

# Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) **RESOLUTIONS 2017**

Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca • Kolozsvár • Klausenburg / Romania on 20 May 2017



## **Resolutions 2017**

- 2017-00**      **Manifesto for a successful campaign for the Minority SafePack Initiative**
- 2017-01**      **Resolution Macedonian Association “Ilinden” - Tirana**
- 2017-02**      **Resolution Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER)**
- 2017-03**      **Resolution Central Council of German Sinti and Roma**
- 2017-04**      **Resolution Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania – RMDSZ, Party of the Hungarian Community – MKP (Slovakia), Hungarian Civic Party (Romania)**
- 2017-05**      **Resolution Delegation of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace - The Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party, the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA) and the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF)**
- 2017-06**      **Resolution Armân (Aromanian) Community of Romania / Fara Armânească dit România**
- 2017-07**      **Resolution FUEN Presidium**
- 2017-08**      **Urgent Resolution Domowina – Union of Lusatian Sorbs**

## 2017-00 Manifesto for a successful campaign for the Minority SafePack Initiative

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following manifesto at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

### **Together we have achieved the registration of the Minority SafePack.**

(1) The Federal Union of European Nationalities welcomes the decision of the European Commission to register the European Citizens' Initiative *Minority SafePack – One million signatures for diversity in Europe*. With this registration, the initiative has entered a new, decisive phase: we can start collecting the supporting signatures which will enable us to make a strong call on the European Union to adopt legal acts.

(2) FUEN believes that it made the appropriate decision when it resolved to use the new legal instrument to promote minority protection in Europe: we request legislation from the European Union to improve the protection of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities and strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity in the Union.

The decision was followed by the elaboration of a package of proposals – the Minority SafePack – and by a legal, political and communications strategy whose success has been proven by the registration of the European Commission.

(3) We highly appreciate the initiative of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania – RMDSZ, the South Tyrolean People's Party – SVP and the Youth of European Nationalities – YEN, who, together with the Federal Union of European Nationalities, have opened a new door to protect the European autochthonous, national minorities and linguistic groups. We are particularly grateful to the Government of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein for its on-going help and support to the initiative. With the participation of minority leaders from several regions of Europe, we established the Citizen's Committee of the Minority SafePack Initiative. These respected leaders of minority communities act, together with FUEN and based on solidarity, as the initiators and representatives of the minorities. We give our thanks to those Member States and regions, which have taken up the cause of the Minority SafePack and are supporting us. A small but enthusiastic team of FUEN has worked in the past five years on creating the necessary conditions to go forward with the project.

### **Minority protection is a common European responsibility.**

(4) In 2013, the European Commission denied registration of the Minority SafePack Initiative, stating that the proposed measures are outside the scope of its competences. FUEN and the Citizen's Committee decided in 2013 to challenge the rejection at the General Court of the EU. The judgment of the European Court of Justice in early 2017 annulled the decision of the European Commission from 2013, and forced the European Commission to consider the

Minority SafePack Initiative once again. Our initiative thus made history, as it made the European Commission reconsider its positions and enter into a dialogue with the founders.

(5) We believe that the situation of European autochthonous national minorities, nationalities, ethnic communities, regional and linguistic groups cannot be considered the internal affairs of individual Member States. It has been proven that EU Member States use different norms, establish and apply different standards in recognizing their minorities and ensuring their rights to the use of their native language, to education and culture. This difference in standards is facilitated by the legal instruments of the Council of Europe, which allow signatory and ratifying Member States to choose the level of protection they provide to the minorities and linguistic communities within their territory. Countries, which have not ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, can simply disregard these provisions. Even Member States that ratified these treaties regularly leave out of consideration the recommendations of the Council of Ministers that point to the deficiencies in implementation. No sanctions are imposed.

(6) It is FUEN's conviction that minority protection standards have to be established in the EU. The Minority SafePack Initiative contains proposals, which represent the first steps in this direction; steps that we consider the basis for dialogue with the EU institutions. The legal acts inside the Minority SafePack Initiative include policy actions in the areas of regional and minority languages, education and culture, regional policy, participation, equality, audio-visual- and other media content, and regional (state) support.

(7) It is especially important to elaborate and apply support measures in the case of those small minorities and linguistic groups without a kin-state, which cannot ensure adequate conditions for the survival of their language and culture on their own. The Minority SafePack Initiative includes specific proposals for this.

### **We are ready to collect signatures.**

(8) In the next twelve months we will face an unprecedented challenge: we need to collect at least one million signatures from at least seven Member States. We must use the time at our disposal to talk about the content of our initiative, about the value embodied by the European minorities. We need to take the Minority SafePack Initiative to regions inhabited by minorities and spread our message to as many Member States as possible. We need to start a dialogue with the majority, the media and the decision-makers, and proclaim together that the protection of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity is a common cause for minorities and majorities.

