



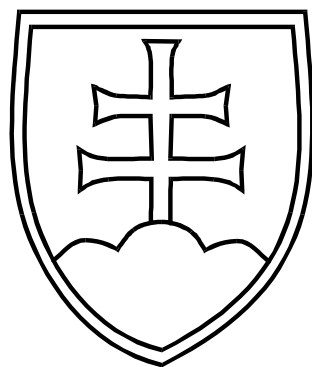
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**EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES**

**Fourth periodical report  
presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe  
in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter**

**SLOVAKIA**



***The Fourth Report on the Implementation of the European  
Charter for Regional or Minority Languages  
in the Slovak Republic***

***Bratislava 2014***

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the "Charter") was signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic in Strasbourg on 20 February 2001. The National Council of the Slovak Republic approved the Charter by Resolution No. 1497 of 19 June 2001. The President of the Slovak Republic ratified it on 20 July 2001 and the instrument of ratification was registered and deposited with the depositary, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, on 5 September 2001. For the Slovak Republic the Charter entered into force on 1 January 2002 based on Article 19(2) of the Charter. The text of the Charter was published in the Bulletin of Acts under number 588/2001.

When depositing the instrument of ratification, the Slovak Republic made the following statement:

*1. The Slovak Republic declares that it will apply the adopted Charter in compliance with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and relevant international agreements that guarantee equality of citizens before the law regardless of their origin, race, religion or nationality in order to support the European linguistic heritage without prejudice to the use of state language.*

*2. The Slovak Republic declares under Article 1(b) of the Charter that the term "territory in which regional or minority language is used" shall refer to municipalities under the Ordinance of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 221/1999 Coll., establishing a list of municipalities in which the citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority account for at least 20% of the population as of 25 August 1999, including the application of its Article 10.*

*3. Under Article 3(1) of the Charter "regional or minority languages" in the Slovak Republic are as follows: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian; the application of the provisions of the Charter under its Article 2(2) with regard to*

***Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, German, Polish and Roma language:***

*Article 8(1)(a) point iii(b) point iii(c) point iii(d) point iii(e) point ii(f) point ii(g), (h), (i);*

*Article 9(1)(a) points ii(a) iii(b) points ii and iii(c) points ii and iii(d);*

*Article 10(1)(a) points iii and iv(2)(b), (c), (d), (f), (g), (3)(c), (4)(a), (c), Paragraph (5);*

*Article 11(1)(a) point iii(b) point ii(c) point ii(d),(e) point i(f) point ii, Paragraphs (2) and (3);*

*Article 12(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), Paragraphs 2 and 3;*

*Article 13(1)(a), (b), (c), Paragraph 2(c);*

*Article 14(a);*

*Article 14(b) for Czech, German and Polish languages only;*

***Ruthenian and Ukrainian languages:***

*Article 8(1)(a) point ii(b) point ii(c) point ii(d) point ii(e) point ii (f) point ii(g), (h), (i);*

*Article 9(1)(a) points ii and iii(b) points ii and iii(c) points ii and iii(d), Paragraph; 3;*

*Article 10(1)(a) points iii and iv(2)(b), (c), (d), (f), (g), Paragraph (3)(c), Paragraph (4) (a), (c), Paragraph (5);*

*Article 11(1)(a) point iii(b) point ii(c) point ii(d),(e) point i*

*(f) point ii, Paragraphs 2 and 3*  
*Article 12(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), Paragraphs 2 and 3;*  
*Article 13(1)(a), (b), (c), Paragraph 2(c);*  
*Article 14(a);*  
*Article 14(b) for Ukrainian language only;*

***Hungarian language:***

*Article 8(1)(a) point i(b) point i(c) point i(d) point i(e) point i*  
*(f) point i(g), (h), (i);*  
*Article 9(1)(a) points ii and iii(b) points ii and iii(c) points ii and iii(d), Paragraph;*  
*(2)(a), Paragraph (3);*  
*Article 10(1)(a) point ii, Paragraph 2(a), (b), (c), (d), (f), (g), Paragraph 3(b), (c),*  
*Paragraph 4*  
*(a), (c), Paragraph (5);*  
*Article 11(1)(a) point iii(b) point ii(c) point ii(d),(e) point i*  
*(f) point i, Paragraphs 2 and 3;*  
*Article 12(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), Paragraphs 2 and 3;*  
*Article 13(1)(a), (b), (c), Paragraph 2(c);*  
*Article 14(a), (b).*

*4. The Slovak Republic declares that Article 8(1)(e) point i applies to the training of teachers, theologians, cultural and adult education workers without prejudice to the teaching in the state language so that the majority of subjects, including core subjects, is provided for in minority language respecting the legislation of the Slovak Republic in the field of higher education.*

*5. The Slovak Republic declares that Article 10(1)(a) point ii, Article 10(2)(a) and Article 10(3)(b) will be interpreted without prejudice to the use of state language under the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and in compliance with the legislation of the Slovak Republic.*

*6. The Slovak Republic declares that Article 12(1)(e) and Article 13(2)(c) can be used if the effects of the use are not in conflict with other provisions of the legislation of the Slovak Republic on non-discrimination of the citizens of the Slovak Republic within employment in the territory of the Slovak Republic.*

The Slovak Republic has adopted very ambitious obligations when it chose from 49 to 53 provisions (the minimum is 35 provisions) from the third part of the Charter for nine minority languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian. In terms of the provisions chosen, the languages are divided into three groups: 1) Hungarian, 2) Ruthenian and Ukrainian, and 3) other languages.

Pursuant to the provisions of Part IV of the Charter (Application of the Charter), the parties are, under Article 15(1) (Periodical Reports), obligated to submit to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in the form determined by the Committee of Ministers, a report of their policy under Part II of the Charter and of measures taken to provide for the provisions of Part III that they have adopted. The first report must be submitted within a year after the Charter for the given party entered into force and subsequent reports will be submitted in three-year intervals after the first one. The parties will publish their reports in compliance with Article 15(2).

The Government of the Slovak Republic discussed and approved the first Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic by Resolution No. 1114 of 26 November 2003. The report was subsequently submitted to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 5 December 2003. In compliance with Article 16(1) (Examination of the Reports), the report on the Slovak Republic was reviewed by the Committee of Experts that adopted the Evaluation report on the implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic on 23 November 2005. The first monitoring cycle of the level of the implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic was concluded with the adoption of recommendation RecChL (2007)<sup>1</sup> of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the Application of the Charter in Slovakia on 21 February 2007.

The second report on the implementation of the Charter was discussed and approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic by Resolution No. 371 of 4 June 2008. The report was subsequently submitted to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 30 July 2008. Based on the submitted report and knowledge acquired during the visit of the delegation of the Committee of Experts in Slovakia (12 – 13 February 2009), the Committee of Experts adopted the Evaluation report on the implementation of the Charter of Languages by the Slovak Republic on 24 April 2009. The second monitoring cycle of the level of implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic ended with the adoption of recommendation RecChL (2009)<sup>6</sup> on the application of the Charter in Slovakia on 18 November 2009.

The third Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic was adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic by its Resolution No. 7 on 11 January 2012. The Committee of Experts adopted the Evaluation Report at its plenary session on 21 June 2012 (MIN-LANG(2012)8). The third monitoring cycle of the level of implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic ended with the adoption of recommendation CM/RecChL (2013)<sup>2</sup> on the application of the Charter in Slovakia on 30 January 2013.

At the initiative of the Secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe, an Implementation Roundtable to the Report on the Progress and Results of the Third Monitoring Cycle of the Level of Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic took place from 29 to 30 April 2014. The event was organised by the Council of Europe and the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities. The roundtable mainly aimed at discussing the status and progress achieved within the current process of the implementation of the language charter. The members of the Committee of Experts appreciated the constructive dialogue not only with the representatives of the state administration, but mainly with the representatives of national minorities: Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Roma, German, Croatian, Polish and Bulgarian, who participated in the roundtable.

The fourth Report on the Implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic was prepared in compliance with a guideline establishing a revised content of periodic reports submitted by the parties of the Charter, which was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 6 May 2009 (MIN-LANG (2009) 8). It also reflects recommendations included in the third evaluation report.

The recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by Slovakia and the evaluation report on the Committee of Experts constituted the basis for the preparation of the report. The fourth Report on the Implementation of the Charter by the Slovak Republic contains updated and comprehensive information on the status and situation of regional or minority languages in Slovakia. It mainly focuses on presenting the status and development of legislation and social practice in the field of protecting and supporting regional or minority languages.

## ***Part I***

### ***General issues arising from the evaluation of the report***

#### ***Number of speakers of regional or minority languages***

12. *The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take steps to collect, in co-operation with the speakers, reliable data concerning the number of users of the regional or minority languages and their geographic distribution. This could be done, for example, by carrying out sociological surveys regarding all linguistic groups or by using local/municipal indicators such as the existence of minority-related associations, events, education or the number of subscriptions to print media in that language.*

Population and housing censuses are the main source of data on the number of members of national minorities in the Slovak Republic. In compliance with Regulation (EC) No. 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 on population and housing censuses, population and housing censuses were conducted in the Slovak Republic in 2011 under Act No. 263/2008 Coll., on Population and Housing Censuses in 2011 amending Act No. 5/2004 Coll., on Employment Services and Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended. Under Section 4(1) of this act, the censuses were conducted in the whole territory of the Slovak Republic as of 21 May 2011. Midnight from Friday 20 May 2011 to Saturday 21 May 2011 was the decisive moment of the censuses.

