



Internal News:

»The wonderful days of Pörtlach have passed«

. . . to adapt the quote of Schiller's works, could form the introduction. Although the weather was not so very pleasant at the beginning of the congress, participants and delegates were certainly able to enjoy the splendid Carinthian atmosphere and hospitality.

The atmosphere of the congress was indeed relaxed yet showed concentration. Thanks to the excellent speeches made by Prof. Asbjørn Eide (Oslo), Prof. Dr Joseph Marko (Graz), the assistance of Dr Stefan Oeter (Heidelberg), Dr Stefan Troebst (Flensburg) and Prof. Dr Silvo Devetak (Maribor), the theme of the congress 'Minority and majority—partners for Europe' was treated with expert and stimulating contributions; the resulting declaration is impressive evidence of this. The changes in the structure of the congress—moving away from the status reports and towards discussions on specific themes—as shown by many positive reactions, has asserted itself well.

A number of the statutes were amended at the Assembly of Delegates to adapted to the changing needs, giving the Assembly of Delegates more professional and expert authority. In the main resolution, the resolutions reflect the hard and earnest work of FUEN on international committees and, in the individual resolutions, gives insight into the many problems of member associations who rely on special international solidarity.

We were particularly pleased to greet a delegation of eight members from the Crimea who were able to recount details of the drastic economic and social conditions in the region to illustrate the difficult situation of the Crimean Tartars.

We were also delighted to welcome six new regular member organisations.

In the name of all those, over 250 participants, many

thanks for the very successful FUEN congress this year go to the Carinthian state government with state representative Dr Christoph Zernatto at the head; state deputy director Dr Karl Anderwald and his staff and the host organisation Narodni Svet Koroskih Slovencev (Carinthian Council of Slovenes) and its president Nanti Oslip, secretary general Franc Wedenig and his staff and everyone who contributed to the success of the congress.

Romedi Arquint
FUEN President

FUEN resolutions in Pörtlach

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates passed the following.

- The 1996 accounts were approved.
- FUEN Secretary General Armin Nickelsen was confirmed in his office.
- The statutes were amended in the article 'Presiding Committee and Assembly of Delegates' and a new article was created 'The Secretary General'.
- The following member organisations became ordinary members:
 - the State Assembly of Germans in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia/**Czech Republic**;
 - Rada Polakow (Council of Polish People)/**Czech Republic**;
 - the Federation of German Socio-Cultural Associations/**Poland**;
 - the Central Association of Finns/**Sweden**
 - the Medzhlis of the Crimean Tartars/**Ukraine**.
- The following organisations/institutions were welcomed as new corresponding members:
 - the state government of Carinthia/Office for Ethnic Groups/**Austria**;
 - All-Georgian Federation of Greek Societies/**Georgia**;
 - Union Generale di Ladins di Dolomites/**Italy**;
 - Kongres Polakow w Rosji/**Russian Federation**
 - and the Compatriots of the Volga Germans/**Russian Federation**
- A total of 6 resolutions were passed.

Fotos: Pressebüro Häber & Spar, Berlin



V.I.n.r. FUEV-Präsident Romedi Arquint, Vize-Präsident Dr. Bruno Hosp, Vize-Präsident Pierre Lemoine, Generalsekretär Armin Nickelsen, Vize-Präsident Joseph von Komlóssy und Vize-Präsident Dr. Ludwig Elle. Es fehlen die beiden Vizepräsidenten Hans Heinrich Hansen und Bela Tonkovic.



Mustafa Dzheimlev (Medzlisce der Krimtataren)



Rolf Goßmann (BMI) und Prof. Dr. Jenö Kaltenbach (Ombudsmann der Republik Ungarn)



Vorseminar in Triest. Am Mikrophon Emil Ratiu (Asociata Culturale Lu Istro-Rumeni »Andrei Glavina«)



V. I. n. r. Romedi Arquint, R. Jakopov und Prof. Dr. Svetlana Tschervonnaja



Frank Steketee, Europarat Abt. Menschenrechte



FUEV Vizepräsident Pierre Lemoine und Hafizi Azem (Union of Kosovars)



DECLARATION

of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)
on the participation of minorities in public life

Adopted at the 42nd Congress held in Pörtlach (Austria) on May 7-11, 1997

Being convinced that the participation of members of nationalities, as individuals and as groups, in decision making concerning their rights is of paramount importance for the stability of polyethnic societies and for good neighbourly relations between the States concerned as well,

Having in mind that the dimension of the rights of nationalities is indicative of the level of democracy in a polyethnic society,

Being aware that the enjoyment of human rights and the elimination of discrimination are a prerequisite for the specific rights of the members of nationalities,

Being aware that constitutional, legal, administrative and other measures should be adopted in order to ensure full and effective equality on behalf of the members of nationalities,

