

European Regional Forum on Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM 6 – 7 MAY 2019



Program of Work

MONDAY 6 MAY

09:00-09:50 Opening Remarks

1. **Fernand de Varennes**, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues
2. **Livia Járóka**, Vice-President of European Parliament
3. **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
4. **Szabolcs Horváth**, Member of Cabinet of the EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport
5. **Vesna Crnić-Grotić**, Chair, Committee of Experts European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
6. **Birgit Van Hout**, Regional Representative for Europe, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
7. **Louise Haxthausen**, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels

The session is chaired by **Anna-Mária Bíró**, Director, Tom Lantos Institute

09.50-13:00 Panel 1: Human Rights and minority language education

Is there a right to education in, or teaching of, a minority language, and if so to what extent and under what conditions? This is one of the central issues for many minority communities around the world. While some European instruments address this, these tend to still be fairly general, open to interpretation, or even misunderstood, particularly in relation to the relationship between human rights obligations and the use of (minority) languages in education.

The session will discuss the interaction between existing human rights standards and education in minority languages, considering the extent and/or conditions for such rights claims. The session will also look at what minorities actually want when it comes to the teaching of and in their languages, as well as what States can provide when considering the principles of proportionality and reasonableness.

The panel discussion is moderated by **Ingvill Thorson Plesner**, Researcher and Network Coordinator, Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies

- **Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark**, Director and Head of Research, Åland Islands Peace Institute
- **Robert Dunbar**, Chair of Celtic Languages, Literature, History and Antiquities, University of Edinburgh