For the purposes of the censuses, nationality meant the belonging of a person to a nation, national or ethnic minority. In order to determine nationality, neither mother tongue nor the language which the citizen uses predominantly or knows better was decisive. Instead, his own decision on the belonging to a nation, national or ethnic minority was decisive. The nationality of children younger than 15 years was stated according to their parents. If parents mentioned various nationalities, the nationality was determined according to one of them (based on a mutual agreement of the parents). The language that the parents used in relation to the citizen during his childhood was identified as a mother tongue. In the case of different languages of the parents, the language used by the mother with her child was registered. The information on mother tongue did not have to correspond with the information on nationality.<sup>1</sup>

The most frequently used language in public is the language that the citizen uses most frequently in his job or school, regardless of whether he works or studies in the Slovak Republic or abroad. The most frequently used language in private is the language that the citizen uses most frequently at home. The most frequently used language was identified for the first time during the censuses in 2011.

The population and housing censuses also took into account the rights of the members of national minorities. Section 5(3) and (4) of Act No. 263/2008 Coll., on Population and Housing censuses in 2011 amending Act No. 5/2004 Coll., on Employment Services and Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, stipulates the following:

"(3) In addition to state language, consensus forms are also prepared in the Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian languages in paper form and in electronic form and in English in electronic form.

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<sup>1</sup> Source:

[http://www.statistics.sk/webdata/scitanie/def\\_sr/run.html](http://www.statistics.sk/webdata/scitanie/def_sr/run.html)

(4) The number of forms prepared in paper form in languages stated in Paragraph 3 is based on the statistical data on the number of nationals belonging to national minorities acquired from the population and housing censuses in 2001."

Consensus forms in the languages of national minorities were available in all municipalities where, according to the data on the population and housing censuses in 2001, the members of national minorities live regardless whether it is a municipality defined by act on the use of languages of national minorities, i.e. a municipality in which the citizens of the Slovak Republic who are persons belonging to a national minority account for at least 20% of the citizens of the municipality.

At present, the last population and housing censuses from 2011 are used. The data on the 2011 population and housing censuses with regard to the number of the members of national minorities are as follows:

|                                  |                        |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Population by nationality</b> | <b>80.7% Slovak</b>    | <b>4,352,775</b> |
|                                  | <b>8.5% Hungarian</b>  | <b>458,467</b>   |
|                                  | <b>2.0% Roma</b>       | <b>105,738</b>   |
|                                  | <b>0.6% Czech</b>      | <b>30,367</b>    |
|                                  | <b>0.6% Ruthenian</b>  | <b>33,482</b>    |
|                                  | <b>0.1% Ukrainian</b>  | <b>7,430</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.1% German</b>     | <b>4,690</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.1% Polish</b>     | <b>3,084</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.1% Moravian</b>   | <b>3,286</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.03% Russian</b>   | <b>1,997</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.02% Bulgarian</b> | <b>1,051</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.02% Croatian</b>  | <b>1,022</b>     |
|                                  | <b>0.01% Serbian</b>   | <b>698</b>       |
|                                  | <b>0.01% Jewish</b>    | <b>631</b>       |
|                                  | <b>0.2% Other</b>      | <b>9,825</b>     |
|                                  | <b>7% Unidentified</b> | <b>382,493</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>100%</b>            | <b>5,379,036</b> |

In connection with the official data on the number of members of the Roma national minority arising from the population and housing censuses in 2011, we would like to note that the real



number of Roma in Slovakia is several times higher. According to the expert estimates it is about 350,000 to 500,000. In a 2013 Atlas of Roma Communities, about 402,840 Roma, i.e. persons whom the neighbourhood considers Roma, were identified.<sup>2</sup>

### ***The 20% threshold***

21. *The Committee of Experts reiterates that the Slovak authorities should determine what absolute “number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages” (Article 10) they consider sufficient to apply the undertakings under Article 10 to Bulgarian and Polish in at least one municipality respectively. They should also consider similar flexible and specific measures “according to the situation of each language” regarding other languages with a view to ensuring a consistent and stable implementation of Article 10.*

The Constitution of the Slovak Republic (the "Constitution") is the basic document governing the rights of the members of national minorities. Article 34(1) and (2) of the Constitution stipulates the right to multifaceted development, especially the right to develop one's own culture together with other members of a national minority or ethnic group, the right to disseminate and receive information in one's mother tongue, to group together in national associations, to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions, the right to education in the languages of national minorities, the right to use the language of national minority in official communication, and the right to participate in the solution of issues related to national minorities and ethnic groups.

The legislative framework for the use of languages of national minorities under the Constitution is supplemented by other generally binding legal regulations, namely:

- Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of Languages of National Minorities, as amended, ("Act No. 184/1999 Coll."),
- Act No. 270/1995 Coll., on the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended, ("Act No. 270/1995 Coll."),
- Slovak Republic Government Regulation No. 535/2011 Coll., implementing the provisions of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of Languages of National Minorities, as amended, ("Government Regulation No. 535/2011 Coll."),
- Slovak Republic Government Regulation No. 221/1999 Coll., Establishing a List of Municipalities in which Citizens Belonging to National Minority Account for at Least 20% of Citizens, as amended, by Slovak Republic Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., ("Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll."). The names of municipalities in the languages of national minorities have been added to individual names of municipalities. Based on this a new official list of the names of municipalities in the languages of national minorities has been provided. An expert working group consisting of historians and linguists with the knowledge of languages of the relevant national minorities has been formed in order to prepare the list of the names of municipalities in the languages of national minorities.

The most comprehensive adaptation to the right to use the languages of national minorities is included in Act No. 184/1999 Coll. A comprehensive revision of national legislation in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities, including Act No. 184/1999 Coll., was done in 2011. Amended Act No. 184/1999 Coll., of 2011

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<sup>2</sup> More detailed information:  
[http://www.minv.sk/?atlas\\_2013](http://www.minv.sk/?atlas_2013)

partially took into account recommendations of the Venice Commission. The recommendation related to the possibility to communicate in the minority language in municipalities that do not reach the 20% threshold was incorporated into the text of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., in the case of oral communication and the threshold for the use of the languages of national minorities has at the same time been decreased to 15% based on two consecutive population censuses.

Act No. 184/1999 Coll., following the constitutional reform stipulates the personal scope of the right to use the languages of national minorities. Under Section 1(1) the right to use the language of a national minority belongs to a citizen of the Slovak Republic who is a person belonging to the national minority. The Act, Section 1(2) stipulates what the term language of national minority means: it is a codified or standardised language which is traditionally used in the territory of the Slovak Republic by its citizens who belong to a national minority and is different from the state language. Minority languages include Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

The subject of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., primarily consists in the use of the languages of national minorities within official communication, names in the language of national minorities, local referendum on change of the name of the municipality in the languages of minorities, information in the languages of national minorities, the powers of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities, and administrative offences in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities.

The scope of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., is territorially limited, because most of its provisions apply exclusively to the territory of municipalities included in Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., As to some other provisions, the Act only refers to other existing legislation. The exception from the territorially limited scope consists of two new provisions, i.e. Paragraph 8 in Section 2, which enables the relevant national minority to use the language of national minority in oral communication with the employee of a public administration authority (provided that the employee of the public administration authority and participating persons agree with this) also outside the territory of municipalities included in Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., The other provision in Act No. 184/1999 Coll., that is not related to the territory of municipalities included in Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., or does not refer to the existing legislation is represented by Paragraph 5 in Section 4 related to the use of the names of geographic objects in publications and other places where the languages of national minorities are used.

Government Regulation No. 535/2011 Coll., which came into effect on 1 January 2012, is an implementing regulation to Act No. 184/1999 Coll., and governs the details in connection with the information on possibility to use the languages of national minorities within official communication and in connection with the form of bilingual official documents. Certain rules for the use of the languages of national minorities are governed by Act No. 270/1995 Coll., whose main subject is the use of the state language. Under Article 6(1) of the Constitution, Slovak is the state language in the Slovak Republic. Under Section 1(4) of Act No. 270/1995 Coll., unless the Act stipulates otherwise, special regulations apply to the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups. Act No. 270/1995 Coll., takes precedence over Act No. 184/1999 Coll. If Act No. 270/1995 Coll., grants Act No. 184/1999 Coll., the status of a special regulation, then Act No. 184/1999 Coll., takes precedence in this special field.

Further acts governing the use of the languages of national minorities deal with various fields, such as administrative proceedings, civil proceedings, criminal proceedings, elections, education, first name and surname, register, television and radio broadcast, etc.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to determine, in co-operation with the speakers, in what areas the regional or minority language speakers are traditionally present in sufficient numbers for the purpose of the undertakings entered into by the Slovak Republic under Article 10, in all those cases where the 20% threshold is not met, and to apply the undertakings ratified under Article 10 also in those areas.*

