



Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)
www.fuen.org

STRATEGY PLAN 2008-2009

2008
2009

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I GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) is the umbrella organisation of the European autochthonous, national minorities. Originating from the European movement after World War II, FUEN was founded in 1949. At this moment it represents 84 organisations of European minorities from 32 European countries¹.

FUEN is the largest umbrella organisation of the European minorities.

According to its statutes FUEN aims at maintaining and promoting the identity, language, culture, rights and nature of the European minorities.

FUEN represents the interests of the European minorities on regional, national and in particular on the European level. FUEN acts as a spokesperson for the minorities at the international organisations, in particular at the European Union and the Council of Europe as well as at the United Nations and the OSCE. As a NGO FUEN has participatory status to the Council of Europe as well as consultative status to the United Nations. Currently FUEN works on reaching a formalised cooperation with the European Union.

In its statutes FUEN speaks out in favour of a federal buildup of Europe, in which the European minorities can participate.

Referring to the general human rights and fundamental freedoms, FUEN pursues its aims solely with peaceful means. FUEN speaks out against separatism and violent changes of borders and pursues good-neighbourly, peaceful

living side-by-side of majority and minority populations in the European regions.

The basis for the actions of FUEN lies in the Charter for the autochthonous national minorities in Europe, which was adopted in the year 2006.

In this document FUEN and its member organisations formulated together with the youth organisation of the European minorities – the Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) – the self-conception, the fundamental principles and fundamental rights as well as political guidelines for the European minorities.

The Charter hence is considered as the fundament for the work of FUEN. The emphasis is – according to the aims of FUEN – on increasing the visibility of the minorities and their organisations as a positive factor in Europe and in the development towards a European civil society. The enhanced presence of the European minorities, the manifestation of FUEN as civil society partner and the participation of the minorities in the European dialogue are central in this regard.

In accordance with the Charter of autochthonous, national minorities in Europe – the political document on principles of FUEN and its member organisations – the European minorities avow for

- liberty, democracy and the rule of law, tolerance and mutual respect, equal treatment and non-discrimination,

1) There is a diverse terminology for the target group that the Federal Union of European Nationalities is representing – the autochthonous national minorities in Europe. Several definitions and terms exist and are used in Europe: traditional minorities; linguistic, cultural and ethnic minorities; national minorities, ethnic groups/peoples and people without kin-state as well as regional or minority languages.

In the English language FUEN uses the term: European autochthonous national minorities – for the sake of simplicity we use in this text the term European minorities.

To the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups belong the minorities that came into being as a result of developments in European history, as a result of the changes of state borders and other historical events (e.g. Danish minority in Germany, Slovenes in Italy, Hungarians in Romania). To the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups also the peoples of Europe belong who have never established a state for their own and who live as a minority in the territory of a state (Frisians in the Netherlands, Sorbs in Germany, Cornish in Great Britain)

- protection of minority rights as part of human rights in general,
- a Europe of diversity and for the inalienable values and intellectual heritage of our continent, in particular in regard to respect and promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity,
- the active and positive construction of a European civil society that includes the European minorities.

The minorities are an important cultural, intellectual, economic and social added value to many European regions and to the European Union.

- Every 7th citizen of Europe belongs to an autochthonous, national minority. In the 45 states belonging to Europe, there are 337 ethnic and national minorities numbering almost 105 million people.
- In total 90 languages are spoken in Europe, out of these 37 are national languages and 53 are considered as “stateless” languages (e.g. Gaelic, Sorbian, Frisian). According to official statistics of the EU there are 40 million people in the enlarged European Union that are using a regional or minority language. This is almost 10 percent of the citizens of the Union³.
- Many of the regional or minority languages have less than 300.000 speakers and because

they are below this number that is considered as critical, the survival of these languages is at stake.

With 10 percent of the European population the European minorities make up a considerable part of the population as a whole. FUEN considers itself as the stakeholder of this target group, in particular on the European level and offers the possibility for mutual exchange of experiences and best practices amongst the European minorities.

It is a declared objective of FUEN to anchor and strengthen the acknowledgement of the significance of the European minorities as guarantors of a diverse Europe, as positive contribution to the development of a European civil society and as enrichment in many European regions, in the public awareness and in the political discourse.

In this way FUEN – as European civil society organisation – contributes to the maintaining and recognition of the cultural, multicultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and works for common European values and for European citizenship.

