



**Declaration of the conference**  
**Mother tongue vs. state language? Language issues in European**  
**education systems**

**7 March 2017, Brussels, European Parliament**

High level experts, politicians and MEPs from European countries discussed the various aspects of language use in European education systems and have come to the following conclusions:

1) Minority and majority cultures and languages contribute to the diversity of Europe and their intrinsic value should be acknowledged. Minority protection serves to nurture the richness of traditional ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of Europe.

2) International agreements, conventions and the Treaties of the European Union, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU provide solid legal background for the protection of the rights of national minorities, thus they should be fully implemented.

3) In democratic societies education in and of mother tongue should be granted and promoted by the State as it is the fundamental right of every person, including persons belonging to autochthonous minorities. Moreover, mother tongue is the best instrument in the educational process because it is proven that pupils and students studying in their mother tongue are more successful in learning curriculum.

4) The rights already granted for autochthonous and linguistic minorities by international and national provisions should be preserved and further promoted, and no measures taken by the State should result in lowering the level



of achieved minority protection, in particular the right to education in mother tongue, including those living in diaspora.

5) Learning of the state language by national and linguistic minorities is necessary in every European state in order to facilitate their participation in society and public life, but it should be taught taking into consideration the special needs of the minorities, by special curricula and methods, different from those established for the native speakers.

6) Calls to create European Union minimum standards of traditional minority rights.

Approved by MEP Andrea Bocskor, MEP Pál Csáky, MEP Andor Deli, MEP Csaba Sógor, MEP Herbert Dorfmann, MEP László Tőkés, MEP József Nagy, MEP Gyula Winkler, MEP Josep-Maria Terricabras, MEP Francesc Gambus; László Brenzovics, Head of KMKSZ; Ildikó Orosz, rector of II. RFKMF; József Menyhárt, head of MKP; Hunor Kelemen, Head of RMDSZ, Annamária Vicsek, State Secretary of Ministry of Education in Serbia;