Overview of the population of the Slovak Republic by nationality – representation in individual regions (Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, population and housing censuses in 2011):

|                               | <b>Slovak nationality</b> | <b>Hungarian nationality</b> | <b>Roma nationality</b> | <b>Czech nationality</b> | <b>Ruthenian nationality</b> | <b>Ukrainian nationality</b> | <b>Other and unidentified</b> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Bratislava region</b>      | 543,573<br>(90.2%)        | 23,888<br>(4.0%)             | 767<br>(0.1%)           | 6,820<br>(1.1%)          | 880<br>(0.1%)                | 627<br>(0.1%)                | 25,881<br>(4.4%)              |
| <b>Trnava region</b>          | 394,902<br>(71.2%)        | 120,784<br>(21.8%)           | 3,048<br>(0.5%)         | 3,259<br>(0.6%)          | 104<br>(0.0%)                | 233<br>(0.0%)                | 32,411<br>(5.7%)              |
| <b>Trenčín region</b>         | 545,535<br>(91.8%)        | 797<br>(0.1%)                | 574<br>(0.1%)           | 4,106<br>(0.7%)          | 116<br>(0.0%)                | 222<br>(0.0%)                | 42,978<br>(7.1%)              |
| <b>Nitra region</b>           | 473,269<br>(68.6%)        | 169,460<br>(24.6%)           | 3,987<br>(0.6%)         | 3,262<br>(0.5%)          | 103<br>(0)                   | 275<br>(0.0)                 | 39,511<br>(5.6%)              |
| <b>Žilina region</b>          | 641,602<br>(93.1%)        | 553<br>(0.1%)                | 2,264<br>(0.3%)         | 4,195<br>(0.6%)          | 182<br>(0.0%)                | 229<br>(0.0%)                | 39,826<br>(5.8%)              |
| <b>Banská Bystrica region</b> | 505,528<br>(76.5%)        | 67,596<br>(10.2%)            | 15,525<br>(2.4%)        | 2,941<br>(0.4%)          | 186<br>(0.0%)                | 493<br>(0.1%)                | 68,294<br>(10.2%)             |
| <b>Prešov region</b>          | 668,300<br>(82.0%)        | 646<br>(0.1%)                | 43,097<br>(5.3%)        | 2,610<br>(0.3%)          | 28,835<br>(3.5%)             | 3,714<br>(0.5%)              | 67,325<br>(8.1%)              |
| <b>Košice region</b>          | 580,066<br>(73.3%)        | 74,743<br>(9.4%)             | 36,476<br>(4.6%)        | 3,174<br>(0.4%)          | 3,076<br>(0.4%)              | 1,637<br>(0.2%)              | 92,551<br>(11.5%)             |

The biggest population of national minorities lives in the Nitra, Trnava, Košice and Banská Bystrica regions.

**Hungarian national minority** has the strongest presence in the Nitra, Trnava, Banská Bystrica, Košice and Bratislava regions. The share of the Hungarian minority exceeds 50% in two districts (Dunajská Streda and Komárno).

The highest share of the members of the **Roma minority** is recorded in the following districts: Kežmarok (11.5%), Gelnica (8.9%), Vranov nad Topľou (9.04%) and Revúca (6.28%) in the eastern part of the country. As for the regions, the largest number of Roma lives in the Prešov region (5.3%).

The members of the **Czech national minority** exceed 1% of the population in the Bratislava region.

86% of the members of the **Ruthenian national minority** live in the Prešov region. Their share in one district (Medzilaborce) accounts for 42.5%.

72% of all the members of the **Ukrainian national minority** live in the Prešov (50%) and Košice (22%) regions.

The members of the **German national minority** live predominantly in the Bratislava and Košice regions.

The members of the Croatian national minority are concentrated mainly in the Bratislava region (70.5% of all the members of the Croatian minority), where they account for 15.3% of the population in the town district of Jarovce and 12.3% of the population in the town district of Čunovo.

The members of other national minorities live all throughout the Slovak Republic and their share in the total population is low. It is not possible to define the geographic region where their language is used.

### ***Russian and Serbian in the Slovak Republic***

23. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to examine [whether Russian and Serbian may be considered as regional or minority languages in the Slovak Republic within the meaning of Article 1.a of the Charter], in co-operation with the speakers, and would welcome further information in the next periodical report.*

The relevant ministries and the Office of Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities have been intensively discussing the possibility of recognising Russian and Serbian as minority languages under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The representatives of the Russian and Serbian minorities in the Slovak Republic have formally presented their proposal through the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups – a permanent professional body of the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality, which is an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic in the field of human rights. Both the committee and the Government Council will deal with the proposal.

According to official statistics, about 2,000 Russians live in Slovakia. The Russians in Slovakia were granted the status of a national minority in 2005. Approximately half the Russians living in Slovakia are Slovak nationals and most of them live in the Bratislava, Prešov and Košice regions. The union of Russians in Slovakia, a compatriot association, was founded in 1997. The union consists of eight legally separate regional organisations of compatriots: the Union of Russians in Bratislava, Obščina in Nitra, Považan in Považská Bystica, Ruslana in Martin, Union of Russians in Košice, Russophiles in Žilina, Union of Russians in Poprad and Initiative 21, a youth organisation of compatriots. All these associations are associate members of the Union of Russians in Slovakia that represents Russian compatriots in international organisations. There is Rossija, an organisation of compatriots, and Molodaja Rossija, a youth organisation, in Banská Bystrica carrying out their activities outside the Union.

The Russian national minority is represented in the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups at the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for human rights, national minorities and gender equality.

Based on the cultural-historical ties and the number of persons with Serbian nationality in Slovakia, the Serbs were granted the status of a national minority in Slovakia in 2010. The Serbian national minority is also represented in the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups at the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for human rights, national minorities and gender equality.

In addition, there are Serbian citizens who have come to Slovakia to work or study or to join their families. As of the end of 2011, there were 3,853 citizens of Serbia living in Slovakia, of whom 648 had permanent residence in Slovakia. Most of the migrants in this group, as many as 90%, hold temporary residence. According to the data of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, approximately two-thirds of the citizens of Serbia living in Slovakia are 20 – 50 years old. In 2010, men accounted for 62% of the Serbian population. Their highest share (66.3%) can be found in the strongest age category (25 – 34 years). Students from Serbia make up the biggest group of foreign students. Their number in 2011 was as many as 307 students. Serbian migrants in Slovakia are relatively scattered, but most of them are concentrated in the Bratislava and Trnava regions. The Košice region is also relatively attractive. The Bratislava region presents the greatest number of job opportunities and offers suitable conditions for Serbian entrepreneurs (e.g. geographical conditions for the needs of cross-border business relationships, registered office of many institutions, etc.). The growth of migrants from Serbia in the Trnava region was mainly due to the opening of automotive production lines. New migrants coming to Slovakia arrive with a certain knowledge of Slovakia, being aware of the benefits of language similarity. Serbian migrants are characterised by the best knowledge of Slovak language from among all of the groups, while as many as 82% of them consider their language skills good or very good.

## ***Part II***

### ***Article 7 – Objectives and principles***

#### ***Paragraph 1***

*In respect of regional or minority languages, within the territories in which such languages are used and according to the situation of each language, the Parties shall base their policies, legislation and practice on the following objectives and principles:*

- b the respect of the geographical area of each regional or minority language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question;*

*35. ... The Committee of Experts invites the Slovak authorities to comment in the next periodical report on how they ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority languages.*

No legal regulations or measures that would change or affect the ratio of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities were adopted during the reporting period. Act No. 221/1996 Coll., on Territorial and Administrative Arrangement of the Slovak Republic, as amended, is still in force. Municipalities and regions are the local authorities of the Slovak Republic. The local authorities of the Slovak Republic consist of eight regions and 79 districts that represent territorial districts for the exercise of the powers of the state authorities.

Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, in 2011 supported the possibility of oral communication in minority language in municipalities that do not reach the 20% threshold. At the same time, the threshold for the use of the languages of national minorities was decreased to 15% based on two consecutive population censuses.

- c the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;*

In order to further institutionally reinforce the protection of human rights, including the rights of people belonging to national minorities, the post of Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities was created in July 2012 – an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic for national minorities. Under the statute the plenipotentiary or a person entrusted with the tasks of the plenipotentiary (the "Plenipotentiary") performs tasks related to the safeguarding, development and promotion of the rights of the members of national minorities. Among other things, the Plenipotentiary is in charge of enforcing the Slovak Republic's international commitments regarding the status and rights of the members of national minorities. By virtue of his office, the Plenipotentiary is the chairman of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, which is a permanent professional body of the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for human rights, national minorities and gender equality in the field of the implementation of the European

Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The Plenipotentiary issues an annual report on the situation of national minorities in the Slovak Republic, which also contains specific recommendations for improving the situation.

39. ... *The representatives of the minority language speakers have underlined the need for a law on the financing of minority cultures, a previous initiative of the Slovak authorities. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to pursue this initiative, in co-operation with the speakers.*

*f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;*

A Culture of National Minorities programme, under the auspices of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities, is one of the most important instruments of the direct promotion of the culture and language of national minorities as well as education and training on the rights of national minorities.

The purpose, terms and conditions, scope and method of the granting of subsidies within the scope of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic are governed by Act No. 524/2010 Coll., on the Granting of Subsidies within the scope of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, as amended. Subsidies within the Culture of National Minorities programme are granted under Paragraph 2(1)(a), (b) and (e) of the Act on Subsidies in order to promote:

- the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities;
- education and training on the rights of national minorities;
- interethnic and intercultural dialogue and understanding between national majority and national minorities and ethnic groups.

In 2014, EUR 3,829,250 was allocated from the state budget to the Culture of National Minorities subsidy programme.

The objective of the Culture of National Minorities subsidy programme consists in the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities, education and training on the rights of national minorities, the promotion of interethnic and intercultural dialogue as well as understanding between national majority and national minorities and ethnic groups. The Plenipotentiary is a coordinator of the Culture of National Minorities programme under Article 2(6) of the Statute of the Plenipotentiary.

The programme was divided into three sub-programmes and the following priorities:

1. The promotion of the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities
  - 1.1. editorial activity, the promotion of periodicals and non-periodicals, sound and multimedia carriers and electronic outputs;
  - 1.2. the activities of theatres and folklore ensembles and the activities of cultural institutions and religious institutions;
  - 1.3. the promotion of cultural activities and artistic creation;
  - 1.4. the research of the culture, life, history, language and identity of the members of minorities;

- 1.5. educational projects;
  - 1.6. hobbies and leisure time;
  - 1.7. foreign cultural activities and international cultural activities.
- 2. The promotion of education and training on the rights of national minorities
    - 2.1. the promotion of education and training of children and young people on the rights of national minorities;
    - 2.2. the promotion of education and training on the rights of national minorities;
    - 2.3. analytical, expert and editorial activity on the rights of national minorities.
- 3. The promotion of interethnic and intercultural dialogue as well as understanding between national majority and national minorities and ethnic groups
    - 3.1. the promotion of mutual understanding and convergence between national groups, between national majority and minorities, and between individual national minorities;
    - 3.2. projects focused on the identification and study of common cultural, artistic and scientific values and traditions;
    - 3.3. projects focused on the revealing and studying of the family, local and regional history, traditions, persons and monuments in ethnically mixed area;
    - 3.4. promoting the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance toward minority languages and cultures into the system of education and training and the mass media;
    - 3.5. the promotion of exchange programmes, stays, common educational events, educational and artistic competitions for children and young people from various national and language groups.

