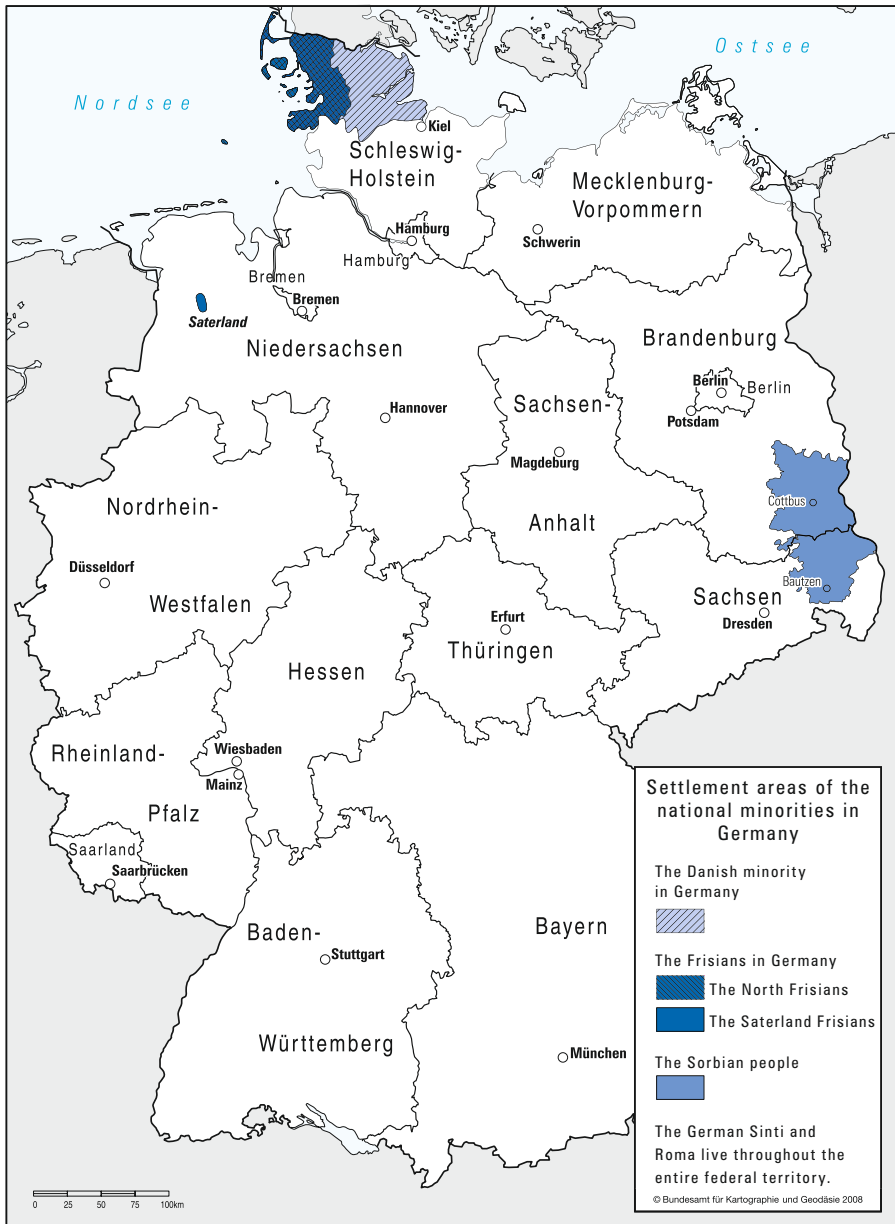




Federal Ministry  
of the Interior

# National Minorities in Germany





# **National Minorities in Germany**



Dr Thomas de Maizière

## Foreword

In Germany, the Danes, the Frisians, the Sorbs and the German Sinti and Roma are recognized as national minorities. Protecting and promoting these four recognized national minorities, which enrich our culture in significant ways, is and will continue to be a Federal Government priority.

This publication offers information about the origins, settlement areas and cultural identity of the national minorities in Germany, as well as the work of their organizations. In this way, we hope to increase awareness of these minorities and promote understanding for their membership.

The legal basis for protecting and promoting national minorities is provided by two Council of Europe treaties:

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force in Germany in 1998, prohibits all discrimination against persons due to their membership of a national minority as well as forced assimilation. The Convention also requires participating states to take measures in the field of schools and education, culture and social life and to protect their civil liberties, which are especially important for members of national minorities.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which entered into force in Germany in 1999, protects and promotes the regional language Low German and the languages of the national minorities: Danish, Frisian (North Frisian and Sater Frisian), Sorbian (Upper and Lower Sorbian) and the Romany language of the German Sinti and Roma. For speakers of these languages, being able to use them is an important part of their identity.

The Federal Republic of Germany, the 16 German states and the local governments support members of the national minorities in preserving their cultural identity. Examples of this support include funding for kindergartens, schools and institutes, funding and advising for organizations of national minorities, subsidies for informational publications and festivals, and bilingual street signs, among many other things. Members of minorities who are proud of their identity often find it easier to integrate within the majority society than those who are unsure of where they belong; those who are sure of themselves are also more open to others.

I would like to thank all members of the national minorities who work tirelessly, almost all in a volunteer capacity, to preserve their culture. Through your commitment, you are saving part of the cultural richness of Germany and the cultural diversity of Europe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas de Maizière', written in a cursive style.

Dr Thomas de Maizière, MP  
Federal Minister of the Interior



Dr Christoph Bergner

## Welcome

Some readers of this brochure may wonder why the Danish minority in Germany, the Frisians in Germany, the German Sinti and Roma and the Sorbian people enjoy special protection as national minorities.


In Germany, the members of these minorities maintain their own unique languages as well as customs and traditions that in some cases are hundreds of years old. They live today according to a culture handed down by their ancestors, and they hope to pass this culture on to their own children and grandchildren. Their unique culture is part of their personality, which, like everyone in Germany, they have the right to express freely. But it is difficult to preserve a language spoken only with immediate family members, or to keep up local traditions that differ from those of the majority and are observed in only a few limited geographical areas. This is why they need our help, for example in the form of language instruction at school. But preserving minority cultures benefits not only the members of those minorities; it also enriches the larger society, allowing all of us to enjoy traditional Gypsy music, the Frisian *Biikebrennen*, the Danish cultural programme at the annual *Arsmøde* and the Lower Sorbian *Zapust* pre-Lenten celebration.

Supporting and promoting national minorities is also important in political terms. One need not open a history book to know that countless conflicts, crises and wars start with the oppression and persecution of minorities. So the way a pluralistic democracy treats its national minorities indicates how healthy that democracy is. Minorities can survive and thrive within a different majority culture only if they have help and are treated with tolerance and respect. In this way, protecting national minorities contributes to and is in fact essential for domestic peace.

It is also important for good relations with other countries. Many national minorities live on both sides of national borders or in border regions, or may be a minority in one country but the majority in another. For this reason, discrimination against a minority in one country can often lead to retaliation against minorities in another country. But the good relations among the Germans and Danes on both sides of our common border shows that it is possible to break out of this vicious circle. Although it is now nearly forgotten, the “Schleswig-Holstein Question” was one of the thorniest political issues in 19th-century Europe.

I hope this brochure helps increase understanding of the special situation of national minorities in Germany today. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact the minorities’ organizations or the federal and state agencies listed at the end of this brochure.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Bergner', written in a cursive style.

