

Conference

## **National Minorities in Romania and Europe – Successful Minority Policies for Social Cohesion and Democratic Stability**

19 - 21 October, 2023

Timisoara, Romania

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One state, one people, one language? Most European countries have ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities. The way a state deals with its national minorities is an indicator of a pluralist democracy in action. Only when national minorities are tolerated, respected and supported can they live, survive and participate in a different political, social and cultural sphere.

On the other hand, there must be a willingness on the part of national minorities to engage with the majority society and to integrate actively through participation. Language is key to participation. Ideally, a successful minority policy helps national minorities to see themselves as an equal part of society. At the same time, it contributes significantly to national minorities being perceived by the majority society as a natural part of the state's population. Minority policies are therefore an important element for ensuring social cohesion and democratic stability.

While the EU prohibits language and minority discrimination under the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, it lacks the competence to propose legislation in key domains that would address these issues, such as education language policies, and political representation of minority groups in Member States. National minorities enjoy special protection under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe. The languages of national minorities are also protected by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

In regions where the majority society has a lot of interaction with minorities, it is apparently easier for people to become friends with the European idea. So can a good national minority policy also be understood as a European policy? And conversely, what role can Europe play when it comes to minority policies? Is there a need for a stronger role of the EU?

The complexity of the system for the protection and inclusion of national minorities makes Romania a leader in the international context. What are the key elements in Romania or other European countries for a successful minority legislation at the national level and its consequent implementation? How to create social cohesion and democratic stability in multi-ethnic countries?

The diverse and inspiring European Capital of Culture 2023, Timisoara, will be the venue for a two-day international conference to discuss current issues and share experiences of national minority policies in Romania and other European countries. Participants will include researchers, policy makers and representatives of national minorities, state authorities and civil society.

# PROGRAMME

**Thursday, 19 October 2023**

**Arrival Day**

Evening

Individual arrival in Timisoara / organized transfer from the airport (confirmation of arrival times required)

**Friday, 20 October 2023**

**First Conference Day**

**Venue: Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House – Timișoara**

10:30h

++++ Individual arrival at Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House / Registration of participants +++++

*Address: 10-12 Gheorghe Lazăr Street, Timișoara 300080*

11:00h

*Moderation: **Benjamin Józsa**, Executive Director of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania*

11:00 – 11:02h

**Welcome remarks**

Greetings by **Johann Fernbach** | Chairman of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Banat (DFGB)

11:02 – 11:10h

Greetings by her **Exc. Regina Lochner** | Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in Timisoara

11:10h

**Dr. Paul-Jürgen Porr** | Chairman, Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania

11:15 – 11:40h

**Keynote address**

*“European Union Policies on National Minorities - the ‘Europe of Regions’”*

**Markus Ferber, MEP** | Chairman, Hanns Seidel Foundation

11:40 – 12:00h

*Ceremonial award of the Golden Badge of Honor “Goldene Ehrennadel” by the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania to **Markus Ferber, MEP***

12:15 – 13:30h

++++ Lunch in the foyer of **Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House – Timișoara** +++++

