

Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) **RESOLUTIONS 2018**

Assembly of Delegates in Ljouwert • Leeuwarden / Netherlands on 23 June 2018



Resolutions 2018

Main Resolution - Pact between minority and majority

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PACT

between minority and majority

We live in Europe for centuries. Some of us are indigenous people and many of us saw borders shifted and live today in minority. It is not a choice, but it is the reality for us. **We have chosen to continue to live in our homeland.**

Our ancestors created a unique cultural wealth, they spoke their own languages, and followed their own traditions and customs. **We aim to preserve and develop our identity, our cultures, and our languages.**

We speak our mother tongue, and we want to be able to use it in everyday life and in the administration. **We wish that our children were able to learn in their mother tongue in schools and to pass them to the next generations.**

Different norms and different standards are applied by the states in the field of minority protection: some don't recognize and disregard the aim of minorities, while others actively promote and protect them. **We believe that the situation of European minorities can not be considered solely the internal affair of the states.**

We are one hundred million Europeans, fifty million in the EU, members of autochthonous national minorities, nationalities, ethnic communities, regional and linguistic groups. Our objective is to strengthen the Council of Europe's legal instruments and sanction mechanism. In the EU our goal is to create a EU legal framework on the protection of national minorities and language groups. **We have a dream about a society where all languages and communities are equal, respected and cherished.**

However, our determination and strength is not enough. We need the majority societies, we need our states and regions, and we need Europe to provide us the tools, which can help us to protect and to develop our cultures and our languages.

Under the umbrella of the Federal Union of European Nationalities 1,300,000 European citizens already joined our cause and started a movement for minority rights. By signing the *Minority SafePack Initiative* they asked the EU to improve the protection of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities and strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity in the EU. The signatures of so many European citizens are an empowerment to make our voice heard in the EU institutions, national parliaments and governments, which should not be ignored.

We need a pact between minorities and majorities to create favorable conditions for linguistic and cultural diversity to thrive, to preserve and promote the identity of the minority communities and to stop their assimilation. They should feel entirely at home on the territory where they have been living traditionally, to have a say in decisions that affect their lives, and to exercise autonomously their cultural, educational and linguistic rights.

I | **We ask you to join our movement for minority rights.** We make Europe richer! We offer our cultural heritage, our languages and our traditions to Europe and to the majority societies.

II | **Listen to us without prejudices.** As national minorities and language groups we have the same aspirations as the majority: we want our countries and regions to prosper. No matter our mother tongue or traditions we contribute together to our societies and economies. We all want to live in a better region, a better country and a better Europe.

III | **Help us in becoming EU citizens with equal rights** in the use of our language, education in mother tongue and the preservation of our culture. Minorities are not a threat for the cohesion of Europe or for the states, instead, in their diversity they are enriching both society and the state and play a crucial role as bridge builders between nations.

IV | **We need to work together on a local, regional and European level.** Minority rights will not be achieved without majority support. It is our common struggle. In order to succeed we, decision makers, organizations, volunteers, partners and influencers need to work together.

V | **We aim to put minority rights on the European agenda.** The upcoming European elections offer the right platform for a debate on autochthonous minority rights. We invite European parties and candidates to include in their objectives solutions to our concerns. The citizens belonging to minority communities will support parties and candidates that are committed to our goals.

VI | **Be part of history in the making.** The Minority SafePack Initiative can be one of the most important achievements in the history of the EU. Only together we can achieve these goals!

Resolution 2018-01

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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Resolution on the division of municipalities in the region of the Macedonian minority in Albania

1. Restructuring of municipalities in the minority region

The administrative division conducted in 2015 did not fulfil any requirement of the criteria defined by the government itself; demographical, geographical, economical and cultural, especially in the areas where the Macedonian national minority is residing.

