

RESOLUTION 2016-08

Resolution on the revitalization of the endangered language heritage in Europe

submitted by the Association of German Social and Cultural Societies in Poland

At the Assembly of Delegates in Wrocław / Breslau, on 21 May 2016, the Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities adopted the following resolution:

- in due consideration of the needs expressed by the autochthonous minority communities, whose heritage languages have no longer been transmitted to the new generations or their transmission has been critically disturbed,
- in due consideration of the postulates formulated by the autochthonous minority communities, who have undertaken substantial measures to revive or revitalize their heritage languages,
- in due consideration of the demands expressed by the autochthonous minority communities, who endeavour to reconstruct their identity embedded in and transmitted by their heritage languages

the Federal Union of European Nationalities and the representatives of minorities and language groups recognize an urgent need

- to counteract the processes of accelerated language endangerment, language death and language attrition among the European minorities,
- to support processes of revitalization and revival among and in favour of Europe's most endangered heritage languages,
- to ask for a constant and effective support of the European Union and the Council of Europe aiming the protection of the European language heritage and ultimately maintaining Europe's linguistic diversity.

We consider:

- (1) that the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is effective primarily as an anti-discriminatory instrument, also in the domain of minority language policy and language planning;
- (2) that the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has proven a highly operative instrument in aid of protecting Europe's linguistic diversity, particularly in regard to those minority or regional language communities, who have managed to maintain their heritage languages and have been strong enough to work out effective language policies on a local, regional and/or European level;
- (3) that in the previous years there have been several successful European initiatives and projects, including FUEN basic documents, the FUEN Programmatic Declaration in 2013, the Language Diversity – a European campaign to raise awareness for multilingualism project, the Compendium on Language Planning by RML2future, The Roadmap for Linguistic Diversity (NPLD2020) initiated by the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity etc.;

- (4) that the 2013 European Parliament's Resolution on Endangered Languages and Linguistic Diversity in the European Union, adopted by an overwhelming majority of the European Parliament, refers to European wide priorities for language revitalization, and that the revitalization and long term survival of Europe's regional and minority languages should continue to be a matter of European concern;
- (5) that more efforts and endeavours of respective institutions, organizations and communities should be aimed at reviving language transmission in the home and the learning of endangered languages within the educational system, essentially through the language immersion as well as the language-and-culture learning-and-teaching models;
- (6) that the specific histories and the resulting current conditions of the Central and Eastern European language minorities have to be addressed by particular models of language-and-identity revitalization programs, envisioning their long-lasting functioning and erosion under austere conditions of limited democracy;
- (7) that the European success stories of minority language maintenance and empowerment of minorities with language rights and language policy/planning instruments should be promoted and enacted on a larger scale throughout Europe;
- (8) that the successful stories and good practices of/in language revitalization or revival should be given more attention, support and recognition by international, national and regional institutions and organizations in order to create wider models of preventing substitution, attrition and death of heritage languages;
- (9) that the Federal Union of European Nationalities and its European partner institutions and organizations should work on a universal and holistic program/platform of support for those communities whose heritage languages and linguistic identities face imminent danger of extinction or substitution.