Through its dynamic objectives FUEN aims at expanding its role as civil society partner continuously, being the largest and most representative stakeholder of the European minorities.

2) Sources: EUROMOSAIC; National Minorities in Europe – Handbook, Chr. Pan, published with support from the European Parliament.

II STRATEGY PLAN 2008 - 2009

1. OBJECTIVES

This strategy plan defines the objectives, priorities and anticipated results of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) – the largest European umbrella organisation of the European autochthonous national minorities – for the period 2008-2009.

In accordance with the aims defined in the statutes and in line with the Charter for the autochthonous national minorities in Europe – the political document on principles of FUEN and its member organisations – FUEN's main objective for the years 2008-2009 is to maintain and develop the languages, rights, identity and cultures of the autochthonous national minorities.

The minorities are an important cultural, intellectual, economic and social added value in many European regions and for Europe as a whole. The European minorities contribute to the maintainance and promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe. People belonging to European minorities can be considered as the embodiment of the European and are protagonists of the European civic society. They are born bi- or multilingual people, are used to deal with several cultures and with conflicts between them and can act as mediators, they are involved voluntarily and on own initiative to maintain their language and culture. They are acting as spokespersons for a common Europe and contribute to the further development of the European regions. As yet European minorities were often not recognised for the added value they are to many regions and for Europe as a whole. In this context it is the concern of FUEN, that it can gain importance and thus clarify the added value of its members by strengthening the own organisation as civic representative of the minorities.

For this purpose a European strategy in the form of a feasibility study has been elaborated in 2006. In order to implement the strategy FUEN pursues the following concrete middle- and long-term objectives:

- The acknowledgement of the positive contribution of the autochthonous national minorities for the development of European civil society and European citizenship,
- To maintain the natural bi- and multilingualism and the regional or minority languages that are often threatened by extinction, as a natural richness of Europe, as a factor of cultural and regional identification and as part of the European values,
- The necessity of comprehensive minority protection and active support for minorities as a guarantee for stability, peace and diversity in Europe,
- To reassert the need for action for the further development of European minority protection, because the final step for European minority protection has not been set with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages,
- To have political debate on regional, national and European level, including and involving the autochthonous national minorities and to ensure participation in the political dialogue on an equal footing,
- To overcome the challenges of changes in society and demographic developments for and with the European minorities,
- Recognition and strengthening the civic organisations of the autochthonous national minorities in Europe,
- Active involvement of the younger generation as guarantee for the further development of the autochthonous national minorities as well as continuous and sustainable support for the younger generations.

Moreover FUEN works continuously on the further implementation of the strategy for the establishment of a permanent representation of the European minorities on the European level.

This pursuit has the following objectives:

- Monitoring of the relevant policy fields,
- To ensure the participation of the European minorities,
- To bundle interests, concerns and opinions, to express these and to ensure representation,
- Presence of the European minorities,
- To show the added value of the European minorities in the European regions and for maintaining the linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe,
- Informing the European minorities and other interested parties about European policies and the constituent value of a European civil society.

Other emphasis in the actions of FUEN is on the implementation of guidelines for an active minority policy.

Based on these objectives and on the document on principles, the Charter for the autochthonous national minorities in Europe, now the time has come to implement to guidelines that have been developed before. This is in particular the case for establishing a more intense dialogue with political decision makers. Apart from the national states this commitment is mainly targeted at the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Participation in the elaboration of the fundamental rights and compilation of a compendium of minority protection

From the catalogue of fundamental rights each year one of the rights is selected for elaboration. It is FUEN's objective to create a useable compendium for minority protection

in Europe. The leading idea behind this is that only knowledge of their own rights will allow people belonging to autochthonous national minorities to implement these, to use them in an adequate way and to develop these rights. This is a condition for maintaining and development of the autochthonous national minorities, their identities, their languages that are often threatened by extinction, their culture and character – as an irreplaceable heritage and richness of a diverse and multilingual Europe.

Representation of the concerns of the European minorities

It is FUEN's aspiration to voice the opinion of people belonging to autochthonous national minorities on the European level, in particular through participation in consultations, the elaboration of opinions and issuing of statements and resolutions as well as direct participation in events, conferences and discussion rounds. This considers subjects like diversity and multilingualism, added value by minorities in the European regions just like tabling of interests in the field of general developments.