Dr Christoph Bergner, MP  
Federal Government Commissioner for Matters  
Related to Repatriates and National Minorities

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# The Danish minority in Germany

## 1.1 History

There has been an ethnic Danish minority in South Schleswig since 1864, when Denmark lost the Second Schleswig War and had to give up North and South Schleswig to Prussia.

In the 1920 plebiscite, North Schleswig (present-day Sønderjyllands Amt) voted to join Denmark, while the majority in South Schleswig decided in favour of Germany. The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany and the state of Schleswig-Holstein and the sense of identity of today's Danish minority in South Schleswig are all based on the Bonn and Copenhagen Declarations of 1955 guaranteeing that anyone may choose to identify him- or herself as having Danish ethnicity, and that the authorities are not allowed to question such self-identification. The same applies to the German minority in Denmark. In its Article 5, the state constitution of Schleswig-Holstein emphasizes that the state recognizes and promotes the Danish minority.

Today, the ethnic Danish minority numbers about 50,000 persons with German citizenship. This minority adheres to the values it associates with its mother country Denmark.

## 1.2 Area of settlement

The roughly 50,000 members of the Danish minority – most of them German citizens – live in Schleswig, the northernmost region of the Federal Republic of Germany. They call the region South Schleswig; North Schleswig belongs to the Kingdom of Denmark.



Using play to promote language acquisition among very young children (photo: Tante Andante).

### 1.3 Language

The chief cultural organization of the Danish minority, which is responsible in particular for preserving and promoting the Danish language, is Sydslesvigsk Forening (SSF), or the South Schleswig Association, with the Danish Secretariat General (Dansk Generalsekretariat) in Flensburg; the SSF is also affiliated with many more associations having a wide variety of tasks. The SSF covers the full range of cultural activities: lectures, concerts of classical and traditional music, opera, ballet, excursions, tours and exhibitions, making sure that Danish language and culture are part of everyday life in South Schleswig.

The extensive system of private schools is especially important for preserving the Danish language. The 48 primary and secondary schools, a boarding school and a university preparatory school run by the Danish Schools Association for South Schleswig (Dansk Skoleforening for Sydslesvig) serve about 5,700 pupils, while about 1,900 children attend the association's 55 nursery schools. The association is

also responsible for adult education. These schools teach more than just language skills; they focus specifically on the needs of the Danish minority and seek to instil a sense of group identity.

## 1.4 Organization

The Danish minority has organizations to deal independently with tasks in a variety of fields, such as culture, politics, nursery schools, schools, teaching, adult education, youth, sport, libraries, daily newspapers, health care, elder care and churches. Thus the Danish minority offers its members – as well as other interested persons – all-round excellent services in Danish.

The Danish youth association Danske Ungdomsforeninger comprises 75 independent sport and youth associations, Scouts and church youth groups with a total of more than 12,500 members; it operates twelve recreational centres.

The Danish minority's library system, the Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig, includes the main library in Flensburg, four branches in the region's other cities, two mobile libraries, an archive and a research centre.

The health-care service Dansk Sundhedstjeneste for Sydslesvig runs a nursing home for the elderly, provides home health care and is responsible for school health services, including dental check-ups.

The Danish Church in South Schleswig (Dansk Kirke i Sydslesvig) has 24 pastors in nearly 40 congregations with a total membership of 6,600.

The bilingual daily *Flensborg Avis* has a circulation of about 5,500.

The Danish minority is represented by its own political party, the Südschleswigschen Wählerverband (SSW), with about 3,000 members. The SSW is represented on municipal and district councils and currently has four seats in the Schleswig-Holstein state parliament.

The SSF is the largest association and point of contact, with about 13,500 members. The SSF uses its information office in Copenhagen to make its views known to the Danish parliament, the Folketing, its administration and the media.

The SSF also oversees the organization of the minority's annual meeting, *Arsmøde*: On the last weekend in May or the first weekend in June, political leaders and other prominent figures from Denmark are invited to more than 40 different events intended to strengthen ties between the ethnic minority and its mother country.

Together with the SSW and in some cases the youth association Danske Ungdomsforeninger, the SSF is working with the other national minorities in Germany to convince law-makers that Germany's constitution needs an article concerning minorities.

The Danish minority believes it is important – indeed essential for closer European cooperation – that every individual should be able to freely choose their nationality and culture. This choice should be respected as a basic democratic principle, in agreement with the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

According to the Danish minority, anyone may choose to identify him- or herself as a Dane; European policy is minority policy, and minority policy is European policy.



The Flensborghus is the cultural centre for the Danish minority in and around Flensburg (photo: SSF).



# The Frisians in Germany



## 2.1 History

The Frisians have been present in the North Sea coastal region since about the start of the Christian era. The earliest historical sources record Frisian settlements in the regions of West and East Frisia. The Saterland Frisians are descended from Frisians who left the North Sea coast between 1100 and 1400, after that region was devastated by storm tides, to move further south to the Saterland region, which had already been settled by Westphalians. After the mass migrations during the Dark Ages, North Frisia was initially unpopulated. In the early Middle Ages, the Frisian language area extended from the mouth of the Rhine to the Weser River.

Frisians migrated into parts of North Frisia, probably as early as the 7th and 8th centuries, and in the 11th century, Frisians began settling the marshlands. In olden times, North Frisia was made up of loosely allied administrative districts. Like the rest of Schleswig-Holstein, North Frisia belonged to Denmark until 1864, then to Prussia, and after 1871 to the German Empire (as part of Prussia).

## 2.2 Language and area of settlement

Frisian is not a dialect of German, but a separate language. Like English, Dutch and German, it is a West Germanic language. The language is made up of three branches:

- West Frisian is spoken by about 400,000 persons in the Dutch province of Friesland.
- East Frisian is now extinct in the region where it originated but has been preserved in the Saterland region of the state of Lower Saxony, where there are about 2,000 native speakers of Saterland Frisian, as the language is now known.

The North Frisian coast (photo: Walter Raabe).



- North Frisian is spoken by about 10,000 persons living on the northwest coast of the state of Schleswig-Holstein and the island of Helgoland.

### **The Frisian ethnic group in Schleswig-Holstein**

The North Frisian language area covers the western part of the Nordfriesland district in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, including the North Sea islands of Sylt, Föhr, Amrum and various smaller islands, as well as the island of Helgoland in the district of Pinneberg. The language is made up of two dialect groups: Island and Mainland North Frisian. The mainland community Risum-Lindholm and the western side of the island of Föhr are strongholds of the North Frisian language.

Starting in the early 19th century, North Frisian was increasingly used as a written language, and dictionaries, grammar books and many literary works have been published in the major dialects. North Frisian is taught in 17 schools, most of them at the primary level (as of 2009/2010). North Frisian can be studied at the universities in Kiel and Flensburg, and also in Kiel, a North Frisian dictionary institute develops language reference works for research and everyday use. Kindergartens are also increasing their use of North Frisian.

Bilingual town sign (German and Saterland Frisian) (photo: picture-alliance).



In recent years, North Frisian has been gaining attention in the public sphere: Since 1997, when it was first permitted, several communities have put up bilingual town signs. Many towns have long had Frisian-language street signs; some civil registry offices provide for weddings in the Frisian language, and church services are occasionally held in Frisian.

