

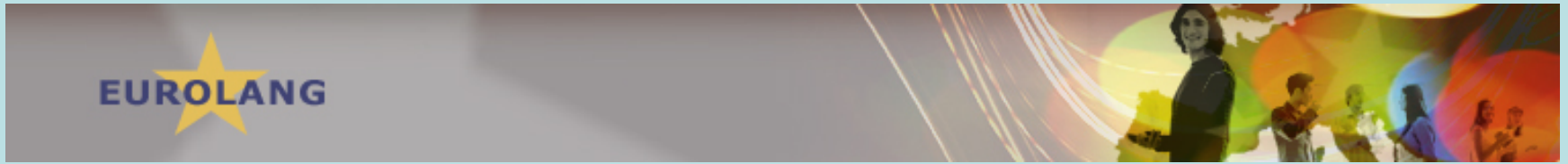
Achievements, challenges, and the way forward: Eurolang, ELEN and working with the FCNM.



Dr. Davyth Hicks, EUROLANG – ELEN

- **Eurolang, European Language Equality Network (ELEN).**
- **FCNM a benchmark treaty.**
- **FCNM achievements.**
- **FCNM challenges.**
- **ELEN recommendations.**

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Who we are

Eurolang, originally EBLUL's news service, advocates for RMLs at the EU and international level. It was established as a NGO in 2010 with a mandate from the former EBLUL member state committees. One of its roles has been as Secretariat for the European Parliament's **Intergroup** for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages.

In July 2011 a new civil society organization, the **European Language Equality Network** (ELEN), was launched comprising former EBLUL members, Eurolang, and individual language NGOs from across Europe. It replaces EBLUL and works to represent RML speakers.

ELEN represents 42 language communities in 21 European states.

Eurolang and ELEN have consultative status with the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the UN, UNESCO, and the OSCE. They sit on the European Commission NGO Platform for Multilingualism, the NGO Platform for Culture, the NGO Platform of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, and the UN's ECOSOC.

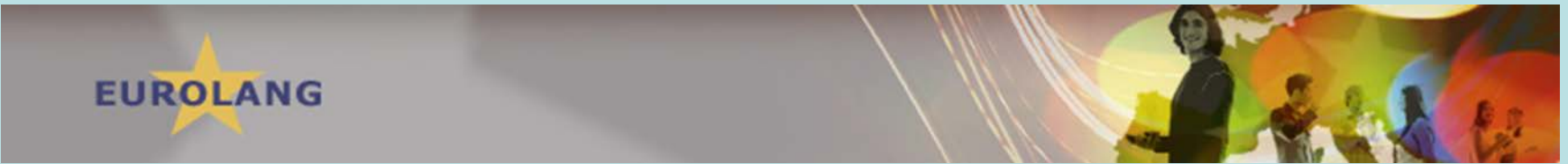
- **ELEN Actions - France**
- March 2011 demonstrations



- **ELEN: Seeking cultural asylum at UNESCO**



- There are approximately 60 minority languages in Europe (ECRML figure).
- Approximately 50 million people, **10%**, in the European Union speak a minority language.
- In continental Europe it is estimated that there are over 330 different nationalities with over 100 million (nearly 14%) living as a national minority.
- ELEN held its General Assembly in Paris on Saturday where our new advocacy strategies were drafted.



The FCNM in ELEN and Eurolang's work

- Importance of the FCNM is over-arching.
- A benchmark, a universal standard, an underpinning international Treaty that we constantly refer to in all of our work.
- An important protection mechanism for minorities because it forms part of the Copenhagen criteria.

The FCNM in ELEN and Eurolang's work

- The FCNM is the treaty that we can refer to ensure that on the accession of a new member state to the EU that national and linguistic minority rights are going to be upheld.
- It gives us one of the few opportunities to actually hold a State to account.

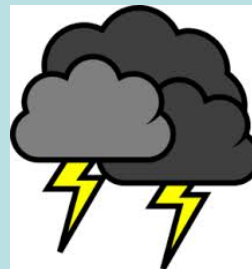
Achievements

- The creation of a treaty-based mechanism to address majority/minority situations with a potential for destabilisation and conflict.
- An overall improvement in the legal protection of minority rights as human rights as a result of additional treaty law, coupled with an international monitoring mechanism.



Problems

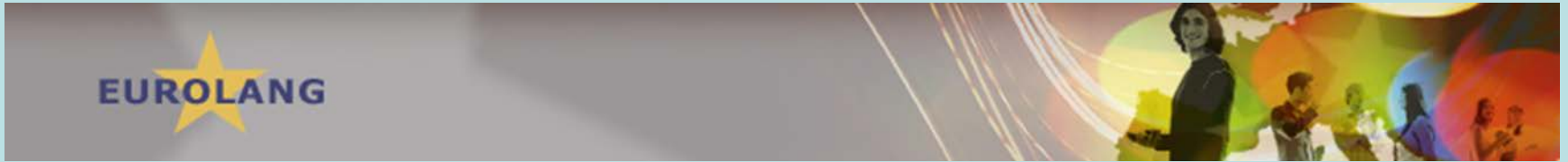
- Problems with implementation once certain states have joined.
- Lack of success in preventing ethnicity-based violence such as in the Balkans and the Caucasus.
- Not all EU Member States had ratified.
- The double standards/ 'Copenhagen dilemma' issue where 'new' EU states have to satisfy the Copenhagen criteria and ratify the FCNM, while not all of the 'old' states have done the same.



Problems

- Shortcomings in the monitoring procedure in terms of duration (such as late reporting).
- Insufficient participation of minorities.
- Non-recognition of certain national groups (Cornish).
- Lack of transparency,
- Continuing problems ensuring the protection of the national minorities/ Roma.
- A 'revealed' problem is the integration of new minorities.





EU Challenges

- Lack of action from EU, ‘the Guardian of the Treaties’ because of lack of competences on national/ linguistic minority issues.
- EChFR, non-discrimination clauses, yet to realise potential.
- Implications of EU joining ECHR for national minorities?
- FRA Report on national and linguistic minorities?
- How does emergence of independence and autonomy movements affect the development of minority rights protection mechanism?
- National minority rights in the EU, no longer “an export article and not one for domestic consumption” ?

Recommendations

- States should support measures for national minorities and ensure better implementation of FCNM. .
- New Intergroup resolution calls on EU comprehensive and legally binding European Union protection system for national minorities, accompanied by a monitoring mechanism.



ELEN / Eurolang Proposals

- **Re. Insufficient reporting. ELEN will undertake outreach work to encourage and help NGOs provide shadow reports.**
- **ELEN will continue to build on the work of the FCNM and encourage states to take measures and implement Adv Cttee Reports, plus encourage new ratifications.**
- **ELEN aims to work with States to help with FCNM implementation, to create a dialogue, and to work with those states yet to ratify.**
- **Continue to work closely with European institutions on FCNM implementation, and its part in the 'new European architecture of minority rights protection'.**
- **ELEN, working towards an EU Directive against language discrimination, for which we need the FCNM and ECRML as benchmark treaties.**





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Intergroup on Facebook

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Intergroup Book <http://static.gal.fidesz-eu.hu/media/2/2/5/5/2255.pdf>



Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages

The issues raised in the European Parliament's Intergroup, 2009-2011