Another emphasis is the inclusion of minorities in the monitoring and reporting processes in the field of minority protection and minority support, as used authoritatively by the Committee of Experts of the Language Charter and the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe.

2. PRIORITIES

The actions and the engagement in the years 2008-2009 are determined by the following priorities:

Representation of the interests of the European minorities vis à vis the international institutions

The emphasis of the action of FUEN in 2008-2009 is on the representation of the interests of the European minorities towards the international organisations, in particular towards the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN. FUEN aspires to establish a formalised cooperation with the European Parliament and to create a permanent representation in Brussels.

Fundamental Rights of the European minorities

The Charter of the autochthonous national minorities in Europe includes next to the self-conception and the fundamental principles also a catalogue of European fundamental rights. FUEN decided to work out one of the 13 fundamental rights of the autochthonous national minorities from the Charter each year and to apply these on the basis of selected examples. In this way a compendium of fundamental rights of the European minorities will accrue.

Political and intercultural dialogue

The dissemination of the concerns of the European minorities, awareness raising and information about the positive contribution of the European minorities is central to an active dialogue, which FUEN will continue to have with the political decision makers, media representatives and other stakeholders from civil society. In this context giving information about the significance of the European minorities in general and FUEN in particular plays a central role.

European citizenship

The European minorities are an essential part of the European civil society and protagonist of its construction. They stand for fundamental European values and the formation of a European identity including minorities.

Part of the strategic programme of FUEN is to promote their self-image and support their interests. For this purpose the Charter for the autochthonous national minorities in Europe offers the foundation. The dissemination of the content of the Charter and the presentation of the concerns of the minorities in a European context is an important part of the advocacy work of FUEN.

FUEN – emerged from the European unifying movements after the Second World War – supports the propagation of the European idea and the development of a common European identity.

It is also a concern of FUEN to provide the European minorities and other interested parties with information about the European institutions and policies and to prepare the minorities intensively for participation in the elections for the European Parliament.

European language promotion and language policy

The preservation of linguistic diversity and active language promotion, using the regional and minority languages, is one other main topic in the work of FUEN. Continuing on the work of the previous year, FUEN will concentrate on the current strategy for multilingualism and in particular seek to obtain adequate support for regional and minority language, especially the small and smallest languages. In many regions the European minority languages contribute to bi- and multilingualism and therefore to the creation of language-friendly environments. These should be used in a positive sense for the minorities and for European multilingualism. The European minorities can actively contribute

to a European multilingualism of the citizens. The condition for this is to disseminate a positive image for linguistic diversity in Europe.

It is FUEN's objective to develop a coherent language policy keeping in mind the strategy on multilingualism that will be published. Central is the preservation of the European linguistic diversity. FUEN is involved in the emerging networks of language promotion.

Conflict- and crisis prevention

Minorities are still subject to (ethnic) crises in Europe – especially because of discrimination, pressure to assimilate and lack of equal treatment. Conflict prevention and conflict resolution are therefore also priorities in the work of FUEN. FUEN regularly undertakes fact finding missions and study visits to European minorities, in particular in crisis areas. The objective of these visits is to contribute to a peaceful dialogue and to disseminate knowledge about models for peaceful solutions in the minority field in Europe.

Social cohesion

Influenced by demographic changes and the effects these have on the younger generations, FUEN gives more attention to subjects and issues within the context of social and economic developments, education, labour market and regional development. To belong to a minority and to live as a minority requires also maintaining the viability of regions where those minorities are living.

Intergenerational engagement

FUEN works closely together with the Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) – the youth organisation of the European minorities. YEN is a strategic partner in the implementation of the political objectives and in several actions to ask attention for the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe (www.yeni.org). Together both organisations work on the establishment of a permanent representation in Brussels and they also cooperate in other instances. The

president of YEN has a consultative status in the presidium of FUEN.

Young people from European minorities often belong to the group of young people with fewer opportunities. Minorities and people belonging to minority communities often have to live with linguistic, cultural and ethnic marginalisation and under the pressure of continuous assimilation. Many European minorities furthermore live in economically and socially weaker and more rural regions of Europe. The migration as a result of this is detrimental to the number of people speaking the language.

The inclusion of the youth and the active promotion of their European engagement is an important part of the action of FUEN. Doing so, the youth is enabled to act autonomously as advocate for their minorities as well as for the linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe.

