



Federal Union of European Nationalities

RESOLUTIONS 2023

ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES IN PÉCS • FÜNFKIRCHEN • PEČUH

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FUEN CONGRESS MAIN RESOLUTION 2023

On the need of more meaningful consultations with national minorities

In the times of the ongoing Russian war of aggression in Ukraine and a challenged rules-based international order, FUEN calls policymakers of the global, European, and national levels to have more meaningful engagement with autochthonous national minorities. Such consultations are essential for having more cohesive multi-ethnic and multilingual societies in the EU and beyond.

Therefore, the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at its Assembly of Delegates on 9 September 2023 in Pécs • Fünfkirchen • Pečuh

1. FUEN urges policymakers to re-assess the existing consultative channels through which they engage into a dialogue with autochthonous national minorities. The existing consultative arrangements have to be reinforced for a more meaningful minority-majority exchange.
2. To establish a permanent consultative body under the auspices of the European Parliament. Such mechanism should consist of representatives of the organizations of autochthonous national minorities from all over the EU. The necessary conditions and resources should be created for this consultative body to function effectively.
3. The European Commission should re-assess its decision on the rejection of the Minority SafePack Initiative (MSPI). The MSPI needs to be respected, as it reflects the goals of more than one million citizens from the EU that call for more developed minority protection standards.
4. The EU member-states should proceed with the national-level endorsement of the Minority SafePack. FUEN calls for the cooperation in this regard between the national governments and parliaments and hopes for spill-over endorsement.
5. FUEN offers its full support and expertise to the European and international organisations. We are ready to contribute to the development and implementation of meaningful minority rights protection policies.

The 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Council of Europe's minority rights instruments

6. 2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of two key international documents in the area of the minority rights protection – the Framework Convention on National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by the Council of Europe. Both documents remain central legally binding instrument for protecting minority rights, including linguistic rights, and for ensuring minorities' effective participation in public life and the protection and promotion of historical regional and minority languages in multiethnic societies across Europe.

7. FUEN considers worrying that the Council of Europe recommendations are not always followed-up by legal and policy adjustments by the national governments and urges the Council of Europe to revise and modernize the two legal instruments and ensure their enforcement.

On the institutional relations between the EU and the Council of Europe

8. On 18th April 2023 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the institutional relations between the EU and the Council of Europe ([2022/2137\(INI\)](#)). FUEN acknowledges the importance of this resolution and fully allies with its content.
9. FUEN strongly welcomes the strengthening of the political dialogue and the institutional cooperation in the fields of the protection of minority rights and the linguistic diversity in Europe between the two institutions.
10. FUEN calls for the EU's accession to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (ECtHR). This would allow individuals, including millions of the European citizens who belong to national and linguistic minorities, to bring cases against the EU directly before the ECtHR.

The 30th Anniversary of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM)

11. 2023 also marks the 30th anniversary since the establishment of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. The FUEN values the efforts of HCNM in preventing conflicts of multi-ethnic societies and assisting governments of the OSCE participating States in promoting inclusive integration policies with respect for diversity.
12. FUEN urges the HCNM to pay more attention to cooperation with minority organisations, deepen its partnership with FUEN and provide more resources for supporting minority empowerment. Supporting minority CSOs is especially important in those parts of the OSCE region where minorities are perceived as a security threat.

RESOLUTION

On the protection of autochthonous minorities in Ukraine

FUEN condemns the Russian full-scale war against Ukraine and demands that Russia stops the war immediately without any condition and withdraws its troops from the internationally recognised territory of Ukraine. The war has led to tremendous loss of lives, immense destruction, economic instability, and humanitarian crisis.

Having regard

- A. The war has significantly deteriorated the lives of many, including persons belonging to the autochthonous minorities. Ukrainians, indigenous peoples and autochthonous minorities (especially Crimean Tatars, Greeks, and Roma) have been forcefully displaced away from their homelands and fallen victims to other human rights violations and war crimes committed by the Russian forces.
- B. Indigenous peoples and autochthonous minorities of Ukraine have demonstrated strong civic identity and patriotism since the beginning of the war.

