

FUEN IS:



THE LARGEST AND MOST REPRESENTATIVE UMBRELLA ORGANISATION OF EUROPE'S AUTOCHTHONOUS NATIONAL MINORITIES, NATIONALITIES AND LANGUAGE GROUPS

THE UMBRELLA ORGANISATION OF MORE THAN 100 MINORITY ORGANISATIONS FROM 35 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



A MUTUAL SUPPORT COMMUNITY AND THE MAIN ADVOCATE OF MINORITY RIGHTS IN EUROPE



THE VOICE OF THE MINORITIES AT INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE



WE RUN THREE OFFICES: IN FLENSBURG, BERLIN AND BRUSSELS

THE YEAR WE ALL CHANGED

The year that had passed since 2019's Anniversary Congress of FUEN can be split up in two parts. 2019, when we celebrated 70 years of working for the interests of national minorities and language groups of Europe, felt like a joyride with a successful congress in Slovakia, the launch of two brand new projects – the *Minority Monitor* and the *Build Yourself!* capacity-building trainings –, the group draw of EUROPEADA 2020 in Carinthia / Koroška, Austria and the *Dialogue for a Stable Future* in Kyiv, Ukraine and the *Forum of the European Minority Regions* in Potsdam, Germany.

2020 started on the same note with two important steps for the Minority SafePack and the opening of our new office in Berlin. And then the COVID-19 pandemic hit in. Since then, 2020 has been about adjustments, uncertainties and compromises. Not only for FUEN, but pretty much for the whole world. For us, it meant the postponement of the MSPI Public Hearing in the European Parliament and the decision of the European Commission and the postponement of many important events – including our flagship event of the year, the EUROPEADA, which will now take place in the summer of 2021.

It is still hard to believe how much the world changed from one moment to another, coming to a standstill before slowly waking up, shaking itself and getting back on its feet. And we all changed with it. But the most important thing is that we are still here, after a crisis which made us all reconsider our main values. In this new world the things we always thought about as given are appreciated again at their true value. Family, friends, community seem to be much more important for us now, after spending months in isolation. What we have to do now is to build upon these rediscovered values and make our communities prosper. We are looking forward to this challenge.



EVENTS CALENDAR

- **12-16.06.2019** FUEN Congress in Bratislava and Dunajská Streda, Slovakia
- **18.06.2019** Visit by German State Secretary Stephan Mayer, Flensburg, Germany
- **23.06.2019** Flensburg Marathon, Flensburg, Germany
- **25.06.2019** Meeting with Members of the Dutch Parliament, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- **27.06.2019** 6th International Conference by the International Association of Language Commissioners, Toronto, Canada

- **05.07.2019** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Czernowitz, Ukraine
- **08.07.2019** Visit by Bund der Jugend der deutschen Minderheit (BJDM), Berlin, Germany, AGDM
- **19.07.2019** Presidium Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- **22.07.2019** Meeting with Members of Slovene Parliament, Ljubljana, Slovenia

- **02.08.2019** Memorials on the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Germany
- **05.08.2019** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Odessa, Ukraine
- **17-18.08.2019** Day of Open Doors in the Federal Ministry of the Interior, AGDM represented with a Stand, Berlin, Germany
- **21.08.2019** ProEtnica Intercultural Festival in Sighisoara/Segesvár/Schäßburg, Romania
- **22.08.2019** Meeting of the Committee on the 100th Anniversary of the Danish-German Border Region, Kiel, Germany
- **19-21.08.2019** Fact Finding Mission to the Kumyk Turks, Moscow, Russia
- **31.08.2019** Day of the Homeland by the Bund der Vertriebenen, Berlin, Germany

- **02.09.2019** ifa Culture Manager's Meeting, Berlin, Germany, AGDM
- **03-06.09.2019** Visit by the Danish Queen Margarethe II., Flensburg, Germany
- **06.09.2019** ECMI Roundtable, Berlin, Germany
- **06.09.2019** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Chisinau, Moldova
- **11.09.2019** Meeting with Minority Commissioner of the Land Schleswig-Holstein Johannes Callsen, Flensburg, Germany

- **13.09.2019** Meeting with Members of the Lithuanian Parliament, Vilnius, Lithuania
- **13-15.09.2019** Youth Festival in Slovakia, Ružomberok, Slovakia, AGDM
- **26-27.09.2019** 30th Anniversary of Wiedergeburt, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
- **30.09.2019** Meeting of the Dialog Forum Norden, Region Syddanmark in Vejle, Denmark

- **03.10.2019** Official Ceremony on the Occasion of the Day of German Unity, Kiel, Germany
- **10-11.10.2019** International Symposium on Turkish Foundations in Rhodes and Kos, Izmir, Turkey
- **11.10.2019** Meeting with Members of the Czech Parliament, Prague, Czech Republic
- **17.10.2019** Meetings with Members of the Irish Parliament, Dublin, Ireland
- **18-20.10.2019** Annual Meeting of the Working Group of Non-Kin-State Minorities inside FUEN, Constanta, Romania
- **25.10.2019** Workshop Minorities in Europe in Akademie Sankelmark, Oversee, Germany