Continued professional development of FUEN as civil society organisation

The increasing demands to civic organisations, the range of potential members as well as the elaboration of complex issues demand an enhanced professional development of FUEN as a European organisation.

It is important to FUEN to build up and develop the functioning network, which enables exchange, encounter, dissemination of best practices as well as cooperation and networking. FUEN pursues the aim to offer high quality materials and events, to work professionally and to develop innovative solutions. The continuously increasing level of activity of FUEN will in the middle term be measured up to the needs together with the member organisations in an organisation development process, which also will define a prognosis of the role of the minorities in a united Europe for the long-term.

Cooperation and establishment of networks

In the field of minority policy and engagement for the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity FUEN works closely together with

other European organisations. The Charter for the autochthonous national minorities in Europe, which was adopted in 2006, contains common objectives of the European minority organisations.

FUEN therefore hold contacts and aims at cooperation, e.g. with the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, the new Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity, the Mercator-Centres as well as with Minority Rights Group.

FUEN works also closely together with a series of experts and scientific institutions, e.g. the European Academy in Bozen/Bolzano and the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg.

Enlargement of the number of members

FUEN aims at a continuous increase of its number of members. There are more than 300 minorities in Europe, and on the long term they should all be included in the actions of the European umbrella organisation.

FUEN accomplishes ongoing support and development work for the organisations and activities of the minorities, especially in central and eastern Europe. FUEN functions as a contact and exchange platform, it disseminates contacts, best practices and exchange of experience.

Informal learning and minority rights education

It is important for FUEN to support the attainment of necessary competences by minorities and members of minority communities in order to secure the participation of this target group in the development of a European civil society.

FUEN advocates the strengthening of voluntary work, certification of acquired competences as well as supporting informal and non-formal learning within the framework of European citizenship for the European minorities and for others who are interested in this field.

Congresses and seminars

The main event of the European minorities, with a broad impact, is the annual congress of the European minorities (FUEN-Congress). Moreover there are annual seminars with a certain theme: seminar of the Slavic minorities in Europe, seminar of the German minorities in Europe and the seminar for minorities without kin-state. FUEN also participates in the annual seminars of the youth of the European minorities (Easter Seminar and Autumn Seminar). Apart from these regional conferences are being organised, which deal with the interests of the minorities in a certain region and which are devoted to cross-border cooperation and in which political decision makers, other NGOs and local/regional propagators are integrated, in order to build effective networks.

At the instance of the FUEN Advisory Board – where representatives of governments and administration who are sympathetic to the work of FUEN come together – the **Civil Society Dialogue** of FUEN has been initiated. In this dialogue governments discuss together with their minorities about sustainable minority protection. Several of these dialogue meeting already took place in the past.

FUEN is also involved in cultural and sports events with a European impact, like e.g. the 2008 Championship for European minorities “Europeada”. These events contribute to public manifestation of the European minorities.

Information network

The information about the European minorities and their positive impact on maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity is a significant field of duty for FUEN and important for the implementation of the aims. Apart from the main homepage of FUEN in the internet – **www.fuen.org** – a news portal is being expanded, which is undertaken together with the Youth of European Nationalities.

At **www.living-diversity.eu** a European information platform is being developed. The most important announcements of both minority

organisations can be found here and political subjects and background information, e.g. about the new Lisbon Treaty, the EU enlargement and its implications for the minorities and other relevant analyses. The portal will be enlarged and contain an overview of minority members and an overview of the most important European documents on minority protection.

3. CURRENT MAIN ACTION

Advocacy, contact body and permanent representation

One of the main tasks for FUEN at this moment is creating a clear profile as representative for the minorities at the European level, especially towards the EU and the Council of Europe. Current actions aim at the establishment of a formalised cooperation with the European Parliament and the build up of a permanent representation in Brussels.