Being aware that participation in decision making, through their own political representation, in the legislative or representative bodies on local, regional, State and international levels is an essential condition for the realisation of human rights for the members of nationalities,

Having in mind that the specific circumstances in which the nationalities live should be taken into account in regulating and implementing the rights to be represented and to participate in decision making,

Taking into account the standards and provisions concerning these matters, hitherto adopted within the framework of international organisations and non-governmental organisations and by FUEN in particular,

Having in mind the right to self-determination as defined by international law,

Convinced that the right and opportunity to take part, without discrimination and with full and effective equality, in the conduct of public affairs is a fundamental element of the freedoms and human rights of the members of nationalities,

The participants of the 42nd Congress of the Federal Union of European Nationalities have adopted the following principles and engagements:

I. The nationalities should enjoy the right to:

1. Self-government or participation in the conduct of

institutions of paramount importance for the preservation of their ethnic and cultural identity (schools, cultural institutions, museums, mass-media, religious communities, and similar organisations),

administrative and other public services and organisations on local, regional and State levels in the fields of education, culture, mass media and religion,

administrative and other public services and organisations dealing with development projects affecting the regions where they live, and the preservation and protection of the historical heritage of nationalities,

local self-governing authorities or different kinds of autonomy.

2. At least proportional representation

in the administrative and similar public services on local, regional and State levels,

in economic, commercial and similar public institutions, organisations and services on local, regional and State levels.

3. Participation in decision making concerning the international and especially cross-border co-operation of the respective states, regions or local authorities.
4. Participation in decision making, among other things, through their own political representation, in the legislative and representative bodies on local, regional and State levels.
5. The right to veto decisions concerning their basic human and minority rights, or decisions likely to damage their traditional habitat.

II. In order to ensure the enjoyment of these rights the States, regions, local and other authorities should within their own field of competence:

1. Adopt adequate constitutional, legislative, statutory and other provisions and regulations, ensuring an adequate representation of nationalities in the legislative and other elected bodies, regardless of their numbers or similar restrictive criteria.
2. Work out and implement adequate policies regarding the cultural, linguistic, social, economic, and other issues concerning nationalities.
3. Refrain from unilaterally changing administrative or historical territorial units against the will of nationalities, and in such a way as to jeopardise their possibilities of taking part in the decision making process, weaken their identity and affect their integrity.
4. Adopt programs for the education of the majority population that should be so designed as to enhance their understanding of the minority rights as a means to ensure the members of nationalities a full and effective equality in the society where they live.
5. Establish permanent institutional dialogue with the legitimate representatives and institutions of nationalities.

III. The participants of the Congress have decided to undertake the following actions:

1. The Presidency and the Secretariat of FUEN will distribute the Declaration as widely as possible, especially within the structure of the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the European Parliament, and the international organisations dealing with minority issues, regionalism and cross-border co-operation.
2. The Presidency and the members of FUEN will spread the Declaration among the respective governmental and non-governmental institutions and organisations within the countries they come from, and initiate discussions and procedures for the implementation of measures in line with its principles and requirements.
3. The Presidency of FUEN will on behalf of the Congress urge the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to sponsor a study, and the Committee of Ministers to initiate the preparation of an additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights on this issue, taking into account the FUEN draft - Convention.
4. The Presidency of FUEN will urge the European Governments that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and to take the necessary measures for the effective implementation of both instruments in line with the requirements of the nationalities involved.
5. The Governments Conference and the institutions of the European Union are required to incorporate the protection of nationalities in the legislation of the Union when the Maastricht Treaties come under revision.
6. The States that plan to join the European Union are required to incorporate the principles of this Declaration in their own legislation and to implement them as a prerequisite to their admission.

The Finns in Sweden

A short history of Finns in Sweden

The scholars still argue about who inhabited fennoscandia (Scandinavia including Finland and western parts of the Kola peninsula) first; the Germanic ancestors of the Swedes or the Finno-Ugrian ancestors of the Finns.

New linguistic discoveries suggest that the clock of history should be rewinded, i.e. that Finno-Ugrian tribes - ancestors to Finns, Estonians and the Samis - have arrived to Scandinavia first following the melting ice line from the latest glacial period.

A fact is, however, that throughout the historic times from early 13th century till 1809 the Finns and the Swedes formed a common state. After a series of wars Sweden had to succumb Finland to Russia in 1809.

Together for more than six centuries

Thus for at least 650 years inhabitants of both countries were able to move around relatively freely within a common state without crossing any borders. As a matter of fact, in the 17th century one could almost travel around the Baltic without leaving that time Sweden. One could say that in the common state more people moved from Finland to Sweden and vice versa than what is happening today.