- **02.11.2019** German Day, Tingleff, Denmark
- **04-07.11.2019** Annual Meeting of the Working Group of German Minorities inside the FUEN, Berlin, Germany
- **07.11.2019** Schackenborg Dialogue 20-20 with Kinga Gal, Tønder, Denmark
- **14-17.11.2019** Annual Seminar of the Working Group of Slavic Minorities inside the FUEN, Carinthia, Austria
- **15.11.2019** 30th Jubilee Minorities Congress of the Land Carinthia, Carinthia, Austria
- **16.11.2019** EUROPEADA 2021 Group Draw, Carinthia, Austria
- **22-24.11.2019** Build Yourself! Module 1, Berlin, Germany
- **27-29.11.2019** Dialogue for a Stable Future, Kyiv, Ukraine
- **27.11.2019** Meeting of European Dialogue Forum, Strasbourg, France
- **28.11.2019** Presentation of the MSPI Legislative Proposals in the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France
- **28.-29.11.2019** Forum on Minority Issues, Geneva, Switzerland

- **06-08.12.19** Build Yourself! Module 2, Berlin, Germany
- **10.12.2019** Visit by young Minority Leaders from Moldova, Flensburg, Germany
- **11-12.12.2019** Forum of the European Minority Regions, Potsdam, Germany

- **01.01.2020** Former Executive President Éva Péntzes becomes Secretary General of FUEN
- **08.01.2020** New Year's Reception of the Land Schleswig-Holstein in Schloss Schleswig, Kiel, Germany
- **10.01.2020** Registration of MSPI Signatures by the European Commission's Online System
- **10-11.01.2020** Working Visit to the Breton Community, France

- **11.01.2020** Day of German Self-Governments in Hungary, Pécs, Hungary
- **16.01.2020** New Year's Reception of the German Border Association, Sankelmark, Germany
- **16.-19.01.2020** BDN New Year's Conference, Sankelmark, Germany
- **16.01.2020** Meeting with Member of the German Parliament Filiz Polat, Berlin, Germany
- **20.01.2020** Working Session on the Minority Competence Network, Germany
- **23.01. 2020** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Novosibirsk, Russia
- **24-26.01.2020** Build Yourself! Module 3, Vienna, Austria
- **27.01.2020** Meeting with Members of Estonian Parliament, Tallinn, Estonia
- **29.01.2020** Visit by the Institute of Ethnic Groups, Berlin, Germany

- **05.02.2020** Presentation of MSPI's Legislative Proposals to the European Commission, Brussels, Belgium
- **10.02.2020** Presentation of MSPI's Legislative Proposals to Members of the German Parliament, Berlin, Germany
- **10.02.2020** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
- **13.02.2020** Meeting of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities in the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France
- **20.02.2020** Opening of the new FUEN Office, Berlin, Germany
- **21.02.2020** Presidium Meeting, Berlin, Germany
- **25.02.2020** ECI Day 2020, Brussels, Belgium
- **26.02.2020** FRA – Fundamental Rights Plattform Meeting, Berlin, Germany
- **27.02.2020** Visit by Piret Hartmann from the Ministry of Culture in Estonia, Berlin, Germany

- **04.03.2020** Reception by SPD in Alsion, Sønderborg, Denmark
- **05.03.2020** AGDM Travelling Exhibition Opening Event, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- **10.03.2020** Preview –The Invisible Bond: Stories from the Danish-German Border, Flensburg, Germany
- **27.03.2020** Digital Kick-off Meeting BLP 2.0-Western Balkans – SH

- **01-30.04.2020** Do You Speak Corona? FUEN online survey
- **06.05.2020** FUEN Presidium Meeting – online
- **11.05.2020** Presentation of the result of the Do You Speak Corona? survey in the Minority Intergroup of the European Parliament, Brussels
- **20-21.05.2020** AGDM Online Meeting

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MINORITY SAFEPACK INITIATIVE

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his has been the busiest period for the Minority SafePack Initiative since its start in 2013. Since the decision that the statements of support would be submitted to the newly enshrined European Commission at the end of 2019, an international group of experts was working around the clock to transform the nine proposals of the MSPI into concrete legislative proposals to be presented to the EC alongside the signatures.





Presenting the legislative proposals

The legislative proposals based on the nine points of the MSPI were presented for the first time in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, at the informal meeting of the Minority Intergroup on 28 November 2019. The legislative proposals were presented by MEP Loránt Vincze, the President of the FUEN and the representatives of the expert group Günther Rautz and Thomas Hieber alongside MSPI policy advisor Dénes András Nagy. The MSPI aims to promote the rights of national and linguistic minorities and ensure their protection at EU level and calls on the EU to use the tools at its disposal in this regard. The experts pointed out that although the EU Treaty lists the respect for rights of persons belonging to minorities as an EU value, EU action and EU legal measures for protecting national and linguistic minorities are absent. The members of FUEN's European Dialogue Forum and many MEPs were present, who were supportive of the proposals.