The division of the municipalities in Golo Brdo and Gora complicates the existence of the inhabitants of the Golo Brdo and Gora area, as they have to travel for two hours even to submit administrative document requests. The FUEN, together with the Macedonian Association “Ilinden” - Tirana and the Macedonian national minority in the Republic of Albania are requesting the three municipalities, which govern Golo Brdo and Gora to restructure it to two individual municipalities with the names “the Municipality of Golo Brdo” and “the Municipality of Gora”.

2. MP in the Albanian Parliament elected directly by the Macedonian national minority

The FUEN supports the aim of the Macedonian national minority in the Republic of Albania, that requires to have at least one MP in the Albanian Parliament who is directly elected by the Macedonian national minority from the proportional list.

3. Disapproval of the amendments in the Report of Albania adopted by the European Parliament in 2016

The FUEN condemns the amendment of the Report on Albania 2016/2312 adopted by the European Parliament, number (ini) prepared by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, by which the Macedonian national minority in Prespa, Golo Brdo, Gora was declared Bulgarian. The Macedonian Association “Ilinden”-Tirana and the Macedonian National Minority in the Republic of Albania urge the European Parliament to amend this resolution since it contains facts that are untrue. In those regions where all censuses were conducted by the Albanian authorities nobody has declared themselves Bulgarian.

4. Disapproval of the Bulgarians effort to prove the non-existence of the Macedonian national minority

The FUEN condemns all efforts of the Bulgarian state to prove that the Macedonian national minority is Bulgarian. We consider this as a cultural genocide against the people belonging to the Macedonian national minority in Albania. The Macedonian Association "Ilinden" - Tirana requests the Albanian government to determine the activities of the Bulgarian government to assimilate Macedonians in Albania.

Resolution 2018-02

Russian School of Estonia

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Resolution on the situation of the Russian national minority in Estonia

With Estonia's proclamation of independence in 1991 the real course was taken to deprive Russians of their civil and political rights in Estonia. This policy was expressed in the following areas:

- 1. The right to citizenship.** 15% of the population and 60% of the Russian population do not have Estonian citizenship because of the high requirements for passing the Estonian language test for citizenship. Such a policy was carried out specifically to limit the rights of the Russian population of Estonia to elections to the country's parliament. As a result of this policy, about 10% of the population of the republic or about 30% of the Russian population was forced to accept Russian citizenship, about the same number do not have any citizenship at all, i.e. are stateless.
- 2. Discrimination based on ethnicity.** Despite the fact that Estonia has adopted laws prohibiting discrimination based on ethnicity, the policies in this area contradict these principles. With the Russian-speaking population accounting for 31% of the total population, only 3% of employees in state structures are non-Estonians. The situation is not much better in the private sector, where the Russians are provided with the lowest-paid positions.
- 3. Estonization of education.** During 26 years of Estonia's independence, a number of politically biased decisions were adopted; in particular, a plan was adopted for the phased transfer of Russian schools to the Estonian language of instruction. The Russian national minority took such a policy as an attempt on their constitutional rights, ignoring the parents' rights to choose the language of instruction, and most importantly ignoring the basic rights of children to preserve their national identity. Repeated legitimate attempts by parents and schools to preserve education in their native language have been declined by the Estonian government for seven years already. Under the slogan of a «better study of Estonian language», the whole system of Russian education, which has been built for centuries, and which has proved its necessity, is destroyed.
- 4. Russian language and its meaning for the Russian national minority.** During the 26 years of Estonia's independence, the Russian language was regularly ousted. The ongoing policy of estonization is conducted from the strange premise that the Russian language somehow threatens the Estonian language, which is fundamentally wrong. This leads to abuses and restrictions in the use of the Russian language, i.e. to the limitations of the right of the Russian national minority to use their native language in many areas. In the sphere of state administration and local self-government, Russian is not used, even in places of compact Russian residence.
- 5. Ignoring international legal norms in the sphere of the rights of national minorities.** Estonia has not yet ratified Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which establishes a general prohibition of discrimination. Also, Estonia refuses to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Based on the above situation