There is a lot of evidence of this movement even if exact numbers of these »domestic immigrants« cannot be found in any books. Some historians say hundreds of thousands per century, some claim tens of thousands. What is known is that during some periods the state ordered peasants in different parts of Finland to move out inhabit parts of Sweden, mainly to the woodlands in the west and north.

Old Finnish names of places

You can still find traces of old Finnish names of places in many parts of Sweden. The last speakers of ancient Finnish in Värmland dies only a few decades ago. Genetically a large part of the population in former »Finmark« areas in Sweden bear evidence of Finnish an-

cestry. According to some scientists maybe even more than one million people... During the Middle and New Ages, the King and the State often set on harsh limitations to the trade. Therefore Stockholm became the most important export harbour for the whole nation and even Finnish goods were traded mainly through the capital, subsequently drawing many Finns to the nation's capital not only to import or export, but also to work in different trades, often as servants or maids in the capital's thriving households. One has also to remember that until the secession of Finland to Russia, a large part of the ranks of the Swedish armed forces consisted of Finnish recruits; even many of their officers were born and raised in Finland. Finnish Language was even therefore widely used throughout the country.

A Finnish congregation since 1533

Following the population movements a Finnish church and congregation was established in Stockholm. It still exists and flourishes...

As a result of all this Finnish was also spoken in the Royal court since a large part of the lower staff were native Finns. It has even been established that King Gustaf Wasa ordered his sons to learn Finnish and had a Finnish clergyman as their tutor. Gustaf Wasas son, Duke Carl ordered in the 16th century that a number of peasants from eastern Finland would have to move out and inhabit parts of Dalama and Värmland in central and western parts of Sweden. As a result thousands of families wandered through the whole country to settle in the Swedish woodlands.

Even after the secession of Finland to Russia the contacts between Finland and Sweden remained very good and flourished, especially in the academic circles. Stockholm and its university were

important for the Finnish scholars and their pupils even if Finland have universities of its own, both in Finnish and in Swedish.

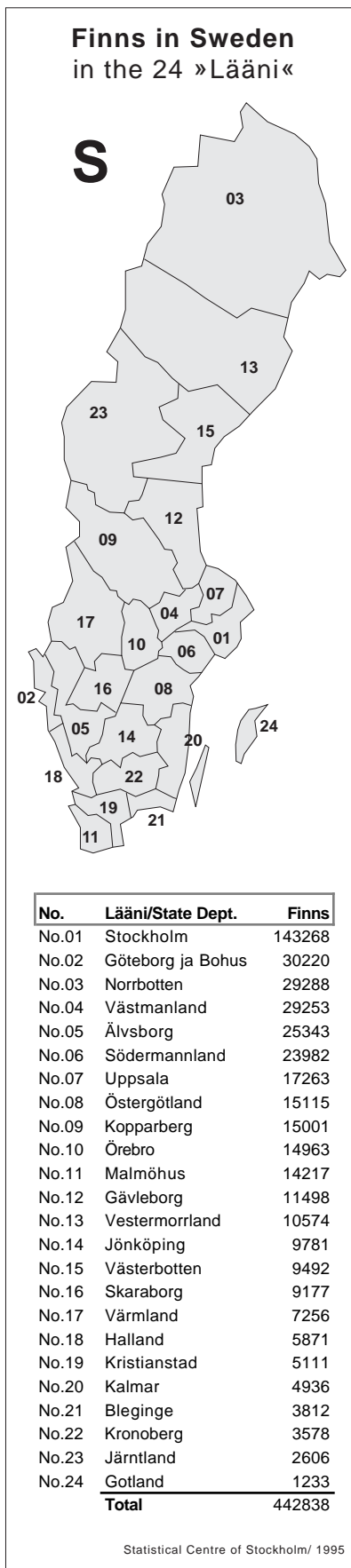
During common historic times many families of nobility and bourgeoisie had split in two branches, one Finnish and one Swedish (and some still are...). Therefore the Swedish language prevailed as the language of Finnish civil servants even after becoming part of the Russian empire.

The coast of Finland was Swedish speaking

The coastal areas in Finland were since the beginning of the common history inhabited by Swedish Finns; mainly fishermen, peasants and tradesmen. Thus it was quite natural that the relations to Sweden were good. Towards the end of the 19th century, when the Russian political pressure on Finland became harsher, many of the suppressed and hunted found sanctuary in Sweden. The same happened after the Civil War in Finland 1917-18 and during World War II, during tens of thousands of Finns, a majority of them children, could move to Sweden in order to save themselves from the horrors of war. Many of these so-called »war children« remained in Sweden or returned here after the end of the war and early 50's.

The movement of immigrants from Finland to Sweden after the war was relatively constant till the end of the 1960's and beginning of the 70'. At that time an economic downfall hit Finland hard. Hundreds of thousands of Finns, main part from the countryside, sought their way to Sweden that, in turn, badly needed more labour force to its thriving industrial development. Some major companies even had regular recruiters in Finland seeking people that would be willing to move to Sweden...