Submitting the statements of support

The statements of support for the Minority SafePack Initiative were registered on the European Commission's online system on 10 January 2020. The FUEN-coordinated campaign began in April 2017, and 1,123,422 of the signatures collected during the one-year period have been validated by the authorities of 28 EU Member States. Initially our plan was to submit the signatures on 3 December 2019, but at the request of the European Commission we agreed to wait until 2020.

Meeting the European Commission

The European Union has by far the biggest influence on the daily life of European citizens and is one of the most important guarantors of the respect of the rule of law and fundamental rights, but policy at EU-level for the protection of national and linguistic minorities is still lacking. We initiated the Minority SafePack to fill this void.



On 5 February 2020 we finally had the first eye level meeting with the European Commission on our Minority SafePack Initiative since its launch in 2013. We witnessed genuine interest on behalf of Vice President Věra Jourová, Vice President of the European Commission for Values and Transparency, Responsible for the European Citizens' Initiative system, Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner Responsible for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth and several representatives of the Secretariat General and Directorate General. We presented the legislative proposals based on the nine points of the MSPI and we made clear that we aim to strengthen existing EU policies to support linguistic and cultural diversity and to protect autochthonous minority communities and language groups as part of our European heritage.

European lobby

Getting the support of stakeholders and decisionmakers is an important element of the MSPI strategy. The fate of the initiative lies in the hands of the European institutions, and because of that we are working continuously on getting the needed endorsement in the European Parliament, European Commission, European Council and in the Member States. Only last year, FUEN delegations paid visit and met high-level government and parliament representatives in Slovenia, Lithuania, Ireland and the Czech Republic – where they even secured the support of Prime Minister Andrej Babiš. FUEN representatives also met members of the Dutch parliament, government officials in Estonia and presented the MSPI to members of the Bundestag.

While the coronavirus pandemic made face-to-face meetings impossible during spring and summer of 2020, the lobby team is already working hard on scheduling the next visits. Europe, get ready, we are coming!



What's next?

After the successful meeting with the European Commission on 5 February 2020, we were getting ready for the Public Hearing in the European Parliament on 23 March. This was supposed to be followed by a Plenary Debate in the EP and then the decision of the European Commission, for which the deadline has been set for 10 July. Of course, the pandemic came, and everything was postponed. The Public Hearing is now set to take place on 15 October 2020. We know this for sure: we will be ready, whenever the events take place.



EUROPEADA 2021

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Heading into 2020 we had a very good feeling regarding our flagship project of the year, EUROPEADA 2020. The location of the European football championship of minorities, Carinthia / Koroška in Austria looked stunningly beautiful, the local partners were doing a great job of preparing and promoting the event, as showcased by the official draw, which took place in November 2019 in Sankt Kanzian / Skočján, Austria with the participation of many of the 24 men and 7 women teams from the tournament. Everything seemed to be in place for an unforgettable summer event, but everybody knows what happened next, and suddenly the health and security of teams and all participants became our highest priority.





The EUROPEADA will now take place from 19 June 2021 to 27 June 2021 in Carinthia / Koroška, Austria. The participating teams were already informed and the organisers are continuously working on rescheduling the event. In these hard times, EUROPEADA's slogan, "together - skupaj - zusammen" is more meaningful than ever. See you in 2021!



FUEN CONGRES

12-16 June 2019

Bratislava
Dozsony
ressburg

70 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CONGRESS 2019

The 70 Year Anniversary 2019 Congress of FUEN was organised in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg and Dunajská Streda/Dunaszerdahely in Slovakia between the 12th and 16th of June. The Congress, hosted by the MKP, the minority organisation of Hungarians in Slovakia, in partnership with the Carpathian-German Association of Slovakia provided an opportunity to evaluate the accomplishments of 70 years of FUEN, in the presence of the former presidents of the organisation. The direction



for the minority umbrella organisation for the decades to come was also drafted. The Congress served as an opportunity to focus on the situation of minorities in Slovakia, the hosting country, and also the minorities of Ukraine.





FUEN Prize

Former German Commissioner for Matters Related to Ethnic German Resettlers and National Minorities Hartmut Koschyk was the first personality to receive the FUEN Prize, awarded to persons who have made a special contribution to dialogue, the protection of national minorities and the coexistence of minorities, language communities and the majority in Europe. The FUEN Presidium's unanimous choice was based on the dedication, involvement and performances during the many years in which Mr. Koschyk worked on minority protection – said FUEN Vice President Olga Martens in her laudatory speech, adding that Koschyk's example has to be inspirational to all minorities in Europe.