Presentation of the concerns of the minorities and FUEN as civic partner in:

- Cooperation with the European Parliament, in particular with the Intergroup for traditional minorities
- Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions and implementation of a conference together
- Cooperation with the Agency for Fundamental Rights of the EU in Vienna
- Participation in Parliamentary Assemblies and participation in the Conference of INGOs in Strasbourg
- Participation in meetings of the OSCE in Warsaw
- Participation in meetings of the United Nations

In cooperation with the Intergroup for traditional minorities in the European Parliament FUEN aims at **establishing a dialogue forum at the European Parliament**, which will have the status of an advisory committee for the European minorities to the European institutions. The first objective is to sign the agreement about the dialogue forum with the European Parliament as well as having the first official meeting of the new dialogue forum of the minorities in the European Parliament. In 2008 this will be implemented and as a result a whole new body for the European minorities will be created. For the year 2009 FUEN and

the MEPs think to extend this forum into an advisory body to the president of the European Parliament.

After talks with the secretary general of the Committee of the Regions and his chief of cabinet the intentions to cooperate will lead into a concrete project in 2008. FUEN, the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein and the Committee of the Region will organise a **Conference for minority regions of Europe under the roof of the Committee of the Regions**. Central to this meeting are examples of best-practices from different European multilingual regions with autochthonous minorities. The conference will focus on showing that minorities can be more than “just” a cultural factor; they can also in other field contribute an added value (economy, tourism, etcetera). The representatives from politics will be invited to the conference together with representatives of the minorities from their region.

FUEN approached the newly founded **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights** already in 2007 and announced its interest in cooperation within the new “Fundamental Rights Platform” for cooperation with civil society. FUEN strives to become one of the civic partners in the work of the agency. For the year 2008 FUEN plans to visit the new Agency in order to talk about possible ways of cooperation.

On a regular basis FUEN participates in the meetings of the **Intergroup for national minorities of the European Parliament**, which take place once a month in Strasbourg. The working group discusses about recent issues of the European minorities. For each meeting FUEN receives an invitation as guest. FUEN participates in the annual **Human Dimension Implementation Meeting of the OSCE** in Warsaw. This is the largest human rights meeting in Europe, where NGOs and state representatives discuss on equal par and can express their points of view.

FUEN participates regularly in the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe** that takes place four times a year and is also represented in the liaison committee of the Conference of INGOs at the Council of Europe.

FUEN is represented at the annual meeting the NGOs having consultative status with the UN.

Belonging the daily work of FUEN is the monitoring of relevant political processes within the international organisations, as well as publishing resolutions, recommendations and the participation in consultation where this is needed.

Implementation of the Charter and the Compendium of Fundamental Rights

The Charter for the autochthonous national minorities comprises, apart from a self-conception and fundamental principles, also a list of European fundamental rights. FUEN decided to elaborate each year one of the 13 fundamental rights of the autochthonous national minorities that are mentioned in the Charter. Based on case examples the rights will be implemented. As a result a compendium of the fundamental rights of the European minorities will accrue.

The first fundamental right that was elaborated, the Fundamental Right to Education, is at the moment being finalised as main theme. The focus now is on the evaluation and dissemination of the results.

The new fundamental right to deal with will be the Fundamental Right to Information and Media of one's own; this will be the main topic during the annual congress of the European minorities in Pécs, Hungary, in May 2008.

Subsequent to the elaboration of the **Fundamental Right to Education** in 2007, follows a discussion on the **Right to Information and Media of one's own** in 2008 and the **Right to Political Representation and Political Participation** in the year 2009.

European language policy and the establishment of a network of endangered languages in Europe

Language promotion is one of the central subjects in the work of FUEN. Many of the member organisations are working on a day to day basis to secure the future of their language. In particular many minorities without a kin-state are threatened in their existence, because the number of people speaking the language is decreasing.

FUEN will continue to see about the subject of sustainable language promotion on the European level and intensify its efforts for the many endangered languages in Europe, based on the results from the year 2007. The foundation for this undertaking is an analysis of the needs of the minority organisation in the field of language promotion.

In the end of 2007 the EU Commission held a consultation on multilingualism, in which many members of FUEN as well as the umbrella organisation itself took part. At this moment next steps in the field of language promotion and language policy are being coordinated within FUEN.

On behalf of its member organisations FUEN will accompany the new strategy for multilingualism, which has been announced to be published by the new EU Commissioner for multilingualism in 2008. FUEN will in particular express the needs of the small and smallest languages in Europe, like e.g. the Sorbs, Rhaetians, Frisians, Ladins, and support that they can cooperate in networks. The following concrete measures have been planned:

- Participation in the process to define a new strategy for multilingualism of the EU
- Definition of a strategy for multilingualism with a special emphasis on endangered languages in Europe by FUEN
- Preparation of an image campaign for linguistic diversity in Europe

- Establishment of a network of the endangered languages in Europe
- Reinforcing natural bi- and multilingualism.