The »new wave« of Finns soon settled down in Sweden and a need for a Finnish language public service and infrastructure increased. Already in the 50's several Finnish Clubs had been es-



tablished in different parts of the country and in september 1957 one of these clubs decided that they needed a nationwide body to coordinate their activities.

The »National Association of Finns in Sweden (NAFS) was born in autumn 1957.

Discussions on governmental level

Today NAFS - including its daughter organisations (see below) - is divided in 10 districts which house around 155 clubs that actively take care of social, cultural and other needs of the approximately 280.000 Finnish speakers in Sweden. In recent years the need for differentiation had led to the forming of a youth organisation (a member of the Youth of European Nationalities/YEN) and a pensioners association belonging and working parallel to it. In addition there is an amateur theatre organisation and a sports organisation within NAFS.

NAFS is also the counterpart to the governments both in Sweden and Finland in discussions concerning the situation of the Finnish minority in Sweden, which still lacks judicial and legal minority rights. The hope is that Sweden soon signs and ratifies the European Councils Charter for Regional and Minority languages which would greatly improve the situation of the linguistic minorities in Sweden.

NAFS also represents the minority in international organisations like the »European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages« (EBLUL) and the »Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)«.

Outside NAFS (or cooperating with it) there are many special organisations, associations and clubs that take care of different groups and their needs (often on the local level). The most important of these organisations is the Finnish Language Church that is an integrated part of the Swedish (formerly state) church. The Finnish Language has always had a special status

within the church and the church liturgy follows that of the Swedish Church in all other aspects but in Finnish language.

Even the Tornedalian Finnish speaking minority that was born in the mishap border drawing 1809 when the local Finnish speaking population was split into to halves (one in Sweden and one in Finland), has lately founded loose forms of infrastructure.



The official logo of the National Association of Finns in Sweden (NAFS)

Their organisation STR-T-Tornedalians was established some 15 years ago.

It is currently included in the talks to give the national minority languages (Finnish, Sami, Roma and Yiddish

including all their variants) a minority status in Sweden.

Government committees on minority issues

Currently two different government set committees are working on the two European Council Charters; the other one for the Regional and Minority Languages and the latter concerning the Protection of Minorities. NAFS together with Samis and Tornedalians is represented in the committee work. The Roma and the Jews have an expert status in the committee work. The latest proposals of the committee that would grant minority status to the Finnish language only in the five northern most communes in Sweden has created a situation where the Finnish government has taken a firm stand demanding its Swedish counterpart to extend the official minority status for the Finns in Sweden for the whole county when signing and ratifying the European Councils Charters.

A continuous discrimination of the Finnish language and the swedenfinnish minority would be regarded from the Finnish government point of view as »a bad symbolic act aiming to worsen the relations between the two countries«.

A decision in the matter of signing the European Councils Charters is expected some time in the autumn 1997, possibly early 1998.

»SWEBLUL«

Four of the linguistic minorities in Sweden (Finns, Sami, Tornedalians and Roma) are represented in the EBLUL's National Memberstate Committee called SWEBLUL. The Secretariat of the committee is handled by NAFS while the chairmanship rotates between the groups. Even the Jews (Yiddish) have shown interest in joining SWEBLUL.

by Heikki Kirjavainen (Vice President of the National Association of Finns in Sweden)

BAD NEWS:

France's problems with minorities

The protection of regional minority languages infringes on article 2 of the French constitution. This is the reason why—according to the Council for the Constitution—France is not able to ratify the European Charta on Regional and Minority Languages.

Bad news for the Breton, Basque, Provenal, Corsican, Alsatian minorities. . . .

NZZ 9702



AVAILABLE

from the FUEN Secretary General:

STATUS REPORTS

- Status reports from Slovakia 1995-09
- Status reports from the Carpathian region 1996-03
- Status reports about the Crimean Tartars 1996-10

FUEN-Now ACTUEL

With brief features on:

- No. 53 Hungarians and Germans in Romania 1995-07
- No. 54 Bretons in France 1995-09
- No. 54 Slovenes in Italy 1995-09
- No. 55 Sorbs in Germany 1996-02
- No. 55 Carinthian Slovenes in Austria 1996-02
- No. 56 Rhaeto-Romanics in Switzerland 1996-07
- No. 57 Sinti and Roma in Germany 1996-10
- No. 58 Crimean Tartars in the Ukraine 1996-12
- No. 59 Carpathian Germans in Slovakia 1997-04

DOCUMENTATIONS

- 41st Congres of Nationalities Timisara/RO 1996
- 42nd Congres of Nationalities Pörschach/A 1997

RESOLUTIONS

of the FUEN Assembly of Delegates

available from the
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