ARLeF AGJENZIE REGJONÂL PE LENGHE FURLANE

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Udine, **3rd** February 2021

Subject: Statement on the European Commission's decision to not adopt new legal acts following up the proposals of the 'Minority SafePack' European Citizens' Initiative

I am writing on behalf of ARLeF- Agjenzie regjonâl pe lenghe furlane (Regional Agency for Friulian Language), the public body of the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia that coordinates activities involving the safeguarding and promotion of the Friulian language.

Friulian, together with Slovenian and German, is one of the minority languages officially recognised by the Italian Republic as well as the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Authority. For our Agency, cultural and linguistic diversity is a key point of the European spirit, and for this reason ARLeF strongly supported the 'Minority SafePack Initiative'.

ARLeF expresses its disappointment at the decision of the European Commission to not initiate new policies or legislation in response to the European Citizens' Initiative 'Minority SafePack'.

ARLeF points out that the 'Minority SafePack Initiative' was supported by more than 1.1 million European citizens, a large number of MEPs as well as various EU national and regional parliaments.

The fact that the Commission will not propose any effective action in any of the nine areas of the initiative is disappointing, in consideration of the many EU competences that are relevant to the rights of the people belonging to minorities. The choice of the Commission represents a missed opportunity when we bear in mind that the protection of minority languages and cultures should take place on several levels, including the local, national and European levels.

The approval of the Minority SafePack could boost legislative measures in the field of minority protection. On the contrary, while over a million citizens used a direct democracy instrument, the Commission decided to leave their voices unheard, thus damaging the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. In so doing, it failed to implement fundamental measures which were aimed at improving the protection of the persons belonging to minorities as well as strengthening, supporting and promoting the cultural and linguistic diversity of the European Union.

ARLeF hopes that the Commission will change its decision in order to implement appropriate measures able to address the importance of the issues at stake.

ARLeF President

Eros Cisilino

REGIONE AUTONOMA FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA
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Agjenzie regjonâl pe lenghe furlane