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at its Assembly of Delegates on 9 September 2023 in Pécs • Fünfkirchen • Pečuh:

1. Demands that Russia stops the war immediately without any condition and withdraws its troops from the internationally recognised territory of Ukraine.
2. Call upon the authorities of Ukraine to develop inclusive post-war minority policies and approach cultural and linguistic diversity as an asset of the Ukrainian society and as an integral part of the all-Ukrainian identity.
3. Recognising the previous efforts of the Ukrainian authorities to engage autochthonous minorities and indigenous peoples in a consultation process and call them upon to continue with this process through meaningful involving their organisations, and minority experts in advisory councils under legislative and executive bodies of the local, regional, and national levels.
4. Urges that Ukraine fully complies with the recently issued recommendations of the Opinion of the Venice Commission on the Law of Ukraine “On National Minorities (Communities)” of 9-10 June 2023.
5. Recalls Ukraine to full implementation of the international and bilateral treaty provisions on autochthonous minorities that were previously signed and ratified.
6. Calls on the European Union institutions to support measures that contribute to preserving ethnic and linguistic diversity in Ukraine, especially in the EU accession process of Ukraine and the fulfilment of the Copenhagen admission criteria.
7. Suggests the EU Commission to provide additional resources, including in support for mother tongue education, for helping autochthonous minorities and indigenous peoples affected by the war to preserve their collective identities.

RESOLUTION 2023-01

Plataforma per la Llengua

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 recognition of Catalan speakers and the other autochthonous language communities in Spain as national minorities and their inclusion in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)

With over 10 million speakers, 9 million of which are in Spain, Catalan is the 13th most spoken language in the European Union. In the regions of Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia, Catalan is a co-official language besides Spanish. But the Spanish Government portrays the citizens of Spain as belonging to a single nation and ethnicity, united by the Spanish language. The state authorities impose the use of Spanish in public and private life.

For example, state civil servants in the Catalan-speaking territories are required to be fluent in Spanish but not Catalan.

Although Spain has ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, 1992), the Catalan speakers do not have equal rights and Spain breaches its commitments under the Charter, as recognized by the reports of the Committee of Experts on the implementation of the ECRML.

Spain has also ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (CoE, 1998). However, in a letter to the President of the Advisory Committee, the Government of Spain reiterated that, in line with its constitutional provisions, “it has consistently interpreted the Framework Convention in the sense that no national minority exists in its territory”. According to the opinion of the Spanish government expressed in the aforementioned letter, the Framework Convention applies to the Spanish citizens of the “comunidad gitana” (Roma, Gypsies, Caló), although these citizens “do not constitute a national minority”.

For this reason, Spain did not include the Catalan minority as a protected group. Even though the main law of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands regions (the Estatut) recognises Catalan as a national group and Italy does recognise the Catalans in its ratification of the FCNM.

At the same time, the Spanish government denies that the concept of “minority” can even be applied to Catalans or Catalan speakers and persists in defending that the notion of linguistic minority is irrelevant when it comes to protecting rights. In this regard, it can be assessed that the national and linguistic Catalan minority is also denied the rights afforded by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (OHCHR, 1976),

the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (PEN Club, 1996), the Oslo Recommendations (OSCE, 1998) and the above-mentioned European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992).

Despite the negation of the existence of any minority by the Spanish authorities, the United Nations special rapporteur on minority issues visited Spain in January 2019 to analyse the situation and, in accordance with his definition of minority, consistent with UN standards (see the annual report A/74/160), in March 2020, concluded that Catalan speakers are indeed a minority in the Spanish State and that the development in Spain has generally led to increasing obstacles to the use of minority or regional languages like Catalan.

The European Union is also of little help in protecting linguistic diversity and only safeguards the limited rights agreed between Spain and some European institutions that allow Spanish citizens to communicate in Catalan. Catalan speakers in France and Italy, however, are exempt. Furthermore, the European Commission has refused to initiate legislative reforms to achieve the aims of the Minority SafePack Initiative, despite a favorable resolution of the European Parliament. Due to the lack of state and European recognition, the Catalan-speaking regions are losing speakers, and for new inhabitants, it becomes easier to learn Spanish and make it their everyday language.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates calls upon Spanish authorities to:

1. Include the Catalan-speaking minority as a protected group in the signature of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
2. Recognise its linguistic and national minorities as such.
3. Elaborate a statistical monitoring tool for language vitality in Spain.
4. Make an exhaustive census of the existing national and linguistic minorities in Spain through reliable statistical data and specific questions about linguistic uses and preferences declared feelings of minority belonging or self-identification (linguistic, religious or ethnic)” and publish the statistical results of the responses obtained.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates calls upon the European Commission to:

5. reconsider its position on the Minority SafePack Initiative and initiate the regulatory changes that more than one million Europeans and a majority of the European Parliament have supported.