Submitted applications for subsidy passed several levels of inspection. Fifteen commissions reviewed the professional aspects of the projects, the quality of the plans and the preparation of the projects.

The assessment process of the Culture of National Minorities programme is governed by relevant legal regulations laying down details on the composition, decision-making, organisation of work and procedure of commissions in relation to the assessment of applications for subsidies and the criteria for the assessment of applications for subsidies. When assessing the applications, the members of expert commissions proceeded in accordance with uniform methodology for the assessment of applications for subsidy. Each project of the application for subsidy was assessed individually and the commissions took into account the quality, originality and tradition of the submitted project, the transparency and completeness of the submitted plan, the feasibility of the budget, the social importance of the project for the development of culture of the given national minority, for the target group, and the purpose and legitimacy to use the subsidy in the previous period, including the meeting of the settlement deadline.

*Overview of allocations for individual national minorities in 2014*

| <i>National minority</i> | <i>2014 CNM programme allocation in EUR</i> |
|--------------------------|---|
| Bulgarian                | 34,215                                      |
| Czech                    | 206,024                                     |
| Croatian                 | 49,375                                      |



|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Hungarian                                | 1,983,057        |
| Moravian                                 | 27,908           |
| German                                   | 96,604           |
| Polish                                   | 62,060           |
| Roma                                     | 634,109          |
| Ruthenian                                | 263,482          |
| Russian                                  | 51,270           |
| Serbian                                  | 27,703           |
| Ukrainian                                | 108,142          |
| Jewish                                   | 55,547           |
| Multi-ethnic and interethnic activities* | 229,755          |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>3,829,250</b> |

45.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to intensify efforts to abolish the practice of unjustified enrolment of Roma children in special schools or in separate classes.*

Education in the Slovak Republic has been provided for systemically both from the financial and the institutional point of view. It includes free pre-school education from the child's fifth year of age, a zero year in elementary school, specialised classes in elementary school with a compensation and development programme (4 – 8 pupils in one class), position of a teacher assistant, contributions for pupils from disadvantaged social backgrounds, subsidies for meal and school supplies, aid for the needy in order to provide for the basic welfare of the child, support for schools within the projects, and the creation and standardisation of relevant diagnostic tools. Measures are taken on a conceptual basis, while they deal with the causes of failure of Roma children from disadvantaged social backgrounds in elementary schools.

The School Act (Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on Education and Training, as amended) prohibits any form of discrimination, especially segregation, and no measures in the School Act lead to the exclusion of Roma children from the standard school system and their placement into special, educational and training facilities, i.e. continuing segregation.

In addition, the ombudsman addressed the topic of the exercise of rights to the education of children of the members of the Roma national minority with special educational-training needs in 2013.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic unambiguously expresses its attitude towards segregation in pedagogical and organisational instructions for the relevant school year. The pedagogical and organisational instructions for

the 2013/2014 school year include specific recommendations for schools: "To thoroughly apply the prohibition of all forms of discrimination and segregation in schools and education establishments. To eliminate undesirable practices such as the space, organisational, physical and symbolical exclusion or separation of Roma pupils due to their ethnicity (often in combination with social disadvantage) from other pupils. To thoroughly resolve the problems faced by children and students from marginalised groups that complicate the process of their acceptance into mainstream schools and education establishments and their inclusion in mainstream classes and subsequent educational process. To create suitable conditions for their education in schools and classes together with the majority population. We do not recommend creating separate classes (except the zero year) for children and pupils from disadvantaged social background."

Departments of education of individual district offices, within the methodical management of educational authorities within their territorial capacity and within the management of education and training in schools and education establishments within their founder capacity, pay relevant attention to the issue of unjustified enrolment of Roma children in schools for children with special needs.

Within the scope of competence of district offices the following is being provided for:

- a thorough control mechanism for the process of professional educational and psychological diagnostics of five- and six-year-old children before obligatory school attendance and after completing a one-year preparation;
- monitoring the thorough compliance with procedures related to the enrolment of pupils in special elementary schools and special classes of elementary schools;
- coordination of the fulfilment of the tasks arising from a Revised National Action Plan of a Decade of the Inclusion of Roma Population 2005 – 2015 for 2011 – 2015.

District offices provided the education establishments of educational counselling and prevention with guidelines for the examination of school competence with an emphasis on children from disadvantaged social backgrounds. The diagnostic process of children/pupils is a long-term process and consists of several back-to-back steps.

Before being enrolled in elementary school, all children of six years of age will undergo screening examinations (the "Kern Test") based on which psychologists will conduct a diagnostic examination. If it is determined that the child should start attending school later, they will recommend the child's legal guardian to enrol the child in kindergarten. If it is determined that the child will not attend kindergarten, they will recommend enrolling the child in the zero-year of elementary school. At the end of the zero-year, the child undergoes another diagnostic examination, the results of which will determine what school the child will attend (an elementary school or a special elementary school). Before the enrolment of the child in the special school, the child's mental level will be examined again by the education establishment of educational counselling several times within an interval of 6 – 12 months. In order to ensure that the repeated diagnostics of children after the first year of education in the school is as objective as possible, the diagnostic is conducted by a different person than the one who examined the child prior to obligatory school attendance. Children and pupils diagnosed at mental level A are mostly included in elementary school or a special class in elementary school. Special schools focus mainly on more serious levels of disability (B or C mental level, combined disabilities). The recommendation to enrol the pupil in special elementary school includes written information for the parents about the education options for their child. The parent has the right to freely choose.

The inclusion of the child in the special school or the special class in the elementary school is not a one-off event. On the contrary, it is a long-term process of monitoring the child that includes several examinations in order to confirm the substantiality of the establishment.

This long-term diagnostic process eliminates the inclusion of Roma children in special schools simply because they belong to the Roma national minority.

The special schools are exclusively attended by children with demonstrable physical disabilities, who due to their disability cannot be successfully educated in normal elementary schools, exclusively on the basis of a recommendation from the education establishment of educational counselling and prevention, in order to optimise their educational, training, psychological, social and career development.

District office departments of education focus on the unfounded inclusion of Roma children in special schools during their inspections and regular visits to the special schools.

The acquisition of exact data on the number of Roma pupils in special schools is complicated by the fact that there are no ethnic statistics in the schools and the education establishments. Roma citizens only seldom say that they are of Roma nationality.

The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities has initiated and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has prepared a National Project of Inclusive Education – PRINED (Project of Inclusive Education). The national project will be realised from April 2014 until November 2015 in 50 kindergartens and 100 elementary schools.

The objective of the project is to create and verify an inclusive education model in normal elementary schools through the engagement of an "inclusive team" (a special teacher, psychologist, teacher assistant) to support the educational process. Fifty kindergartens will participate in the project. An intensive programme of preparation for enrolment in a normal elementary school will be implemented during this project in cooperation with parents.

*g the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;*

*48. ... The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to develop facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language to learn it if they so desire.*

The adoption of Act No. 245/2008 Coll., with effect from 1 September 2008 resulted in the implementation of a two-level model of education by means of state and school educational programmes. Complying with the state educational programme will help the schools to profile themselves according to the needs and interests of pupils, legal representatives, local conditions, and so on. It follows that if there is interest, the language of a national minority can also be studied by pupils of Slovak nationality within disposable hours in the Slovak language schools.

In the Slovak Republic there are a sufficient number of schools providing education in the minority language or that teach the minority language.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective.*

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to intensify efforts in the field of education and media devoted to raising the awareness of the Slovak-speaking majority population of the positive contributions of the regional or minority languages to the Slovak society.*

Projects that promote intercultural and multicultural dialogue are also annually financed through the Culture of National Minorities programme. Funds of EUR 229,755 were allocated to this sub-programme in 2014.

Seventy-two projects focused on nationwide intercultural and multicultural activities presenting the culture of multiple national minorities to different target groups have also been supported. Likewise research focused on multicultural and intercultural issues, professional conferences and seminars related to the status of national minorities in the Slovak Republic, and multicultural and intercultural printed and electronic media and carriers have been supported.

#### *Paragraph 4*

*In determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages.*

*58-59. ... [A] Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality was established in 2011 ... The former Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups became the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups ... This body was active until March 2012. At present, a new structure of the government is under discussion. The Committee of Experts expects that the new structure will pay due consideration to the needs and wishes of the regional or minority language speakers, as required by this undertaking.*

In terms of national legislation, Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, (the "Act on Minority Languages") plays an important role. The Act enables citizens of the Slovak Republic who belong to national minorities to use the language of the national minority and stipulates the rules for the use of the minority language within official communication and in other fields. Under the Act, minority languages include Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian. The legislative framework for the use of the languages of national minorities under the Constitution is supplemented by other generally binding legal regulations.

