RESOLUTION
on the languages and cultures of regional and ethnic minorities in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Columbu and others on linguistic rights in Northern Catalonia (Doc.2-1259/84),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Kuijpers and Mr Vandemeulebroecke on the protection and promotion of regional languages and cultures in the Community (Doc. B2-76/85),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Rossetti and others on the recognition of the rights of minorities and the full recognition of their cultures (Doc. B2-321/85),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Vandemeulebroecke and Mr Kuijpers on the Commission's failure to implement the European Parliament's resolution on a Community charter of regional languages and cultures and a charter of rights of ethnic minorities (Doc. B2-1514/85),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Kuijpers and Mr Vandemeulebroecke on the recognition of free radio stations (Doc. B2-1532/85),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Vandemeulebroecke and others on a Frisian television service in Friesland (Doc. B2-31/86),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Kuijpers and Mr Vandemeulebroecke on the projected withdrawal of the grant from the Netherlands Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs for the Association for the Promotion of Standard Dutch and the detrimental consequences thereof for transfrontier cooperation in the field of culture (Doc. B2-890/86),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Columbu and others on the establishment of Institutes for the study of minority languages (Doc. B2-1015/86),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Rubert de Ventos on the obstacles to the use of Catalan in the universities and on television (Doc. B2-1323/86),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Mizzau and others on support for institutions and associations for the study of minority languages (Doc. B2-1346/86),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Kuijpers and others on the integration of the bilingual Basque-French schools run by the SEASKA association (Doc. B2-149/87),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Colom'l Naval on improving the position of minority languages within the EEC (Doc. 82-291/87),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport and the opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights (Doc. A2-150/87),

A. having regard to its resolution of 16 October 1981 on a Community charter of regional
languages and cultures and on a charter of rights of ethnic minorities (1) and its resolution of 11 February 1983 on measures in favour of minority languages and cultures (2),

B. having regard to the basic principles regarding rights of minorities formulated and approved by the United Nations and the Council of Europe,

C. regretting that so far, the Commission has not put forward any proposals to implement the abovementioned resolutions which deal comprehensively with the problems of ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities in the Community;

D. whereas there are still many obstacles to the full development of the specific cultural and social identity among the national and linguistic minorities, and whereas attitudes towards these minorities and their problems frequently reveal a lack of appreciation and understanding and, in some cases, are based on discrimination;

E. having regard to the final Declaration of the Conference of the Regions of the European Community and Its resolution of 13 April 1984 on the role of the regions in the construction of a democratic Europe and the outcome of the Conference of the Regions (3), in which it is noted that strengthening the autonomy of the regions in the Community and the creation of a politically more unified European Community represent two complementary and convergent aspects of a political development which is essential to cope effectively with the future tasks of the Community,

F. noting that regional economic conditions determine the prospects for the expression and development of the local culture so that appropriate measures should therefore be worked out within a balanced European regional policy that starts from a regional basis and is destined to counteract the exodus from outlying regions to the centre,

1. Calls for the principles and proposals set out in its abovementioned resolutions or 16 October 1981 and 11 February 1983 to be fully applied;

2. Points out once again the need for the Member States to recognize their linguistic minorities in their laws and thus to create the basic condition for the preservation and development of regional and minority cultures and languages;

3. Calls on the Member States whose Constitutions already contain general principles concerning the protection of minorities to make timely provision, on the basis of organic laws, for the implementation of those principles;

4. Supports the Council of Europe's efforts to draw up a European Charter of regional and minority languages;

5. Recommends to the Member States that they carry out educational measures including:

   • arranging for pre-school to university education and continuing education to be officially conducted in the regional and minority languages in the language areas concerned on an equal footing with instruction in the national languages,

   • officially recognizing courses, classes and schools set up by associations which are authorized to teach, under the regulations in force in the country concerned, and which use a regional or minority language as the general teaching language,

   • giving particular attention to the training of teaching staff in the regional or minority languages and making available the educational resources required to accomplish these measures,

   • promoting information on educational opportunities in the regional and minority languages,

   • making provision for the equivalence of diplomas, certificates, other qualifications and
evidence of professional skills so that members of regional or minority groups in one Member State may have easier access to the labour market in culturally related communities in other Member States;