The FUEC Assembly of Delegates reelected Loránt Vincze as President, and elected a new Presidium, the Members of the European Dialogue Forum and Auditors.





DIALOGUE FOR A STABLE FUTURE



Last year, FUEN went on a mission to empower national minorities in Ukraine and in countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia. Building trust between majorities and minorities, enhancing cooperation among the minorities of countries of Eastern Partnership, and providing a platform for exchange of information with representatives of authorities responsible for minority affairs was the focus of the FUEN event *Dialogue for a Stable Future*, held between 27-29 November 2019 in Kyiv, Ukraine. The follow-up to FUEN's project *Minorities in the Caucasus – Dialogue for a Stable Future* proved to be even more attractive than its predecessors, with more than 60 participants taking part in the event. This is a clear sign that there is potential in this approach, and that we should continue to work with the minorities in the region and show them that we are present here – says FUEN Vice President Gösta Toft.

The aim of this FUEN project is to get first-hand reports on the current situation of minorities regarding education rights, the use of mother language, access to media, integration in the society and identifying ways of helping them achieving their goals. To facilitate the political participation of minorities a dialogue at eye level with political decisionmakers and minority affairs authorities, state and city representatives was also part of the program. Participants visited a radio and a TV station operated by the Crimean Tatars and the Babi Yar and Roma memorial.

FORUM OF THE EUROPEAN MINORITY REGIONS



about migration in itself, the existence of more opportunities and gaining of international experience are all assets, but the challenge is how we attract these highly skilled workers back home, so that their home countries and minority communities would benefit from their much needed knowledge and experience. During 11-12 December 2019 experts, regional and minority leaders and decisionmakers discussed the ways in which minority regions can counter the effects of workforce migration and brain drain at the Brandenburg State Parliament in Potsdam. FUEN's Forum of the European Minority Regions.





The exodus of young, highly skilled work force and labour migration in general have an additional very severe impact on minority communities, as the political weight of a minority community is directly linked to its number, so losing the young, skilled members of the community has severe future consequences on its political representation capital. It also makes the communities more vulnerable, weaker, with less internal resources for recovery and development. This is a formidable challenge for every community, but at the Forum we have also seen successful ways of promoting remigration through politics, policies, cross-border collaboration and civil activism. Cross-border commuting for work was another topic discussed at the Forum, where there was a consensus that commuting is beneficial and should be aided by the states.



FUEN OFFICE OPENING IN BERLIN

The Federal Union of European Nationalities has moved into a new office in Berlin, which they share with other organizations committed to the protection of minority rights: the Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) and the Society for Threatened Peoples International. On this occasion, we have invited our partners, supporters and friends to join us on 20 February 2020 to celebrate the official opening of our new bureau in Berlin Charlottenburg (Kaiser Friedrich-Straße 90).

Among the invitees were Hungarian Ambassador in Germany Dr. Péter Györkös, State Secretary Ingbert Liebing, Plenipotentiary of the State of Schleswig-Holstein to the Federal Government, State Secretary Tobias Dünow, State Representative for Sorb / Wendish Affairs and Former Federal Government Commissioner for Resettlers and National Minorities, Former State Secretary Hartmut Koschyk. FUEN was represented by the FUEN Presidium, former members of the Presidium and several staff members.

The new office is really something to behold, and we have to confess that we missed it a lot during the lockdown and we are glad that we are finally able to get back to working from there.



NEW PROJECTS



MINORITY MONITOR

MINORITY MONITOR

Presented at the Anniversary Congress, the Minority Monitor is a new online tool that can be used by the minorities if they encounter a breach of their minority rights, face discrimination, or if they want to share a case of good practices with each other.

FUEN's member organisations expect us to put the problems the minorities have to face, the cases of discrimination, of minority rights breach on the map – and this new initiative does exactly that. But the Minority Monitor is more than a database of problems, as FUEN also aims to present a database of solutions, with good practices from all over Europe.

As the database grows, the Minority Monitor will work as a unified European information centre, the news will be sent to all major media providers, and it will also become a strong resource for our European lobby.

www.minoritymonitor.eu



BUILD YOURSELF!

Alongside the community-building and cultural projects of FUEN and its role as the defender of minority rights across Europe, the Build Yourself! project, launched in 2019, brings something new to the table. The aim of these capacity-building trainings is the knowledge-based organizational development of the FUEN, and this implies the development of the people working in the organizations. Learning is key, and we want to make FUEN and its member organizations better, more qualified and well-trained. The Build Yourself! programme is the best opportunity to achieve just that. We are glad that so many people were and are interested in it, as they consider it a great opportunity to develop themselves and their organizations. Three training sessions have been organized until now, the first two (“Advocacy and lobbying for NGOs. Presentation and public speaking skills” and “Online communication, Campaign communication”) in Berlin and the third one (“Fundraising and community management”) in Vienna. Unfortunately due to the coronavirus outbreak in Italy we had to cancel the fourth installment of Build Yourself! in South Tyrol in the last moment. For the time being, the project will continue as a series of webinars, which has already started in July.