(9) We wish to take advantage of the experience of our member organizations and the practice of those regions which have created working models of living together. Sharing best practices within the EU has to be extended to the area of minority protection and regional arrangements as well, because the positive experiences of what works in a region may also be useful in another region or Member State.

(10) FUEN is ready to launch the campaign to collect signatures. We have to create the conditions during this FUEN Congress 2017 to conduct a successful campaign under the supervision of the Presidium and in close cooperation with the Citizen's Committee and with our member organisations. We count on the financial and structural support of our members, regions and partners, as well as of private persons and institutions sensitive to the issue of minorities. In the coming weeks we will form a project team whose task will be to elaborate in detail the strategy and schedule for the European signature collection campaign. After a build-up phase in the coming months, we intend to start the massive collection of signatures on paper and online in all countries of Europe in September.

(11) We ask our member organisations and partners from various regions to help us in planning and conducting the local and regional campaigns, to use their expertise and local knowledge to help us win the support of citizens in different regions with the most appropriate messages and best campaigning strategies.

### **Be a friend of the Minority SafePack!**

(12) We ask individuals, public personalities and civil society organisations sympathetic to the Minority SafePack Initiative to be the ambassadors of our cause; to become Friends of the Minority SafePack Initiative. We ask them to raise their voice to protect the often-marginalized minority communities in Europe whose rights are violated and which are losing native speakers. It is our shared responsibility to preserve the cultural and linguistic values of our societies.

(13) We ask the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and other European institutions, the legislatures and governments of Member States, the legislatures and governments on regional and local level, to support the signature collection campaign for the Minority SafePack Initiative in every possible way, to be our partners, and at the end of the petition campaign, to call on the European Commission to initiate legal acts in the areas concerned.

(14) We wish to show that the solidarity among the European minorities goes beyond the borders of the EU, that protection of rights should be available for all communities, no matter where they live in Europe. We appreciate the support of member organizations and communities that live in non-EU states. We ask their support too and will enable an online support tool for signatures from non-EU states.

## Resolution 2017-01

### Macedonian Association "Ilinden" - Tirana

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

By request of the Macedonian Association "Ilinden" - Tirana, the FUEN Assembly of Delegates asks for:

1. The Government of Albania to sign and ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
2. The Recognition of the Macedonian national minorities living in Golo Brdo, Gora and across the entire territory of the Republic of Albania.
3. The state television (TVSH) to start broadcasting in the Macedonian language.
4. Education in the Macedonian language in public schools in Golo Brdo and Gora and across the entire territory of Republic of Albania where there is a significant number of persons belonging to the Macedonian national minority.
5. The Government of the Republic of Albania to reinstall at least one joint municipality in Golo Brdo and Gora. The Macedonian minority in the Republic of Albania considers the administrative reform implemented in 2015 a setback for the rights of the Macedonian minority in the regions of Golo Brdo and Gora. Before the administrative reform was implemented the government of the Republic of Albania assured that the municipalities where the Macedonian minority lives will not be dissolved. Since the year 1913 the regions of Golo Brdo and Gora had been in separate administrative units. The administrative reform implemented in 2015 did not meet any of the criteria set by the government of the Republic of Albania, thus ignoring the demographic, geographic, economic and cultural factors in these two regions where the Macedonian minority lives. The closure of the municipalities in the region of Golo Brdo complicates life for residents of the regions of Golo Brdo and Gora because they have to travel nearly two hours even for a simple administrative document.
6. The Government to guarantee the right to use the mother tongue of the Macedonian national minority in Albania, meaning that Macedonian could be used besides the official language (Albanian) in all municipalities with more than 20% of the population part of the Macedonian national minority.
7. Financial support from the Ministry of Culture for cultural activities and education for the Macedonian national minority in Albania.

## **Resolution 2017-02**

### **Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER)**

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### **THE DEPORTATION OF MUSTAFA KAYMAKÇI, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TURKISH COMMUNITY IN RHODES AND KOS FROM GREECE**

Mustafa Kaymakçı, the President of our member organization, the Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER) was arrested in Kos (İstanköy), where he went on a research field trip, for a new project of his organization. Kaymakçı was kept under detention one night and then expelled from Greece on grounds that he poses a threat to the public order in the country.

The Greek police arrested Kaymakçı on August 30, 2016, based on the decision dated 18 July 2016 that he is prohibited to enter Greece. Kaymakçı was not informed about this decision before in Rhodes (Rodos), where he first entered Greece on August 27, 2016 and a copy of this decision was not served to him at the moment of his arrest in Kos. The detention conditions at the police station were inhumane and Kaymakçı was kept under detention one night in an overcrowded room of 30 square meters with only a small window.

