



# Images of

## Minority Languages

Date: Tuesday 1 June 2010 | Venue: The Arc, Square - Brussels Meeting Centre, Mont des Arts 1, Brussels

Creating an image of a particular minority language is not only about constructing a brand. It is also about explaining the role of the minority in society and underlining the importance of understanding culture and languages in general. The image of a language affects the majority's interest in and knowledge of the minority. In 2008, Svenska kulturfonden hosted a seminar in Brussels on the topic of the minority language situation in Europe. With today's seminar we would like to go one step further and look beyond the general facts about linguistic minorities. Focus will be on how a positive image of a language is formed.

The seminar **Images of Minority Languages** is organized within the framework of the European Foundation Centre's (EFC) Foundation Week to take place in Brussels during the first week of June. We are happy to introduce European policy makers, our foundation colleagues and other prominent guests to the world and reality of the many linguistic minorities in Europe.

The event is hosted by Member of the European Parliament **Mr Carl Haglund**, Co-Chair of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages. A number of distinguished speakers will present best practise cases of how the image of their minority language has been enhanced. What can we learn from these success stories?

**Welcome!**



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[www.kulturfonden.fi](http://www.kulturfonden.fi)

We kindly ask you to register by 20 May on <http://registration.kulturfonden.fi>  
Participation is free of charge (including meals)



## Images of Minority Languages

1 June 2010

- 9.00 **OPENING OF THE SEMINAR**  
**Ms Wivan Nygård-Fagerudd,**  
Chairman of the Council, Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland
- 9.15 **WELCOMING ADDRESS**  
**Representative of the European Commission (TBC)**
- 9.30 **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC**
- 9.45 **HOW PEPPAR AND PLAYME REACH OUT TO YOUNG PEOPLE**  
**Mr Carl Haglund,**  
Member of the European Parliament and Co-Chair of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages
- 10.15 **MAKING CO-EXISTENCE TRENDY IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN**  
**Ms Kinga Gal,**  
Member of the European Parliament and Co-Chair of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages
- 10.45 **THE IMAGE OF CATALAN IN THE BALEARIC ISLANDS**  
**Ms Teresa Riera Madurell,**  
Member of the European Parliament
- 11.15 Coffee Break
- 11.45 **THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY. SOME NOTES ON FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMAGE OF MINORITY LANGUAGES**  
**Mr Jeroen Darquennes,**  
Head of the Multilingualism Department at the University of Namur
- 12.15 **THE ADDED VALUE OF SVENSKA.NU**  
**Ms Gunvor Kronman,**  
Managing Director of Hanasaari-Hanaholmen – the Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre
- 12.45 **RELEVANCE OF TODAY'S TOPIC FOR THE FOUNDATION SECTOR: WHY IS THIS SEMINAR PART OF THE EFC FOUNDATION WEEK?**  
**Mr Berndt Arell,**  
Director, Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.30 **SELLING WELSH TO THE YOUNG THROUGH PROJECTS**  
**Mr Meirion Prys Jones,**  
Chief Executive of the Welsh Language Board
- 15.00 **IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF GERMAN MINORITIES THROUGH PROJECTS**  
**Mr Jan Diedrichsen,**  
Director of the Federal Union of European Nationalities
- 15.30 Coffee Break
- 16.00 **THE DYNAMISM OF CATALAN AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**  
**Mr Oriol Junqueras,**  
Member of the European Parliament
- 16.30 Discussion
- 17.00 **CONCLUSIONS**  
**Mr Björn Teir,**  
Chairman of the Board, Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland

## The Swedish-speaking Finns

The Swedish-speaking Finns amount to approximately 290,000 (5,4 % of the total population), the majority of which resides in bilingual or unilingual Swedish municipalities in the coastal areas of southern and western Finland. The Åland Islands are a unilingual Swedish self-governing province outside the west coast of Finland.

Finland belonged to Sweden until 1809, when it became part of the Russian empire as an autonomous Grand Duchy. In the 1917 turmoil following the collapse of the Russian Empire, Finland declared itself independent. After being a part of Sweden for 650 years, Swedish remained the language of administration throughout the first half of the 19th century. It was not until 1863 that Finnish was recognised as an official language in Finland.

After independence, Finnish very soon became the dominant language, but Swedish-speaking Finns have traditionally played an influential and enriching role in the cultural, educational, entrepreneurial and political life of the country.

Both Finnish and Swedish are recognized as official national languages in Finland and can be used when contacting authorities. The Swedish language is present in everyday life; newspapers, theatres, bilingual road signs, etc. The availability of education in Swedish – from day care to higher education - is a prerequisite for the survival and growth of the Swedish language and culture in Finland.

## Svenska kulturfonden – Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland

Svenska kulturfonden was established in 1908 and today consists of more than 450 individual funds created by private donors. The purpose of the foundation is to support the cultural and educational activities of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland and to promote Swedish as a minority language in a broad sense. The budget for the present year amounts to about 38 million euros.

The work of the foundation is divided into eight lines of action: arts & culture, education, the Swedish language, social cohesion through NGOs and other third sector associations, the social sector, media, investing in premises for culture & education, and international activities. About 7,500 applications are received annually. In addition to its grantmaking activities, the foundation initiates larger projects in the fields of culture and education, organises conferences on varying themes for key groups, and awards a number of prizes each year. In order to fulfil its mission, the foundation cooperates with a wide range of other foundations and organizations, both on the national and the international level.