



# ELECTION CHECKSTONES OF FUEN

**Elections to the European Parliament from 6 to 9 June 2024**

## **Election Checkstones of FUEN**

**Answers by Helmer Krane, FDP (Free Democratic Party), Germany**

- 1. Will you advocate for the stronger engagement by the EU institutions, particularly the European Commission, to protect autochthonous national minorities and language groups? Will you support the development of a comprehensive set of legal and policy standards for a more advanced protection and equal treatment of minority rights in the EU? Will you support the full implementation of the Copenhagen criteria, particularly the provisions on minority rights protection, in the EU candidate countries? If yes, how?**

*As a Free Democrat, I am in favour of a Europe of diversity. The protection of minorities is a prerequisite and must be a concern of the European constitutional state. We Free Democrats and I are therefore in favour of protecting and promoting autochthonous national minorities at all political levels. To this end, we support a stronger commitment by the European Commission in this area. For accession to the European Union, the full implementation of the Copenhagen criteria is a top priority for us Free Democrats. If candidate countries do not adhere to the provisions on the protection of minority rights or do not implement them, we want to examine, among other things, the reduction of EU funding to the relevant candidate countries.*

- 2. Do you agree the EU needs a stronger political representation of national minorities and language groups? How could the political representation of minorities in the European institutions be guaranteed? Will you support the re-establishment of the Intergroup on Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages in the European Parliament? Are you committed to working for a more minority-friendly electoral system in your Member State for the next European elections?**

*We Free Democrats support the promotion of the cultural and linguistic identity of national minorities and ethnic groups as well as their political participation. In general, the protection of our democratic institutions and laws that oppose the marginalisation and discrimination of minorities, as well as their continuous further development, are essential in this regard. At European level, there are various funding programmes scattered across different EU initiatives to ensure the protection and representation of minorities. In our opinion, a good approach could be to anchor minority policy directly with a responsible EU Commissioner. I am open to the re-establishment of a corresponding working group and would look into this if it were to materialise.*

**3. Do you agree more meaningful dialogue and exchange between policymakers and minorities' experts and civil society is needed? Will you support the establishment of the Advisory Group on minority issues under the auspices of the European Commission and the European Forum of national and linguistic minorities to consult both the EU and the Council of Europe? Through which other channels or mechanisms can such sustainable exchange and consultations be ensured?**

*Regular dialogue between politicians and civil society actors, including experts on minorities, is welcome and beneficial. It is a matter close to my heart that we live the democratic culture much more – this also includes a lively exchange and pre-parliamentary spaces for discussion. We Free Democrats are therefore in constant dialogue with external contacts, discussing our positions with them and developing them further. The format of the dialogue is less important to us. However, it must be guaranteed – also at parliamentary level.*