### **The Saterland Frisians in Lower Saxony**

Saterland is an independent municipality in the north-western part of the district of Cloppenburg, in the state of Lower Saxony. Saterland borders the districts of Leer and Emsland to the north and west and is made up of four villages: Strukelje (Strücklingen), Roomelse (Ramsloh), Skäddel (Scharrel) und Sedelsbierich (Sedelsberg). Surrounded by moor, the region was settled by East Frisians between 1100 and 1400. Unlike most East Frisians, the Saterland Frisians are largely Catholic.

Saterland Frisian is not a Low German dialect but the last surviving remnant of Old East Frisian, which the East Frisian legal scholar Ubbo Emmius (1547–1625) described in this way: “The Frisian language varies greatly by region. In general, the language is so similar and so closely related to the English language that it is no closer to any other language of other peoples, not even neighbouring peoples ... It often combines vowel sounds and has a wide variety of diphthongs, so that pronunciation is sometimes difficult and writing even more so. That is why this language is so rarely preserved in books ...”

Today, Saterland Frisians are gradually increasing their use of this language, which is apparent above all in the schools. More grandparents are speaking Frisian with their grandchildren, and the Saterland Frisians have become increasingly aware of how unique their language is.



The *Biikebrennen* in North Frisia (photo: Ulf Dahl).

## 2.3 Organization

In North Frisia, Frisian associations devoted to various tasks provide important support for the Frisian movement. The Frisian Council (Frasche Rådj, Sektion Nord e. V.) serves as an umbrella organization representing the common interests of North Frisians. The Council is a member of the Inter-Frisian Council, the joint umbrella organization for West, East and North Frisians, and a member of the Minority Council representing the four autochthonous minorities in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Frisian ethnic group is also represented in the Federal Union of European Nationalities and the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. The Council's work is based on the experience that individual human rights can be fully exercised only in a specific cultural, social and geographical context which is perceived as home, and in the awareness that the diversity of cultures, ethnic roots and languages is part of Europe's rich heritage.

Associations for all of North Frisia are the North Frisian Association (Nordfriesische Verein) and its affiliates, with about 4,800 members and the Frisian Association (Friisk Forining), with about 650 members.

The North Frisian Institute (Nordfriisk Instituut) in Bredstedt is the central research facility in North Frisia and is responsible for promoting, researching and documenting the Frisian language, history and culture; it operates a specialized library and publishing house, among other things.

The Seelter Buund is a Saterland Frisian association which works with the North Frisians in the Inter-Frisian Council and the German committee of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages.

Under Article 5 of the Schleswig-Holstein state constitution, the Frisian ethnic group is entitled to protection and promotion. In 1988, a body was established at the Schleswig-Holstein state parliament to deal with matters concerning the Frisian population group and ensure awareness among policy-makers. Chaired by the president of the state parliament, the body includes representatives of the parliamentary groups, members of the Bundestag, the state minister-president's commissioner for minority issues and representatives of the Frisian Council.

### **The Biikebrennen in North Frisia**

“Every year on 21 February, more than 60 *Biiken* burn on the islands and mainland, especially in the north. The Frisian word *Biiken* means ‘signal fire’ and is related to the English word ‘beacon’. The *Biikebrennen*, or burning of the *Biiken*, has a special place among the customs of the region and is considered the North Frisian national celebration. It is thought to have originated in pre-Christian times to mark the end of winter. The date of 21 February was probably set on the island of Sylt during the 19th century: That is the day before the Feast of the Chair of St Peter, when the court was convened and the community gathered to celebrate. In some places, the *Biikebrennen* has become a tourist attraction, with special trains bringing guests to the event. But most of the bonfires are the centrepiece of village festivals comprising a variety of events.”

(Fiete Pingel, “Nordfriesland von A bis Z”, ed. Nordfriisk Instituut, Bräist/Bredstedt, 1998)



## The German Sinti and Roma

### 3.1 History

The German Sinti and Roma make up a long-established minority group in Germany. They are mentioned in historical documents from the 14th and 15th centuries. According to Sinti tradition, their forebears have lived in the German language area for a thousand years.

They now live here as German citizens with their own distinctive cultural identity, for example their musical tradition. Despite Nazi claims to the contrary, before 1933 Sinti and Roma in Germany were German citizens and part of German society. They pursued the same occupations as the majority population – as labourers, white-collar workers, civil servants, tradesmen, farmers, artists, soldiers and business owners – as they had done for generations, as permanently settled members of the community. The same was and is true of the Roma elsewhere in Eastern and Western Europe, where they also constitute national minorities in their home countries.

When the National Socialists began singling Roma out and depriving them of their rights, they were no longer able to live their lives as ordinary German citizens. As early as December 1938, SS chief Heinrich Himmler announced the “final solution to the Gypsy question”; transports to concentration camps had already started. In the last large-scale transports, in March 1943 23,000 Sinti and Roma from eleven European countries were taken by train to the death camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau. More than 500,000 Sinti and Roma died in concentration camps and were killed by SS commandos and the German army in occupied Europe. At the opening of the Documentation and Cultural Centre of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma on 16 March 1997, Federal President Roman Herzog said, “The genocide of the Sinti and Roma was carried out for the same motive of fanatic racism, with the same conscious desire for

systematic and complete annihilation as the genocide of the Jews. Everywhere the Nazis were in control, [Sinti and Roma] were systematically murdered, entire families from babies to the elderly.”

### 3.2 Area of settlement

The German Sinti and Roma population is estimated at around 70,000. The majority live in or near the major cities of western Germany and Berlin: Kiel, Hamburg, Düsseldorf and Cologne, and in the population centres of the Rhine/Main and Rhine/Neckar regions. Large numbers of German Sinti and Roma also live in smaller cities clustered in other regions, for example in East Frisia, northern Hesse, the Palatinate, Baden and Bavaria.

### 3.3 Language

At home, German Sinti and Roma speak both German and the Romany language, and their children grow up bilingual, using both Romany and German as native speakers. The Romany dialect spoken by German Sinti and Roma differs from other Romany dialects spoken elsewhere in Europe, although all are derived from ancient Sanskrit. The language is used in many regions of Germany where Sinti and Roma have lived for centuries.

The racist policies of the Nazi regime destroyed much of the historical structure of the minority in Germany and with it, the language communities. Today, Romany language speakers live in most of the German states.



### 3.4 Organization

#### The Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

The Central Council of German Sinti and Roma was founded in February 1982. The Central Council is made up of 15 member associations, that is, state and regional associations of German Sinti and Roma.

The Central Council holds many discussions with federal and state governments to promote the national minority and ensure protection against discrimination. The Central Council also organizes protests to raise awareness for its demands.

For example, the Council successfully fought for new rules on compensation for victims of the Nazi regime. Since its founding, the Council has systematically researched and documented the genocide of the Sinti and Roma and has pursued surviving SS criminals. The Council also successfully protested against what it considered racist methods of record-keeping by the police and justice authorities, and the relevant internal publications were removed from circulation.

Since 1993, the Council has been calling for a ban on discrimination to be included in the state media laws and in civil service law in order to prevent suspects from being identified as Sinti and Roma, using that term or other synonyms. The Council worked to have the German Sinti and Roma legally recognized as a national minority and to have German Romany recognized as a minority language under the Council of Europe Charter.

Music festival of the state association of the Sinti Alliance of Germany (photo: Sinti Alliance of Germany).





Federal President Roman Herzog opening the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg (photo: Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma).