We call on the Government of Estonia

1. To support the consistent implementation and further promotion of existing legislative provisions on national minorities, especially in the field of linguistic rights and the rights of education in their native language.
2. To refrain from any attempts to restrict the use of minority rights, to guarantee and not to hinder the full application of domestic legislation in the field of the rights of national minorities.
3. To comply with international obligations and implement the recommendations of the OSCE, the UN, the CE and the EU.
4. Ratify Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
5. Any legislative initiatives concerning the Russian national minority in Estonia should be carefully prepared; the opinion of minority representatives should be heard and considered before these initiatives are adopted.
6. A constructive dialogue with representatives of the Russian national minority is needed.
7. It is necessary to expand the use of the Russian language as a regional language, especially in places where Russians live compactly. Current situation cannot be considered as normal.
8. It is necessary to combat the growth of intolerance and the prevention of crimes motivated by ethnic hatred is needed. Law should prohibit the language of hatred. Especially unacceptable is the use of such language by political and public figures.
9. It is necessary to understand that Estonia is a multinational state, where all nations should have a worthy attitude to themselves. Building a state on the principle of superiority and the priority of one nation over others is unacceptable for Europe.

We call on European institutions

1. To support the Russian national minority in the Baltic region (as part of the European Union) in its aim to preserve its national identity, including by preserving the education system in Russian.
2. Develop a system within the EU that guarantees comprehensive protection of ethnic minorities;
3. To pay more attention to the problem of stateless persons, especially in Estonia and Latvia, where this problem is particularly acute.

Resolution 2018-03

Association of Cultural Societies of the German-speaking Community in Slovenia

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Urgent appeal to the government of the Republic of Slovenia to support the German-speaking community that has been living in Slovenia for centuries

Despite many years of efforts, the German-speaking national community in Slovenia still does not receive a constitutional recognition of its minority rights as an autochthonous minority. The State of Slovenia does not follow the recommendations of the Council of Europe which are the basis for the survival of a linguistic minority and refer to areas such as instruction in the German language, the appropriate recognition of the minority language in radio and television programs and the granting of satisfactory financial support.

Without the help of civil society organisations, the functioning of societies within the national community would already be completely impossible.

The FUEN calls on the government of the Republic of Slovenia

1. The constitutional recognition of the German-speaking community in Slovenia as a national ethnic group and to ensure the cultural associations of the German-speaking community the necessary funding for a natural development on a long-term basis.
2. The members of the German-speaking national community to be recognised, respected and supported as loyal citizens of Slovenia
3. The support for the German-speaking national community in Slovenia to build sustainable peace bridges between Slovenia and Austria.

Resolution 2018-04

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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

The properties of the foundations belonging to the Rhodes and Kos Turks/Muslims in Greece are sold off forcibly and demolished

After the islands of Rhodes and Kos in 1947 came under the rule Greece, Turks living in Rhodes and Kos encountered many problems. The first of these is the non-recognition of the cultural identity of the Turks. Greece describes the Turks as "Muslimized Greek". Other problems are; Citizenship, Education, Right to Learn Turkish, Religion and Worship, Protection of Cultural Heritage of Ottoman Turks, Hate and Pressure, Foundation and Foundation Properties.

Greece has been destroying immovable properties which belong to the foundation property belonging to Rhodes and Kos Turks / Muslims with the strategy that it has applied. With the destruction of the foundations, the existence of Rhodes and Kos Turks will also disappear.

Firstly, the Rhodes and Kos Turk and Muslim foundation properties are illegally sold according to decisions; which were appointed by the South Aegean Regional Secretary of Greece.

Secondly, foundation properties are granted to Rhodes metropolis through a manipulated board of directors.

Thirdly, new expenses are charged on the foundations and they are forced to spend more than their income and their lands and properties are sold by force to cover these expenses.