Join us and build yourself!

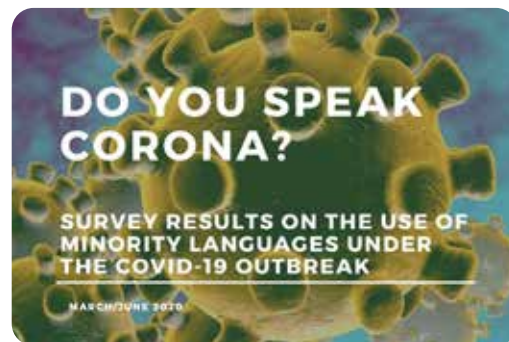
buildyourself.fuen.org

IN OTHER NEWS

Do you speak Corona? A FUEN survey on minority language use during the pandemic

FUEN has conducted a survey between 31 March – 30 April 2020 to analyze to what extent communication in minority languages is assured by diverse stakeholders in the Member States of the European Union, as well as among the members of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN). The online questionnaire focused on the availability of information related to COVID-19 in general, healthcare information related to the outbreak, the existence of an emergency hotline operated in minority language and the availability of online education in mother tongue. Until the end of April, the survey was completed for 29 minority groups in 18 European countries.

» **For the results check fuen.org!**



UN recommendations on minority education include FUEN's proposals

The European Commission should elaborate specific legislative proposals based on the language-related and education-related provisions of the Minority Safepack Initiative – says one of the recommendations of the European Regional Forum on Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities. The recommendations of the Regional Forum, held in May 2019 in Brussels, were presented in November 2019 by UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Mr. Fernand de Varennes. The forum was developed jointly by the Special Rapporteur and a consortium of non-governmental organizations working for the human rights of minorities in Europe. FUEN president Loránt Vincze and the members of FUEN's Education Working Group played an active role in the forum, with many of their proposals ending up in the recommendations.

Stephan Mayer visits FUEN

Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Development and Community Stephan Mayer visited the FUEN office in Flensburg on Tuesday, 18 June 2019. This was the State Secretary's first visit to Flensburg/Flensborg.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Development and Community is a main financial supporter of FUEN's work for many years. It is all the more pleasing that the State Secretary took a visit to our headquarters in Flensburg after confirming the good co-operation and the importance of the FUEN by attending the 70 Year Anniversary Congress in Bratislava/Pressburg/Pozsony. At his visit in Flensburg, Mr Mayer once again expressed his open-mindedness and goodwill towards the Minority SafePack, which, in his view, could enrich the standards of minority protection in the EU.

The representatives of FUEN Member organisations SSF of the Danish minority in Germany, Jon Hardon Hansen and BDN, the organisation of Germans from Denmark, Hinrich Jürgensen and Friisk Foriining (North Frisians), Bahne Bahnsen were also present at the meeting.



FUEN visits Toronto

At the invitation of the International Association of Language Commissioners, FUEN president Loránt Vincze presented the current situation of European national minorities at the association's 6th International Conference in Toronto, Canada in July 2019.

Mr. Vincze pointed out that although the motto of the European Union is "United in diversity", this diversity only means the 24 official languages. "But what about the several dozens of minority languages in the member states, like the Frisian language in Netherlands, the Welsh in the UK, the Sorbian language in Germany, and so on? Something needs to be done, and my organization, the FUEN, with other NGOs from Europe, started a Citizens' Initiative for the protection and promotion of the autochthonous minorities" – said the FUEN president at the event.

WORKING GROUPS

WORKING GROUP OF GERMAN MINORITIES (AGDM)

The year 2019 was in many respects a year full of challenges for the Berlin-based coordination office of the Working Group of German Minorities (AGDM). The AGDM projects already started were successfully continued in 2019 and new approaches were successfully initiated and the coordination office was strengthened under the guidance of speaker Bernard Gaida. Thus the aim of the AGDM – to be a contact and service point for the German minorities in Berlin – was increasingly perceived. The year 2019 was marked by three important projects of the AGDM:

Travelling Exhibition “IN TWO WORLDS”

The AGDM travelling exhibition “In two worlds. 25 German stories. German minorities introduce themselves”, which has been on tour in Europe since 2017, travelled from Latvia (Riga) to Estonia (Tartu), the Czech Republic (Prague), Ukraine (Kiev, Chernivtsi and Odessa), Moldova (Chisinau) and the Russian Federation (Novosibirsk) in 2019. In the first half of 2020, the exhibition continued to Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan) and Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek). Our further plans were unfortunately upset by the Corona pandemic, so that we had to cancel the planned exhibition venues in Uzbekistan, Georgia and Serbia. Until the relaxation of COVID-19 measures, the travelling exhibition is temporarily stored in Hungary.