The Council argued that the small number of Romany speakers in some regions and the situation of the language community as a result of Nazi race policies should not interfere with objective possibilities for protecting the language, as the reason for this dispersal was earlier government action. The Council argued that the state had a particular obligation to help mitigate problems threatening the existence of the language and to expand the scope for developing the language and culture. **The Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma** is a specialized institution of the Central Council, and its tasks include documentation and research on the history, culture and current issues of the national minority; cultural activities; education and further training; advising on equal treatment; and public information. Starting in the early 1990s, the Central Council received federal funding to build the Documentation and Cultural Centre, which Federal President Roman Herzog officially opened on 13 March 1997.

### **The Sinti Alliance of Germany**

The Sinti Alliance of Germany (Sinti Allianz Deutschland e. V.) is an association of German Sinti, founded in 1999/2000 by 20 representatives of tribes and the umbrella organization of nine independent Sinti organizations and one Lowara tribe. The Sinti Alliance of Germany pursues exclusively charitable aims and is independently funded. It represents the interests of those Sinti who feel committed to their traditional way of life with its historical precepts and prohibitions governing the conduct of their lives, and who wish to preserve this system. In this way, they keep alive their traditional Vedic legal system, which obligates every Sinto to respect and maintain the cultural and social taboos of their ethnic group.

The majority of Sinti represented by the Alliance do not regard themselves as a national minority requiring special recognition, but as members of the Sinti ethnic group within the German people, maintaining their Sinti language and culture alongside their German language and culture.

The Alliance's practical work focuses on various areas: The Alliance seeks a legal basis which would allow Sinti to exercise their civil rights in harmony with the Sinti system of taboos, so that this system would be recognized by the state and society as relevant for decision-making. According to the Alliance, the taboo system is a set of cultural laws which Sinti must follow; these laws are currently not protected or actionable. The Alliance also seeks to strengthen and preserve Sinti culture through cultural projects. Sinti elders teach Sinti children and young people about their history, culture, customs and traditions, and musically gifted children and young people attend workshops with experienced Sinti musicians, singers and dancers.

The Alliance seeks government support, in particular from the states, in the form of funding, especially project funding. The Alliance also provides social counselling for precarious Sinti families, assistance for the elderly, and counselling and representation for victims of the Nazi regime, as well as other social work on behalf of the Sinti community.

In policy terms, the Alliance believes it is essential to clarify that the term “German Sinti and Roma” does not refer to a single, common national minority, but that the German Sinti and German Roma are two different ethnic groups with their own distinct languages, cultures and legal systems. According to the Alliance, the German Sinti follow cultural rules unknown to the German Roma; the Alliance also sees the two groups as having opposing views on language instruction: Whereas Roma accept state-sponsored instruction in Romany, the Sinti consider this to be a serious violation of their community’s cultural taboos.

Sinti Alliance of Germany website.



Some reject efforts to use the term “Roma” in place of the various groups’ own names for themselves, including “Sinti”, as well as the traditional generic term “Gypsy”, arguing that, in the absence of a general term acceptable to all groups, the term is indispensable, as long as it is not used in a pejorative sense.



# The Sorbian people

## 4.1 History and area of settlement

Starting around A.D. 600, after the Germanic tribes had migrated out of the region east of the Elbe and Saale rivers, Slavic tribes moved from the east into the largely unpopulated area between the Baltic Sea and the Erz Mountains. A Frankish chronicle from 631 referring to a Sorbian Prince Derwan provides the first written evidence of their presence. From that time on, Slavic tribes lived in the region between the Saale and Neisse rivers, in the area around present-day Leipzig, Altenburg, Lommatzsch, Dresden, Bautzen and the Spreewald. The term “Sorbs” initially referred only to the Slavic groups in the west, while the Lusatians and Milceni settled in Upper and Lower Lusatia. It is not known when or why the term “Sorb” came to apply to the other Slavic tribes in the region as well.

In 929, the German King Henry I led an army into what is now Saxony, built a fortress at Meissen and placed the region under German rule. The conversion of the Sorbs to Christianity began with the founding of the bishopric of Meissen in 968. The German Empire exerted political and cultural domination, but the Sorbs were able to maintain their own language, customs and traditions.

The second wave of German eastward migration during the High Middle Ages changed that, as several hundred thousand German settlers moved to the region east of the Saale in order to work the land. There was frequent contact between the Sorbs in their old settlements and the Germans in the newly settled areas, resulting in the gradual intermixing of the two groups. Only in Upper and Lower Lusatia were the Sorbs able to remain separate, probably because they outnumbered Germans in this region. Upper and Lower Lusatia had no local rulers, which gave them greater autonomy and



Lusatia's Sorbian-Wend communities celebrate *Zapust*, the Lower Sorbian pre-Lenten festival (photo: picture-alliance).

apparently allowed the Sorbs to maintain their traditions, especially since the medieval nobility and church leaders were not interested in Germanizing the local population.

The Reformation played an important role in reinforcing Sorbian identity, because it gave priority to sermons and hymns in the vernacular. Only now did the Sorbs develop a written language, as Sorbian pastors and teachers laid the foundations for a national identity and created a body of literature in the Sorbian language. After the Reformation, 13 out of the roughly 200 churches in Upper Lusatia remained Catholic; five of them were in the Sorbian settlement area. Resisting both German and Protestant influence, Catholic Sorbs have maintained especially strong ties to their Sorbian traditions.

In the early 19th century, Sorbian intellectuals played a key role in awakening a sense of Sorbian ethnic identity. Sorbian scholars, together with clubs, books and magazines, ensured the survival of the language, history and traditions of the Sorbs, whose settlement area in Upper and Lower Lusatia remained almost exclusively Sorbian until the end of the 19th century. Schooling and church services in their native tongue helped foster a sense of ethnic identity, although Saxony was significantly more tolerant than Prussia, which exerted greater pressure to adapt to German culture.

The Sorbs mainly lived in villages and remained largely untouched by industrialization. Emigration to industrialized regions and cities and career advancement often led Sorbs to become more assimilated into the German majority culture, and by the mid-18th century, the Sorbian settlement area began to shrink. The ability to speak German became necessary for economic reasons alone. During the Nazi regime, this underlying trend was rein-



forced by a conscious policy decision to do away with Sorbian autonomy. Pastors and teachers, Sorbian associations and the Sorbian press in particular were targets of repression.

In the early years of the German Democratic Republic, the government issued decrees for the preservation of the Sorbian people which found expression mainly in culture and the educational system and in bilingual town and road signs. The Sorbian organizations were incorporated into the communist party system, while a “proletarian class consciousness” was supposed to supplant the Sorbs’ agriculturally based autonomy. Intensive industrialization of Upper and Lower Lusatia attracted a wave of new German-speaking settlers as the Sorbs were increasingly outnumbered in their old homeland.

There are currently about 60,000 Sorbs in the states of Saxony and Brandenburg and outside the region of Lusatia.

## 4.2 Language

Sorbian belongs to the West Slavonic family of languages. Written Sorbian arose out of various dialects; by the mid-19th century, two dialects had become dominant in the standardized written language: Upper Sorbian, based on the Bautzen dialect; and Lower Sorbian, based on the Cottbus dialect. The Sorbian language area remains divided in two; between the areas in which Upper and Lower Sorbian are dominant, there is a transitional zone where the two overlap.

## 4.3 Organization

### Domowina

Federation of Lusatian Sorbs

Domowina was founded in Hoyerswerda in 1912 to represent the Sorbs, also known as Wends, in their pursuit of national rights. As good as banned in 1937, stripped of its assets and forced to operate illegally, the organization reconstituted itself on 10 May 1945 in Crostwitz, in the district of Kamenz. In the German Democratic Republic, Domowina had the status of a “socialist national organization” of the Sorbs; after the end of communism in 1989, it reorganized and changed focus, although its primary goal continued to be the preservation and promotion of the Sorbian language and culture.

