



# FUEN 2024 EU ELECTIONS MANIFESTO

In Europe, our strength is in unity in diversity. We, the traditional minorities of Europe, believe in a Europe that proudly preserves its cultural richness, traditions and linguistic diversity. There are about 50 million people who belong to a national minority or speak minority language in the European Union. **The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) and its member organisations stand for a culturally and linguistically rich and democratic European Union, where national and linguistic minorities flourish.**

Despite the fundamental rights guarantees provided for in its treaties, the EU still lacks a comprehensive minority policy. **We regret that the protection of national and linguistic minorities does not receive greater attention in the institutions of the European Union, especially in the European Commission.** The EU has to be an area where respect for ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity prevails and where people are neither excluded nor marginalised. **Our vision is of a culturally rich and democratically inclusive European Union where national and linguistic minorities thrive.**

**We, members of FUEN, request the adoption of minority protection norms within the EU to ensure substantive equality for minorities.** The establishment of an effective mechanism to ensure and monitor fundamental rights of minorities is of outmost importance both in EU Member States and in candidate countries.

The situation and legal standing of national minorities in the EU differ widely from one Member State to another. We therefore advocate for a common European policy standard for their protection. **We want a European strategy for the protection and promotion of national and linguistic minorities** to make sure that all Member States take measures for the improvement of minority rights. **We ask the EU to adopt a systematic approach to preserving and protecting national and linguistic minorities under its rule of law mechanism.**

In a wider international context, we believe that the EU should deepen its institutional partnership in the sphere of minority rights protection with the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the United Nations. The set of basic minority protection standards of the Council of Europe should be integrated into the EU acquis.

**We support the full implementation of the Copenhagen Criteria in the candidate countries, and consider the conditions on minority rights protection as crucial ones to assess readiness for EU membership.** In its enlargement process the EU should require full and unconditional compliance with those provisions.

The implementation of the objectives of the Minority SafePack European Citizens' Initiative remains high on our agenda, we remain convinced that its measures would greatly contribute to an enhanced protection of minorities in the Union.

We call for the reestablishment of the Intergroup on Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages in the European Parliament, which should continue to serve as an important forum to obtain first-hand information about the challenges faced by linguistic and minority communities.

We call for the establishment of an advisory group for the European Commission focusing on traditional national and linguistic minorities. This consultative body of independent experts on minority rights should assist the Commission in policy making across all relevant areas.

We call for the future Commission to include the protection and promotion of the rights of national and linguistic minorities in the portfolio of one of its Commissioners.

We advocate for a European Forum of national and linguistic minorities to serve as an affiliated consultative advisory body of both the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The participation in the European elections between 6-9 June 2024 is of utmost importance for the future of minorities. We strongly encourage voting for candidates from our minority communities to ensure our voices are heard in European politics and policy-making!