It is estimated that the exhibition was visited by a total of about 10,000 people in 2020. In 2021 the project of the travelling exhibition will come to an end, after having visited 30 exhibition sites.



The 1. Youth Meeting of the AGDM

The AGDM member organisations have clearly opted for the absolute necessity of strengthening and systematising youth work in the AGDM. They decided that only through increased activity in youth work a fundamental and future-oriented realignment of the German minorities in the CEE and CIS countries can be achieved.

The youth conference took place from April 4 to 7, 2019 in the educational institution of the German minority in Denmark on the Knivsberg. A total of 24 participants from Kazakhstan, Serbia, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Georgia, Croatia, Denmark, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation took part in the conference. The group devoted itself to topics that are important for the structure of youth work within the AGDM. The participants elected Mr. Patrik Lompart, the chairman of the Carpathian German Youth in Slovakia as youth coordinator and Mr. Eugen Wagner, chairman of the Youth Ring of Russian Germans was elected as deputy youth coordinator.



AGDM Annual Meeting

The 28th Annual Conference of the AGDM took place in Berlin from 5 to 8 November 2019. The conference was attended by 40 representatives and youth representatives of minority organisations from 19 European countries and countries of the former Soviet Union.

With the great support of the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Matters Related to Ethnic German Resettlers and National Minorities, Prof. Dr. Bernd Fabritius, numerous and important discussions with decision-makers in German political life took place. The youth of the German minorities was one of the focal points of the conference in 2019. On this occasion the youth representatives of the AGDM member organisations met already on 4 November, for a special session with Prof. Bernd Fabritius, in which both sides set important impulses for the future of the German minorities.

In the German Bundestag, during the discussion with the Chairperson of the Committee on Internal Affairs in the Bundestag, Mrs. Andrea Lindholz, as well as with the members of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group “Expellees, Resettlers, German minorities”, the idea of establishing a sub-committee on “German minorities” in the Bundestag was initiated. The 2019 conference once again confirmed the good cooperation with the BKM (Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media), the Federal State Commissioners for Ethnic German Resettlers and Displaced Persons, the BMI (Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Homeland Affairs) and the Federal Foreign Office and brought it to a higher level.



WORKING GROUP OF SLAVIC MINORITIES (AGSM)

The Working Group of Slavic Minorities is a well established working group in the FUEN network whose seminars of the Slavic minorities in Europe have a long tradition. In the year 2017 the coordination of the AGSM was taken over by the FUEN Coordination Office, whereby the long-standing efforts of the working group to further develop and professionalize its activities could finally be realized. The fact that this was an extremely reasonable step was not only confirmed by the members but also by the internal strategies of the FUEN.

In 2019, when the FUEN celebrated its 70th anniversary, the AGSM family has grown by three new member organisations and thus already has 29 members. New members come from the Slovene minority in Italy, the Pomaks in Greece and the Slovaks and Czechs from Romania.

Due to a stable funding by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, the AGSM was able to develop significantly in 2019 and record an increased political participation and public presence as well as numerous new cooperations.

Since 2019 the AGSM has been sending out a newsletter at regular intervals, it has a new, thoroughly designed homepage (www.agsm.fuen.org), and has published a brochure about its members, which is available under the new homepage. These were important steps to strengthen the public presence, which should lead to an increased awareness of the concerns of the Slavic minorities in Europe.

The AGSM met in Bratislava/Pressburg/Pozsony, Slovakia for its regular working session during the FUEN Anniversary Congress, where its activities and the concerns of the Slavic minorities in Europe were presented. The already 22nd Seminar of Slavic Minorities in Europe took place in Bleiburg / Pliberk and Carinthia / Koroška, Austria, where the AGSM was received at the highest political level, namely by Carinthian Governor Dr. Peter Kaiser. On site, three mayors, whose municipalities cooperate in an exemplary manner with Slovenian neighbours in cross-border projects, presented numerous projects and initiatives for peaceful coexistence. The Carinthian Slovenes were thus able to present themselves with many best-practice examples which could serve as models for other Slavic minorities. At the seminar Dr. Angelika Mlinar, a Carinthian Slovene and Vice President of the FUEN, was elected as the new spokeswoman of the AGSM. The whole AGSM family would like to take this opportunity to thank their former speaker and co-founder, Bernhard Ziesch, for his many years of commitment! Džakujemo Bjarnat!



WORKING GROUP OF TURKIC MINORITIES (TAG)

The Working Group of Turkic Minorities/Communities (TAG) inside FUEN was established in 2013. It unites the Turkic minorities and communities under the FUEN umbrella and promotes solidarity and cooperation among Turkic minorities and communities in a vast geographical area ranging from the Balkans to the Caucasus.

