

Müstair Declaration

Cultural and linguistic communities without a kin–state

Preamble

- Recalling that the cultural heritage of Europe in its diversity is part of European civilization.
- Stating that cultural and linguistic communities without a kin–state characterize themselves through their strong will to preserve their language and culture and to adapt to the conditions of our time.
- Considering that cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state are clearly in a weak position, and that they are particularly endangered by assimilation and ultimately by extinction and, thus, are in need of special protection.
- Stressing that cultural and linguistic communities without a kin–state are multilingual and therefore models for shaping the Europe of tomorrow, and that multilingualism is a value which grows in human relations.
- Acknowledging that the preservation and promotion of the identity of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin–state needs public recognition and firm support which in times characterized by demographic changes must be accorded also outside of their areas of traditional settlement.
- Emphasizing that the digital world enhances the preservation and promotion of language, culture and identity of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state.

Recommendations to the states where cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state live and to the European Union

- Ratify and fully implement the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- Fully respect the right of everyone to self- identification in particular in the national census, as enshrined in Article 3 (1) of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
- Understand and recognize the special needs of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state.
- Identify the fields of their specific needs, such as:

o Teaching in and of their native language - need of sufficient teaching materials and qualified teachers

- o Public and private media using their native language
- o Effective participation in decision-making in matters affecting their rights and interests, and existence of a negotiation mechanism with national authorities

- o Full access to the digital world

- o Autonomy rights – territorial and/or cultural and linguistic – for the protection of their language and culture within a clear and firm legal framework
 - Acknowledge that meeting the special needs of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state requires provision of financial and human resources and positive measures.
 - Include language rights in basic rights and safeguard them in order to build a truly democratic society.
 - Implement the contents of EU Directive 2000/43/EC and other relevant instruments.

Recommendations to international organs

- Be concerned of the potentially vulnerable position of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state and formulate opinions and recommendations accordingly.
- The monitoring organs of the relevant Council of European Instruments should develop a specific strategy on how to address the problems of cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state.

Recommendations to cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state

- To continue to respect the rights of others.
- To aim for a democratic and representative organizational structure.
- To respect the human rights of all individuals belonging to their group.
- To be ready to participate as equal partners when negotiating measures for the implementation of their needs.
- To establish close links and co-operation among themselves in order to make their voices better heard in the international arena.
- To take concrete steps to leverage the digital world within their cultural and linguistic communities without a kin-state.

This declaration was adopted by 32 experts that participated at the international seminar, which was held in Müstair, Switzerland, from October 20 till 23 October 2021.