



FUEN - Federal Union of European Nationalities
UFCE - Union Fédéraliste des Communautés Ethniques Européennes
FUEV - Föderalistische Union Europäischer Volksgruppen
Федералистский Союз Европейских Национальных Меньшинств

PRESS RELEASE

“We are living diversity - FUEN concludes its jubilee congress in Brussels”

With a festive celebration in the Committee of the Regions and a public meeting of the “European Dialogue Forum” in the European Parliament as highlights in a diverse and chequered programme, FUEN can look back positively at the jubilee congress that took place in Brussels from 29 September until 2 October 2009. FUEN was founded 60 years ago in Versailles.

“We are glad and also a bit proud that we succeeded in organising such a high-ranking congress in Brussels. We have come much closer to our goal to be taken seriously as NGO-stakeholder on the European level. I am particularly happy with the engagement of our members, who made the congress a complete success”, said FUEN-president Hans Heinrich Hansen.

About 200 guests from more than 30 European countries participated in the different parts of the programme with which the jubilee of the largest umbrella organisation of the autochthonous minorities in Europe was celebrated.

The European Dialogue Forum, which was jointly established by FUEN and the European Parliament, held a session in the European Parliament in the presence of 150 delegates and guests. The chair of the Intergroup for National Minorities, Kinga Gal MEP, underlined the significance of cooperation with FUEN, in order to give the minorities a voice in the European Parliament.

At the jubilee celebration three speakers congratulated FUEN, namely Prime-Minister Karl-Heinz Lambertz, Secretary-General of the



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Committee of the Regions Gerhard Stahl and Johan Häggman, member of the cabinet of EU Commissioner Leonard Orban. FUEN-president Hans Heinrich Hansen addressed his keynote speech to the 175 visitors of the jubilee celebration, which was concluded with a jubilee-gala in Hotel Conrad.

In a first draft the Fundamental Right to Political Participation was adopted by the delegates of FUEN. The document, elaborated by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), gives the direction for what FUEN will work on in the coming months.

During the Assembly of Delegates 11 resolutions were adopted. The Assembly inter alia passed an open letter to all the heads of states and governments of Europe to make them aware of the dwindling interest of minority-issues in Europe

The FUEN-family was enlarged with another two members. The Italian-speaking community in Switzerland and the German minority in Lithuania were accepted unanimously. As a result FUEN now has 86 member organisations. Another five organisations are on the waiting list, and probably can be accepted as member in 2010.

The FUEN-congress ended with a visit to the German-speaking community in the East of Belgium. A discussion and a dinner with the participants was attended inter alia by Minister Oliver Paasch and director Stephan Förster of the liaison office in Berlin.

More information will soon follow on our website.