The Spokesperson of the Working Group is FUEN Vice President Halit Habip Oğlu, the President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF). Halit Habip Oğlu has been elected for the third term at the FUEN Congress held on 12-16 June 2019 in Bratislava, Slovakia. The Secretariat of the Working Group is carried out by ABTTF, an NGO established in 1998 and based in Germany with two representative offices in Brussels and Athens with an exclusive focus on the rights of the Turkish community in Western Thrace in Greece.

The Working Group holds annual meetings every year with the participation of representatives of member organizations as well as guests from other Turkic minorities and communities from different countries. The Working Group pays study visits in which the Spokesperson meets representatives of the Turkic minorities and communities and organizes fact-finding missions to investigate their problems.

The Working Group carries out many international activities since 2013 with the participation of Turkic minorities and communities with alarming problems. With the sponsorship of the FUEN TAG, Turkic minorities and communities attend meetings and conferences organized by the UN, the OSCE and pay study visits to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in order to enable them to raise their own voices at the international level.



TAG Coordination

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International Workshop and Conference on Bilingual Education, Komotini/Greece, 1-2 March 2019

With the support of the FUEN TAG, the Federation of Western Thrace Turks (ABTTF), the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA) and the Culture and Education Foundation of Western Thrace Minority (PEKEM) in cooperation with FUEN organized an international workshop and conference on 2 March 2019 with the topic “Bilingual Education: A Minority Issue – Bilingualism in Turkish/Muslim Minority Education and Different Approaches in the World – Problems and Possible Solutions”. Scholars, bilingual education experts, educators belonging to the Turkish community in Western Thrace and representatives of the civil society participated at the workshop and conference held in the city of Komotini. As the special guest, Prof. Dr. Fernand de Varennnes, United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, made a keynote speech at the conference.

Prior to the workshop and conference, scholars and experts participated at the cultural programme organized by the Western Thrace Turkish civil society organizations. As part of the cultural programme, speakers visited Komotini and Xanthi and other Turkish villages and met with the representatives of the Turkish community in Western Thrace.

Study Visit to Moscow, 20 August 2019

FUEN paid a fact-finding mission to Moscow, Russia in order to examine the membership application of the “Qumuqlar”, the NGO which represents the Kумыk Turks in Russia. Regarding their application, as the Vice President responsible for membership applications, Halit Habip Ođlu met with the Kумыks in Moscow.

Following the meeting with the Kумыks, Habip Ođlu met with representatives of the Turkic communities living in Moscow.



NON-KIN-STATE WORKING GROUP

The Non-Kin-State Working Group was founded by the FUEN in 2017 to give minorities without a kin-state the opportunity to discuss their specific concerns and challenges, to find solutions and to develop common strategies for the preservation of their small languages and cultures. Its first ever official meeting took place in November 2017 in Rome, Italy. The working group aims to give minorities without a kin-state the opportunity to establish a fruitful dialogue and strengthen their connections. The group's speaker is FUEN Vice President Bahne Bahnsen.

Annual Meeting in Constanta, Romania

Digitalization and new technologies are our chance – this thought by the Arman community's representative Sterica Fudulea was the conclusion of the Annual Meeting of FUEN's Non-Kin-State Working Group in Constanta, Romania held on 18-20 October 2019. Thirty representatives of ten different minorities (North Frisians, Ruthenians, Alsatians, Aromanians, Pomaks, Roma, Crimean Tatars, Tatars from Romania) joined the Annual Meeting focusing on media and digitalisation, hosted by the Arman (Aromun, Aromanian) community from Romania.

Local political leaders and the representatives of the Armans and the Tatars also greeted the participants, calling Constanta a city symbol for multiethnic tolerance, calling for mutual understanding but also talking about the Arman identity as a very emotional topic.

Numerous representatives of the minorities in the region and politicians at local and regional level took part in a discussion on the political participation of the Non-Kin State minorities, after a presentation on the different mechanisms and instruments that the state provides to the minorities or that can be demanded from the minorities. The Aromanians also had the opportunity to present their culture, history and current situation to the participants: the critical minority political situation, the history of their language and the new ways to preserve it, the work and commitment of the Aromanian community in Romania. An Aromanian evening was organized by the municipality during which dances, songs and gastronomy were presented.

The working group also welcomed a new member of the FUEN, "Lunjina" Aromanians from Serbia.

The group has intentions to extend its agenda to address concerns of all its members.





WORKING GROUP ON EDUCATION

In the age of globalisation, the protection of language and culture is an issue of existential importance for minorities in Europe. In the discussion on the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity, hardly any other factor plays such an important role as the core issue of education. In order to ensure the sustainability of the educational work of minorities, the FUEN wants to consolidate and build up the Working Group on Education which was founded in 2018.

