently focusing its work on the following recommendations

- To establish a national and linguistic minority EU Framework Strategy similar to the Roma Framework Strategy.
- The implementation of the non-discrimination clauses in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, perhaps through the Commission's new rule of law initiative, and the EU ratifying the ECHR, with the aim of ensuring that the EU lives up to its obligation of protection.
- An EU Language Discrimination Directive. Put simply, if the EU can protect endangered fish and plants, why not endangered languages?

ELEN also has the following recommendations regarding a strategy for RML radio:

1. It is our aim to see each of Europe's RML communities have their own terrestrial state sponsored radio station such as Radio nan Gàidheal, as foreseen in the ECRML.
2. A first step will be establish a special ELEN Media Committee that will focus on RML Community radio to bring the experts and partners together to plan ahead.



3. We will call on the Commission, with Parliament support, to consider supporting the project of a radio station per language, as stipulated in the ECRML.
4. With support, trials will be launched of a radio station per RML by setting up a pilot internet radio site.



László Tökés MEP

In Romania, community radios are marginalized. The Commission ignores the problem of national and linguistic minorities in spite of the fact that we are 50 million people out of a 500 million EU population. In addition, four European Citizens Initiatives for national minorities have been rejected.

For us Hungarians it's become a question of existence and survival for our community. I would argue that Hungarian is becoming endangered in Romania when you have 300,000 Csango Hungarians, but where only 50,000 today speak the language. We have seen the same decline in Serbia and Slovakia because of assimilation policies. Hungarians are being assimilated. We appeal to ELEN to help us as much as possible.

While there is television in Hungarian in Romania, we also have a very centralized media.

Commercial radio started using minority languages after the fall of the communist regime leading to the birth of Hungarian Radio. So there is community radio, but mostly they have religious programmes. There are also other radio programmes on the internet, but not everyone has access to these programmes.

Hungarian radio representative

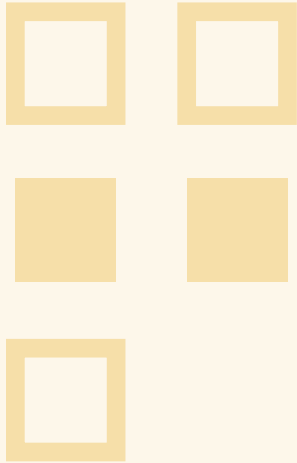
Hungarian commercial radio has been relatively successful compared to community radio, but we don't always succeed in reaching all members of the Hungarian community.



Mikel Bujanda, Euskalerrria Irratia

The radio station Euskalerrria Irratia is located in Pamplona where only 12 % of the population speaks Basque out of a population of 300,000. The radio offers a place to hear and use the Basque language. It is also a local radio station that broadcasts business information.





But it is not the only radio, there are others. Its status is a priori illegal, we have appealed to the courts and are awaiting a decision. It is difficult to determine whether we are a community or commercial radio, we do not really know, but we had to opt for the commercial status having no other choice.

In Spain, a law from 2000 deals with community radio but only very briefly. In reality, it does not offer the opportunity to actually create a community radio. Therefore, licenses are the only opportunity. However, while we pay taxes and royalties we're not recognised legally.

We have been fined but the judge cancelled the case, and we are trapped in an endless process of legalization .

Radio Euskalerria Irratia has an agreement with another Basque Radio, Basque Irratiak, offering a similar output. The agreement establishes complementarity. In this way we connect listeners in Pamplona with other listeners in the Basque Country, and it is precisely this that the authorities do not accept.

However , Article 11 of the Charter of Regional or Minority Languages says that states can not put obstacles in the field of broadcasting. But it must be said that the state does not prohibit directly, they use smarter ways that bypass the law. For example, they use the business case of 'lack of competition'. But this argument is a pretext. The problem is that the Autonomous Community of Navarre never creates public radio. We are, therefore, no competition to public radio. We aim to investigate whether there are opportunities to build bridges between the public and private sectors.

There is an EU Directive from 2000 which requires that the law of the market cannot override cultural rights.