Since 1991, Domowina has functioned as a politically independent and autonomous umbrella organization whose members include the regional associations Bautzen (Budyšin), Kamenz (Kamjenc), Hoyerswerda (Wojerecy), Weisswasser/Niesky (Běta Woda/Niska) and the Lower Lusatian regional federation, the Sorbian Schools Association, the Union of Sorbian Students, the sport association Serbski Sokoł, the Sorbian cultural tourism association Sorbischer Kulturtourismus, the Sorbian scientific society Maćica Serbska, the Union of Sorbian Choral Societies, the Sorbian Artists’ Union, the Cyrill Methodius Club, the Pawk youth club, the Union of Sorbian Craftsmen and Businessmen, the Association for the Promotion of Sorbian National Culture, and the Society for the Promotion of a Sorbian Cultural and Information Centre in Berlin, as well as six affiliated associations in Europe, Australia and the U.S.

Domowina, whose national executive is democratically elected, represents the interests of all 60,000 Sorbs. Its goals are to work on behalf of preserving, developing, promoting and disseminating the language, culture and traditions of the Sorbian people, Sorbian

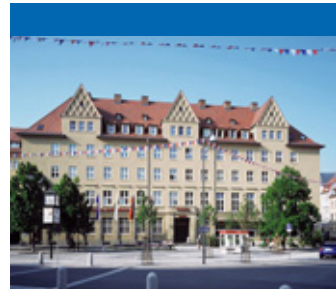
identity, the Sorbian community and its rootedness in its traditional homeland; to unite and support the Sorbs and their organizations in their efforts for the good of the Sorbian people; to represent the interests of the Sorbian people in public, to parliaments, institutions and government agencies; to work for legislation to protect and promote national minorities in Germany; to promote mutual respect between the Sorbian and German populations and their equality; and to promote international friendship with other national minorities and with the Slavic peoples.

Domowina's current activities focus mainly on preserving and developing the Sorbian language in line with the slogan "Lusatia is bilingual". The organization opposes the relocation of Sorbian schools, calls for special rules on Sorbian and bilingual education taking into account the Sorbs' minority status, and seeks to promote the use of Sorbian in all areas of daily life. Within the Domowina office, the WITAJ Language Centre coordinates efforts to promote the Sorbian language.

Domowina receives institutional funding from the federal level and from the states of Saxony and Brandenburg via the Foundation for the Sorbian People.

The Sorbian people need help to maintain their own language, customs and ethnic identity. The Sorbs ask the German population to respect and promote their right to their own identity and to remember that the Sorbs have also contributed to the development, economy and culture of eastern Germany and that Lusatia is their traditional homeland.

The "House of the Sorbs" (Serbski dom) in Bautzen (photo: Jürgen Matschie).





# Institutions and bodies for minority issues

## 5.1 Secretariat for the National Minorities in Germany

Established in Berlin in 2005, the Secretariat for the Four Autochthonous National Minorities in Germany promotes the exchange of information among the Bundestag, the Federal Government and the national minorities. Among other things, it keeps the Bundestag committees, working groups, MPs and the Federal Government informed about the concerns and the situation of the national minorities. At the same time, the Secretariat keeps the minorities' associations informed about relevant issues and developments at federal level and the public informed about the four national minorities.

The Secretariat also helps the national minorities coordinate their activities, including their reports and comments for national and international organizations such as the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

## 5.2 Consultative committees

Within the Federal Ministry of the Interior, there are consultative committees to deal with issues concerning the Danish minority, the Sorbian people and the Frisian ethnic group.

These committees are intended to give the minorities a voice in the Federal Government and the Bundestag. They deal with all issues of federal interior policy affecting the national minorities and are chaired by the Federal Government Commissioner for Matters Related to Repatriates and National Minorities.

According to their statutes, the consultative committees are made up as follows:

Photo left: Headquarters of the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg (photo: Thomas Raake).

### **Consultative Committee for Issues of the Danish Minority**

Members are the Federal Minister of the Interior and a state secretary from the ministry; two members from each of the parliamentary groups of the German Bundestag; three members of the Danish minority in Germany; and one representative of the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

### **Consultative Committee for the Frisian Ethnic Group**

Members are the Federal Government Commissioner for Matters Related to Repatriates and National Minorities and one additional representative from the Federal Ministry of the Interior; one member of the Frische Rädj/Friesenrat Sektion Nord e. V., the Friisk Foriining, the Nordfriesischer Verein and the Seelter Buund; the director of the Nordfriisk Instituut; and one representative each from the states of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein.

### **Consultative Committee for Issues of the Sorbian People**

The committee comprises three members of the Sorbian people; one representative of the Foundation for the Sorbian People; and two representatives from the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the governments of the state of Brandenburg and the Free State of Saxony. Members of the German Bundestag and representatives of other federal ministries can be invited to attend the meetings.

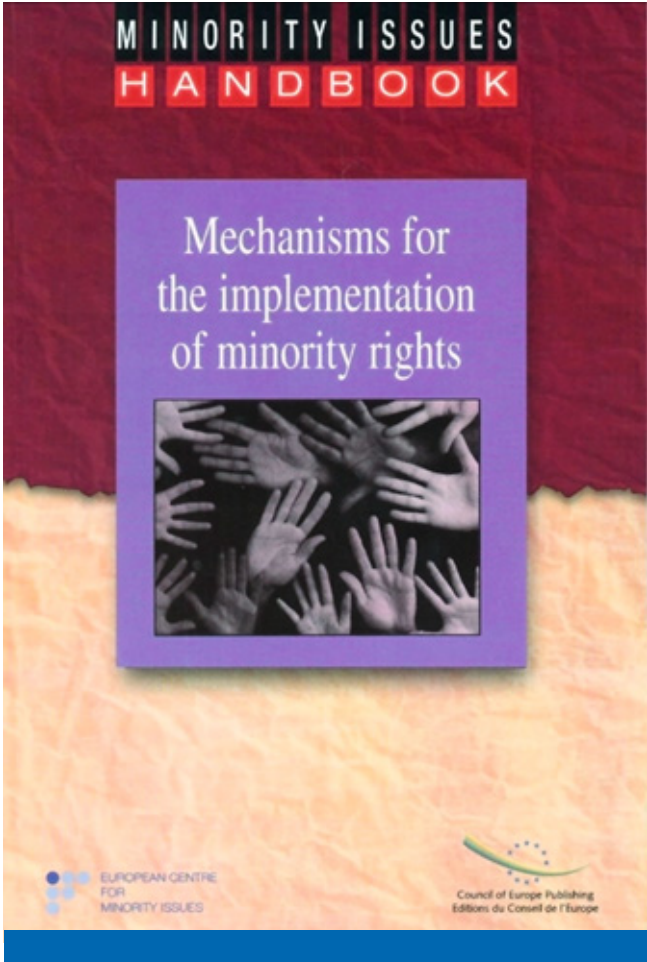
### 5.3 The European Centre for Minority Issues

The European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) conducts praxis-based research on potential conflicts in Eastern and Western Europe and advises on problems of minorities in Europe. It works with governments, international organizations and other groups in Europe. The ECMI also assists the media, the general public and research activities of the academic community by providing information and analyses. With these activities, the ECMI hopes to help resolve ethnic tensions in Europe.