The duty to provide professional and methodic assistance in the implementation of the Act on Minority Languages has been transferred to the Government Office of the Slovak Republic as of 1 October 2012. At the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, this activity is performed by the Office of the Head of Services of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic in collaboration with the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities that was created in July 2012 as an advisory body of the Government for national minorities. Under Section 7(a), Paragraph 2 of the Act on Minority Languages, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic submits a Report on the

Use of the Languages of National Minorities in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to the Government of the Slovak Republic. The first Report on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities in the Territory of the Slovak Republic (for the year 2012) was adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic on 19 December 2012 by Resolution No. 703/2012. The 2013 – 2014 Report on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities in the Territory of the Slovak Republic, under Section 7(a), Paragraph 2 of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, was adopted on 10 December 2014 by Resolution No. 630/2014.<sup>3</sup>

In December 2012, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic formed a professional commission for the application of the Act on Minority Languages. The commission consists of the representatives of individual departments in charge of the local state administration bodies obligated to apply the Act on Minority Languages, the representative of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, the representative of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and the representatives of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic or the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities. The professional commission prepares, among other things, recommendations for the Head of Services of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic to the filings in case of the infringement of the Act on Minority Languages.

Under Section 7(a), Paragraph 1 of the Act on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, by means of the Office of the Plenipotentiary, takes care of the technical terminology in the languages of national minorities, especially in the form of the preparation of technical terminological dictionaries in the languages of national minorities. The technical terminological dictionaries aim to simplify, facilitate and improve the use of minority languages within official communication. They are primarily intended for the employees of the public administration bodies who use the language of national minorities in daily communication, further for interpreters and translators who work with technical texts in the field of public administration and also for citizens who need to use technical terminological terms in minority languages when settling their matters. In order to develop the terminological dictionaries, a terminological framework was developed in the state language. The framework has been reviewed by all the relevant departments and it represents a database of the most frequent terms and phrases from the selected fields of the state administration and self-government of the Slovak Republic. The following dictionaries have been published on the website of the Government Office up to now: Slovak-Hungarian Terminological Dictionary, Slovak-Roma Terminological Dictionary and Slovak-Ruthenian Terminological Dictionary. The dictionaries have been developed by experts in the field of professional terminology in the languages of national minorities for the activity of the state administration bodies. At present, the Office of the Plenipotentiary has been preparing the update of selected terms (entries) and linguistic correction together with the mutation of the dictionary in Ukrainian.

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic deals with administrative offences related to the use of the languages of national minorities. On behalf of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic it is the Head of Services of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic who acts in this field at the 1<sup>st</sup> level. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> level it is the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. In 2013, 37 submissions were delivered to the Government Office under the Act on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities. No submissions were delivered to the Government Office in 2014. The vast majority of

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<sup>3</sup> The report is available at:  
[http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/5422\\_sprava\\_en.pdf](http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/5422_sprava_en.pdf)

submissions related to the infringement of Section 4(6) of the Act on the Use of Minority Languages stating that in the municipality the information related to the threat to life, health, safety or property of the citizens of the Slovak Republic is announced in the places accessible to the public in both the state language and the minority language. The identified infringements have been removed.

In 2011, the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (the "Council") was established as a new, permanent advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic. The deputy prime minister of the Government of the Slovak Republic for human rights and national minorities continued to act as a member of the Government. The previously active advisory bodies of the Government of the Slovak Republic in the field of human rights, the elimination of discrimination and the development of civil society have been included in the newly formed Council. The Council has transformed these bodies into its permanent committees:

- Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups;
- Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations;
- Committee on Seniors;
- Committee on Persons with Disabilities;
- Committee on Gender Equality;
- Committee on Children and Young People.

At the same time, two new committees have been established: the Committee on Research, Education and Training in the Field of Human Rights and Development Education and the Committee on the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations was transformed into the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for Non-Governmental Organisations by Slovak Republic Resolution No. 397 of 1 August 2013. A Committee on the Rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual Persons was established by Slovak Republic Resolution No. 516 of 3 October 2012. The Committee on Seniors was transformed into Government Council of the Slovak Republic for the Rights of Seniors and the Adjustment of Public Policies to the Aging of the Population by Slovak Republic Government Resolution No. 17/2014 on 8 January 2014.

The Council consists of public administration bodies and institutions on the one hand and the representatives of non-government organisations, independent institutions and experts on the other, which are represented on a parity basis.

The Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups is a permanent, professional body of the Council for the Issues Related to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups and for the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages under Article 7(4) of the Charter and the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities under Article 15 of the Convention.

The Plenipotentiary is a chairman of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups.

The Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups also includes national minorities whose language is not considered a language of a national minority for the purposes of the Act on Minority Languages. These are the Moravian, Russian, Serbian and Jewish national minorities. Under its statute, the Committee prepares an annual assessment report on the promotion of cultures of national minorities, a report on the status of national education, and a report on the use of the languages of national minorities that is submitted to the Council for approval.

*Paragraph 5*

*The Parties undertake to apply, mutatis mutandis, the principles listed in paragraphs 1 to 4 above to non-territorial languages. However, as far as these languages are concerned, the nature and scope of the measures to be taken to give effect to this Charter shall be determined in a flexible manner, bearing in mind the needs and wishes, and respecting the traditions and characteristics, of the groups which use the languages concerned.*

63. ... [T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive steps to promote Yiddish, in particular by offering the possibility to learn it to those who so desire.

In particular the Hebrew and Yiddish languages are minority languages that cannot be connected with a specific geographical area despite their traditional use in the territory of the Slovak Republic. Since these languages are primarily used during religious rites, special legislation for their use is not necessary.

Based on the information of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia it has been found out that there is no institution in Slovakia that would teach the Yiddish language. The nearest institutions are located in Vienna and Warsaw.

Slovak authorities have not received any request from the Jewish minority for the teaching and use of Yiddish within official communication.

## *The evaluation in respect of Part III of the Charter*

### *Hungarian*

#### *Article 8 – Education*

##### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

*b i to make available primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*69. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to take special measures supporting access to primary education in Hungarian for all the pupils interested.*

As regards the education and training of children and pupils belonging to national minorities, the department of education applies and complies with the democratic right of parents to choose the language of instruction of the school. At present, the education of the members of national minorities has been going on based on their requests.

Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and Education Authority and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, enables councils, community school boards and territorial school boards to promote the interests of local and regional authorities, parents and teachers in the field of education and training, i.e. also teaching in the mother tongue.

In addition to the right to learn the state language, the children and pupils of citizens belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups are also entitled to education and training in their language under the terms and conditions stipulated by Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on Education and Training (School Act). Compulsory teaching of the Slovak language and literature is a part of the required curriculum in elementary schools and secondary schools whose language of instruction is other than the state language.

For children and pupils of citizens belonging to national minorities, education and training are guaranteed

- a) in schools and classes where the education and training are conducted in the language of the relevant national minority;
- b) in schools and classes where one of the subjects taught is the language of the national minority and the language of instruction of other subjects is the state language; in these schools and classes some subjects can be taught in the language of the national minority, especially art, music and physical education;
- c) in education establishments where the education and training are conducted in the language of the national minority.

Education conditions for all schools in the Slovak Republic are stipulated by applicable legislation in the field of education and by the state educational programmes that



hierarchically represent the highest objective-programme project of education that includes a framework model of the graduate, a framework curriculum of the education level and its framework curricula.

With effect from 1 September 2015 a framework curriculum has been prepared for elementary schools with the language of instruction of the national minority and a framework curriculum for elementary schools with the teaching of the language of national minority.

In the 2013/2014 school year, the network of schools and education establishments included 2,312 elementary schools in total (of which 2,140 state schools, 125 religious schools and 47 private schools). As of 15 September 2013, there were 26 elementary schools with instruction in Slovak-Hungarian and 237 elementary schools with instruction in Hungarian.

In state schools there were 1,979 classes with instruction in Hungarian, with 28,496 pupils (of which in grades 1 – 4 there were 919 classes with 13,649 pupils, in grades 5 – 9 there were 878 classes with 14,847 pupils). In religious schools there were 84 classes with 1,219 pupils (of which in grades 1 – 4 there were 38 classes with 553 pupils, in grades 5 – 9 there were 46 classes with 666 pupils).

*d i to make available technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*72. The Committee of Experts ... urges the authorities to ensure that technical and vocational education remains available in Hungarian, in conformity with the present undertaking.*

Since 1 January 2013, the number of classes of first grades in secondary schools financed from the state budget in its territorial scope has been determined by self-governing regions based on generally binding regulation in compliance with the regional strategy of education and training in secondary schools. Under the amended School Act, the lowest number of students in a secondary school class was changed on 1 January 2014, while the founder of a secondary vocational school can in specific cases determine a lower number of students in the class. The total number of teachers in secondary schools with instruction in Hungarian was 1,770.

As of 15 September 2014, there were 413 secondary vocational schools in the Slovak Republic with instruction in Slovak, 31 secondary vocational schools with instruction in Slovak and Hungarian and nine secondary vocational schools with instruction in Hungarian.

Under Section 3 of Act No. 597/2003 Coll., on the Financing of Elementary Schools, Secondary Schools and Education Establishments as amended, the ministry allocates the funds for textbooks centrally financed by the Ministry of Education. The State Institute for Vocational Education in the field of the preparation of textbooks, the information and methodological materials issued for secondary vocational schools and conservatoires with instruction in the language of a national minority cooperates with the Ministry of Education, the authors of textbooks and publishers. Over the last five years, 81 textbooks for secondary vocational schools and conservatoires with instruction in the language of national minorities have been issued.

When preparing a state educational programme, the State Institute for Vocational Education pays constant attention to the education and training of national minorities in secondary vocational schools. Within the reporting period, it focused on the changes in vocational education and training in secondary vocational schools in the Slovak Republic, which also apply to national minorities, and on the inclusion of the language of national minorities in the framework curricula of the state educational programmes for secondary

vocational schools. A revision of all state educational programmes, all groups of departments and all levels of education was conducted from 2011 until 2013. Schools with instruction in Hungarian also participated in the revision.