Kaymakçı was released after signing a letter declaring that he would not sue the Greek authorities. Kaymakçı, who was deported to Turkey under police supervision on 31 August, was also not allowed to return to Rhodes to retrieve his personal belongings.

The striking point is that Kaymakçı was first allowed to enter Greece in Rhodes and he was arrested in Kos three days later from when he first entered the country. He should have been declined to enter Greece from Rhodes in the first place and not three days later, when his official prohibition to enter Greece was declared.

As a member of the Turkish community in Rhodes and Kos, Kaymakçı was born in Rhodes, but had to migrate to Turkey for his study with his family. The Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER) is working on international level.

The Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association, which has the aim of preserving the cultural identity and traditions of the Turkish community in Rhodes and Kos, particularly to learn their mother tongue through bilingual education as it was before 1972, carries out activities on the international level.

We think that the deportation of Kaymakçı from Greece is an attempt of intimidation by Greek authorities against the Turkish community living in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese, which is kept under political pressure for almost 70 years.

FUEN strongly believes that the friendship and cooperation between the Turkish-Greek peoples living on both sides of the Aegean Sea should be strengthened and that this friendship and cooperation should include in engaging dialogue for the solution of primary problems in bilateral relations.

Dialogue between majority and minority should prevail. We are calling on the Greek authorities to be open to the problems expressed by ethnic minorities as a correct and European approach.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates condemns Mustafa Kaymakçı's deportation from Greece and expresses its strong support to Mr. Kaymakçı against this illegitimate and humiliating act by the Greek authorities.



## Resolution 2017-03

### Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

FUEN calls for immediate action in order to stop the violation of human rights against the Roma in several European countries, which result partly in the complete exclusion of the Roma from the communities they live in. They are deprived of access to housing, education, occupation, social and health services and condemning a high number of Roma children into suffering from malnutrition, diseases and lack of education.

FUEN underlines the fact that stopping the violation of human rights against the Roma and the recognition of antigypsyism as the underlying cause for the desperate situation, which huge parts of the Roma population has to face, is the only way towards a sustainable development for communities where the Roma and the majority population are living.

FUEN calls upon the Commissioner for Justice of the European Union and the Commission for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, to closely monitor all cases of antigypsyism, and investigate the reported forcible evictions and school segregation cases and to use its diplomatic and political channels to stop these and solve the damages caused.

FUEN urges the European Commission and the national governments to effectively implement the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020. The adoption of the document in 2011 meant an important step in recognizing the complexity of the Roma situation. However, many of the findings and recommendations are not implemented in the daily life of the member states' Roma communities. Stopping the violation of human rights against the Roma, antigypsyism and its negative impact on their social inclusion needs to be addressed urgently on European, national, regional and the local level. FUEN also recalls on its "Eisenstadt Declaration" adopted in 2011.

In this context, FUEN monitors with major concern the large number of recent cases in Europe, where Roma are the victims of forcible expulsions by local authorities. Some examples:

- On 21 June 2016, approximately 75 Roma-families were forcibly evicted from the camp of Masseria del Pozzo, in the town of Giugliano in Campania, close to Naples. They were transferred to an abandoned industrial site, without adequate housing accommodation, sanitary infrastructure or access to healthcare.<sup>1</sup>
- In the summer of 2016, in the small town of Garmen in Bulgaria also many houses were demolished, ordered by the town administration. Also in this case the forced eviction and

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://appelli.amnesty.it/italy-stop-roma-segregation/>

destruction of the houses took place despite the fact that no alternative housing was available at the time. 22 families were left to their own devices. The authorities did not even provide temporary accommodation.<sup>2</sup>

- In May 2015, the highest Hungarian court convicted the town of Miskolc because of the systematic expulsion of more than 160 Roma-families from the town. Under the pretext of an infrastructure project, Roma-families who lived for decades or sometimes for generations in Miskolc were evicted from their houses and resettled to far-off locations outside town.<sup>3</sup>
- On 17 December 2010, 300 persons belonging to the Roma-minority in Cluj-Napoca in Romania were expelled from the centre of Cluj without prior notification or legal procedure. The families were resettled to Pata-Rat, in barracks located directly adjacent to the enormous city waste dump. The families had been living in Cluj for more than twenty years. Although the Romanian Council for Combating Discrimination classified this action of the city administration of Cluj as an act of ethnic discrimination and ordered the city administration to pay a fine of 2,000 Euro (sic), even five years after the expulsion, the families are still suffering from the poison and health risks of the waste dump and they live under inhumane conditions.<sup>4</sup>

This method of systematic, forcible expulsions of Roma has become a transnational phenomenon and it the expression of increasing racism and increasing discrimination against Roma. Similar expulsions happen in almost all surrounding countries, and forced evictions are often staged when there are local or national elections and politicians from the right-wing or nationalist parties want to raise their profile against the Roma. The victims are the Roma-families, who are unprotected against this type of racism.

