



2009-03

The Assembly of Delegates of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), at its session in Brussels of 2 October 2009, adopts the following resolution:

Submitted by the presidium of the Federal Union of European Nationalities

FUEN calls upon the heads of state and governments, the European Commission and the European Parliament to create the position of an EU-commissioner for minority issues or to assign the issue of autochthonous minorities in Europe as a specific remit to one EU-commissioner.

Rationale

The autochthonous, national minorities of Europe are a significant political, cultural, linguistic, economic, regional and intellectual factor in Europe.

In the 45 states belonging to Europe there are more than 300 minorities with circa 100 million people belonging to these minorities; this means that about each seventh European citizen identifies himself to belong to an autochthonous, national minority.

There are around 90 languages spoken in Europe, out of these 37 are recognised national languages and 53 are so-called stateless languages, the regional or minority languages.

The minorities live in European regions and want their regions to go well. One should not consider the minorities as a danger, but rather as a potential for the development of these regions.

With the Copenhagen Criteria and the conditions to acquire EU-membership therein, the European Union created an important instrument to establish good minority systems in the relevant countries within the context of the accession negotiations.

Unfortunately no actions were taken to resolve how to guarantee these standards after accession to the EU. Simultaneously the Copenhagen Criteria created a system of two standards; new states have been bound to introduce minority standards, which are not required for the “old” member states.

The EU-commissioner can help in overcoming this flaw and using the experiences of the Council of Europe and OSCE he could cater for a sustainable minority policy of the European Union.

The national competence may not be questioned by an EU-commissioner for minority issues. There are however many political, legal and cultural interests and tasks, which can be dealt with by an EU-commissioner in close consultation with the member states, the minorities and their civil society representatives.