

RML2future

Network for multilingualism and
linguistic diversity

*It's never too late ...
monolingualism is easy to cure!*

*Es ist nie zu spät ...
Einsprachigkeit ist heilbar!*

DOCUMENTATION

Partner meeting

in Beč / Vienna (Austria)
from 1–7 June 2011

www.rml2future.eu

RML2future – Network for Multilingualism and Linguistic Diversity in Europe
under the lead of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)

www.language-diversity.eu, www.rml2future.eu

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PARTNER MEETING

56th FUEN Congress in Željezno / Eisenstadt, Burgenland
followed by partner meeting in Beč / Vienna (Austria),
1–7 June 2011

Dobro došli! Willkommen! Welcome!



The largest meeting of the autochthonous minorities of Europe in Željezno / Eisenstadt

From 1–4 June 2011 the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), together with the Croatian Cultural Association in Burgenland / Hrvatsko kulturno društvo u Gradišću invited

all for the 56th annual congress of FUEN in Željezno / Eisenstadt, Austria. With about 90 member organisations in more than 30 European countries, FUEN is the largest umbrella



organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities in Europe. Around 180 guests from more than 20 European countries responded to the invitation and attended the congress.

Next to the issue of the Roma, also the minority situation in Austria was vividly discussed, the future direction of European language policy and networking of the actors involved in it

were addressed and the participants looked back on the past five years since the document on principles of FUEN, the Charter for the autochthonous minorities in Europe, was adopted.

web



More information about the FUEN Congress you find at www.congress2011.fuen.org



Burgenland, Eisenstadt, in Croatian Gradišće, in Hungarian Felsőőrvidék

Burgenland as a geographic stretch of land is the epitome of a European cultural region – characterised by being under varying rule throughout history, by different people, cultures, languages and religions and the so-called Pannonic climate.

Today, Burgenland is the smallest federal region in Austria. The capital is Eisenstadt/Željezno. The town has circa 14 000 inhabitants and lies at the foot of the Leitha-moun-

tains. Eisenstadt is uniquely characterised by composer Joseph Haydn and Esterházy Palace.

Gradišćanski Hrvati / the Burgenland Croats

The Gradišćanski Hrvati (Burgenland Croats) are the descendants of the Croatian settlers from the 16th century, who came after the Ottoman wars. Today the minority, which is recognised in Austria as an ethnic group (Volksgruppe), lives in Austria, Hungary and Slovakia and in Vienna. According to estimates they are 60 000 people, the majority of them lives in Burgenland / Gradišće.

In all three countries they speak Croatian dialects, but since the beginning of the last century they developed one Burgenland Croatian written language. For almost 500 years the Burgenland Croats have retained their multifaceted and rich culture.

The Burgenland Croats are integrated in public life and they are significantly involved in the cultural life in Burgenland / Gradišće.



Positive reactions to the FUEN-initiative for more networking in the field of regional and minority language and linguistic diversity in Europe

During its congress in Željezno / Eisenstadt in Burgenland, Austria, FUEN invited several actors active in the field of regional or minority languages for a meeting. About 20 representatives from different sectors had come, e.g. the member state committees of EBLUL (which has been dissolved on the European level), the network NPLD, representatives of various regions, RML2future and FUEN.

The rationale behind the initiative, which was moderated by Johan Häggman – former member of cabinet of EU Commissioner for Multilingualism Leonard Orban, is the fact that there is a political and institutional gap on the European level in regard of the promotion of regional or minority languages and European linguistic diversity.

After EBLUL Europe decided to dissolve itself there are three networks, which are funded by the European Commission and work in the interest of the regional or minority languages, namely the FUEN-network RML2future, the Mercator network and NPLD (Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity). Furthermore, there are several EBLUL committees on national level, who are active locally for the regional and minority languages, but who no longer have a European connection. By changing its statutes, FUEN made it possible now that these EBLUL committees can be admitted, giving them a framework for coordinating their activities on the European level. This offer was positively accepted by the member state committees that were present at the meeting.

The working group that had an informal meeting during the congress decided to elaborate

a joint memorandum of understanding of the different actors, in order to establish the conditions for an effective and sustainable alliance for the regional or minority languages and for linguistic diversity in Europe.

For more information on the joint declaration, which was published on the Day of Languages 2011 in Celovec / Klagenfurt, see:

web



www.fuen.org/show.php?id=88&news=116

www.fuen.org/media/265.pdf (DE)

www.fuen.org/media/266.pdf (EN)

www.fuen.org/media/267.pdf (SL)

Directly after the FUEN Congress the partners met in Beč / Wien for a partner meeting. Besides a report on the ongoing work of the partners, the evaluation of the FUEN Congress of 2011, preparation of the Third Regional Conference in Celovec / Klagenfurt, the main topic of the meeting was a discussion on the minority situation in Austria and the implementation of a future oriented workshop on the subject of a centre of competence and service. The participants explored questions about needs and requests from the different multilingual regions and also the input and possibilities for support on the part of the partners of the network in establishing a centre of competence.



In summary, the centre of competence shall be composed of several pillars. In the field of promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in Europe the main priorities will be specific trainings for professionals and educators, exchange between minorities, concrete services on the European level, promotion work, research and a joint political representation.

For the sake of variety, away from theoretical considerations, the partners did a language quiz, in which they had to find out which 10 languages the slogan “It’s never too late ... Monolingualism is easy to cure!” was translated into. The partners dealt with the different language families and systems and this led to the idea for a digital quiz on the website www.language-diversity.eu.



Extract from the agenda

1. Activity reports from the partners of the network
2. Preparation and planning of the Third Regional Conference of the network RML2future in Celovec / Klagenfurt
3. Discussion about the minority situation in Austria: revision of the Ethnic Groups Law in Austria
4. Future-oriented workshop on the subject of a centre of competence and service
5. Language certification and assessment of language skills
6. Language quiz for the partners: try-out of the quiz
7. External evaluation of the network: interim report by prof. dr. Peter Weber: information and feedback of the partners
8. Practical matters, planning of meetings, dissemination and exploitation



Participants of the partner meeting

Marko Oraže – Council of the Carinthian Slovenes NSKS, Austria

Nadin Wissenberg – Council of the Carinthian Slovenes NSKS, Austria

Sabine Wilmes – European Academy Bozen / Bolzano EURAC, Italy

Madlena Kowar – YEN; Agency for European Education Programmes VoG, German-speaking Community in Belgium

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Judith Walde – Federal Union of European Nationalities FUEN, Germany

Accommodation: FUEN Congress: Chamber of Commerce Burgenland in Eisenstadt/Željezno

Partner meeting: Hotel Eitljörg in Vienna, www.hotel-eitljoerg.at/en



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