13:30 – 13:35h

**Dominic Samuel Fritz** | Mayor of Timisoara

13:35 – 13:45h	<p align="center"><b><i>“The German minority in Romania”</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Dr. Paul-Jürgen Porr</b>   Chairman, Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania</p>
13:45 – 14:15h	<p align="center"><b><i>“Cooperation between the German and Jewish communities in Romania – a model for success”</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Silviu Vexler</b>   President, Association of Jewish Communities in Romania</p>
14:15 – 14:30h	<p align="center"><b><i>“The bridge-building role of the German minority in Romania”</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Ovidiu Gaņț</b>   Member of Parliament for the German minority in Romania; Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies, former MEP</p>
14:30 – 15:00h	+++ Coffee Break +++
15:00 – 15:30h	<p align="center"><b><i>“The legal framework of the national minorities in Romania”</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Dincer Geafer</b>   Undersecretary of State, Department for Interethnic Relations</p>
15:30 – 16:30h	<p align="center"><b>Moderated discussion and dialogue with the participating experts on the European dimension of minority policy</b></p> <p><b>Markus Ferber, MEP</b>   Chairman, Hanns Seidel Foundation  <b>Ovidiu Gaņț</b>   Member of Parliament for the German minority in Romania (Romania)  <b>Audience:</b> International guests and representatives of expert committees from Romania  <b>Q&amp;A-Session</b></p>
16:30h	<b><i>End of the first day of the event</i></b>
<p><b>Saturday, 21 October 2023</b>  <b>Second Conference Day</b>  <b>Venue: Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House – Timișoara</b></p>	
08:30h	<p>++++ Individual arrival at Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House / Registration of participants +++++</p> <p><i>Address: 10-12 Gheorghe Lazăr Street, Timișoara 300080</i></p>
09:00h	<i>Moderation: Dr. Radu Carp, Professor at the University of Bucharest</i>
09:00 – 10:00h	<p><b>Panel</b></p> <p><b><i>Legislation on national minority policies in European countries: Case studies, experiences and best practices (1/2)</i></b></p>

	<p><b>Dr. Bernd Fabritius</b>   President, Federation of Expellees; fmr. Federal Government Commissioner for Matters Related to Ethnic German Resettlers and National Minorities (Germany)</p> <p><b>Dr. Ihor Lossovskiy</b>   Deputy head, State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Policy and Freedom of Conscience (Ukraine)</p> <p><b>Thomas Şindilariu</b>   Undersecretary of State, Department for Interethnic Relations (Romania)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Q&amp;A-Session</b></p>
10:00 – 10:40h	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Panel</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Legislation on national minority policies in European countries: Case studies, experiences and best practices (2/2)</b></p> <p><b>Ludmila Burlaca</b>   Head of Directorate Strengthening Interethnic Relations of the Agency for Interethnic Relations of Republic of Moldova (Moldova)</p> <p><b>Ábel Ravasz</b>   President, Mathias Bel Institute (Slovakia)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Q&amp;A-Session</b></p>
10:40 – 11:00h	+++ Coffee Break +++
11:00 – 12:30h	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Panel</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The security dimension: Democratic stability and national minorities</b></p> <p><b>Yulia Tyshchenko</b>   Head of the Council, Ukrainian Centre for Independent Political Research UCIPR (Ukraine)</p> <p><b>Dr. Attila Demkó</b>   Head of the Center for Geopolitics, Mathias Corvinus Collegium (Hungary)</p> <p><b>Alexandru Postică</b>   Member, Superior Council of Magistracy and Strategic Planning; Advisor, NGO Promo LEX (Moldova)</p> <p><b>Dr. Virgiliu Țârău</b>   Professor at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca (Romania)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Q&amp;A-Session</b></p>
12:30h	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Closing remarks: Core elements of a successful minority policy</b></p> <p><b>Benjamin Bobbe</b>   Head of Division Central and Eastern Europe</p>
12:45 – 14:00h	++++ Lunch in the foyer of <b>Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House – Timișoara</b> followed by individual departure of participants +++++
14:00h	+++ End of Conference +++

## Conference Information

### **CONTACT DETAILS FOR PARTICIPANTS:**

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**VENUE:** Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn House – Timișoara, 10-12 Gheorghe Lazăr Street, Timișoara 300080 (Tel. +40 256 499 341)

**TRAVEL EXPENSES:** Hanns Seidel Foundation will cover all of your travel expenses (transport, hotel, conference meals). We will offer transport from the airport to the hotel. Hanns Seidel Foundation disclaims liability for arrival to or departure from the venue. Personal data will be handled based on § 28 Abs. 4 of the German Data Protection Law (Bundesdatenschutzgesetz / BDSG).