RESOLUTION 2023-02

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

GREECE SHOULD ACCEPT MUSLIM-TURKISH PRESENCE IN RHODES AND KOS AND RE-OPEN SCHOOLS ON THE BASIS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND STOP DESTRUCTION OF MOSQUES, SHRINES AND CEMETERIES.

Nowadays, the Greek State and the Greek media continue to allege that “there are no Turks but there are Greek Muslims” in Rhodes and Kos.

This allegation is in contradiction with many foreign documents as well as Turkish sources confirming Turkish presence in the islands. One of them is the communiqué dated April 1, 1947 which was issued by Major Konstantinos Krekoukias, the Commander of the Kos Military Administration. The said communiqué stated, “We wish to live with the Turkish inhabitants of Kos in harmony and in an atmosphere of fraternal love”. With this document, the Greek Military Administration refuted the thesis of the Greek State. Another such document is the resolution entitled “The Situation of the Greek Citizens of Turkish descent in Rhodes and Kos” that was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on March 9, 2012.

Apart from that, Greece’s thesis that “Muslim Turks of Rhodes and Kos do not have cultural rights arising from the provisions of international treaties” contradicts the treaties to which Greece is a party. Against this background, the Island Turks have rights arising from treaties including “the Treaty of Athens (1913), Greek Treaty of Sèvres (10 August 1920), Turkey-Greece Population Exchange Agreement (30 January 1923), the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the Treaty of Athens of 1926 and Treaties of Ankara of 1930 and 1933, and Paris Peace Treaty (1947) “. The issue of the succession of states in these treaties is specified in Article 15 of the 1978 Vienna Convention, which stipulates that the concept of “territorial status “ includes not only a part of the territory of a state at the time of the treaty, but also the territory acquired by a country afterwards.

As the FUEN Assembly of Delegates, we demand the following from the Greek State:

- Greece should accept the cultural rights of the Muslim Turks of Rhodes and Kos arising from international treaties.
- The Greek State should make sure that schools that offer education and training in Turkish and Greek on the basis of bilingualism are opened for Turkish children.
- The religious autonomy of the Muslim Turkish minority living in Rhodes and Kos in Greece should be respected, and their freedom to elect their own religious leaders should be accepted.

- Rhodes and Kos Turkish Foundation Administration should not be formed by appointments, but by the free choice of Turks/Muslims living in Rhodes and Kos.
- Necessary steps should be undertaken to restore and protect Turkish cultural heritage and monuments. Deliberate destruction of historical mosques, soup kitchens, cemeteries and shrines should be prevented.

RESOLUTION 2023-03

Turkish Minority of Western Thrace, submitted by the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF), the Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party and the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA)

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:

Discourse of Othering and Stigma of the Turkish Minority in Western Thrace in Greece

Greece has a reputation for being the cradle of democracy, but minority protection lags far behind the minority protection regime provided by international treaties and international standards.

The Turkish minority in Western Thrace is an autochthonous, national minority in Greece. Although it was granted autonomy in the field of education and religion with the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, this autonomous structure is not implemented in practice. The ethnic Turkish identity is not recognised by the Greek state and the Minority is subjected to systematic discrimination in social, economic, public, and political life.

Two out of three deputies both in the prefectures of Rodopi and Xanthi in the 21 May elections were members of the Turkish minority. The only province in which SYRIZA received more than the ruling New Democracy was Rodopi, where the Turkish minority in Western Thrace forms the majority in terms of population.

The developments in the period between the 21 May elections and the renewed elections on 25 June 2023 have clearly revealed the stigmatisation and marginalisation of politicians belonging to the Turkish minority.

After the election result in Rodopi, a political smear campaign was launched, and Turkish deputies and candidates were targeted by using them as tools of the election campaign. The will of the voters and their free elections were ignored, and there were attempts at trying to discredit the Turkish deputies in politics and the media, based on the claim that the high number of votes of the Turkish deputy elected from SYRIZA in Rodopi is the result of Türkiye's interference in the election.