The State Institute for Vocational Education also provides assistance related to the establishment and operation of private secondary vocational schools with instruction in the language of national minorities, the preparation of school educational programmes, the submission, realisation and assessment of new textbooks and training courses for experimental verification. From 2012 until 2013, assistance was provided to a Private Secondary Vocational School in Očová that is focused on the education and training of primarily Roma youth, in relation to the state educational programme intended for the training courses of cook, waitress, innkeeper and the training course of a two-year study of a kitchen assistant that is being experimentally verified and is intended for pupils who finished elementary school in lower than the ninth grade. There is also cooperation in the field of research. Eight pilot secondary vocational schools participate in the research task "Single Assignment of the Final Test" that is being verified in relation to the profession of hairdresser and one of these schools is a Private Secondary Vocational School with instruction in Hungarian in Dunajská Streda.

Since 1 September 2013, the revised framework curricula of the state educational programmes have been set for all groups of professions and levels of education so that they provide the same conditions for all secondary vocational schools in the Slovak Republic, i.e. also for schools with instruction in the languages of national minorities.

*f i to arrange for the provision of adult and continuing education courses which are taught mainly or wholly in the regional or minority languages;*

75. ... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to arrange for the provision of adult and continuing education courses which are taught mainly or wholly in Hungarian.

Examples of educational programmes for adults in Hungarian:

- "The Development of Hungarian-Slovak Bilingual Competence of Administrative Workers", organiser: Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, accreditation confirmation number: 3233/2011/26/1;
- "Hungarian language – beginners - A1", organised by: Academy of Education, Žilina, accreditation confirmation number: 0581/2010/186/22;
- "Hungarian language – intermediate - A2", organised by: Academy of Education, Žilina, accreditation confirmation number: 0581/2010/186/22;
- "Hungarian language – intermediate - B1", organised by: Academy of Education, Žilina, accreditation confirmation number: 0581/2010/186/22.

*g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

80.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to improve the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Hungarian in mainstream education.*

Education on the culture and history of minorities is intended for individual levels of education within cross-sectoral topics Multicultural Education, Regional Education and Traditional Folk Culture and also in educational areas, e.g. Man and Values, Art and Culture, Man and Society. A document entitled The Preparation of the Objectives and Content of Multicultural Education and Training (2011 – 2012) focuses on assistance to elementary and secondary schools in relation to the implementation of multicultural education and training.

The procurement of diverse and high-quality textbooks, teaching texts and worksheets in schools is a separate topic of the education and training of children of members of national minorities.

As regards pedagogical documents, the National Institute for Education is preparing a State Educational Programme for History for lower secondary education and grammar school with instruction in Hungarian.

Two specific state educational programmes have been prepared within the innovation of the state educational programmes. They react to issues related to how history is taught and the process of creating history textbooks for schools with instruction in Hungarian, taking into account the historic consciousness, identity and historic culture of students of Hungarian nationality. Part of the textbooks for schools with instruction in Hungarian has been prepared by experts – members of the Hungarian national minority in Slovakia, and part of the textbooks has been written in cooperation with experts from Hungary. Under applicable legislation, schools with instruction in the language of a national minority can, in addition to the approved textbooks, also use the textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education and other textbooks that are in compliance with the objectives and principles of the School Act.

*h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

*83. The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to adopt a structured approach to the further training of teachers.*

The continuing education of teachers and professional staff is mainly governed by Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Teachers and Professional Staff and on Amendment and Supplementation of Certain Acts, as amended. Education is provided by schools and education establishments, organisations established by the Ministry of Education or other ministries, universities, church or religious societies, or other legal entities after meeting the conditions laid down by law.

The Methodology and Pedagogy Centre (MPC) is a professional sponsor of the further education of teachers, including teaching staff from schools with instruction in the language of a national minority or with the teaching of the language of a national minority. Under Section 14(2)(c) of Act No. 596/2003 Coll., on State Administration in Education and Education Authority and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts as amended, the Centre is a centrally managed organisation of the Ministry of Education.

Since 2009, the Centre has been implementing projects within Operational Programme Education "The Profession and Career Development of Teaching Staff" in the total financial amount of EUR 49.8 million. The objective of the national project is to create and develop an effective system of further education for teachers and professional staff of schools and education establishments with an emphasis on the development of key competencies, the deepening and improving of the qualifications of teachers and professional staff in

compliance with the Act on Teachers and Professional Staff and in compliance with the current and perspective needs of the knowledge society.

The Methodology and Pedagogy Centre in Bratislava established a branch office in Komárno in April 2011. This office started to fulfil the tasks related to the promotion of the professional development and continuing education of the teachers and professional staff of schools and education establishments with instruction in Hungarian. At present, the office employs 12 people. More than 1,600 teachers from schools with instruction in Hungarian were re-trained from April 2011 to August 2013. One of the important objectives of the office is to methodologically guide the teaching of Slovak language in national minority schools in order to achieve sufficient conversation skills in the state language among the members of national minorities.

The main tasks and activities of the branch office in Komárno include:

- the language and professional-methodological assessment of textbooks and teaching materials and the translation thereof in Hungarian language teaching (worksheets, methodological guides, auxiliary textbooks, spelling books, etc.), professional support and consulting in the field of the organisation of workshops for the authors of textbooks and teaching materials;
- the content and organisational support for the continuing education of teachers and professional staff under Act No. 317/2009 Coll., including the attestations of teachers and professional staff based on the MPC statute;
- the programmes of continuing education implemented through the national project Education of Kindergarten Teachers as a part of the educational reform, the programmes of continuing education implemented through the national project Profession and Career Development of Teachers, and the programmes of continuing education implemented through the national project Activating Methods in Education;
- care and collaboration in supporting the Slovak-Hungarian and Hungarian-Slovak education terminology and terminological dictionary;
- providing professional-methodological assistance to teachers and professional staff in the region and outside it, including schools and education establishments with instruction in the language of national minorities;
- methodological guidance of the teaching of Slovak language in national minority schools in order to achieve sufficient conversation skills in the state language among members of national minorities.

In 2013, the Komárno branch office closely cooperated with the Union of Hungarian Teachers in Slovakia organising a summer university and professional conferences and seminars for schools with instruction in Hungarian. It was also in charge of organising professional seminars on the methodology of the teaching of Slovak language and literature in schools with instruction in Hungarian, as well as training and the preparation of publications for educational activities that are published in Hungarian, especially for schools with instruction in Hungarian.

Within the framework of continuing education in the Košice region in 2013, an MPC Košice branch office organised the following educational programmes in the Hungarian language with 183 graduates:

Digital Technologies for the Improvement of Teaching Using the Interactive Board in Schools with Teaching Conducted in Hungarian, Interactive Board in Educational Process, Development of Grapho-Motorics Through Art Activities, Creation and Development of Positive Climate in the Class, Project Education within Educational Process.

Further education was organised within the programme entitled Management of the School and Education Establishment in Mother Tongue for teachers in schools with instruction in Hungarian.

In 2014, the Košice branch office plans to open other programmes in the Hungarian language.

Since September 2012, an MPC branch office in Trnava has been recording the affiliation of applicants for education to national minorities in connection with the implementation of an electronic application system for continuing education. As of 31 March 2014, 271 applications for teachers and professional staff belonging to national minority were recorded from the total number of approximately 4,000 applications. Of this number, 72 trainees completed the training. The others are being gradually included in educational programmes. All the applicants are of Hungarian nationality and they have the opportunity to join all the MPC accredited educational programmes. The Trnava branch office also provides opportunities for education in the Hungarian language, if the applicants so request.

Education in minority languages and the MPC attestation were also provided in 2013 to teachers and professional staff with possibility of education in the languages of national minorities within a preparation attestation. Internal MPC Directive No. 8/2013 on Attestations includes the rules for the writing of attestation works in the language of a national minority, and the attestation itself can be conducted in the language of the national minority. In 2013, within the preparation attestation education, this option was used by 214 teachers in total – 103 teachers for the 1<sup>st</sup> attestation and 111 teachers for the 2<sup>nd</sup> attestation.

Commissions in which there are conditions for the attestation to be conducted in a minority language were formed for the applicants for attestation in Hungarian. In compliance with applicable legislation, under Section 51(2) and (6) of Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Teachers and Professional Staff and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, the directorate-general of the MPC proposes, if necessary, the Hungarian-speaking chairmen of attestation commissions who implement their mandates based on the appointment of the Ministry of Education. With regard to the growing number of minority language applicants, the MPC, under Section 51(4) and (5) of the above act, provides for external reviewers, if necessary, in order to prepare reviews in the Hungarian language.

- i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

*87. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in developing teaching in Hungarian, and of drawing up public periodical reports on the development of Hungarian-language education.*

In 2013, the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic established a Council of the Minister for National Education as his advisory body for the education and training of the members of national minorities and the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages. The first meeting was held in April 2013 with the participation of the representatives of the Hungarian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German and Roma national minority together with the Plenipotentiary. The meeting focused on the issue of textbooks, teaching material for national education, discussion on the framework teaching plans for national education and the report on the status of national education prepared by the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups in March 2013.

As to the meeting of commitments arising from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Slovakia for national education, conditions have been created for:

- a) the keeping of bilingual pedagogical documentation, including bilingual report cards;
- b) the creation of classes with a lower number of pupils in ethnically mixed areas;
- c) the taking into account of the financial requirements arising from the inclusion of Hungarian in the school educational programme;
- d) the positive discrimination of students coming from elementary schools with teaching conducted in Hungarian during entrance examinations to the study conducted in Slovak;
- e) grammar schools with instruction in Hungarian, where all subjects are taught in the mother tongue; however, the students can also study the state language. Most of the grammar school graduates continue their studies at Slovak universities without bigger language problems;
- f) educational courses that are organised according to the requirements of the applicants (employers) for the language of instruction, they are simultaneously organised in Slovak and Hungarian language;
- g) communication with the State School Inspection in Hungarian in the premises of the school;
- h) free textbooks and teaching materials in Hungarian;
- i) the information on cooperation in the regions is provided in the minority language, e.g. County Reporter – appendix about the most important information in the minority language;
- j) the use of the minority language in private and in public as well as its use in contacts with administrative bodies;
- k) cross-border contacts, international and cross-border cooperation, the promotion of contacts between users of the same language in the field of education, vocational training and lifelong learning.