The Centre's activities concentrate on three areas: firstly, assessing and developing universal, national and regional standards for strengthening democratic governments with special attention to ethnic diversity and human rights. In this context, the ECMI is particularly interested in the emerging convergence of standards between the EU Member States and candidate countries. A second area of research concentration is implementing such standards and examining their effectiveness. The third area is constructive conflict management. The ECMI has many personal contacts in various European regions where ethnic tensions exist and works to create a dialogue among local residents.

The ECMI carries out a variety of action-oriented projects within its three areas of concentration. For example, in 2001 the Centre launched a Standing Technical Working Group, an inter-ethnic forum comprising civil-society representatives, independent local experts, and young members of political parties, all of whom address technical aspects of policy-making. In a now-completed project in the Baltic States, the ECMI helped international and regional organizations promote the process of

Publication of the European Centre for Minority Issues (photo: ECMI).





national integration in Estonia and Latvia, in order to prevent inter-ethnic tensions from threatening the young democracies in these countries.

The ECMI was founded in 1996 by the governments of Denmark, Germany and the state of Schleswig-Holstein. Its headquarters are in Flensburg. The Centre also has branches in Kosovo and Macedonia, and plans to open an office in Georgia. The ECMI is a non-partisan, interdisciplinary institution. The three governments cover its operating costs, while the Centre seeks additional project funding to pay for its rapidly growing tasks. The ECMI employs a small but highly skilled team of scholars which is assisted by a number of visiting fellows and research associates and can draw upon an extended network of outside experts. The Centre maintains active relations with other institutions engaged in similar activities and develops joint projects with them.

The ECMI is governed by a nine-member board: three from Denmark, three from Germany, and one representative each from the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

## Legal basis

### 1 The Basic Law

In its Article 3 (3) first sentence, the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (Germany's constitution) states:

“No person shall be favoured or disfavoured because of sex, parentage, race, language, homeland and origin, faith, or religious or political opinions.”

This constitutional guarantee, which as self-executing law is binding on the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, also covers members of the national minorities and traditional ethnic groups.

### 2 Protocol note on the Unification Treaty

On 31 August 1990, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic concluded the Treaty on the Establishment of German Unity, which entered into force on 29 September 1990.

At the signing of this treaty, a protocol note was included to clarify various matters. This protocol note explicitly referred to the special rights of the Sorbian people. Referring to Article 35 of the Unification Treaty, No. 14 of this note states:

- “1. Every individual shall be free to declare his or her affiliation with the Sorbian ethnic community and with the Sorbian culture.
2. The preservation and further development of the Sorbian culture and of Sorbian traditions shall be guaranteed.

3. Members of the Sorbian people and their organizations shall enjoy the freedom to cultivate and preserve the Sorbian language in public life.
4. The constitutional division of responsibilities between the federal and state governments shall remain unaffected.”

In this way, even this important historical document emphasizes the importance of protecting one of the national minorities.

The text of the Unification Treaty is printed in the Federal Law Gazette 1990, II, p. 885 ff.

### **3 Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities**

In Vienna on 9 October 1993, the heads of state and government of the Council of Europe member states declared their intent to protect, under the rule of law, the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, whilst fully respecting the principles of territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

Within a year, the Council of Europe member states had drafted the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and opened it for signature on 1 February 1995. The convention has been in force in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1 February 1998. Under ratifying legislation of 22 July 1997, the Framework Convention in Germany has the status of federal law taking precedence over subordinate law, including state legislation, and is to be applied as the more specific law overriding other federal laws. Comprehensive legal provisions ensure compliance with the Convention at the national level.

The Framework Convention contains binding principles for the protection of national minorities. The Convention, which is also open to non-members of the Council of Europe, prohibits all discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership of a national minority and their assimilation against their will, and obligates the contracting states to safeguard the personal liberties that are especially important to members of national minorities:

- freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association,
- freedom of expression,
- freedom of conscience and religion.

The Framework Convention also obligates the contracting states to undertake comprehensive measures of protection and promotion, among others in the field of education and schools, culture and social life. The contracting parties are given a certain period for implementing the Convention in order to tailor their measures to actual conditions.

Out of the current 47 Council of Europe member states, 39 have ratified the Framework Convention and another four states have signed it (as of May 2010).

Germany took an active role in drafting the Framework Convention, in particular working to make the implementation mechanism as efficient as possible, because making sure that mechanisms designed to ensure compliance with obligations under international law are effective is at least as important as entering into such obligations.

As part of monitoring the implementation of the Framework Convention, within one year of its entry into force, each contracting party must provide the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe with full and detailed information on the measures

taken to enforce the principles set out in the Convention. Contracting parties must submit comprehensive country reports to the Council of Europe every five years.

An Advisory Committee made up of independent experts assists the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in monitoring the proper implementation of the obligations accepted by the Contracting Parties. To do so, the Advisory Committee conducts site visits in the contracting states; based on these visits, it produces monitoring reports which may contain recommendations for better or more efficient implementation.

The text of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1 February 1995 and the ratifying legislation of 22 July 1997 is printed in the Federal Law Gazette 1997, II p. 1406 f.

## 4 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages takes as its starting point the inalienable right to use one's regional or minority language in private and public life. The Charter arose out of initiatives by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE). It was opened for signature in Strasbourg on 5 November 1992, but did not enter into force until 1 March 1998 after achieving the five ratifications needed. The Federal Republic of Germany was one of the first signatories to the Charter on 5 November 1992. By an Act of 9 July 1998, the German Bundestag, with the approval of the Bundesrat, ratified the Charter, which entered into force in Germany on 1 January 1999. Under the ratifying legislation, the Charter in Germany has the status

of federal law taking precedence over subordinate law, including state legislation, and is to be applied as the more specific law overriding other federal laws.

The Charter is intended to protect and – even more importantly – promote languages traditionally spoken within the territory of the contracting parties as an endangered component of Europe’s cultural heritage. The Charter contains criteria to define regional or minority languages and refers to the languages traditionally spoken in a given contracting state. In Germany, Low German is a regional language as defined in the Charter. Minority languages protected in Germany are the languages of the national minorities protected under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: the Danes, the Sorbian people, Frisians, and the German Sinti and Roma. These languages are Danish, Upper and Lower Sorbian, North Frisian and Saterland Frisian, and the Romany of the German Sinti and Roma.

Protection and promotion focuses on education, particularly instruction in and with the language; and on the use of the regional or minority languages in the courts, government authorities, in broadcast and print media, at cultural events and institutions, and in economic and social life.

Being able to use their own language helps these minorities foster a sense of group identity. Particularly for national minorities, preserving and developing their language is the necessary basis for maintaining their culture, tradition and identity. If their own distinct language is not preserved, speakers of regional or minority languages face the risk of losing their cultural identity. But also for the majority population, the loss of regional or minority languages means the loss of an important part of their country’s traditional culture.

Under Germany's Basic Law, anyone may use and acknowledge a mother tongue as freely as they may identify themselves as a member of a national minority. Membership of these groups is an individual personal decision and is neither registered, reviewed nor contested by the government authorities. No statistics based on ethnic or linguistic criteria are kept. This is why the number of speakers of regional or minority languages can only be an estimate.

Out of the current 47 member states of the Council of Europe, 24 have ratified the Charter and another nine states have signed it (as of May 2010).

As with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, making sure that mechanisms designed to ensure compliance with obligations under international law are effective is as important as entering into such obligations.