6. Recommends to the Member States that they carry out administrative and legal measures including:

- providing a direct legal basis for the use of regional and minority languages, in the first instance in the local authorities of areas where a minority group does exist,
- reviewing national provisions and practices that discriminate against minority languages, as called for in Parliament’s resolution of 16 January 1986 on the rise of fascism and racism in Europe (4),
- requiring decentralized central government services also to use national, regional and minority languages in the areas concerned,
- officially recognizing surnames and place names expressed in a regional or minority language,
- accepting place names and indications on electoral lists in a regional or minority language;

7. Recommends to the Member States that they take measures in respect of the mass media, including:

- granting and making possible access to local, regional and central public and commercial broadcasting systems in such a way as to guarantee the continuity and effectiveness of broadcasts in regional and minority languages,
- ensuring that minority groups obtain organizational and financial support for their programmes commensurate with that available to the majority,
- support for the training of journalists and media staff required to implement these measures,
- putting the latest achievements in communications technology to the service of the regional and minority languages;
- taking account of the extra costs entailed by provision for special scripts, such as Cyrillic, Hebrew, Greek, etc.;

8. Recommends to the Member States that they take measures in respect of the cultural infrastructure including:

- ensuring that representatives of groups that use regional or minority languages are able to participate directly in cultural facilities and activities,
- the creation of foundations and institutes for the study of regional and minority languages, one of whose tasks would be to set up the educational machinery for the introduction of regional and minority languages in schools and draw up a ‘general inventory’ of the regional and minority language concerned,
- the development of dubbing and subtitling techniques to encourage audiovisual productions in the regional and minority languages,
- provision of the necessary material and financial support for the implementation of these measures;

9. Recommends to the Member States that they take social and economic measures including:

- providing for the use of the regional and minority languages in public concerns (postal service, etc.),
- recognition of the use of the regional and minority languages in the payments sector (giro
cheques and banking),

- providing for consumer information and product labelling in regional and minority languages,
- providing for the use of regional languages for road and other public signs and street names;

10. Recommends to the Member States that they take measures in respect of the regional and minority languages that are used in several Member States, particularly in frontier areas, including:

- providing for the appropriate cross-frontier cooperation machinery for cultural and linguistic policy,
- promotion of cross-frontier cooperation in accordance with the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Communities or Territorial Authorities;

11. Calls on the Member States to encourage and support the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages and its national committees in each of the Member States;

12. Calls on the Commission to:

- do all it can within its terms of reference to implement the measures set out in paragraphs 5 to 10,
- take account of the languages and cultures of regional and ethnic minorities in the Community when working out the various areas of Community policy, particularly with regard to Community measures in the field of cultural and educational policy,
- accord the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages official consultative status,
- make provision for a system of mutual study visits to increase mutual knowledge of minorities,
- reserve the necessary broadcasting time for minority cultures in European television,
- give the necessary attention to linguistic minorities in the Community's information publications;

13. Calls on the Council and Commission to continue their support and encouragement for the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages by

- ensuring adequate budgetary resources and the reinstatement of a separate budget line,
- proposing the necessary budget funds for the implementation of the measures set out above,
- allocating ERDF and ESF funds for programmes and projects on behalf of regional and popular cultures,
- reporting annually to Parliament on the situation of the Community's regional and minority languages and measures taken in this connection by the Member States and the Community;

14. Stresses its determination to ensure that adequate provision is made for action in favour of minority languages and that at least 1 million ECU is entered in the 1988 budget;

15. Stresses categorically that the recommendations contained in this resolution are not to be interpreted or implemented in such a way as to jeopardize the territorial Integrity or public order of Member States;

16. Instructs its appropriate committee to draw up separate reports on the languages and cultures of non-permanent Community citizens, Community citizens living in another Member State from that from which they come, migrants and overseas minorities and points out that each of these groups share many of the disadvantages of speakers of lesser used languages and that their specific problems deserve detailed and separate treatment;
17. Decides that the Intergroup on Lesser Used Languages shall be granted full status as an official Intergroup of the European Parliament;

18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the national and regional governments of the Member States, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Sanding Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.