The problem for Spain is that we form a community and that they want to create ghettos.

We have appealed to the European Courts of Human Rights (ECtHR) on this issue.



Fergus Ó hÍr

Irish language radio in the north of Ireland

Its interesting to hear how we all share a similar set of problems. Our situation for years was "pre-legal", not actually illegal, we came to setting up a radio station



as language activists at the same time as setting up an Irish language school. The authorities were hostile to the Irish language revival. The language had been maintained at the grass roots, we went further and set up an Irish-speaking Gaeltacht. In 1971 we had our first Irish language primary school and the schools movement has remained as one of the chief drivers of the revival.

Today some 180,000 have some knowledge of Irish, an increase of 10% since 2001. Even East Belfast, known for being more British, has started Irish language classes with 100 people attending.

The progress of the Irish Language Act proposal is still vulnerable. The 1998 Good Friday agreement meant that governments were committed to support it, followed by the 2006 St Andrews agreement. Responsibility for passing an Act lies with the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Minister for Culture is very supportive but there is still no Act. Irish has become an EU official language which has helped, yet the ECRML fails to be implemented. The 3rd visit of the ECRML Committee of Experts to Northern Ireland could not be finished because the Northern Ireland Assembly did not provide the required information. It led to a serious condemnation of the UK government by the Council of Europe. In 2011 the FCNM report found that the "climate was not conducive to the promotion of the Irish language."

Regarding media, there are 50 English-medium radio stations and only one in Irish, Raidio Failte, which broadcasts 24/7. But we can only broadcast over a 5km distance despite arguments with OFCOM (the UK broadcasting regulatory authority) to increase the range.

There's no Irish newspaper or Irish TV, just a few hours per year on the BBC. We have asked for UK government support plus we aim to get on a digital platform. We need a proper dedicated Irish language station in northern Ireland, plus for all the other radio stations to use some Irish.



Ms Maria Pia Matta

President AMARC International

Community radios and indigenous languages

How do we make headway regarding linguistic diversity from a South American perspective? Democracy has come a long way in South America and can't progress

without indigenous involvement. Communication, and more specifically community radio stations, are a question of human rights plus there is also a commercial perspective .

Argentina and Uruguay have the highest standards, both recognize community radio as non-profit organizations and so they have easy access to frequencies. However, in Guatemala 90 % of the population are indigenous and people are required to have some financial support before they can set up a radio station. Indigenous unlicensed radios are punished with fines or imprisonment.

The Mapuche took Chile to court after Chile denied them having even one radio station. We went to court in a case alleging racial discrimination based on the UN ban on Discrimination against Indigenous People. The Chilean government was punished, although the penalty was not binding, but they were made to provide 40 community radio stations. So there is a process here that could be developed. The Freedom of Expression is an individual but also a collective right. The human rights framework opens up many possibilities for community radio.

Yann-Per Thomin

Breton language radio

The situation of community radio is linked to that of language . There is no public protection. France has refused to ratify the ECRML and provides zero legal support within French domestic law. We know the important role that radio has in terms of social cohesion, but public funding is limited for radio stations.

A radio station network has been established in Brittany which has evolved into a federation (sharing tasks, creating an information centre, and a website). However, there remains the difficulty of obtaining frequencies. One could consider a possible change to a network of community media as with Occitan (with television).

Europe can also play an important role in this regard . Why not establish a European framework knowing that there are regions that have pro-RML language policies? Why not pool these policies at European level? To do this would require support of course.



Mauro Missana, Radio Onde Furlane, Friuli

We are witnessing a very slow development. We depend on 40 volunteers. Its very interesting for us to be here and to talk about the problems that we share.

Pere Manzanares, Radio Arrels, North Catalonia

We need to see some concrete action over the problems that face RML radio in the French state.



Jean Paul Gambier, Radio Lengua d'Oc, Occitan

Regarding finance, for radio that is a public service, public funding should be ensured. In addition, there is a need for joint-financing (from the Region / State / EU) given that it is a state public service.