As part of monitoring the implementation of the Charter, within one year of its entry into force, each contracting party must provide the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe with full and detailed information on the measures taken to meet the obligations it has accepted. Contracting parties must submit comprehensive country reports to the Council of Europe every three years.

A committee of independent experts helps the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers monitor compliance with the obligations accepted by the contracting parties. To do so, this Committee of Experts conducts site visits in the contracting states; based on these visits, it produces monitoring reports which may contain recommendations for better or more efficient implementation.

The text of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the declaration of the Federal

Republic of Germany in preparation for its ratification of 23 January 1998 and its declaration of 26 January 1998 to implement the obligations of the Charter is printed in the Federal Law Gazette 1998, II, p. 1314 ff. The Second Act of 11 September 2002 on the Charter and the Declaration of the Federal Republic of Germany are printed in the Federal Law Gazette 2002, II, p. 2450 f.

## **5 Federal electoral law and law on political parties**

Within the legal system of the Federal Republic of Germany, the protection of national minorities also finds expression in federal electoral law and law on political parties.

The Federal Electoral Act states that political parties of national minorities are exempt from the five per cent clause for parliamentary representation:

According to this clause, political parties can enter the Bundestag only if they receive at least five per cent of the second votes or win a direct mandate in at least three constituencies. But under Section 6 (6) second sentence of the Federal Electoral Act, this principle does not apply to political parties of national minorities.

The Federal Electoral Act also contains special provisions for parties of national minorities regarding the nomination of district candidates (Section 20 (2) third sentence) and state party lists (Section 27 (1) fourth sentence). (Federal Electoral Act of 7 May 1956, Federal Law Gazette 1956, I, p. 383 ff., revised by promulgation of 23 July 1993, Federal Law Gazette 1993, I, p. 1288 ff., 1594; last amended by promulgation of 5 August 2009, Federal Law Gazette 2009, I, p. 2687.)



The Political Parties Act also takes into account the special situation of parties of national minorities. According to Section 18 (3) of the Act, these parties may claim government subsidies even if they do not receive the necessary share of votes as specified in Section 18 (4) third sentence of the Political Parties Act. Further, under Section 25 (2) no. 3 b of the Act, parties of national minorities have certain privileges with regard to fundraising from foreign sources. (Political Parties Act in the version of 31 January 1994, Federal Law Gazette 1994, I, p. 149 ff., last amended by Article 5a of the Act of 24 September 2009, Federal Law Gazette 2009, I, p. 3145 ff.)

With these provisions, the Federal Electoral Act and the Political Parties Act take into account the fact that, precisely due to their minority status, the parties of national minorities may not be in the same position to win votes and financial support on the same scale as other political parties. These provisions therefore do not constitute preferential treatment, in the legal and narrower sense of the word, for the parties of national minorities, but rather represent an attempt to compensate for the difficult situation of such parties.

## 6 Constitutions of the federal states

### 6.1 Brandenburg

The constitution of the state of Brandenburg of 20 August 1992 (Gazette of Laws and Ordinances I/92, p. 298, last amended by the Act of 16 June 2004, Gazette of Laws and Ordinances, I/04, p. 254).

“Article 25 (Rights of the Sorbs [Wends])

- (1) The right of the Sorbian people to the protection, preservation and fostering of their national identity and of their ancestral settlement area shall

be guaranteed. The state, local governments and local authority associations shall promote the enforcement of this right, especially the autonomy of Sorbian culture and effective political participation by the Sorbian people.

- (2) The state shall work to ensure the cultural autonomy of the Sorbs across the state's borders.
- (3) The Sorbs shall have the right to the preservation and promotion of the Sorbian language and culture in public life and to their dissemination in schools and child day-care centres.
- (4) In the settlement area of the Sorbs, signs to identify buildings, roads and places shall include the Sorbian language. The Sorbian flag shall consist of the colours blue, red and white.
- (5) The rights of the Sorbs shall be specified in a law. That law shall ensure that Sorbian representatives participate in matters of the Sorbs, especially as regards legislation."

## **6.2 Freistaat Sachsen**

Constitution of the Free State of Saxony of 27 May 1992 (Gazette of Laws and Ordinances 1992, p. 243).

### **"Article 2**

- (4) In addition to the state colours and coat of arms, the colours and coat of arms of the Sorbs may be displayed on an equal footing in the settlement area of the Sorbs, and the colours and coat of arms of Lower Silesia may be displayed on an equal footing in the Silesian region of the state."

### **"Article 5**

- (1) The population of the Free State of Saxony comprises persons of German, Sorbian and other ethnic origins. The state recognizes the right to live in one's traditional homeland.

- (2) The state guarantees and protects the right of national and ethnic minorities of German nationality to preserve their identity and cultivate their languages, religion, culture and tradition.”

#### “Article 6

- (1) The citizens of Sorbian ethnic origin living in the state shall be part of the state’s population having equal rights. The state shall guarantee and protect their right to preserve their identity and to cultivate and develop their traditional language, culture and traditions, especially by schools, preschool facilities and cultural institutions.
- (2) State and local government planning shall take into account the Sorbian people’s necessities of life. The German-Sorbian character of the settlement area of the Sorbian ethnic group shall be preserved.
- (3) Interstate cooperation among Sorbs, especially in Upper and Lower Lusatia, shall be in the state’s interest.”

### 6.3 Schleswig-Holstein

Constitution of the state of Schleswig-Holstein in the version of 13 June 1990 (Gazette of Laws and Ordinances 1990, p. 391, last amended by the Act of 14 February 2004, Gazette of Laws and Ordinances 2004, p. 54).

#### “Article 5

#### National minorities and ethnic groups

- (1) Every individual shall be free to declare his or her affiliation with a national minority; such declaration shall not release the individual from his or her general civic duties.

(2) The cultural autonomy of national minorities and ethnic groups and their political participation shall be protected by the state, local governments and local authority associations. The national Danish minority and the Frisian ethnic group shall be entitled to protection and promotion.”

**“Article 8  
Education**

(4) The person(s) entitled to bring up a child shall decide whether the child should attend a school operated by a national minority.”

## Useful addresses

The following lists the organizations and federal and state agencies which deal with matters related to the national minorities traditionally resident in Germany. Due to the large number of such organizations and agencies, not all can be listed here. However, those listed here can provide further information upon request. The federal and state agencies listed here are often offices responsible for coordination and may forward information requests to the relevant institution. In this case, a response may come from a different government agency than the one originally addressed.