Fourthly, Turk/Muslim foundations in Rhodes and Kos have heavy tax obligations. Real estate tax is levied from the foundations in the rate of 0.6%. In other words, real estates belonging to foundations are subject to real estate taxation at the same rate with trade organizations. In addition, no tax is received from other religious and ethnic foundations. This shows the extent of discrimination.

Fifthly, the cultural heritage remaining from the Ottoman Turks belonging to the Turkish foundation's possessions is not allowed to be maintained or repaired, the restoration works are only perfunctory and the artifacts are left to the destruction of time.

We recommend

1. Greece to adopt a manner in compliance with the provision of the "Foundation's Property cannot be bought, sold, acquired, or shared as heritage" which was specified in the Foundation Regulation. The compliance with this provision is also guaranteed by international agreements.

2. The management of Rhodes and Kos Turkish Foundations should not be determined by appointment, it should be constituted with free will of Turks/Muslims living in Rhodes and Kos.
3. The property tax which was applied to Turkish Foundations of Rhodes and Kos in the rate of 0.6% should be abolished and tax should not be collected as in other religious and ethnic foundations.
4. The restoration of the architectural works belonging to the foundations of Rhodes and Kos Turks should be carried out by the foundations of Turks and Muslims living in Rhodes and Kos.

Resolution 2018-05

Turkish Minority of Western Thrace, submitted by 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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

The right to freedom of association of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace and execution of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

Greece did not execute the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Bekir-Ousta group of cases and others against Greece concerning violations of the freedom of association, although more than ten years have elapsed since the judgments of the European Court in 2008. Following the adoption of a new law (No. 4491/2017) which would allow the re-opening of the cases adjudicated by the ECtHR on 13 October 2017, execution of the ECtHR's judgments in this group of cases has vital importance for the recognition of ethnic identity of the minority in Greece.

Xanthi Turkish Union (1927), Komotini Turkish Youth Union (1928) and Western Thrace Turkish Teachers' Union (1936) have been officially registered and pursued its activities unhindered for nearly half a century. These three associations were dissolved in 1986 by local courts on grounds that they constituted a threat to democratic society with an aim to promote the idea that there was an ethnic minority with the word Turkish which refers to citizens of Turkey and could not be used to describe citizens of Greece. The ECtHR found Greece in violation of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights in the Bekir-Ousta group of cases and others against Greece concerning Evros Prefecture Minority Youth Association, Xanthi Turkish Union, Cultural Association of Turkish Women in the Prefecture of Rodopi due to the refusal to register associations and to the dissolution of an association on the sole basis of a suspicion that the applicants intended to promote the idea that an ethnic minority existed in Greece.

Law 4491/2017, which would enable an application of revocation or amendment in the domestic courts following an ECtHR judgment, was adopted on 10 October 2017 with restrictions concerning the protection of national security, public order, the prevention of crime, the protection of health or morals and the protection of rights and freedoms of others and international conventions implying the Treaty of Lausanne which officially refers to the religious affiliation of the Turkish community in Western Thrace with the term "Muslim minority in Thrace".

In its 1302nd meeting (5-7 December 2017), the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe invited Greek authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure that the relevant case law of the European Court, in particular the judgments in these cases, as well as the present decision of the Committee, are disseminated to all competent courts of all levels. The Committee invited the authorities to provide further information on the possible change in the domestic courts' case law concerning registration of associations in Thrace following the adoption of the above-mentioned law.

The Xanthi Turkish Union applied to the domestic court for the re-opening of its case. At the hearing held at the Court of Appeal of Thrace on 9 February 2018, the Xanthi Turkish Union asked for cancellation of the decision of Court of Appeal dated 2002, which ratified the dissolution of the Xanthi Turkish Union and return of its official legal entity. The State of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, which represents the former Governor, asked the rejection of the application and the re-registration of the Turkish Union of Xanthi. The decision of the court is pending.

