

# Motions and Declarations

Motion/Declaration number	6
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Name of the person introducing the Motion/Declaration to the GA	Flemming Meyer and Carsten Leth Schmidt
Member party	SSW and SP
Title (of the Motion/Declaration)	<b>100 years since the plebiscite in the Danish-German border region: Minorities building bridges</b>
<p>Drawing on the laws on minorities in the border region as inspiration, which are characterised by the following events:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The border between Germany and Denmark was determined in 1920 in a democratic and peaceful manner in accordance with the right of self-determination of peoples.</li> <li>b. The 1955 Copenhagen-Bonn Declarations recognised the rights of minorities on both sides of the border, including the right to their own schools and institutions, the recognition of school-leaving certificates, the exemption of the Danish minority's party from the five per cent hurdle in the Bundestag, etc.</li> <li>c. Danes and Frisians have been protected by the Land constitution of Schleswig-Holstein since 1990, and Sinti and Roma since 2013.</li> <li>d. The Act on the Promotion of Frisian in the Public Area of 2004 recognised certain rights of the Frisian minority, including the right to acknowledge oneself as a member of the Frisian minority, recognition of Frisian as the 2nd official language in North Frisia and on Helgoland, and regulations on bilingual signs in North Frisia and on Helgoland.</li> <li>e. Following the local government reform in Denmark, in 2005 special rules were created in Sønderjylland for the German minority party; these rules make it easier for them to be represented in local government.</li> <li>f. With the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, many (although far from all) cultural and linguistic demands of minorities have been achieved.</li> <li>g. Representatives of the German and Danish minorities and of the Frisians have had a permanent seat in the bodies of the cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig since 2001.</li> <li>h. The German, Frisian and Danish minorities play an active part in political life as citizens with equal rights and on an equal footing with the majority population. Minorities are integrated into Danish and German society and are respected and recognised; they are not assimilated or excluded. These minorities see their role as building bridges between Germany and Denmark</li> </ol>	

and work actively and successfully to ensure the Danish-German border region, as well as cooperation with the Netherlands, continues to develop economically, culturally and socially.

the European Free Alliance (EFA) calls on the EU to encourage Member States to work towards:

1. Seeing minorities in Europe as bridge-builders and a benefit for society and supporting and promoting them accordingly.
2. Protecting and implementing the democratic, cultural and linguistic rights of minorities.
3. Protecting and actively promoting the political participation of minorities in democratic processes.
4. Respecting the right of self-determination of peoples and minorities.

Grounds:

After two wars (1848-1850 and 1864), two world wars and a long conflict between Germany and Denmark over the Duchy of Schleswig, which continued into the 1950s and 1960s, today we can see an extremely positive development in the Danish-German border region, with close, friendly relations between Denmark and Germany.

The plebiscites held in 1920 on the line of the border laid the foundations for the positive and peaceful development of the Danish-German border region. The democratic vote held on the basis of the right of self-determination of peoples ensures that 100 years later the border is maintained and respected by both parties.

An important precondition for this positive development in minority politics was the active political participation of the minorities in political processes; this ensured and continues to ensure that any problems between the majority and minority can be discussed and addressed.

Although not all problems have been resolved, and at times setbacks occur, the framework of minority politics in both countries is designed so that the majority and minority can find solutions together.

Today the majority and minority population on both sides of the border work for each other and with each other in order to promote the region. The cultural and linguistic capabilities of minorities make them automatic bridge-builders who can mediate between the various countries. Even though historical and political events cannot simply be transferred to others, the European Union and its Member States should take their inspiration from the Danish-German border region, the regulations on minorities, and the plebiscite of 1920, when tackling the numerous unresolved minority and regional conflicts in Europe.