A smear campaign was carried out against the re-elected and the newly elected Turkish deputies from Rodopi and Xanthi, and the aim was to prevent the Turkish deputies from being placed at the top of the election lists in the 25 June 2023 elections. New Democracy MP Candidate from Rodopi Mustafa Katrancı, who has indicated that he will pursue his duty as a deputy with the aim of bringing harmony in the livelihoods of the Christians and Muslims living together in Rodopi, withdrew his candidacy in the elections on 25 June.

The presence of the Turkish minority in the political arena and the ugly political campaigns carried out over the loyalty of the Turkish parliamentary candidates to their country threatens the peaceful environment in the

region. During the election campaign, SYRIZA President Alexis Tsipras used the expression “Turkish minority” in a TV programme, and there were aggressive reactions and verbal attacks insofar as the Minority was not Turkish but described as a “Muslim minority”.

Dora Bakoyannis, one of the leading figures of New Democracy, visited a mountainous Turkish village in Rodopi and intimidated the minority by explaining that the conditions would worsen if the members of the Minority did not vote for them.

The campaign of defamation and targeting against the deputies of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace in the political arena was carried out in the media, and there were attempts at trying to manipulate the will of the electorate by using a provocative and aggressive language in the news, including in the mainstream media. This situation deepens the structural and systematic discrimination against the Turkish minority.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates calls on Greece to:

- end structural and systematic discrimination against the members of the Turkish Minority in Western Thrace.
- prevent the Turkish minority from being instrumentalised by using it as election campaign tool by preventing stigmatisation, defamation and discrediting in the political arena and in the media.
- prevent and punish the spread of hate speech and hate-based thoughts by prohibiting aggressive and offensive language in politics and media.
- encourage the free exercise of all political rights of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace and to respect the free will and right to vote of minority voters.
- guarantee, protect and encourage the participation of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace in political life.
- sign and ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECMRL).

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.

RESOLUTION 2023-05

Interregional Society of Meskhetian Turks “Vatan”

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 about the accession of Georgia in the European Union (EU)

The issue about return of the Meskhetian Turks, the indigenous population of the southern regions of Georgia, forcibly deported by the USSR leadership in 1944, has not yet been resolved.

The Republic of Georgia is currently a candidate country for the EU. The public organization of Meskhetian Turks «Vatan» supports Georgia’s desire to become a member of the European Union. However, solving the problem of Meskhetian Turks should be one of the conditions for Georgia’s admission to the family of European states. The basic principles and values of the European Union are incompatible with a situation where the consequences of such a crime as forced deportation are still a tragedy for an entire nation.

Despite the commitments made before joining the Council of Europe in 1999, Georgia didn’t solve this problem. The legal mechanisms adopted by the Parliament of Georgia for the repatriation of the population deported from the territory turned out to be a formal satisfaction of the requirements of the Council of Europe and had no result in the return of Meskhetian Turks. In addition, in recent years, the Georgian authorities have stopped allowing representatives of the public organization “Vatan” the entry to Georgia, as well as members of organizations of Meskhetian Turks from other countries, which practically stopped the negotiation process on repatriation.

The Assembly of Delegates of FUEN calls on Georgia

to fulfill its obligations, to repatriate the deported population, taking into account reasonable, realistic procedures and conditions of return, with the adoption of necessary legislative measures to restore the rights of the illegally deported population.

FUEN calls for the European Institutions and the EU member States

to identify a complete solution to the problem of Meskhetian Turks, as a criterion for Georgia’s membership in the EU and demand its implementation.

RESOLUTION 2023-06

Joint resolution submitted by the following member organisations of FUEN: Sydslesvigsk Forening (SSF), Domowina - Zwjazk Łužiskich Serbow, Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma, Friesenrat Sektion Nord, EBLUL Deutschland, Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger (BDN), Narodni svet koroških Slovencev (NSKS), Skupnost koroških Slovencev in Slovenk (SKS), Svet Slovenskih Organizacij (SSO)

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 importance of the rule of law for minority rights in the European Union

Introduction:

The European Union, founded on the values of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights, is committed to promoting and upholding the rule of law within its Member States. Respect for human rights and the protection of minorities are fundamental principles that should be sacrosanct in the EU. This resolution emphasizes the importance of the rule of law in ensuring human rights and the protection of minorities in the EU.

Only in a functioning democracy built on the rule of law is minority protection possible that is not dependent on state arbitrariness and randomness.