The State School Inspection regularly assesses the development of instruction in the Hungarian language at individual levels of education. Only Hungarian-speaking school inspectors enter kindergartens, schools and classes with instruction in Hungarian.

## ***Article 9 – Judicial authorities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

- a in criminal proceedings:*
  - ii to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*
  - iii to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language;*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

90. ... *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

Under Act No. 382/2004 Coll., on Interpreters and Translators, interpreters and translators are registered in a list of interpreters and translators kept by the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic. Interpreters and translators are included in the list at their own request after they meet the qualification conditions under the Act. If the list of interpreters does not include an interpreter for a language chosen by a person, regardless whether it is a regional, minority or other language, the court will provide for an interpreter into the language that the person understands. In practice, the language faculties of universities that are used for this purpose, such as the Faculty of Ruthenian Language and Culture of Prešov University, since the current list of interpreters and translators does not include any interpreter and translator into the Ruthenian, Roma or Yiddish<sup>4</sup> languages. Interpretation and translation is a liberal profession and at the moment nobody is thinking about compulsory registration in the list of interpreters or similar measures. If the civil or criminal proceedings require the appointment of an interpreter or a translator under the guaranteed rights, the court is obligated to do so regardless of whether the interpreter or the translator into the relevant language is included in the list or not. Moreover, within the criminal proceedings under Section 28(6) of the Criminal Law, it is possible: "if it is not necessary to provide for an interpreter in order to provide for the just process and it is not possible to provide for an interpreter in the language that the person under Section 2(20) sufficiently understands, it is possible in substantiated cases to provide for the interpretation by means of technical equipment intended for video and audio transmission".

91. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use Hungarian in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she also has a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution. ... [T]he Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in Hungarian, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

In the case of criminal proceedings, Act No. 301/2005 Coll., Code of Criminal Procedure, which came into effect on 1 January 2006, applies. The validity and subsequent application of the Code of Criminal Procedure applies throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic.

The right to use one's mother tongue before the court is governed by the basic principles of the Code of Criminal Procedure in the provision of Section 2(20) of the Code of Criminal Procedure: "If the accused, his legal representative, injured party, participating person or witness declares that he does not speak the language of the proceedings he has the right to an interpreter and a translator."

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<sup>4</sup> Source:

[http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk/jaspiw1/htm\\_reg/jaspiw\\_mini\\_regt\\_vyber\\_hl1.asp?clear=Y&cball=Y&oddiel=tl](http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk/jaspiw1/htm_reg/jaspiw_mini_regt_vyber_hl1.asp?clear=Y&cball=Y&oddiel=tl)

With effect from 1 February 2014, a new wording of Section 28 of the Code of Criminal Procedure governing the interpretation during criminal proceedings came into effect. The new adjustment has significantly expanded the present provision and new standards have been set in compliance with Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings.

Section 28(2) states that an interpreter is also invited in the case when the person stated in the above Section 2(20) of the Act declares "that he understands the language of the proceedings, however the body that performs the action discovers that this person's language skills are not sufficient for the proper exercise of its rights in the language of the proceedings; in such a case, the interpreter is invited on the basis of a resolution against which the complaint is admissible".

As mentioned in the previous reports, an interpreter and translator can be invited already in the pre-trial phase. The costs of inviting the interpreter and translator are covered by the state and they do not lead to extra expense on the part of the person concerned.

Under Section 34(4) "the law enforcement bodies and the court are obligated to always inform the accused of his rights, including the significance of confession, and give him the possibility to fully exercise them".

Applications and evidence can be submitted in a foreign language, while the court must provide for the translation of documentary evidence submitted in other than Slovak language, with the exception of the Czech language under Section 51(5) of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic Decree No. 543/2005 Coll., on the Processing and Office Procedure for district courts, regional courts, the Special Court and military courts.

92. ... *[T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

The above new wording of Section 28 of the Code of Criminal Procedure governing the interpretation in criminal proceedings with effect from 1 February 2014 is one of the active measures facilitating the implementation of these commitments into practice.

The absolute guarantee of the possibility to use a regional or minority language is included in the Charter alternatively and at present the Slovak Republic is not considering an adjustment that would provide interpretation to people who fully and without reservation understand the language of the proceedings. In such a case it would be a disproportionate financial burden for criminal proceedings, and in rare cases, it would be a way to intentionally obstruct or prolong the proceedings.

*b in civil proceedings:*

*ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*



- c *in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*
    - ii *to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
    - iii *to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*
- if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

95. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

The information on interpreters and translators in connection with criminal proceedings also apply to civil proceedings.

96. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

Valid and effective legislation in practice does not represent a restriction of the right to use a regional or minority language in criminal proceedings and it also makes it possible to submit documents and evidence in regional and minority languages without any additional costs for these parties, by which the provision of the Charter in question is fully respected.

Act No. 99/1963 Coll., applies to these commitments. Under Section 18 of the Code of Civil Procedure, as amended, (the "Code of Civil Procedure"): "Parties to civil proceedings have the same status. They have the right to act before the court in their mother tongue or in the official language of the country that they understand. The court is obligated to provide them with equal opportunity to exercise their rights."

Under Section 141(2) of the Code of Civil Procedure: "The costs of the evidence that are not covered by an advance payment, and the cash expenses of the appointed representative who is not an attorney, and the costs associated with the fact that a party acts in its mother tongue are covered by the state."

Applicable law of the Slovak Republic makes it possible to submit documents and evidence in regional and minority languages without additional costs for the parties, by which the provision of the Charter in question is fully respected.

Provisions related to court proceedings in administrative matters constitute an integral part of the Code of Civil Procedure, which includes special standards related to this legal field provided for in Part V of the Code of Civil Procedure. It follows that the general provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, including the right to act before the court in one's mother tongue, apply analogously to court proceedings in administrative matters.

As regards the Hungarian language, the decision-making activity of relevant courts shows that in most cases the reason for inviting an interpreter consisted in the fact that the party to the proceedings spoke Slovak but requested interpretation because their mother tongue, in which they can express themselves much better, is Hungarian. Judicial practice shows that in civil proceedings if the judge discovers at the first hearing that the party speaks

little Slovak and therefore invites an interpreter by means of a resolution, he will adjourn the hearing and invite the interpreter to the next hearing and pay the interpreter's remuneration after the hearing. There are also cases when the party informed the court in writing before the hearing that it did not speak Slovak and requested an interpreter to be invited to the hearing. In such cases, the court usually issues a resolution to invite the interpreter. In some cases the interpretation according to the Processing and Office Procedure was provided by the acting judge who spoke Hungarian, or his assistant. If it was necessary to translate documents, the court invited a translator.

There are no difficulties in the Slovak Republic with the practical application of the above commitment.

The costs of interpreting or translation associated with the use of the right of the party to use a regional or minority language before the court in civil proceedings or before the court in administrative matters are covered by the state.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make available in the regional or minority languages the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of these languages, unless they are otherwise provided.*

*102. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to ensure that amendments to the most important national statutory texts are also available in Hungarian.*

The translations of most of the legal regulations, especially acts that directly exercise the constitutional rights of persons belonging to the largest Hungarian national minority, already exist and are publically available through publications. Translations of legal regulations into other minority languages in the Slovak Republic have not been made yet. In this regard, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities has initiated the translation of the most important national legal regulations in the given field.

## ***Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services***

### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- a ii to ensure that such of their officers as are in contact with the public use the regional or minority languages in their relations with persons applying to them in these languages;*

*112.*

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to ensure that such of their officers as are in contact with the public use Hungarian in their relations with persons applying to them in*

*Hungarian, wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.*

In 2010 and 2011, a comprehensive revision of national legal regulations in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities was conducted in order to provide for the widest possible application and use of minority language in public communication. The adoption of Amendment Act No. 270/1995 Coll., on the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended, and Amendment Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, has resulted in the completion of a legislative framework in the field of the language rights of national minorities, which resulted in the existence of comprehensive legislation that provides for an adequate balance between the promotion of the state language and the right to use a minority languages.

The amendment has strengthened the language rights of the members of national minorities, extended the possibilities to use languages in public and official communication, including several new fields in which it was not possible to use minority languages under the legislation applicable at that time. The guarantee of the practical exercise of these rights consists in the definition of multiple duties for public administration bodies to use the language of a national minority under the Amendment Act on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities.

The Amendment Act stipulates the rules for the use of the language of a national minority in official communication and in some fields governed by law. The rules for the determination of municipalities in which the languages of national minorities are used in official communication have been changed, by which it was possible to take into account the declining tendency in the number of the members of national minorities in some municipalities. In order to use the language of a minority in official communication, there is a condition of a 15% share of persons belonging to a national minority in the total number of the population of the municipality based on two consecutive population censuses in the municipality. The Government of the Slovak Republic issues a list of such municipalities by means of its regulation.

A new provision of Section 7(c)(2) simultaneously ensures that all the language rights laid down in the Act on the Languages of National Minorities can be further used in all municipalities in which it has been possible up to now, i.e. also in those in which the number of the members of national minorities has dropped below the 20% threshold. Not a single municipality has been excluded from the list of municipalities in which the members of national minorities accounted for 20% in 1991 and the decrease of the 20% threshold to the 15% threshold has made it possible to keep the municipalities, which the Act would not otherwise apply to, on the list. In these municipalities, the right to use the language of a national minority will expire if based on the results of three consecutive population censuses after 1 July 2011 the citizens belonging to the national minority do not even once account for at least 15% of the citizens. The present, real situation is that the Act also fully applies to the municipalities that according to the latest population census in 2011 have, for example, only a 9% share of members of a national minority.