Radio Pays and **Filipino Radio** also made short contributions in support of the other comments particularly over the importance of community radio for social cohesion.

Concluding Remarks

What emerged from the morning and afternoon sessions is that there are three very specific problems facing RML radio stations in Europe. These are Funding, Frequencies and Rights. It was under these headings that the next days' proceedings, hosted by AMARC Europe and attended by several radio stations, focused on.

Clearly, what also emerged is that many RML communities are facing a systematic contravention of their rights to a radio station in their own language. It is matter that needs to be addressed urgently.

The following day the radio stations, AMARC and ELEN, met to discuss the three issues and to





decide further strategies and measures to be taken. From this meeting both organisations issued the following conclusions, agreements and recommendations.

Conclusions, agreements and recommendations

ELEN and AMARC Europe are able to work together on a strategy that addresses the three main challenges, Funding, Frequencies and Rights, facing RML community radio which were discussed in the conference.

ELEN Proposals

ELEN held its General Assembly in Paris on November 23rd, 2013 with some of the RML radio representatives attending.

- **Rights, funding, frequencies**

At the meeting it was proposed that a special ELEN Action Committee for RML Media will be set up that will address the concerns of RML Radio.

- **Rights**

The Committee will make recommendations for RML radio rights protection in its advocacy work at the UN, UNESCO, and in the EU, as part of its work programme for 2014. We have already conducted advocacy work on behalf of Euskalerrria Irratia, for example. We will also call for a specific Intergroup meeting in the Parliament to discuss the topic which has been scheduled for January in Strasbourg.

- **Funding**

Referring to Erasmus Plus, ELEN sit on the EU Platform for Multilingualism and for Culture and will be examining the new programme carefully to seek out funding for RML radio projects. It is envisaged that ELEN will apply to set up a RML media network under Erasmus Plus that all the RML radio stations will be invited to join. ELEN will support

the RML radio pilot project proposal to be tabled in the Parliament.

- **Frequencies**

Gaining frequencies is for ELEN very much part of the rights issue as much as it is also a practical issue. States should ensure that RML communities have frequencies reserved for their radio stations. Furthermore, that each RML community has a terrestrial radio station is a bare minimum and something that is stipulated in the ECRML. Part of the work of our media action committee will be to ensure that our RML communities have frequencies designated for RML radio.

AMARC Europe proposals

AMARC Minority Language Working Group.

This group will be in charge of developing strategies to promote, support and develop minority language community radios. They will liaise with the EFA group in the European Parliament and the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages of the European Parliament. It is planned that before May 2014, the group should be making a presentation to the Intergroup, as well as to the Council of Europe, and there is an initial commitment by the EFA group to facilitate this.

Members of the group:

Fergus Ó hÍr, Radio Fáilte, Belfast, Ireland.
Radio Agora (Austria)+ Mauro Missana (Friuli)
Isabel Lema (CUAC FM) Galicia
Aitor Errazkin + Jean Paul Gambier (AMARC Europe board)
Domenja (Radio Pays, Pays d'Oc)
Radio CUAC (Galicia)

The AMARC-Europe Minority Language Working Group has developed a document of recommendations from AMARC to the European Parliament and the Commission in order to promote minority languages through community media. This brief document which summarises the European context of the rights of linguistic minorities, the normative framework of communication



rights in minority languages and, finally, our recommendations for supporting minority languages and local cultures through community media (See Appendix 1).

Initial activities to be assisted by AMARC

1. To facilitate the creation of a network of community radio stations that broadcast on minority languages in Europe.

- MAPPING: Create a summary document of the meeting and a short questionnaire to be circulated among the meeting participants and to be forwarded by them to other radio stations they might know who broadcast in minority languages.
- To facilitate the creation of a network of community radio stations that broadcast on minority languages in Europe.
- To create a list of MEPs who might be supportive of minority languages.
- To create a list of international organisations that support community radio and minority languages.

