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The European Parliament may examine the closure of the Basque daily, Egunkaria

The Committee on Petitions has agreed to consider a proposal submitted by the MIDAS minority language newspaper association protesting against the closure of the Basque daily, Euskaldunon Egunkaria.

It may lead to the European Parliament's plenary session examining the causes for the closure.

MIDAS, the European Association of Daily Newspapers in Minority and Regional Languages is based in Bozen/Bolzano, South Tyrol.

It represents more than ten linguistic communities in Europe, co-ordinating strategies and increasing co-operation in minoritised language publishing. When the closure of Egunkaria occurred in February 2003, MIDAS members met in the European Parliament. It led to a formal, European level complaint being made.

According to the Basque daily Berria, Nino Gemelli, the chairman of the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions, has written to Gunther Rautz, the general secretary of MIDAS, saying that the Petition's Committee has already started going through the issue and has decided to ask the European Commission for opinions on the matter.

According to Berria, Nino Gemelli decided to send a copy of the petition submitted by MIDAS on the Egunkaria closure to the Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament.

Speaking to Eurolang, MEP Miquel Mayol said he was "very enthusiastic with the news," but was sceptical regarding the impact of the petition as "the Committee on Petitions has limited competences." Mr Mayol added that every time somebody tried to carry out some form of action to protest against the closure, or to write written questions on the issue at European level, there were always obstacles. (Eurolang)

Link: www.midas-press.org/welcome.htm