In this sense it was important to hold the first official annual meeting of the working group this year under the guidance of former FUEN Vice President Olga Martens. This took place at the European Committee of the Regions in Brussels from 6th to 8th May 2019 with 19 participants from 12 European countries, among them representatives of minorities as well as experts from institutes, competence centres and educational institutions. The topics “Pedagogical aspects of minority language education/ teaching of minority languages and culture” and “Promoting linguistic diversity in the EU” were addressed and strategies to optimise minority education work were discussed. During the annual conference, the participants also took part in the UN Regional Forum for Education, Languages and Minority Rights in the European Parliament. Five members of the working group (representatives of the West Frisian minority in the Netherlands, representatives of the Aromuns in Romania, representatives of the Slovak community in Hungary, representatives of the Lezghinians in Russia as well as a representative of the Youth Organisation of Minorities in Europe) described the situation and challenges of their respective minorities in the field of education.

The aim of the Working Group on Education is to pool the competences of minorities in the field of education, to exchange best practice examples and to promote ideas. As a basis for this, a catalogue of questions was developed this year with the support of an external expert from the education sector. Data is collected in the form of an online survey, which provides well-founded insights into the educational situation of European minorities. Based on the evaluation of this survey, we can consciously advocate for the educational rights of minorities in Europe and formulate an adequate target for the future work of the working group.

YOUTH OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES

The Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) is a European umbrella organisation of 42 youth organisations of autochthonous national minorities and ethnic groups from all over Europe. YEN supports the preservation and development of the language, culture, identity as well as the rights of European minorities with the special focus on young people and their interests.

As a European network, YEN organises international seminars, trainings, workshops as well as cultural and social gatherings for young minority members. The main seminars of the year (usually three to four) are hosted by minority youth organisations belonging to the network. During these seminars topics important to young people are discussed in the workshops led with the methods of non-formal education.

YEN understands itself as a self-organised and self-managed youth organisation.





The Board of YEN consists of 7 young representatives of different European minorities, its President is Giuanna Beeli. The work of the Board is supported by three Working Groups with ca. 10 members each dealing with the topics of Minority Rights and Politics, Communication and Member Integration. The Office is currently staffed with the Secretary General, a Project Manager and a Project Assistant and is located in Berlin.

YEN enjoys a strong cooperation with FUEN and the President of YEN is a member of the FUEN Presidium.

In 2019, under the motto “MYnority – MY Say”, YEN focused on youth participation as a fundamental subject for young people, who want to engage themselves in their societies. The results and outcomes of the activities and seminars were published in the online campaign “MYnority My Say” which showed the demands young people have for their communities and for the future of Europe. In the activities 2020 the focus lies on human rights and solidarity between young people from various backgrounds aiming to build a diverse, inclusive, open minded and peaceful Europe. As a result of the coronavirus outbreak YEN had to cancel some of the physical activities, but continues the youth work online. 2020 is also the 3rd year of the Minority Messengers Project, which aims to collect, analyse and document the outcomes of YEN’s work in the last 3 years to ensure that the voice of minority youth will be heard.



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH YEN OR IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO office@yeni.org

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FUEN IS THE NUMBER ONE ADVOCATE FOR MINORITY INTERESTS IN EUROPE



In close cooperation with international organisations, states and regions, FUEN endeavours to highlight minority issues in Europe's multi-level political system. Relying on its many years of experience and its large network, FUEN encourages the relevant stakeholders to maintain a sustainable minority policy.

FUEN has participatory status at the Council of Europe and consultative status at the United Nations. FUEN demands that the Council of Europe's conventions, the recommendations of the OSCE and the UN conventions be taken seriously and updated to meet contemporary needs.

FUEN is a regular attendant of the Minority Intergroup meetings in the European Parliament, of the PACE and the UN's annual Minority Forums, as well as the relevant institutions inside the OSCE.

FUEN regularly submits relevant information and data about the situation of national minorities in Europe to all bodies involved in minority protection.



PARTNERSHIPS

FUEN sees itself as a community based on solidarity and collaboration. This is why we maintain a large network and contacts to the European minorities and their organisations, to policymakers, scientific institutes, youth organisations, media, cultural and educational institutions and other partners.

FUEN collaborates with a wide range of institutes and organisations in Europe and beyond: Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD), Mercator Network, Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), European Language Equality Network (ELEN), European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), European Academy (EURAC), Tom Lantos Institute (TLI). We participated and organised many events involving these partners of ours.



BUILDING-UP THE FUEN

PRESIDIUM



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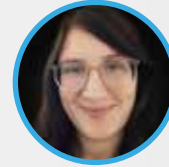
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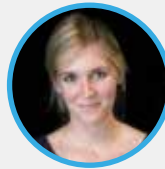
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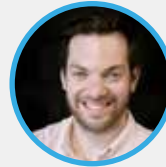
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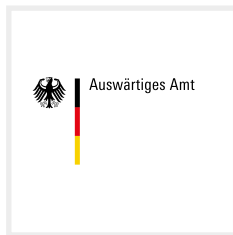


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