2. To build a legal framework on minority languages and community radios

There is a proposal to facilitate a meeting with AMARC legal advisor Damian Loreti who would be able to build and share the international legal framework on minority languages and community radios that could be used for lobbying. This text should include references to social cohesion, cultural and linguistic diversity, access, etc).

Report to the Commission on Minority Languages.

- Establish contact with UN Structures that support community radios and minority/indigenous languages.
- Build contact with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatovi
- Note Directive 2012 audiovisual activity.

3. To obtain EU Funding for linguistic diversity on community radio projects

- Structural Fund
- Pilot project to be presented on linguistic diversity and community radio to the European Parliament CULT committee.

- The GUE-NGL group is presenting an amendment to a motion to the 2014 budgets that introduces specific reference to funding for lesser spoke languages and community radios.
- Use of the European Political groups funding to facilitate further meetings in the future by working with the EFA Group.
- Agreement to engage in Erasmus +, either as a learning partnership type project or access to network funding. This will be decided when the programme guidelines are published at the end of the year. As part of the project there is the proposal for creating an exchange platform for minority language content.

ELEN will also support the AMARC Europe proposals.

Further Links



Conference video:

<http://www.greenmediabox.eu/archive/2013/10/16/radio-broadcasting-in-minority-languages/>



Eurolang Facebook site:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Eurolang/174907085047>



ELEN Facebook site:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/European-Language-Equality-Network/412170375471752>



AMARC Europe

<http://www.amarceurope.eu/>



Inaki Irazabalbeitia MEP

<http://www.irazabalbeitia.eu/eu>



EFA Parliamentary Group

<http://efa.greens-efa.eu/>



Annex 1

Press release

A conference at the European Parliament yesterday, organised by the Basque European Free Alliance MEP Inaki Irazabalbeitia, has highlighted the importance of radio broadcasting in supporting regional or minority languages.

Organised in conjunction with AMARC Europe, ELEN and Eurolang, the conference echoed previous calls for the European Commission to consider boosting financial support for regional languages in the period 2014 - 2020, including for regional language radio. In addition, in a first for the European Parliament, the working languages of the conference included Basque and Corsican.

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

In his closing speech Mr Inaki Irazabalbeitia 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."

Davyth Hicks, CEO Eurolang and Secretary General of the European Language Equality Network (ELEN), underlined the sociolinguistic importance of community radio in language revitalisation

and proposed various measures that ELEN would take to promote regional language radio including that the EU considers passing a Directive or Regulation to protect endangered languages. He pointed out that: "If the EU can protect endangered fish and endangered flora and fauna, why not our endangered languages?"

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."

Contributors included MEP Francois Alfonsi, who was rapporteur on 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.

The guidelines are being finalised by ELEN and AMARC Europe with the formation of a special ELEN / AMARC sub-committee to work on regional language community radio focusing on the various issues raised by participants including rights, funding and radio frequency allocation.

Speakers also included:

Venus Jennings, UNESCO

Mikel Bujanda, Euskalerrria Irratia

Fergus O'Hir, Radio Failte

Laszlo Tokes MEP

Nils Torvalds MEP

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>



Annex 2



Promoting minority languages through community media Recommendations from AMARC to the European Parliament and the Commission

Context

1. The protection of the rights of linguistic minorities is a human rights obligation.

According to UNESCO the translation and promotion of local languages supports cultural and linguistic diversity, and provides a basis for the social, economic and cultural life. However, the globalization of digital media is having a direct and negative impact on minority languages and cultural diversity. Community media is a tool that reinforces pluralism and diversity, not only through the production of radio content, but through democratic and participatory processes that support and reinforce the European identity and cultural wealth through the use and promotion of minority languages in Europe.

According to Eurolang, in Europe there are 60 regional or minority languages and 50 million people (10 % of European population) speaking these languages. Community media plays an essential role for these populations by consolidating the perception of belonging to a group, a community. Community media is a space for providing information and for the expression of local or regional sensitivities. It also fulfils an educational and cultural aim, as it preserves the local identity of the native language and culture in a contemporary context.

