

Declaration of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages of the European Parliament (2014-2019)

For a better future of minorities in the European Union

We, Members of the European Parliament and of the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages of the European Parliament, recall the responsibility of the EU in the protection of the rights of autochthonous national and linguistic minorities. The respect of the rights of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities is one of the founding values of the European Union enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union. Furthermore, any discrimination based on membership of a national minority is explicitly prohibited under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Despite all these, ten years after entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU still lacks a common comprehensive framework for the protection of the national and linguistic minorities.

We welcome the success of the Minority SafePack Initiative, in which more than 1.2 million European citizens asked the EU to preserve and develop the identity, culture and language of autochthonous minorities. We encourage the European Commission to support the Minority SafePack initiative.

We emphasize the commitment of the European Parliament for the establishment of a European minority protection framework. In its eighth legislative term, the Parliament took the lead and adopted several resolutions and reports for promoting the rights of minorities, such as the

- Resolution on The EU Citizenship Report 2017: Strengthening Citizens' Rights in a Union of Democratic Change (2017/2069(INI))
- Resolution on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States (2017/2937(RSP))
- Report on minimum standards for minorities in the EU (2018/2036(INI))
- Report on language equality in the digital age (2018/2028(INI))

We believe that national and linguistic minorities are an essential part of the European diversity protected through the founding treaties and as such should be protected at EU level in the same manner as all other EU citizens. Fundamental freedoms, human rights and equal opportunities shall be provided for all citizens of the European Union including persons belonging to minorities.

Therefore, we call for:

- *A comprehensive and common European protection and monitoring system for autochthonous national and linguistic minorities.*
- *A European Commissioner responsible for autochthonous national and linguistic minorities.*
- *A consultative body of the European Parliament in matters of national and linguistic minorities.*