

RESOLUTION 2023-04

NGO “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 Pécs • Fünfkirchen • Pečuh, Hungary on 9 September 2023:

Resolution on the change of legislation of Russian kindergartens and schools

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) has to state with regret that in December 2022 parliament of Estonia has adopted the new legislation that will be the basis of full estonization of Russian kindergartens and schools starting from the year 2024 till 2030. New laws and legal acts have confirmed the course towards forced estonization of Russian schools and kindergartens. More than that new legislation contradicts the constitution of Estonia where it is written that «The language of instruction in an educational institution for a national minority is chosen by the educational institution» (not government or parliament). We consider it as violation of the rights of the Russian national minority (including the right to preserve national identity). This will also lead to the general decline of the quality of education process and degradation of the Russian school system that was built during hundreds of years. The whole generations of Russian children in Estonia will be left without the right for high quality education based on their mother tongue. FUEN believes that national minorities should not be considered as an object of assimilation but as a source of big potential for development and diversity. The state must proceed from all international obligations in this area. The legislation adopted by Estonia breaches the European Union TEU (Article 3), principles of European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) and the commitments to the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of the National Minorities (FCNM) to which Estonia has been a State-party since 1997.

The Assembly of Delegates of FUEN calls on Estonia:

1. to withdraw the new legislation that will be the basis of full estonization of Russian kindergartens and schools as starting from the year 2024
2. to comply with all articles of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the Language Charter (ECRML) of the Council of Europe and adhere to the recommendations of international organizations (OSCE, ECRI etc.).

FUEN calls on European institutions:

1. to recognise that the new legislation adopted by Estonia breaches the European Union TEU (Article 3), the Copenhagen Criteria and the above-mentioned conventions of the Council of Europe.