On the occasion of the European Day of Languages FUEN wants to organise an event that gives special attention to the regional and minority languages.

Further priorities

In the working plan FUEN concentrates on **three concrete issues**.

- *The question of the Roma in Europe*
- *The relation between “old and new” minorities in Europe*
- *The future legal status of Kosovo and its consequences for the minorities*

A vital question for the EU is the special situation of the population of Roma.

FUEN has several Roma-groups as member organisation and their situation is often a topic at FUEN congresses. The problems are in their complexity often hard to compare with the situations of other minority groups, who are active in FUEN. Nevertheless FUEN holds the situation of these members for an essential working field that must be strengthened.

Until today there is no explicitly formulated FUEN strategy on the role of the Roma in Europe; FUEN should catch up on this issue. The subject will also in 2009 be on the agenda and it is the goal to establish a working group on Roma within FUEN, similar to existing working groups like those on German minorities or on Slavic minorities.

FUEN wants to develop and disseminate its position about the situation of the Roma as a minority.

The relation between “old and new” minorities in Europe is an essential strategic policy issue. In many contexts there is a amalgamation and mingling of the demands

of the “old” minorities that are represented in FUEN and the demands/challenges of the minorities in Europe, which have settled in Europe during the last decades as a result of immigration.

It is an objective for FUEN to develop a strategy on how the relation between both types of minority groups should be shaped in future. This needs in particular a fundamental discussion on the subject within the bodies of FUEN. Following this discussion, a direct dialogue with representatives of the “new minorities” will be started.

FUEN strives after defining its position in the relation between the so-called “new and old” minorities and on the contribution that the European minorities can give to the integration of immigrants.

The future legal status of Kosovo and the consequences for the minorities has been an essential issue for FUEN in 2007, with the Vienna negotiation and the Ahtisaari proposal. The delegates at FUEN’s assembly have supported the Ahtisaari proposal in a resolution during the congress in Tallinn.

The decision about the future status of Kosovo will have decisive consequences for the future of Kosovo in general and for the minorities in particular. FUEN will follow the issue and have special focus on the implementation of minority protection and the participation of minorities in shaping the future of Kosovo.

A fact finding mission to Kosovo is being prepared.

European publicity – 60th anniversary of FUEN

Within the timeframe 2008-2009 there will also be attention on the preparation and celebration of the 60 years anniversary of FUEN. In the same year as the 60 years anniversary of the Council of Europe and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms as well as the 25 years anniversary of the youth

organisation of the European minorities, it will be a concern to acknowledge the contribution of FUEN to civil society in the context of the European development – as the largest umbrella organisation of the European minorities. For this a commemorative book will be published. On the occasion of the jubilee the annual congress will take place in Brussels.

4. INFORMATION WORK: development of information and communication work

As a European organisation with members in many countries of Europe, FUEN functions also as virtual information platform. The information about the European minorities and their positive impact on maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity is a significant field of duty for FUEN and important for the implementation of the aims.

Components of the communication strategy of FUEN are:

- Maintaining an information network at **www.fuen.org**, in particular for the European minorities,
- Maintaining a news-portal at **www.living-diversity.eu**, and extending it, addressing minorities, political decision makers, partners and media,
- Comprehensive press- and PR activities, using Europe-wide media and European minority associations, like e.g. the Minority Dailies Association (MIDAS),
- Dissemination of information about the European minorities in the form of information and advertisement materials,
- Regional and local presence and information stalls at events of the 84 member organisations and other partners around the year,
- Mutual exchange of information and cooperation with other umbrella organisations in Europe.

Informing about the European minorities and their positive contribution for the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity is an essential working field for FUEN and important for the realisation of FUEN's objectives.

Apart from the main homepage of FUEN in the internet – **www.fuen.org** – the news portal FUEN operates together with YEN is at the moment being expanded.

At **www.living-diversity.eu** a European information platform is developing. Here you can find the most important releases of both minority organisations, political subjects and background information, e.g. about the Reform Treaty of Lisbon, EU enlargement and its consequences for the minorities and other relevant analyses. The portal is to be enlarged with an overview of the minority members and an overview of the most important European documents on minority protection.