Reaffirming our commitment to an active and constructive creation of a European civil society which includes the autochthonous, national minorities / ethnic groups,

- 1) The FUEN Assembly of Delegates urges the Government of Greece to recognize ethnic Turkish identity of the Minority and implement, without any further delay, judgments of the ECtHR in Bekir-Ousta and others group of cases against Greece (Application No. 35151/05)
- 2) The Assembly asks the Government of Greece to provide explanation for the implementation of Law 4491/2017 adopted with restrictions and reaffirm its commitment of the Greek authorities to implementing fully and completely the judgments of ECtHR in matters related to freedom of association.
- 3) The Assembly urges Greece to implement the legal procedure for registration of associations in order to ensure that the right of national minorities in Greece to the freedom of association are fully respected, protected and promoted.

Resolution 2018-06

Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

On the support for the Crimean Tatar people

The rights of the Crimean Tatar people as of indigenous people are enshrined in regional, national and international legal instruments. In 2014, Ukraine recognized the Crimean Tatar people as Ukraine's indigenous people and supported the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, Ukrainian law has since recognized the Mejlis and Qurultay as the highest representative bodies of the Crimean Tatar people.

Since the start of the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea in 2014, international bodies and human rights organisations repeatedly pointed to massive and grave human rights violations in Crimea, which disproportionately affected Crimean Tatars. Numerous killings and abductions lack effective investigation, whereas dozens of Crimean Tatars have been arrested on dubious charges leaving hundreds of children without means for living.

In 2016, Russian authorities in Crimea also outlawed the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People calling it an extremist organisation. The absolute majority of Crimean Tatars perceived the ban as an attack against their culture and identity. In April 2017, UN's International Court of Justice delivered an Order on provisional measures in proceedings brought by Ukraine against the Russian Federation. The Order concluded that the Russian Federation must "refrain from maintaining or imposing limitations on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to conserve its representative institutions, including the Mejlis". Russia is still yet to implement the Order.

Meanwhile, Ukraine makes remarkable progress in recognition the rights of Crimean Tatar people, including the right of self-determination. In May 2017, the Constitutional Commission of the President of Ukraine commenced its work to prepare amendments to the Constitution's Chapter X "Autonomous Republic of Crimea". The process fulfills the international law requirements as the representative bodies of the Crimean Tatar people are actively involved in the drafting process.

FUEN calls on the Russian Federation:

1. To immediately take measures to protect the rights of the Crimean Tatars on the territory of Russia's effective control, in accordance with the United Nations Resolution 71/205;
2. To immediately lift the ban of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people and to allow its activities

and Ukraine:

3. To proceed further with the recognition of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people.

Resolution 2018-07

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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

On the recognition of the Armân (Aromanian) Community in Romania

I. Taking into consideration

- ✓ that the Arman Community of Romania's members find themselves trapped in a vicious circle: on one hand, they claim their rights (as the other European citizens belonging to a certain minority) and on the other hand their rights are infringed through unilateral local government decisions.
- ✓ that even after the fourth opinion on Romania of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities published on 16th of February 2018, Romanian institutions reacted even more aggressively denying the demands of the Arman Community in Romania.
- ✓ our belief that FUEN, after succeeding the gathering of the 1.000.000 signatures, will advocate even more strongly also for our organization's aims, in order for the "Recommendation 1333/1997 on the Aromanian culture and language" to produce the expected effects for our community;
- ✓ the recently released text of the European Parliament resolution (7.02.2018) on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States ([2017/2937\(RSP\)](#)) which highlights that the natural & cultural heritage resources of national minorities are key pillars of social cohesion and must be considered assets to be fully preserved for future generations.

