

**MEMORANDUM
of the Minorities in the Western Balkans conference**

The participants of the Minorities in the Western Balkans conference, organised on 2-3 June 2023 in Osijek-Esseg-Eszék by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) in cooperation with the Democratic Union of Hungarians of Croatia, the German Society – Organisation of Danube Swabians in Croatia and the Coordination Council and Representatives of the Czech National Minority, convene the following:

Coexistence based on mutual respect, bringing the majority and the minority closer together, appreciating and protecting the value of linguistic and cultural diversity of autochthonous minorities requires further efforts, in this effort member organisations count on the support and mediation role of FUEN.

The participants of the Minorities in the Western Balkans Conference clearly state the need to strengthen the presence of FUEN as an umbrella organisation for minorities in this part of Europe.

The accession of the countries of the region to the EU is an important goal for all minority communities; the conference participants are confident that legal guarantees for the protection of minorities will be strengthened in the accession negotiations.

Combating hate speech is an objective for FUEN's member organisations in the Western Balkans which should be a priority in the coming years, using all possible means.

The participants call for real solutions to the situation of the Roma minorities and for FUEN to continue to represent the interests of these communities at EU level. Antigypsyism, discrimination, and marginalization of Roma communities must be actively combatted and eliminated in Western Balkan countries in accordance with the active politics and measures of the European Union.

Education in the mother tongue has been solved in many EU countries, but needs more attention in this part of Europe, so the participants call on FUEN to use its know-how to push for the development of public education policy strategies that can guarantee the survival of minority communities in the region.

Ageing is affecting not only majority societies but also indigenous minorities across Europe, so policy instruments should be identified to address the system of representation of minorities.