In European Union context, some States have cut budget for education and culture issues because of the economic crisis and, in the same way, several public media have been closed. Those decisions worsen the situation of minority languages and cultural contract. Promoting community media help to alleviate the damage caused by government neglect.





2. The “Alfonsi Report” has brought to the political and civic debate the issue of minority languages in Europe.

The proposed resolution of the European Parliament by MEP François Alfonsi (Report on European languages in danger of extinction and linguistic diversity in the European Union (2013/2007 (INI)), calls on the EU and the Member States to pay attention to the endangered status that many European languages find themselves in, and to commit to a policy of protection and promotion that corresponds to the task of preserving the diversity of cultural and linguistic heritage of the Union, by supporting policies for the protection of the languages within the linguistic communities.

The report calls on the European Commission and the Council to adopt policies and programmes that would support endangered languages and linguistic diversity with the creation of EU financial support mechanisms for the period between 2014 and 2020 that should focus on the role of media.

Normative Framework.

1. The fundamental right to communication in minority languages.

The right for a member of a minority or indigenous community to use their own language is a human right. Access to the media is a right readily available to the socially and economically powerful classes, but it is not equally available to minority or indigenous communities. However, international law also recognizes the right of access to media to sectors (minorities, women, socially excluded groups, indigenous communities, etc) that are prevented, because of lack of access to media skills and/or resources, from participating in public debate.

International law guarantees freedom of expression not only to States or businesses, but also to minority or indigenous communities, which have the same right to have ‘quality’ media to ensure cultural and linguistic diversity. The right to freedom of expression includes the right to create media companies, the freedom of individuals and citizens to communicate freely through any medium, and this right, guaranteed by international law, is the main legal framework on which to base claims in support of community radio.

The additional Protocol Number 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, states categorically that “The enjoyment of the rights recognized by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other measures, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.”

Minority language speakers are in many cases denied the right to access and receive information and opinions in their own language, so the right enshrined in Protocol Number 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights is not sufficiently protected. The Protocol has not been implemented in a way to ensure equal access of minority language speakers to broadcasting licenses to enable them to develop media activities in their own languages as part of the special considerations needed to protect cultural minorities. We, therefore, consider that the damage that occurs is not limited to the language community but also affects fundamental individual and subjective rights.

AMARC asserts that the effective exercise of the right to communicate makes the use of peoples’ languages an exercise of the right to individual and collective identity. In this context AMARC also asserts that the right to access radio and television frequencies is a right for minority groups that make up the cultural and ethnic diversity of the territories and peoples of the world.

AMARC echoes the words of the United Nations Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression. In his statement of 2007 not only recommends the adoption of anti-monopoly laws to prevent undue concentration of media or cross-media ownership, also recommends support for those wishing to establish new types of media. In this regard the promotion of community media can offset monopolistic practices observed in some member states that impact negatively on linguistic and cultural diversity.

2. The recognition of community media as key instruments for cultural and linguistic diversity by the European Parliament and the European Commission.

It is part of the ethos of community media to support expression, creation and dissemination of content in minority languages or about minority languages.

The European Parliament resolution on community media on September 2008 describes the third sector of media communication as an instrument for expression and for information for minority cultural groups in society, and as a tool for intercultural dialogue. In this sense, the European Parliament stresses that Community Media (CM) is an effective means of strengthening cultural and linguistic diversity, social inclusion and local identity.

This recognition of the social value of media is also reflected in the Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the role of community media in promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 February 2009 at the 1048th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

Also, community media promotes intercultural dialogue through the education of audiences, and it plays a significant role in training programmes and in the provision of media literacy to citizens through direct participation in the creation and dissemination of content. In the absence of public and commercial media in certain regions in the EU and its periphery, and the tendency of commercial media to reduce local content, Community Media (CM) might provide the only source of local news and information, and the only voice for local communities.

To develop to its full potential, Community Media (CM) needs to achieve high quality production and training activities. However, the lack of adequate financial resources hinders these aspirations. Financial support and the use of new technologies and platforms would allow the sector to increase its innovative stance and provide new and vital services that would bring added value to the existing services.

3. Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) recognises communication services as economic but also cultural services. There could be a commercial aim, but that the right of expression should be provided with an overview of public service.

Support to Minority languages through community media.

AMARC considers that European Parliament and EU Member States should not only recognise the positive contribution of Community Media (CM) in terms of the social value that it provides in a very extremely cost-effective manner, but should consider the sustainability, growth and development of the sector by creating mechanisms that guarantee financial resources as well as the availability of frequency spectrum - analogue and digital- for community radio and television.

In addition, Community Media (CM) could make more use of EU funding instruments, through accessing of specific programmes, such as the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund as well as developing education and training opportunities for journalists offered by the Lifelong Learning. However, in some cases, the financial requirements to take part in these programmes makes impossible for community media to participate in them.

In its 2008 resolution, the European Parliament urges Community Media (CM) to establish a European on-line platform to disseminate useful and relevant information for the sector and facilitate networking and exchange of best practices. The open Forum that took place in October in Brussels facilitate the creation of AMARC Europe's minority language working group, which is now responsible for the development of a working axis on European regional minority languages that will focus on creating tools for the promotion and evaluation of minority languages and the measurement of the status of linguistic diversity. Hence, Community media could develop tools for the exchange of best practices, expertise, professional training and skills transfer.

Within these aims, AMARC considers a priority to promote, in the European context, opportunities for the exchange of best practice, the development of key skills, the creation of tools and strategies to promote the use and mainstreaming of endangered languages in community media and the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity.

The first step will require mapping community media broadcasting through minority languages in different European regions and define the role of community radio.

Recommendations from AMARC to the European Parliament and the Commission.

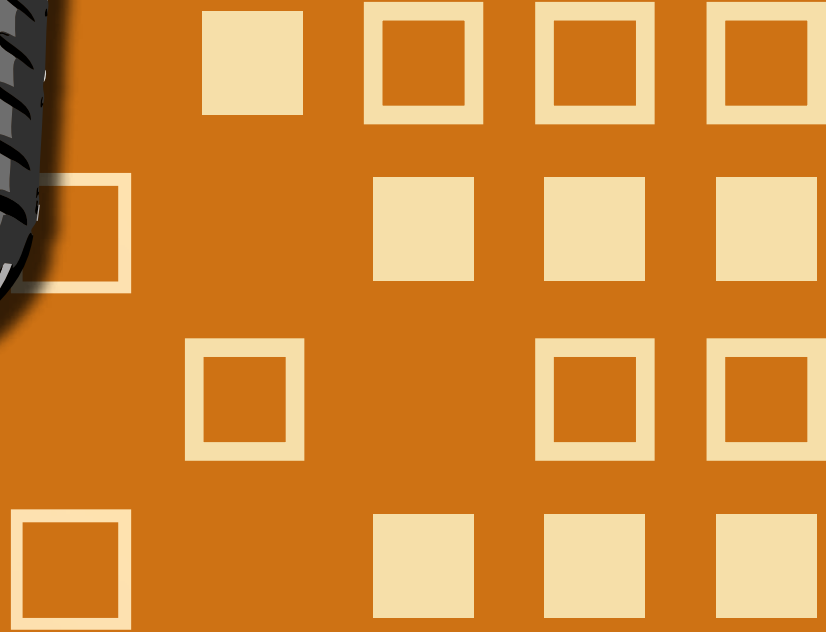
1. To promote the existence of a common European framework to guarantee the development, growth and sustainability of community media projects.

2. To encourage member states to reserve 33% of the electro-magnetic radio spectrum for community media broadcasting in regional languages.

3. To guarantee equality in terms of broadcasting power and access to airwaves to other local broadcasters (public or commercial).

4. To broaden the possibilities for community media funding, avoiding budget limitations and putting in place mechanisms to secure public funding at local, regional, national and international level. The European Parliament and Council of Europe praised community media role in ensuring social cohesion, cultural and linguistic diversity, pluralism and freedom of expression of citizens. This “public interest” approach should be fully recognised and supported by public funds.





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