



**Joint Declaration of Bozen / Bulsan / Bolzano of October 23, 2025
of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, the Autonomous
Province of Bolzano – South Tyrol
and the Federal Union of European Nationalities
on combating geo-blocking and strengthening cross-border access
to audiovisual media in minority languages**

Whereas, according to Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities is one of the founding values of the Union;

Whereas, in accordance with Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, the Union must respect its cultural and linguistic diversity and ensure the protection and promotion of Europe's cultural heritage;

Whereas discrimination on grounds of nationality or place of residence is prohibited within the internal market of the Union;

Whereas the European Citizens' Initiative 'Minority SafePack', supported by more than 1.1 million people across Europe, has called for improved cross-border access to audiovisual media services for persons belonging to traditional national or linguistic minorities;

Whereas, pursuant to Article 11(2) of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe, the freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in a language used in identical or similar form to a regional or minority language shall be guaranteed, and the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in such a language shall not be opposed;

Whereas Article 9 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities provides that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information or ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers;

Considering that the OSCE High Commissioner's Tallinn Guidelines on National Minorities and Media in the Digital Age provide that States should not impede or restrict the ability of persons belonging to national minorities to access media established in other countries which serve the interests of national minorities; the ability to access such media does not diminish the State's obligation to facilitate and support the development and effective operation of media serving national minorities within their own jurisdictions; States should moreover seek to prevent, or at least mitigate, the negative effects for national minorities of copyright agreements that result in geo-blocking of media content;



Whereas many persons belonging to traditional national or linguistic minorities speak a language which is the majority language of another country in Europe; whereas, due to the often too small number of speakers of the various minorities, it is often not even possible to establish a comprehensive media landscape, which is why access to media from neighbouring countries which speak the same language is indispensable;

Whereas citizens residing in border regions or belonging to traditional national or linguistic minorities are often prevented from accessing audiovisual content in their own languages as a result of geo-blocking, thereby limiting their access to cultural content;

Whereas, without such cross-border access to audiovisual media, minorities find it difficult to maintain their linguistic and cultural ties, and the preservation of their cultural identity is thereby significantly weakened;

The signatories of the Bolzano Declaration of 23 October 2025 commit to facilitating lawful cross-border access to audiovisual content and to ending unjustified geo-blocking and all other forms of discrimination based on nationality and residence with regard to cross-border access to audiovisual content in the internal market;

Agree to work together with the European Union institutions and all relevant stakeholders to achieve this goal and to reform the Geo-Blocking Regulation to this end;

Jointly call on the European legislator to take all necessary measures to enable cross-border access for citizens belonging to traditional national or linguistic minorities to audiovisual content in the internal market.

Arno Kompatscher, Governor of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano – South Tyrol

Oliver Paasch, Minister-President of the German-speaking Community of Belgium

Loránt Vincze, FUEEN President