A. We call on the Government of Romania to:

1. stop from initiating an aggressive approach towards our language, culture and identity;
2. invite the Arman Community to celebrate the one centenary anniversary of the Great Union of the Romanian state through recognizing Arman/Aromanian people as a distinguished people, i.e. as a minority in Romania, in line with the provisions stated in the Romanian Constitution and in the EU legal framework related to minorities & human rights;
3. understand that we fully respect our citizenship, being fully integrated in the Romanian society, but that we are also Armans, with our own cultural identity, language and traditions – things that cannot be taken from us;
4. urgently & effectively 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 & cultural heritage;
5. provide accurate and complete data regarding the number of the Armans/Aromanians recorded during last census (2011).

B. We call on the European Institutions to:

1. support more than ever the Armans/Aromanians in their efforts to maintain and develop the identity related goals, in order to continue living in peace and harmony in their communities;
2. find the appropriate levers that will solve the Arman people & similar minorities' situations;
3. explore the possibility to create a European Committee of the Minorities to work together with the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and European Commission so that we, as European citizens, can also make our voices heard.

Resolution 2018-08

Domowina – Union of Lusatian Sorbs

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Consideration of the concerns on the autochthonous national minorities, like the Sorbs/ Wends in Lusatia, in connection with decisions concerning the withdrawal from the coal-fired power generation and further regional aid

The Sorbian people are an officially recognized autochthonous national minority in Germany. The ancestral settlement area is the region of Lusatia/ Łużyca/ Łužica. The northern part of the region of Lusatia is administratively assigned to the state of Brandenburg, the southern part is assigned to the state of Saxony. Since more than 100 years the region is affected by extensive lignite mining in opencast mines and the subsequent power generation. Despite the associated demolition of a large number of villages of the Sorbian/ Wendish settlement area and the ensuing enormous loss of material and immaterial substance for the Sorbian/ Wendish people, the regional lignite industry was an important source of income for the residents and municipalities in the Lusatian area. Climate policy decisions of the global community in the EU and Germany concerning the withdrawal from the coal-fired power generation do have direct impact on the economic structure of Lusatia.

1. The delegates of the FUEN Congress 2018 demand from the authorities of the Federal Government and the states of Brandenburg and Saxony, that the matters of the Sorbs/ Wends find particular attention in the structural development of Lusatia. The Lusatian Sorbs/ Wends can only continue to live as one people in their ancestral homeland today and in future, if it can provide a secure existence for them.

The financial frame for the EU budget 2020 is currently under discussion and planning. The discussions include calculations concerning the EU regime of grants and the extent of regional support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), measured in terms of GDP pro capita.

2. Given the long-term phase of reorganisation and reshuffling of the economy on Lusatia, the delegates of the FUEN Congress 2018 demand from the national and community committees of the European Union, to consider in their assessment in accordance with the funding categories of the ERDF, the aspect of possible settlement of autochthonous communities, ethnic groups or national minorities in the regions that are to be supported.

2018-09 Urgent Resolution

Serb National Council (Srpsko narodno vijeće) SNV

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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Urgent resolution on the worrying developments and the impending deterioration of the rights of national minorities in Croatia

By adoption of the Constitutional Law on National Minorities in 2002, Croatia ranked among the countries, which have a comprehensive legal framework regulating national minorities' rights and freedoms. Croatia has often been emphasised as an example of how national minorities' rights should be regulated, which had served as one of the stronger arguments that it met criteria for integration into the European Union.

Minorities' political representatives have so far supported work of Croatian governments which formally and partly also in practise proclaimed and supported protection of national minorities and their integration into the society.

Unfortunately, recent period and particularly the past three years, brought to the fore essential deficiencies of the Croatian model of minority rights protection. Today numerous deficiencies arise in exercising minorities' cultural autonomy, their right to education and use of language and script. Also, national minorities are experiencing difficulties in achieving participation in public administration bodies and are facing obstacles in functioning of minority advisory bodies (minority councils) elected to represent their interests.

Discrimination of members of certain minority groups, particularly Serbs and Roma is not addressed. Return of refugee and displaced Serbs has not yielded more visible results and was systematically obstructed.