Forced evictions are a gross violation of several internationally recognised human rights treaties. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Commission on Human Rights stated this in its Resolution 1993/77, in which it affirmed that “the practice of forced eviction constitutes a gross violation of human rights, in particular of the right to adequate housing.”

FUEN therefore calls upon the national governments, in whose countries the Roma are affected by forced evictions, from the Commissioner for Justice of the European Union and the Commission for Human Rights of the Council of Europe:

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.amnesty.de/urgent-action/ua-169-2015-1/drohende-zwangsraeumung>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.housingrightswatch.org/content/evictions-and-harassment-miskolc-residents-declared-unlawful-and-anti-constitutional>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2014/01/romanian-court-victory-forced-eviction-roma-cluj-napoca-illegal/>

- to start an investigation into the incidents and to create political pressure to realise an immediate stop to these forcible expulsions
- to ensure that forced evictions can only be legitimately take place under extraordinary conditions and in accordance with the relevant provisions of international human rights and humanitarian law (General Comment No. 7 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1977), and that
- the basic principles and human rights guidelines of the United Nations for development–based displacement are respected (E / CN.4 / Sub.2 / 1997/7, Annex).
- to guarantee that comprehensive antidiscrimination-legislation is introduced and that discrimination of Roma in relation to housing and accommodations is effectively sanctioned;
- to create an institution on European level that can implement programmes – especially in the area of housing – to improve the situation of the Roma, that is able to intervene locally, without being reliant on the respective bureaucracies of the different states.

## Resolution 2017-04

### Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania – RMDSZ, Party of the Hungarian Community – MKP (Slovakia), Hungarian Civic Party (Romania)

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### **Resolution regarding the necessity for effective implementation of language rights for minorities**

The use of the mother tongue in life's various domains is one of the key elements for preserving the identity of minorities. Both the creation of adequate conditions needed for the use of minority languages and the effective implementation of language rights is mainly the task of the state. The precondition of such protection relies in the proactive cooperation with national minorities, as well as in the creation and application of properly set national and European legal and institutional frames.

The vast majority of the European states have ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and adopted other language rights through various domestic legal acts.

**Taking into consideration** that in many of these systems the stipulated rights have an optional status and that in various fields their implementation is obstructed;

**Observing** that the proper norms needed for the implementation of the Language Charter still not have been created or if created they still have many flaws, while the states fail to guarantee and monitor the implementation of language rights;

**In order to draw attention** to the importance of using the mother tongue in education, justice and public administration;

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates urges the states that ratified the Language Charter:

1. To emphasize the role and importance of the Charter inside their domestic legal framework;
2. To consequently elaborate the application norms of all language rights according to the spirit of the Charter and the real needs of the minorities;
3. To closely monitor and firmly guarantee the application of language rights;

4. To actively involve the minority communities in the elaboration process of language rights;
5. To create the necessary legal and institutional framework for quality education in mother tongue;
6. To reduce the linguistic impediments in the public administration and fully guarantee the free use of the mother tongue in justice;
7. To elaborate an action plan to implement language rights until the end of 2017;
8. To take further steps towards the creation of a legal framework for minority protection with special regard to developing a monitoring mechanism and introducing sanctions in case of breach.

The FUEN repeatedly urges states that have not signed or ratified the Language Charter to do so in the shortest possible way. Also because of this fact, the language rights of minorities is especially perilous in France, Greece, Turkey, Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

### **Country specific demands**

#### **Romania ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2007 but language rights are still not being applied in many cases.**

Romania failed to create a monitoring and control system of the language rights' application and the implementation of the Charter. There is no system of sanctions for failing to apply the linguistic rights and fails to meet the minimum international standard of being effective, proportional and dissuasive. During the first monitoring cycle, there was a eighteen months delay in the submission of the initial Monitoring Report by Romania followed by another two years for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Report, which makes it difficult to efficiently apply the Charter.

Nevertheless, Romania continuously failed to provide sufficient information about the use of minority languages in justice, public administration and other key domains. The lack of information and erroneous interpretation of the scope of some provisions of the Charter leads to the conclusion that Romania has no structured vision in the implementation of the Charter. Although the Committee of Ministers asked Romania to consider lowering the current 20% threshold, practically there were no such measures taken in this sense. Furthermore, in many cases, the national legislation is incomplete or, despite of the obligations in relevant conventions, their application is prevented by the lack of implementing rules and by their excessively restrictive interpretation.