We call on the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament to ensure the full implementation of the rule of law in all EU member states.

We call on the FUEN Presidium and member organisations to advocate for the implementation of the rule of law in all EU member states at both the national and European levels.

Affirming the importance of the rule of law:

- Fundamental rights and freedoms, based on the values of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, human dignity, freedom and democracy, and protected by the rule of law, are the foundation of a democratic society and are central to the protection of human rights and the protection of minorities.
- EU member states must ensure that the principles of the rule of law are firmly anchored in their national legal systems and upheld by independent judicial bodies.
- The Copenhagen criteria should become legal standards for all EU member states and for the admission of new members to the EU. These criterias shall include among other things, the guarantee of freedom

of expression, freedom of the press, independence of the judiciary, protection of minorities and the fight against corruption.

Human Rights:

- Respect for human rights is a fundamental principle of the EU and must be fully respected and protected by all Member States.
- The EU and its member states must ensure that human rights violations are consistently investigated and punished in EU member states, as well as outside the EU, by establishing effective mechanisms, including robust monitoring, reporting, and cooperation with relevant human rights organizations.
- The EU must take action to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights by engaging in global partnerships, joint initiatives with national and international human rights organizations, and knowledge-sharing platforms.

Protection of minorities:

- The protection of minorities is an integral part of respect for human rights and must be guaranteed in EU member states.
- The EU and EU member states must ensure that minorities are protected from discrimination and persecution and can fully exercise their rights.
- The EU and EU member states must take appropriate measures to promote the integration of minorities and respect their cultural diversity.
- The EU and EU Member States must combat discrimination and racism in all their negative manifestations and take preventive action.

Monitoring mechanisms and sanctions:

- The EU must establish effective mechanisms for monitoring compliance with the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities in its member states.
- In cases of serious and persistent violations of the rule of law, human rights or the protection of minorities, appropriate sanctions must be considered to ensure effective deterrence.

Cooperation with international organisations:

- The EU must intensify its cooperation with international organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the United Nations, to share best practices in the field of rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities.

RESOLUTION 2023-07

Union Generela di Ladins dla Dolomites

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:

Enhance of the written use of minority languages

“Language is the most direct expression of culture; it is what makes us human and gives each of us a sense of identity. The existence side by side of many different languages has been a constant feature of our European continent”, pointed out the European Commissioner for Multilingualism Leonard Orban already in 2009.¹

In support of the European value of multilingualism, we state that:

- Linguistic and cultural diversity is wealth, which Europe shall preserve, nurture, and strengthen in its own interest.
- Europe shall cherish the cultural and linguistic diversity as an added value – they are not a burden.
- Apart from the state languages of the continent, there are least 69 stateless languages. The use of these autochthonous languages by the autochthonous minorities is at the core of the language diversity in Europe.
- The cultural diversity and the linguistic diversity are interconnected.
- Language is a cultural carrier and an identity marker. A language-based culture would cease to exist if the language is no longer in use. Without their own language a cultural community will vanish.
- To preserve the cultural diversity, active language competences in the European minority languages shall be promoted at regional, national, and European levels.
- To ensure the stable and sustainable preservation and future development the rich cultural linguistic environment in Europe, fostering of the written competences in the European minority languages shall become an integral part of the cultural and the educational policies on the continent.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates calls on the regions, the EU member states, and the European Institutions to:

- Promote and support the elaboration of written standards for minority languages, where such are lacking;
- Promote the dissemination and use of the existing written standards for minority languages.

¹ Leonard Orban European Commissioner for Multilingualism „The benefits and challenges of linguistic diversity in Europe” The launch of the civil society platform Brussels, 23/10/2009, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_09_495

RESOLUTION 2023-08

Joint Resolution of the Council of Carinthian Slovenes (NSKS) and the Community of Carinthians Slovenes (SKS)

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 inadequate implementation of minority rights in Austria

The Slovene ethnic group in Carinthia/Koroška basically enjoys comprehensive minority rights, which are enshrined in the Austrian Federal Constitution and in agreements under international law. Despite a significantly improved climate between the majority population and the ethnic group in recent years, these rights are not implemented sufficiently or with great delay. Recently, there have been an increasing number of examples of minority rights not being taken into account in implementing legislation.