Another important building stone in the information concept is the newsletter that regularly is disseminated amongst currently 3000 people from politics, culture, media and minority representatives on a regular basis. **www.living-diversity.eu/Newsletter.html**

At this moment FUEN is working on the integration of a common portal for the German minorities within FUEN. Similar plans have been made for other European minority groups.

The most important component in the strategy to increase the visibility of the European minorities is the image campaign that will be carried through in the field of language promotion (see above). By improving the image of the small and smallest language groups in Europe in a well-targeted campaign the added value of the European minorities will be shown.

III THE YEAR 2008

Overview of selected activities

Annual congress of the European minorities from 21-25 May 2008

The highlight of the year is the **53th FUEN-Congress**, which takes place in Pécs, Hungary, in May. The congress offers a platform to more than 250 guests from 30 countries and many guests from Hungary, where they can present their concerns to a wide European public. The main theme during the congress is the fundamental right to information and media.

Regional conferences

Four Regional Conferences have been planned. The regional conferences of FUEN have proven to be a good means to strengthen the cooperation between the umbrella organisation and its member organisations. Thematically the meetings are concentrating this time on the fundamental right to media, which is to be adopted in 2008. Conferences have been planned in Cornwall / United Kingdom in April, Greece in June, Riga / Latvia in September and Copenhagen / Denmark in November.

Cooperation with the European Parliament

Apart from regular participation in the meetings of the Intergroup of the European Parliament FUEN strives to have the first meeting of the dialogue forum of the minorities at the European Parliament in September 2008 – after successful signing of the agreement.

Cooperation with the Council of Europe

FUEN regularly participates in the meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Conference together with the Committee of the Regions, the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein in Brussels in the framework of the open days of the Committee of the Regions (October 2008)

The conference together with the CoR should strengthen the cooperation with this EU institution and improve the relations between the regions and their minorities.

YOU!MM Minority Marathon in Flensburg, Germany 5-7 September 2008

Meeting of the Working Group on German Minorities in FUEN (9-12 October in Košice/ Slovakia)

Meeting of the Working Group on Slavic Minorities in FUEN (23-25 October 2008 in Lusatia, Germany).

MINORITY Film Festival in Husum, Germany. 13-15 November 2008

Annual congress of the youth organisations of the European minorities 2008: The more I see you – the surplus value of minorities in Gråsten/Gravenstein (Denmark). 6-12 May 2008

Read more (www.fuen.org and www.living-diversity.eu) about the events in the beginning of the year 2008:

Strategy meeting about European language policy in Bozen/Bolzano, Italy (6-8 January 2008)

Internet portal for German minorities in Europe (17 January 2008)

Participation in the UN assembly of NGOs (2-6 February 2008)

Meeting with EU Commissioner Orban in Copenhagen (5 February 2008)

Civil Society Dialogue meeting in Eupen, Belgium (14-15 February 2008)

Common board meeting FUEN and YEN in Vienna, Austria (25 February 2008)

**EUROPEADA 2008 – European football
championship of the European minorities
31 May – 7 June 2008**

FUEN organises in cooperation with the Swiss Canton of Graubünden, the International Culture Forum Disentis (ICF), Sedrun Disentis Tourism (SDT) and Lia Rumantscha, the umbrella organisation of the Rhaetians in Switzerland, a football championship for the autochthonous, national minorities Europe. For

the championship, called EUROPEADA 2008, minorities from all over Europe have been invited. The organisers want to use the European championships 2008 in Austria and Switzerland to ask attention for the special importance of the European minorities.



SURSELVA / GRAUBÜNDEN / SWITZERLAND

from 31st May - 7th June 2008

GROUP 1

GB Welsh in Great Britain
PL Germans in Poland
CH Rhaetians in Switzerland
H Germans in Hungary

GROUP 2

E Katalans in Spain
I Slovenes in Italy
D Danes in Germany
RO Aromunians in Romania

GROUP 3

RUS Karatschay Community Russia
PL Lemks in Poland
MK Aromunians in Macedonia
I South Tyrolians (German - and Ladinianspeaking) in Italy

GROUP 4

YU Croats in Serbia
H Roma in Hungary
DK Germans in Denmark
D Frisians in Germany

GROUP 5

F Occitans in France
I Cimbrians in Italy
D Sorbs in Germany
RO Croatians in Romania



www.europeada2008.net

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