The use of community symbols and different language signs is often challenged by county level representative of the government, in many cases also the courts rule against the right to use community symbols or bilingual signposts.

Considering all these observations, we urge the Romanian authorities to implement the following measures until the end of 2017 in order to fulfil their obligations arising from the Charter:

1. Ensure full access and proper teaching staff to quality education in the mother tongue at all levels; take the necessary steps to create a solely Hungarian state university; elaborate and implement the special curricula suited for minorities.
2. Elaborate proper legal framework and methodology; allocate reasonable human and financial resources for the actual use of the mother tongue in justice and monitoring the application of these rights.
3. Lower the 20% threshold to 10% in the public administration; introduce an alternative threshold based on a minimum number of inhabitants belonging to national minorities and implement a system of sanctions for non-compliance with the relevant legal provisions.

**Slovakia ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2001 but it still does not fulfil its undertakings in many fields. Slovakia has long lasting, serious law enforcement deficiencies in the field the language rights of the national minorities.**

The Slovak Republic, contrary to the recommendations of Committee of Experts monitoring the implementation of the Charter, or in relation with long lasting legitimate aspirations of its national minorities, still fails to

- collect reliable data concerning the number of users of the regional or minority languages and their geographic distribution,
- extend the scope of the Law on the Use of the Minority Languages to areas where the 20% or 15 % threshold is not met,
- reach appropriate balance between the State Language Act and the Law on the Use of the Minority Languages,
- ensure that existing territorial divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the minority languages,
- take measures in further problematic fields intensively presented in the public discourse of the national minorities, such as the TV broadcasts in minority languages, language of pedagogic documentation, instruction of Slovak as a foreign language, teaching minorities' history and culture, criminal proceedings, bilingualism in the traffic, facilities enabling non-speakers of minority languages to learn them, etc.

The Slovak Republic has been pursuing deliberate “policy of negligence” in terms of failure to provide sufficient technical, personal, procedural means to enable the enforcement of the existing language rights in everyday practice. The minority language users suffer to enforce their language rights, since the concerned laws are considerably fragmented, contradictory, incomprehensive, illogical and unclear.

The Slovak state authorities deliberately neglect to prepare almost all types of bilingual forms, to provide the local state authorities with civil servants having adequate linguistic skills, to translate important laws into the minority languages, to display important information in their facilities in minority languages etc.

Considering the above mentioned, we urge the Slovak authorities to

1. Fulfil their obligations arising from the Charter until the end of 2017,
2. Take measures in the most important, so far unresolved issues that are in the focus of the public discourse of the national minorities for a long time,
3. Take effective measures in order to substantially improve the law enforcement in the field of the minority language rights in force.

## Resolution 2017-05

### **Delegation of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace - The Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party, the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA) and the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF)**

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### **Political deterrence and intimidation against members of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace in Greece**

The Turkish Minority of Western Thrace in Greece, which is represented under the umbrella of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) by three different organizations, namely the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF), the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA) and the Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party, is highly concerned about attempts of intimidation and deterrence by the governmental authorities in the region.

During its visits to the region of Western Thrace since 2010, FUEN conducted extensive consultations with the minority members, had acknowledged first-hand experience and made observations on the ground. We are very concerned about attempts of intimidation and deterrence by the governmental authorities in the region of Western Thrace in Greece.

The juridical investigations against representatives of the Turkish minority have revealed there is an environment of political intimidation and pressure against the minority. Considering that in Greece;

1. The neo-Nazi Golden Dawn Party filed before the “Search for Justice” march organized by the FEP Party on 24 July 2016 a criminal complaint against the FEP Party President Mustafa Ali Çavuş and FEP Vice-President Ozan Ahmetoğlu. Along with the Acting President and the Legal Advisor of the FEP Party Ahmet Kara, Ali Çavuş on 30 July 2016 and Ahmetoğlu on 8 August 2016 made their depositions to the Rhodope Police Department<sup>1</sup>.
2. On 4 October 2016, the FEP Party President Mustafa Ali Çavuş made his deposition in relation to an investigation for his speech during the FEP Party’s 4<sup>th</sup> General Congress on 22 May 2016 about the Party’s founder and first President Dr. Sadık Ahmet’s stolen car in which he lost his life<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://milletgazetesi.gr/view.php?id=5336>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.debpartis.org/indexENG1.php?s=detailsENG&id=4742>