1. Education

Although the Austrian State Treaty of 1955 guarantees elementary education in Slovene, there are still no legal regulations for bilingual kindergartens, no regulations for the training and recognition of qualifications of bilingual elementary teachers, and no regulations for bilingual after-school care or bilingual leisure education in general. Due to the fact that Slovene is not offered or not required in many types of schools, the use of the language is lost. In addition, due to the migration of members of the ethnic groups to larger urban centers, the acquisition of the languages of the ethnic groups must also be ensured outside the traditional settlement areas, as required by the Council of Europe in connection with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

A new decree on curricula for elementary schools stipulates, among other things, that for pupils registered for bilingual education in Carinthia/Koroška, subject instruction in German should be 4-6 hours, and subject instruction in Slovene 3-4 hours per week. Although the Minority School Act for Carinthia stipulates that instruction in both languages must take place to approximately the same extent, an unequal distribution of language instruction was made here and 2 Slovenian hours were deleted.

2. Use of the Slovenian language in the jurisdiction

Slovenian is allowed as a court language in three district courts, but these three district courts cover only one third of the bilingual area. Due to an ECJ ruling, all EU citizens are also allowed to use the Slovenian language before the regional court in Klagenfurt/Celovec, while 2/3 of Carinthian Slovenes do not have access to the bilingual jurisdiction. An extension of the admission of the Slovene language as a court language to the entire

bilingual area is vehemently demanded by all representatives of the ethnic groups, as it is guaranteed in Article 7 (3) of the State Treaty.

3. Use of the Slovene language in the administration

In public administration, as in the judiciary, there is a lack of competent bilingual personnel. In tenders for positions in the bilingual field, knowledge of the Slovene language is often not taken into account as a criterion, although the lively use of the language in public life is of immense importance for the preservation of the minority language. Therefore, there is a need for a legal regulation that prescribes the knowledge of the Slovene language for employees in the public administration to an appropriate extent.

4. Amendment of the Ethnic Groups Act

In the course of the place-name sign negotiations in 2011, an important promise was made in the so-called memorandum for the Slovene ethnic group, namely the swift adoption of a “new ethnic group law”. The coalition program from 2020 of the current federal government also provides for an amendment of the Ethnic Groups Act, which dates back to 1976 and urgently needs to be reformed. Unfortunately, the federal government has not yet submitted a draft.

The Federal Union of European Nationalities requests the Austrian Federal Government

- to generally create the legal framework conditions to ensure the learning and teaching of the language of the ethnic groups in all areas of school education from crèche to university, including technical schools, also outside the autochthonous settlement area for all six recognized ethnic groups.
- to initiate a process for an overdue reform of the Minority School Act for Carinthia, including elementary education, recreational education and strengthening bilingualism at the secondary level.
- to implement necessary changes in the curriculum for the bilingual elementary schools in Carinthia by means of ordinances as well as to shape future reforms in the school system with the involvement of the organisations of the ethnic groups.
- to extend access to bilingual jurisdiction for the Slovene ethnic group to the entire bilingual area, including the Klagenfurt Regional Court, and to establish competence centers for the smooth operation of the bilingual courts.
- to regulate by law the knowledge of the Slovene language for employees in the judiciary and in the administration in the bilingual area as well as to promote the language acquisition of the employees by appropriate trainings.
- to subject the Ethnic Groups Act to a comprehensive amendment involving all recognized ethnic groups in Austria, as stipulated in the coalition agreement.

RESOLUTION 2023-09

Joint resolution submitted by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania - RMDSZ, the South Tyrolean People's Party - SVP, the National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary - LDU, the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Croatia – HMDK, and the Roma Community Center from North Macedonia - DROM

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 role and priorities of the FUEN

- A. Recognizing the diverse range of perspectives and priorities within FUEN, and aiming to foster an inclusive and open environment that respects all views;
- B. Acknowledging the goals of FUEN as laid out in the Statutes (Article 3) and the importance of preserving and protecting the national and regional characteristics, language, culture, and individual and collective rights of autochthonous minorities in Europe;
- C. Reaffirming its commitment to the Charter of 2006 signed in Bautzen, which places minority rights in the framework of human rights and sets out the political demands of the member organizations towards individual states, the European Union, and the Council of Europe;
- D. Emphasizing the importance that FUEN, as the historically most prominent minority rights organization in Europe and the largest umbrella organization of minority organizations on the European continent maintains and strengthens its distinctive voice and character within the civil society;

