

Annual Report 2024

The past year was characterized by numerous projects, which will have impact on the future activities of the CONVIVENZA Foundation: The Board decided to renew a past collaboration with the Institute for Minority Rights at Eurac Research in Bolzano, Italy. In the first joint project, Raoul Blindenbacher, the Foundation's President, taught a one-day seminar on “The Governmental Learning Spiral – A Tool to Solve Minority and Diversity Issues in Governance” at the Summer School on Human Rights, Minorities, and Diversity Governance on July 11, 2024. Based on this experience, the Foundation will co-organize the upcoming Summer School in 2026 with Eurac Research.

For the Foundation, it is important that its publications are recognized both publicly and in the scientific community. Therefore, it is a great success that in the December 2024 issue (3/4) of Europa Ethnica, Andreas Raffeiner from the University of Innsbruck wrote an excellent review of Volume 6 of the Convivenza Book Series, titled “Innovation and Learning to Manage Diversity in Governance”. The same issue also features an article by Raoul Blindenbacher, titled “Little Changes in Minority Politics with Great Impact: The Governmental Learning Spiral – The Convivenza Foundation’s Method to Improve the Lives and Institutions of Small Cultural, Linguistic, and Religious Communities.”

Furthermore, in collaboration with Schultheiss Verlag, the publisher of the Convivenza Book Series, the Foundation was allowed to upload Volume 5 of the Convivenza Book Series, “Embracing Differences - A Commitment for Minorities and Managing Diversities (Wertschätzung des Andersseins - Ein Bekenntnis zu Minoritäten und zum Organisieren von Diversität)”, on our website for free. This will contribute to the broader dissemination of our written works.

This year, the Foundation was again present at various national and international forums to present its work:

- On March 11, 2024, the Foundation's Vice President, Romedi Arquint, delivered a keynote speech on “Herausforderungen für kleinere Sprach- und Kulturgemeinschaften” at the invitation of Domowina in Cottbus, Saxony, Germany.
- On August 14, 2024, in collaboration with the Summer University of the Institute of Federalism at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, the Foundation organized a lecture with Professor Joseph Marko from the University of Graz, Austria, on “Human and Minority Rights in Crisis”. More than 50 participants from over a dozen countries attended the event.
- On September 18, 2024, Romedi Arquint spoke on a high-level panel at the 75th anniversary event of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), an organization representing the interests of European minorities on regional, national, and European levels. The event took place in Husum, Germany.

On March 22, 2024, the Convivenza Foundation held its annual Board meeting at the Cercle de la Grande Société in Berne. On this occasion, Lisa Hierlemann-Aebi resigned from the Board after five years of service. The Board thanked Lisa for her extraordinary contributions and wished her the best for her upcoming retirement. At the same time, the Board unanimously elected Jon Pult, a Member of

the National Council of Switzerland, as its new member. We congratulate Jon on his appointment and look forward to working with him in the future.

Lastly, the Board congratulated former Federal Councilor Alain Berset on his election as Secretary General of the Council of Europe in a personal letter. Mr. Berset responded in writing to the Board, stating that he is “aware of the quality of the projects carried out by the CONVIVENZA Foundation, and that its analyses and research results are carefully read by his secretariat, especially by the Division of National Minorities and Minority Languages. As Secretary General of the Council of Europe, he places particular importance on the protection of minorities and the promotion of diversity.” The Board is now exploring options to sponsor a keynote speech by Mr. Berset on the subjects he addressed in his letter.



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President of the Convivenza Foundation