3. On 30 December 2016, the Mayor of Iasmos (Yassıköy) Municipality İsmet Kadı belonging to the Turkish minority was sentenced to a four-month-imprisonment because he allegedly used the official car outside the municipality borders and for his personal affairs. On 19 December 2016, the Mayor was stopped by the police while driving in the vehicle after leaving his children to the school in the morning.<sup>3</sup>
4. On 23 January 2017, the elected Mufti of Komotini İbrahim Şerif made his second deposition to the police for his speech at the opening ceremony of the new headquarters of the FEP Party in January 2016, at which he chanted the slogan and carried the campaign flag the FEP Party used during the EP elections in 2014 to attract attention to the problems of the minority<sup>4</sup>.
5. The elected Mufti of Xanthi Ahmet Mete was asked to make a deposition on 24 January 2017 for his speech about the Law 4115/2013, known as “240 Imams Law” which regulates how the 240 Imams/religious instructors of Islam would be appointed to public schools and mosques in Western Thrace. The relevant law met strong reaction by minority members because the law prepared with no consultation with the minority clearly violated minority’s religious autonomy guaranteed by the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty<sup>5</sup>.
6. The masjid (mosque) belonging to the Education and Culture Association of Muslims in Didymoticho established by the Western Thrace Turks was closed by the order of the police on 9 March 2017 on the grounds that the operating permit was missing. The masjid had been operating within the association since 2006<sup>6</sup>.
7. By command of the public prosecutor’s office, the elected Mufti of Komotini İbrahim Şerif was invited to the police headquarters to take delivery of his court file on 16 March 2017. He is being accused of usurping the Mufti Office in Komotini<sup>7</sup>.
8. The elected Mufti of Xanthi Ahmet Mete will be tried on 20 June 2017 for his actions of the funeral of a young minority member who died while performing his military service in the Greek army. During the memorial ceremony on 14 July 2016, the appointed Mufti of Xanthi, who is not recognized by minority members, wanted to make the prayer at the funeral where minority members voiced their strong objection. After the public prosecutor’s office in Xanthi had filed a suit against the elected Mufti of Xanthi and the Imam of Glafki (Gökçepınar), Ahmet Mete will be

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/haberyunanistan/detay/2457>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.birlikgazetesi.net/haberler/12395-mueftue-brahm-erf-avrupa-avrupa-duy-sesmez-bayraini-elne-aldi-dye-pulse-fade-verd.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/haber/detay/2585>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/haberyunanistan/detay/2785>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/haberyunanistan/detay/2803>

tried for allegedly usurpation of the Mufti office and for allegedly being the instigator for disruption of the public order and the removal of the appointed Mufti from the funeral<sup>8</sup>.

**We call on the Government of Greece:**

- To protect, respect and promote the rights of the Turkish minority, including the rights guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne from 1923, and restore the autonomous structure in the fields of education and religion with no further interventions.
- To end discrimination and eliminate prejudices against the Turkish minority at all levels of government and law enforcement departments. We ask the Greek government to end the strategy of intimidation and deterrence against members of the minority in full respect for the right to freedom of expression and opinion and treat members of the Turkish minority as equal citizens of the country.

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/haber/detay/2142>

## Resolution 2017-06

### Armân (Aromanian) Community of Romania / Fara Armânească dit România

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### I. Taking into consideration

- ✓ the current situation: after 20 years since the adoption of the “Recommendation 1333/1997 on the Aromanian culture and language”, in 2017 the Aromanians are still finding themselves under the threat of disappearance as a distinct people;
- ✓ our belief that FUEN will stand for our organization aims, in order for the above mentioned Recommendation to produce the expected effects for our community;
- ✓ the positive judgment of the European Court of Justice on the Minority SafePack Initiative (MSPI), in the same year when Europe is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome;
- ✓ the sensation that in these turbulent times marked by crises and conflicts, what we need more than ever before is to reaffirm our commitment towards unity, respect of human rights and tolerance;
- ✓ that the existence of ethnic minorities contributes with important values to the life of the home country as a whole.

#### A. We call on the Government of Romania to:

- ✓ Recognize the Arman/Aromanian people as a distinct people, i.e. as a national/ethnic minority group in Romania, in line with the provisions stated in the Romanian Constitution;
- ✓ Implement the provisions mentioned in the Recommendation 1333 by promoting the conditions necessary for persons belonging to the Arman/Aromanian Community to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their language, traditions, cultural heritage and religion;

- ✓ Ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the international human and minority rights documents that Romania has signed and ratified;
- ✓ Provide accurate and complete data regarding the number of the Armans/Aromanians recorded during the latest census (2011);
- ✓ Repeal the Law 176/2013 which defines the Armans/Aromanians as “Romanians from everywhere” (our NGO has expressed its disapproval with this legislative provision that was prepared and adopted without any notice to or consultation with the members of the community);
- ✓ Take the necessary steps to introduce the Arman/Aromanian language programs into the public/governmental mass-media;
- ✓ Refrain from any attempts to block or cancel the cultural activities organized by our NGO and to picture some of them as a threat to Romania’s national security;
- ✓ Establish an objective and productive dialogue mechanism with the representatives of the Arman/Aromanian Community from Romania in order to settle their long-standing problems.