The member organisations of FUEN

- 1. Reaffirm the primary goal of FUEN to represent and serve the interests of its members in the field of minority rights by addressing the concerns, complaints, and aspirations of minority communities and language groups in Europe.
- 2. Stress that FUEN must continue to focus on strengthening legal guarantees for the protection of minorities at the European level and in all European states. This activity is of fundamental importance for member organizations and requires provisions for legal and organizational intervention on their behalf.
- 3. Highlight the activity and mediation role of FUEN in the European states, as well as through its relationship with the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the UN.
- 4. Consider it important to strengthen the presence of FUEN as an umbrella organization for autochthonous minorities in all European states and aim to welcome new member organizations representing minority communities.

5. Recognising the existence of disparities in the situation and the needs of minorities within different countries of Europe, encourage the member organizations to work together based on mutual understanding to successfully influence policies relevant to minorities.
6. Commit to strengthening the organization's clear and strong collective voice in advocating for minority rights by maintaining its focus on its core objectives set out in its statute.
7. Stress that FUEN should continue to promote dialogue, cooperation, and partnership on national, European, and international levels with governments, institutions, and organizations working towards the protection and advancement of minority rights, fostering constructive engagement and mutual respect.
8. Emphasize the importance that FUEN upholds in its activity inclusivity, equality, and the protection of minority rights within their respective countries and that it strongly combats discrimination and hate speech against national minorities.
9. Encourage open and respectful discussions within FUEN and its structures to ensure in the framework of democracy and rule of law, respecting human and minority rights that the diverse perspectives of member organizations are fully respected.
10. Invite member organizations to cooperate and exchange best practices, expertise, and knowledge, fostering a collective effort to promote minority issues across Europe.

RESOLUTION 2023-10

Verband der deutschen sozio-kulturellen Gesellschaften in Polen VdG [Association of German Socio-Cultural Societies in Poland]

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 role of FUEN and especially in challenges of member organisations.

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) is concerned about the situation of national and ethnic minorities in many states of Europe. The lack of common standards regarding minority rights in Europe means that rights that are taken for granted in one EU state are not regulated at all in another. In addition, there are situations, as is currently the case in Poland, where a minority is treated differently from other minorities living in Poland for political reasons. At the same time, there should be common rules on how minorities should be treated, especially at the European level, where human rights policy and minority policy are admission criteria for EU accession. The basis for a common standard can be the conventions of the Council of Europe with the European Language Charter and with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as well as the FUEN Charter of Autochthonous National Minorities / Ethnic Groups in Europe (Bautzen/Budyšin of 2006). Due to their size and the available resources, the organisations of the respective minorities in the various countries are often overwhelmed in their search for solutions in difficult situations.

Therefore, FUEN calls on the institutions of the European Union to:

- a. take action to defend the European values that are violated by regulations in the field of minorities;
- b. send a strong political message to countries that violate minority rights and thereby human rights;
- c. take measures to improve the knowledge of the obligations of member states with regard to human rights and rights of minorities in the EU;
- d. take measures to protect the endangered minority languages in the EU;
- e. recruit a Commissioner for Minority Rights or another senior official of the EU Commission for Minority Rights;

FUEN calls on the Council of Europe to:

- a. increase the pressure on the countries that have ratified the Council of Europe documents on the protection of minorities to fully comply with the obligations arising from the ratified Framework Convention and the Language Charter;
- b. take measures to improve knowledge of the obligations of the Framework Convention and the Language Charter in the respective government administrations of the countries and the local authorities;

The FUEN is committed to:

- a. focus on its core objectives as defined in its statutes and to strengthen member organisations in the defense of minority rights with a clear and strong common voice.
- b. actively accompany and support the member organizations of FUEN in the search for solutions to pending problems
- c. look for possibilities and support to make possible the preservation of the minority languages in the different countries of the EU.
- d. support in difficult situations, especially when not only the legislation of the respective country, but also the legislation on the European level should be taken into account.



POLITICAL
PARTICIPATION

FUNDAMENTAL
RIGHTS

LINGUISTIC
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SOLIDARITY
WITH
THE ROMA

EUROPEAN
CITIZENS'
INITIATIVE

EUROPEAN
NETWORK

FORUM OF THE
EUROPEAN
MINORITIES



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