



FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES · FÖDERALISTISCHE UNION EUROPÄISCHER VOLKSGRUPPEN
ФЕДЕРАЛИСТСКИЙ СОЮЗ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ · UNION FÉDÉRALISTE DES COMMUNAUTÉS ETHNIQUES EUROPÉENNES

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) is the European umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities in Europe. FUEN has more than 90 member organisations in 32 countries and represents the European minorities on the EU level.

We would be very grateful if you, as a Member, could raise some important questions about aspects of the portfolios of the Commissioners-designate that are of great importance to the European minorities and to the protection of regional and minority languages.

Questions for the Commissioners-designate

1. Multilingualism and linguistic diversity

There is some confusion about the place of the multilingualism unit within the Commission. Last week we heard from high Commission officials that also in the new Commission multilingualism will play an important role in education and culture, although the role and place of the unit is still unsure. Elements of this field are relevant for both **Ms Thyssen** (Employment) and **Mr Navracsics** (Education & Culture).

FUEN is very concerned that the change of the name of the portfolio might reflect a decrease in importance of this subject within the new Juncker Commission. As part of the **Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism** established by the European Commission, we support the letter written by the Platform, which contains the following basic questions for **Mr Navracsics**:

- (a) What is your position in relation to promoting a multilingual ethos of communication in Europe, and*
- (b) Which actions do you intend to take so as to advance conditions of linguistic and cultural pluralism in Europe.*

As a cooperation partner of the **Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity** (NPLD), FUEN also supports the letter that the Network sent to the CULT Committee in regard to regional and minority languages; after all, last year 92% of Members of the European Parliament voted for the promotion of all the languages of Europe, especially those in a minority position.

- a. In your capacity as Commissioner-designate in charge of languages, how would you ensure that all languages participate on equal footing to the different EU initiatives/programmes?*
- b. How are you going to ensure that all the languages of Europe have equitable access to funding and opportunities?*
- c. Will the Commission review the “Mother tongue + two” formula, which does not correspond to the reality of many European citizens, many of whom already have more than one first language?*

2. The rights of national minorities, including participation and citizenship

Ms Jourová is nominated to become the new Justice Commissioner. She will be responsible for the rule of law and for the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which include the obligation to respect the rights of persons belonging to minorities and to respect cultural and linguistic diversity.



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a. Which actions does the Commissioner-designate intend to take in regard to Member States that do not respect the rights of national minorities or that discriminate against them?

b. Which policy actions will the Commissioner-designate take to improve the situation of the Roma in Europe? Does the Commissioner-designate agree that the current approach is insufficient?

In 2013, FUEN proposed the [Minority SafePack Initiative](#), a European Citizens' Initiative with several proposals to improve legislation that has an impact on the minorities of Europe, in several fields in which the EU is active. Unfortunately the Barosso Commission rejected the registration of the initiative. However, according to the response by the Commission, at least several sub-proposals from the Minority SafePack Initiative could have been adopted under EU law.

c. Is the Commission Juncker willing to reconsider the different proposals and is the Commissioner-designate willing to discuss together with the organisations of the European minorities about how the proposals of the Minority SafePack Initiative can be implemented?

FUEN would appreciate your help in posing these questions to the Commissioners-designate during the hearings with the nominated Commissioners. In case you need further information about FUEN, please have a look at <http://www.fuen.org>, or contact us at info@fuen.org.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Hans H. Hansen', is written over a vertical line.

Hans Heinrich Hansen,
FUEN President

Flensburg 2014-09-29