**B. We call on the European Institutions to:**

- ✓ Support the Armans/Aromanians in their efforts to maintain and develop their identity-related goals;
- ✓ Elaborate a system within the EU which guarantees a comprehensive protection of ethnic minorities;
- ✓ Spend more attention on stateless peoples and provide direct European support to preserve such cultures;
- ✓ Promote a clear EU minority policy.

## Resolution 2017-07

### FUEN Presidium

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### **Resolution regarding the situation of national minorities in Ukraine**

*Taking into consideration, that:*

Ukraine has come a long way since the fall of the Soviet Union and during this period of almost three decades it has struggled to become a democracy, to implement the rule of law, adopt and respect human and minority rights, especially as an aspiring candidate country of the European Union.

In the same period, Ukraine has been building its national identity, which eventually broke the long Russian linguistic and cultural hegemony, while there are many national communities, all of them Ukrainian citizens, living side-by-side on the territory of the Ukrainian state.

Nevertheless, we need to recognize the right of the Ukrainian majority and of the state to protect the state language and strengthen the national identity.

Promoting minority rights and building-up the Ukrainian identity and promoting the language does not exclude one another. On the contrary, they can support each other, and create a better climate in the society.

As a sign of good faith, Ukraine has signed and ratified several European and international conventions and has started to build a country-specific minority protection scheme. Some national minorities in Ukraine have strong, distinct historical, ethnic, religious and linguistic identities that they wish to maintain and express, as well as strong cultural, economic, social or linguistic connections with kin-states. Most minority representatives cherish their minority status while desiring to build a common future as equal citizens of Ukraine.

However, the continuously challenged legislative framework does not help in creating constructive environment for minorities, instead it leads to uncertainty and it raises concerns from international organizations, kin-states and NGOs. The FUEN has been informed about the following challenges, which the national minorities of Ukraine had to face recently:

1. There is an attempt to change the law on education in a restrictive manner that would negatively affect minorities, namely: minority education would be limited to pre-scholar and high school level and only to those who live in compact minority communities; while parallel teaching in the Ukrainian language may be compulsory;

this right would be limited only to languages which are official in the European Union, thus leaving minorities with no EU-member kin-states outside the application of the law.

2. After several attempts to abolish the language law, it now faces a new challenge in front of the Constitutional Court of the Ukraine. The situation is particularly dangerous because, if the Court declares the law anti-constitutional, language rights will simply disappear and ethnic tensions will certainly increase once again in the Ukraine.
3. There is an attempt to ban double citizenship which will affect some national minorities who have a strong and formalized connection with their kin-state, even though there is no real risk of national security involved in the majority of double citizens, instead it is merely a chance to affirm one's identity and to travel and work according to the granted possibilities.
4. The language law amendment contains an obligation of (radio and television) broadcasting in the Ukrainian language, which could also cause a functional and unnecessary burden for minority channels since the public is determined by the spoken language.
5. Xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitic assaults have been reported in the regions where the minorities reside while the competent public institution is not functional.

*The General Assembly of the FUEN notes, that:*

Even though it is legitimate for the Government to foster Ukrainian national identity and language, it must be conducted in a manner, which respects, protects and promotes the rights of minorities. The above-mentioned amendments would be a clear source of inequality and therefore violates not only the Constitution but also the spirit of bilateral agreements, European and international conventions, which are signed by the Ukraine. The FUEN expresses its concern about the general effects such amendments might cause.

*Therefore, the FUEN assures the Ukrainian minorities about its full solidarity and support for the minorities in Ukraine and urges the Ukrainian authorities to:*

1. Support the consistent implementation and further promotion of the existing legislative provisions on national minorities, especially in the field of language rights and education.
2. Refrain from any attempt to limit the use of minority rights and guarantee full application of internal and international commitments instead. Any law revision must be carefully prepared, the opinion of the minority organisation representatives should be heard and considered before adoption.
3. Conduct a constructive and permanent dialogue with and amongst the minorities in Ukraine.

4. Re-establish a specialized governmental body with sufficient financial and human resources to handle all issues relating to the protection of national minorities.
5. To strengthen the respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including minority rights and respect for diversity.
6. Further develop a modern legal framework, exchange best practices in the field of minority protection with role-model regions and countries in Europe.
7. Combat the growth of intolerance and prevent hate crimes driven by racism, xenophobia or anti-Semitism.
8. Guarantee that the minorities have unconditional access to television and radio channels on all levels.

