



## Minority Council distances itself from statements made by the newly elected FUEN President

After the election of the new FUEN Presidium on October 1 2022 in Berlin, there was a discussion of a statement on the situation in Hungary submitted by the Minority Council of the four autochthonous national minorities and ethnic groups in Germany.

FUEN President Loránt Vincze was already quoted in several media in the run-up to the congress and afterwards as criticising the European Parliament, from which we expressly distance ourselves.

We reject his claims that the European Parliament report acknowledging Hungary's "decaying democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights" is fundamentally wrong. In its report, the European Parliament explained in detail that Hungary is on the way to becoming an autocracy or "elective autocracy" and that the democratic institutions are being weakened. The report also goes into detail about the situation of the minorities and in particular the Roma.

We strongly reject his allegations that the statements contained in the report reflect "a large leftist ideological bunch, a revelation of eternal truths" but in no way verifiable facts.

FUEN President Loránt Vincze had previously expressed his unreserved support for Hungary in his concluding remarks on the internal FUEN debate. He said Hungary is the "most important supporter" of FUEN and the minorities in Europe. It would therefore be "ungrateful" to criticize Budapest and only Hungary's support has saved FUEN from financial bankruptcy over the past four years. In addition, Hungary is the only state that "undoubtedly" supports FUEN.

The statements of the FUEN President cannot go unchallenged. They are in blatant contradiction to the FUEN Charter, which was adopted in Bautzen/Budyšin in 2006 and formulates "**the protection of minorities as part of human rights**".

The justification of unacceptable conditions in Hungary is also incompatible with the Charter position that compliance with fundamental rights is not only required of EU accession candidates, but that the “old countries” have the same obligation here.

We distance ourselves from these statements and reject such instrumentalization of the minorities in Europe by their president in favour of a government. We see Hungary’s development as a danger for Europe and a danger for the minorities – we expressly stand by that.

We therefore expect the FUEN Presidium to avert further damage to the largest umbrella organization of the autochthonous national minorities in Europe, to critically examine the statements of the incumbent FUEN President and to commit to the FUEN Charter publicly clearly.

The historic achievements of FUEN for political, cultural, and linguistic diversity in Europe must not be lightly jeopardized. Especially at this time, we need a FUEN that consistently and everywhere advocates non-discrimination and equal treatment.