### 1 Associations and interest groups

#### **The Danish minority in Germany**

Südschleswigscher Verein/  
 Sydslesvigsk Forening – SSF  
 Norderstraße 76  
 24939 Flensburg  
 Tel.: (04 61) 14 40 80  
 E-Mail: [info@syfo.de](mailto:info@syfo.de)  
 Internet: [www.sydslesvigsk-forening.de](http://www.sydslesvigsk-forening.de)

Südschleswigscher Wählerverband/  
 Sydslesvigsk Vælgerforening – SSW  
 Schiffbrücke 42  
 24939 Flensburg  
 Tel.: (04 61) 1 44 08-3 10  
 E-Mail: [info@ssw.de](mailto:info@ssw.de)  
 Internet: [www.ssw.de](http://www.ssw.de)

## **The Frisians in Germany**

### **North Frisians**

Frasche Rädj – Friesenrat Sektion Nord e. V.  
Schmiedestraße 11/NIC  
25899 Niebüll/Naibel  
Tel.: (0 46 61) 9 00 81 26  
E-Mail: PetraHansen@friesenrat.de  
Internet: www.friesenrat.de

### **Nordfriesischer Verein**

Klockries 64  
25920 Risem-Lonham/Risum-Lindholm  
Tel.: (0 46 61) 58 73  
E-Mail: nfverein@versanet.de  
Internet: www.nf-verein.de

### **Friisk Foriining/Friesischer Verein**

Moose 4  
25842 Beergem/Bargum  
Tel.: (0 46 72) 7 75 20  
E-Mail: info@friiske.de  
Internet: www.friiske.de

### **Saterland Frisians**

Heimatverein Saterland  
Seelter Buund  
Scharreler Damm 3  
26169 Friesoythe  
Tel.: (0 44 92) 17 12

### **The German Sinti and Roma**

Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma e. V.  
Bremeneckgasse 2  
69117 Heidelberg  
Tel.: (0 62 21) 98 11 01  
E-Mail: zentralrat@sintiundroma.de  
Internet: www.sintiundroma.de

Sinti Allianz Deutschland e. V.  
 Postfach 10 31 05  
 50472 Köln  
 Tel.: (0 22 02) 1 04 76 02  
 E-Mail: [sintialliance-deutschland@t-online.de](mailto:sintialliance-deutschland@t-online.de)  
 Internet: [www.sintialliance-deutschland.de](http://www.sintialliance-deutschland.de)

### **The Sorbian people**

Domowina – Bund Lausitzer Sorben e. V.  
 Postplatz 2  
 02625 Bautzen  
 Tel.: (0 35 91) 55 01 00  
 E-Mail: [domowina-bautzen@sorben.com](mailto:domowina-bautzen@sorben.com)  
 Internet: [www.domowina.sorben.com](http://www.domowina.sorben.com)

## **2 Federal agencies**

Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für  
 Aussiedlerfragen und nationale Minderheiten  
 Alt-Moabit 101 D  
 10559 Berlin  
 Tel.: (0 30) 18 681-10 62  
 Telefax: (0 30) 18 681-11 38  
 E-Mail: [aussiedlerbeauftragter@bmi.bund.de](mailto:aussiedlerbeauftragter@bmi.bund.de)  
 Internet: [www.aussiedlerbeauftragter.de](http://www.aussiedlerbeauftragter.de)

Bundesministerium des Innern  
 Referat M II 4  
 Graurheindorfer Straße 198  
 53117 Bonn  
 Tel.: (02 28) 99 681-37 66  
 E-Mail: [poststelle@bmi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmi.bund.de)  
 Internet: [www.bmi.bund.de](http://www.bmi.bund.de)

Bundesministerium der Justiz  
Arbeitsbereich IV M  
Mohrenstraße 37  
10117 Berlin  
Tel.: (0 30) 20 25-94 46  
E-Mail: [poststelle@bmj.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmj.bund.de)

Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur  
und Medien  
Referat K 25  
Graurheindorfer Straße 198  
53117 Bonn  
Tel.: (02 28) 99 681-35 96  
E-Mail: [poststelle@bkm.bmi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bkm.bmi.bund.de)  
Internet: [www.kulturstaatsminister.de](http://www.kulturstaatsminister.de)

### 3 State agencies

#### **Baden-Württemberg**

Staatsministerium Baden-Württemberg  
Referat 14 „Innenpolitik, Fragen der Streitkräfte“  
Richard-Wagner-Straße 15  
70184 Stuttgart  
Tel.: (07 11) 2 15 34 16  
E-Mail: [poststelle@stm.bwl.de](mailto:poststelle@stm.bwl.de)  
Internet: [www.stm.bwl.de](http://www.stm.bwl.de)

#### **Bayern**

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Unterricht und  
Kultus  
Dir LZ/VL LZ  
Salvatorstraße 2  
80333 München  
Tel.: (0 89) 21 86 23 02  
E-Mail: [poststelle@stmuk.bayern.de](mailto:poststelle@stmuk.bayern.de)  
Internet: [www.stmuk.bayern.de](http://www.stmuk.bayern.de)



**Berlin**

Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Sport  
 Referat III A 1  
 Beuthstraße 6–8  
 10117 Berlin  
 Tel.: (0 30) 90 26 55 13  
 E-Mail: [Briefkasten@SENBJS.Verwalt-Berlin.de](mailto:Briefkasten@SENBJS.Verwalt-Berlin.de)  
 Internet: [www.berlin.de/sen/bjs](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bjs)

**Brandenburg**

Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur  
 Referat 14  
 Dortustraße 36  
 14467 Potsdam  
 Tel.: (03 31) 8 66-48 02/48 06  
 E-Mail: [poststellemwfk@mwfk.brandenburg.de](mailto:poststellemwfk@mwfk.brandenburg.de)  
 Internet: [www.mwfk.brandenburg.de](http://www.mwfk.brandenburg.de)

**Freie Hansestadt Bremen**

Senator für Arbeit, Frauen, Gesundheit,  
 Jugend und Soziales  
 Referat Zuwandererangelegenheiten und  
 Integrationspolitik  
 Migrations- und Integrationsbeauftragter  
 Bahnhofplatz 29  
 28195 Bremen  
 Tel.: (04 21) 3 61 68 83  
 Internet: [www.soziales.bremen.de](http://www.soziales.bremen.de)

**Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg**

Justizbehörde  
 Arbeitsstelle Vielfalt  
 Dammtorwall 9–13  
 20354 Hamburg  
 Tel.: (0 40) 42 8 43-35 97  
 E-Mail: [friedhelm.kroesche@justiz.hamburg.de](mailto:friedhelm.kroesche@justiz.hamburg.de)

### **Hessen**

Hessische Staatskanzlei  
Referat K 3  
Georg-August-Zinn-Straße 1  
65183 Wiesbaden  
Tel.: (06 11) 3 20  
E-Mail: [poststelle@stk.hessen.de](mailto:poststelle@stk.hessen.de)  
Internet: [www.stk.hessen.de](http://www.stk.hessen.de)

### **Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**

Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und  
Kultur des Landes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern  
Referat VII 420  
Werderstraße 124  
19055 Schwerin  
Tel.: (03 85) 5 88-74 20  
E-Mail: [poststelle@bm.mv-regierung.de](mailto:poststelle@bm.mv-regierung.de)  
Internet: [www.kultus-mv.de](http://www.kultus-mv.de)

### **Niedersachsen**

Niedersächsische Staatskanzlei  
Referat 302  
Planckstraße 2  
30169 Hannover  
Tel.: (05 11) 1 20-0  
E-Mail: [poststelle@stk.niedersachsen.de](mailto:poststelle@stk.niedersachsen.de)  
Internet: [www.stk.niedersachsen.de](http://www.stk.niedersachsen.de)

### **Nordrhein-Westfalen**

Staatskanzlei des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Referat I B 2  
Stadttor 1  
40190 Düsseldorf  
Tel.: (02 11) 8 37-01  
E-Mail: [poststelle@stk.nrw.de](mailto:poststelle@stk.nrw.de)  
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 Referat 2.1 Allgemeine Rechts- und  
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Süderstraße 30  
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Tel.: (0 46 71) 60 12-0  
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Internet: www.nordfriiskinstituut.de

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Deutscher Sinti und Roma  
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Internet: www.sintiundroma.de

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Sorbisches Institut/Serbski Institut  
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European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL)/  
Europäisches Büro für Sprachminderheiten/EBLUL  
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