All measures should be achieved in full consultation with the minorities.

The FUEN also calls on the European Union and the Council of Europe to closely monitor the Ukrainian authorities and constantly remind the country's government about its commitments regarding the application of the European minority protection regulations as well as support the country in achieving the goals mentioned above.

#### *On the situation in Crimea and the Crimean Tatar people*

The FUEN notes that national minorities in Crimea have been subject to systematic violations of their rights since the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 while the reaction of the international community was limited. Crimean Tatars are subjected to constant repressions and discrimination by the de facto authorities, people were killed, kidnapped and detained as political prisoners in Crimea. Since Crimea is under occupation it is not only difficult to enjoy the right to identity but the population faces major economic and social problems and therefore many people had to flee from their homeland. The Crimean Tatars' governing body, a member organization of FUEN, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people is classified as an extremist organization and is banned in Crimea.

Nevertheless, it has been reported that human rights organizations still cannot gain access to the region and face difficulties in providing assistance to the people of Crimea. The European Union, and the European Parliament, in particular, should advocate for the establishment of an international human rights monitoring in Crimea.

The FUEN acknowledges the legitimate demand of the Crimean Tatars to the Ukrainian authorities to be recognized as indigenous people of Crimea and that the autonomous Crimean Tatar Republic should be established in accordance with the right to self-determination of the indigenous people of Crimea.

## 2017-08 Urgent Resolution

### Domowina - Zwjazk Łužiskich Serbow z.t. Zwězk Łužyskich Serbow z.t. - Bund Lausitzer Sorben

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following urgent resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár / Klausenburg, Romania, on 20 May 2017:

#### **Draft bill for the revised version of the Sorbs/Wendish-School Regulation (Sorben/Wenden-Schulverordnung (SWSchulV)) in Brandenburg**

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the State of Brandenburg is planning a revision of the current regulation regarding bilingual and foreign language teaching in Lower-Sorbian language. The draft bill for the revised version includes among others that a learning group for these educational offers shall not be formed unless a minimum group size of 12 students is guaranteed. In case this number is not reached, the learning group is to be complemented with students from other grade levels until the required minimum number of students is reached. This regulation has the inevitable result that a large part of the current Lower-Sorbian language teaching in public schools cannot be continued.

Public pressure from the minority accomplished that the Ministry of Education withdrew its proposal regarding the minimum number of students for the learning groups. This was achieved through an online petition supported by more than 20 000 people but also through the political efforts of the parents' initiative, Domowina and the Council for Sorbian/Wendish affairs. Some other issues regarding the framework conditions for the instruction in Lower-Sorbian language that shall be arranged in the revised regulation are not solved yet.

The Delegates expect from the responsible Ministry that with the proposed draft bill, it will work towards consolidation of the Lower-Sorbian language teaching in its different forms, in order to guarantee the right of the Sorbs/Wendish to this education. Education is an important aspect of the preservation and development of the Sorbian language, culture and identity.

We expect from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports that it will take into account the extensive experience of practitioners working at the elementary and secondary schools when deciding about the revised regulation. Furthermore, the results and findings of the ongoing evaluation of the Lower-Sorbian language teaching should be considered so that the revised regulation can meet the expectations formulated in the state-plans to strengthen the Lower-Sorbian language and to improve and develop its organisational structures in all its facets.



In addition, we expect from the Ministry that an overall concept for language acquisition of the Lower-Sorbian language, starting from the level of daycare up to high school graduation will be developed. For this purpose the experiences with Upper-Sorbian language training in Saxony should be considered. The concept should be developed on the basis of the chartered rights of the Sorbs/Wendish, according to Article 25 of the Constitution of the State of Brandenburg and the relevant legislation regarding education and protection of the Sorbian/Wendish people.



# FUEN

FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES  
FÖDERALISTISCHE UNION EUROPÄISCHER NATIONALITÄTEN  
ФЕДЕРАЛИСТСКИЙ СОЮЗ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ  
UNION FÉDÉRALISTE DES COMMUNAUTÉS ETHNIQUES EUROPÉENNES

#### **FUEN Flensburg / Flensburg**

Generalsekretariat Schiffbrücke 41  
+49 461 12855 D-24939 Flensburg

#### **FUEN Berlin**

AGDM Koordination Bundesallee 216 – 218  
+49 30 186814613 D-10719 Berlin

#### **FUEN Brussel / Bruxelles**

Europa-Büro Avenue Palmerston 20  
+32 485 284315 B-1000 Brussel