Since Croatia's accession to the EU, public discourse has been dominated by fundamentalist political movements which all culminated in requests to abolish national minority rights. Croatian media including public media service (Croatian Radio Television) are increasingly giving space to public hate speech and those who deny Holocaust and genocide in the Second World War. Reports by relevant European bodies, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights and ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance), requested from Croatia urgent action against growing intolerance and hate crime and expressed concern for "lack of ability to secure impartiality of public media".

In the beginning of May 2018, civil initiative "People Decide" started a campaign demanding a referendum to change the Constitution, which would drastically reduce rights of national minorities. The initiative asked for reduction of the number of minority representatives in the Parliament – from eight down to six – and banning their participation in electing the government and deciding on the state budget. To this end, it collected almost 400,000 signatures.

FUEN is deeply concerned about the perspective of constitutional and legislative amendments that would cause national minorities to lose some of their rights by reducing the number of elected minority representatives in the Croatian Parliament and losing their equality compared to other parliamentary

representatives. Diminishing existing rights is not acceptable according to the Council of Europe and European Union standards.

FUEN calls on Croatian institutions – the Parliament, Government and the Constitutional Court

1. to clearly distance themselves from conduct and acts of the mentioned nationalist-populist initiative
2. to prevent losing the achieved level of protection of minority rights, in accordance with national laws, international treaties and obligations.

FUEN also appeals to all international institutions, primarily the EU, Council of Europe and the OSCE

3. to pay special attention to the current situation in Croatia and to support all efforts towards democracy and rule of law, including the preservation of the comprehensive legal framework regulating national minorities' rights and freedoms.

2018-10 Urgent Resolution

Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

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 Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, Netherlands, on 23 June 2018:

Resolution concerning the propagated unconstitutional and discriminatory ethnic census of Sinti and Roma in Italy

FUEN strongly condemns the hate speech and antigypsyism of Italian Minister of Interior Affairs, Matteo Salvini, who propagated an unconstitutional and discriminatory ethnic census of Sinti and Roma in Italy, and who stigmatized Sinti and Roma and divided Italians based on their ethnic origin. Minister Salvini expressed his intention to deport Roma from Italy and stated that Roma with Italian citizenship “unfortunately have to be kept”; thus, he questioned and violated the citizenship of the Italian Sinti and Roma who have been citizens of their country for centuries.

FUEN stresses the importance of equal citizenship and the protection of national and ethnic minorities; it therefore calls upon the Italian Republic to strengthen the recognition and protection of Sinti and Roma under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

FUEN underlines that such public hate speech risks to incite hatred and violence against Sinti and Roma. FUEN calls upon all political parties in Italy and in Europe to support and respect the [Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society \(Revised\)](#), in particular during election campaigns and ahead of the European Parliament elections 2019.

FUEN recalls its resolution 2017-03 of its General Assembly in Cluj-Napoca on forced evictions and housing segregation, as well as its “Eisenstadt Declaration” on solidarity with Roma adopted in 2011. The inhumane living conditions of about 25.000¹ Sinti and Roma in formal and informal camps in Italy are the result of state policies over decades² that violate European values, equality laws and fundamental rights. FUEN calls upon the European Union and its Member States to prioritize the fight against antigypsyism in a renewed European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies after the year 2020.

FUEN calls upon the Italian government, which currently holds the chairmanship of the OSCE and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2018, as well as upon the European institutions and EU Member States to uphold the rule of law and democratic values by fulfilling their binding international commitments for human rights, minority protection and equal treatment, and by condemning and sanctioning any form of antigypsyism and human rights violations against Sinti and Roma.

¹ http://www.21luglio.org/21luglio/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/rapporto-inglese_completo_web_giugno_interattivo.pdf

² http://barabal.eu/images/The_situation_of_Roma_in_Italy_13062015.pdf



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