The new Section 2(8) of the Amendment Act has made it possible to use oral communication in minority languages in official communication in any municipality in the Slovak Republic regardless of the percentage representation of the members of national minorities, as long as the employee of the public administration body and people participating in the proceedings agree.

As regards official written communication, the amendment has provided citizens belonging to a national minority with the possibility to require the issuance of a certain group of bilingual public documents and official forms. It is possible to keep bilingual official

records of the public administration bodies. As regards public communication, there is the possibility to use, in addition to standardised geographic names, the customary and established names of geographic objects in the languages of national minorities in specialised publications, press and other mass communication media and official activities of public administration bodies if they use a minority language.

The Amendment Act confers powers to the Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights and National Minorities (at present these powers belong to the Government Office of the Slovak Republic), i.e. to provide professional and methodological assistance to the public administration bodies and the departments of the security and rescue teams in the implementation of the law. It stipulates a duty to submit, once in two years, a report on the status of the use of the languages of national minorities to the Government of the Slovak Republic and to discuss administrative offences related to the use of the languages of national minorities.

Emergency calls to the number 112 are a special field of the use of regional or minority languages. Under Section 5(2)(a) of Act No. 129/2002. Coll., on the Integrated Rescue System, emergency calls to the emergency number 112 are received by a coordination centre established by a district office in the seat of the region (Section 5(1)(a)). All coordination centres of the integrated rescue system that operate in the Slovak Republic send every day, during the exchange of the shift of the operators of the number 112, a list of the number of operators speaking a specific foreign language to a permanent service of the section that evaluates the data. If the relevant centre is not able to deal with a call to the emergency number 112 due to the lack of knowledge of a foreign language on the part of operators working the shift, the call will be dealt with in the form of a conference call with an operator of the centre that reported the presence of its operator who speaks the foreign language in the report on the shift exchange. Based on experience to date, no problems have been encountered when dealing with emergency calls in the language of a national minority. The system of dealing with calls to the emergency number 112 in the language of a national minority works effectively and contributes to the protection of life and health of citizens who find themselves in an emergency situation.

Local state administration bodies that use a minority language – Hungarian – in addition to the state language:

- District offices: Senec, Dunajská Streda, Galanta, Komárno, Levice, workplace in Šahy, Levice, workplace in Želiezovce, Michalovce, workplace in Veľké Kapušany, Nové Zámky, Šaľa, Štúrovo, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava, Trebišov, workplace in Kráľovský Chlmec;
- State archives in Banská Bystrica, Rimavská Sobota branch office, Bratislava, Šaľa branch office, Košice, Rožňava branch office, Nitra, Komárno branch office, Nitra, Nové Zámky branch office;
- District directorates of the Fire and Rescue Service: Dunajská Streda, Galanta, Komárno, Nové Zámky, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava;
- Regional Offices for Public Healthcare: Senec, Dunajská Streda, Galanta, Komárno, Nové Zámky, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava;
- Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family: Dunajská Streda, Dunajská Streda, workplace in Šamorín, Dunajská Streda, workplace in Veľký Meder, Galanta, Komárno, Komárno, workplace in Hurbanovo, Komárno, workplace in Kolárovo, Košice, workplace in Moldava nad Bodvou, Levice, workplace in Šahy, Levice, workplace in Želiezovce, Lučenec, workplace in Filákov, Michalovce, workplace in Veľké Kapušany, Nové Zámky, Nové Zámky, workplace in Šaľa, Nové Zámky, workplace in Štúrovo, Pezinok, workplace in Senec, Revúca, workplace in Tornaľa, Rimavská Sobota, Rimavská Sobota, workplace in

- Gemerský Jablonec, Rožňava, Rožňava, workplace in Plešivec, Trebišov, workplace in Kráľovský Chlmec, Veľký Krtíš, workplace in Vinica;
- Regional Veterinary and Food Administration: Senec, Dunajská Streda, Galanta, Komárno, Nové Zámky, Šaľa, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava;
  - Tax authorities: Košice, Rožňava branch office, Košice, Kráľovský Chlmec contact point, Košice, Veľké Kapušany contact point, Košice, Moldava nad Bodvou contact point, Trnava, Veľký Meder contact point, Trnava, Šamorín contact point, Trnava, Dunajská Streda branch office, Trnava, Galanta branch office, Trnava, Sládkovičovo contact point, Nitra, Komárno branch office, Nitra, Nové Zámky branch office, Nitra, Hurbanovo contact point, Nitra, Kolárovo contact point, Nitra, Šahy contact point, Nitra, Želiezovce contact point, Nitra, Štúrovo contact point, Nitra, Šaľa contact point, Banská Bystrica, Rimavská Sobota branch office, Banská Bystrica, Filákov branch office, Banská Bystrica, Tornaľa branch office, Bratislava, Senec branch office.

## *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of the local and regional authorities on whose territory the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages is such as to justify the measures specified below, the Parties undertake to allow and/or encourage:*

- a the use of regional or minority languages within the framework of the regional or local authority;*

*115. ... [I]t remains unclear whether the use of Hungarian within local and regional authorities, not only in relations with applicants, is formally permitted and implemented in practice.*

The use of the Hungarian minority language is not only formally allowed, but also formally, i.e. legislatively guaranteed in Slovak law and widely used and implemented in practice.

Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, makes it possible to use minority languages, including Hungarian, in oral and written communication between the members of the minority and relevant local authorities, makes it possible to submit documents in a minority language to which the local authority is obligated to respond in the language of the national minority, and makes it possible to use a minority language in the decisions in the administrative proceedings, in birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, officially issued documents, authorisations, confirmations, expressions and declarations as well as in any forms provided by local authorities.

Likewise, the Act makes it possible for the local authority to keep bilingual records, i.e. in the minority language.

Under the Act, the relevant local authority is obligated to publish written information on any legislatively laid down possibilities to use the minority language, which must be published in a visible place in its headquarters, and it is obligated to publish in minority language the information on the threat to life, health, security or property of the citizens of the Slovak Republic.

Further, it is obligated to publish in the minority language any important information related to the activity of the local authority. The information must be published on an official board, on the website and in periodicals.

This duty relates to the information on the composition and powers of the local authority of the municipality; the publishing of the overview of legal regulations, orders, instructions, interpretative opinions according to which the municipality acts and decides or which govern the rights and duties of physical entities and legal entities in relation to the municipality; the publishing of the information on where the physical entities or legal entities can submit an application, a proposal, initiative, complaints and other submission; the publishing of a procedure that the municipality must adhere to when dealing with any applications, proposals and other submissions, including the relevant deadlines that must be met; the publishing of a tariff of administrative fees collected by the municipality for the actions and proceedings of administrative bodies, and a tariff of payments for making the information available and the information on the management of public funds and the handling of assets of the municipality.

In addition, the Act enables the local authorities to issue occasional printed materials, publications, periodicals and any other written information intended for the public also in a minority language, the name of the seat of the local authority in a minority language, etc. It also makes it possible to display the names and any public notices in a minority language.

*b the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*

120.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to:*

*- take the necessary measures so that the Hungarian-speakers may submit oral or written applications in Hungarian in those municipalities where there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation;*

*- provide the legal basis required for Hungarian speakers to submit oral or written applications in Hungarian also in relation to regional authorities where the speakers are present in sufficient numbers.*

In practice, the above requirement is fulfilled and the state authorities respect the initiative of municipalities to issue official documents in Hungarian.

Hungarian-speakers can submit oral and written requests and other documents to the relevant local authorities in the minority language under Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended.

Under the Act, the right to submit documents in the minority language is also preserved in those municipalities that currently do not reach the 20% threshold. For instance, there are municipalities where 13%, 12% or 11% of residents are members of the Hungarian minority.

The legal basis according to which Hungarian-speakers can submit oral or written requests to regional authorities is Section 2(3) of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., under which citizens belonging to a national minority have the right to use the minority language in official communication with the local territorial authority in the municipality which the Act relates to. This authority represents not only the local municipal authority, but also the regional authority.

- c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

125.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to allow and encourage the publication by local and regional authorities of their official documents also in Hungarian, where there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. As mentioned in Paragraph 115, the Act enables the relevant local authorities to publish documents in the Hungarian minority language, while the municipality is obligated to publish a part of these documents in the minority language on the official board, website and in periodicals.

- f the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;*

129.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure that the right to use Hungarian in debates of municipal assemblies is guaranteed where there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. The use of the Hungarian minority language at meetings of local councils is legislatively guaranteed by Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, based on which the members of the local council in the relevant municipality can use the minority language without limitation during meetings of the council. Other participants in the meeting can use the minority language with the consent of present members and the mayor of the municipality.

- g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

140.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to encourage the use of traditional and correct forms of place-names in Hungarian within the meaning of the present undertaking and irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of Minority Languages, as amended, has made it possible since 1999 to use, in the relevant municipalities, local geographical names in minority languages, including the names of streets in the given municipality.

Since 1994, Act No. 191/1994 Coll., has made it possible to use the names of municipalities stated in the Act in a minority language and there is a duty to display these names on separate traffic signs located under the traffic boards containing the name of the municipality in the state language that mark the start and end of the municipality.

Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., of 2011 has significantly expanded the list of the names of municipalities in minority languages, which has sufficiently supported the use of the traditional local names in minority languages. The list includes several municipalities that do not reach the 20% threshold. At present, the municipalities that have less than 15% are also marked.

### *Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- b to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request and receive a reply in these languages; or*

*144. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to enable Hungarian-speakers to submit a request in Hungarian to public services, including in those municipalities where they do not attain the 20% threshold but represent nevertheless a sufficient number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

Hungarian-speakers can submit oral and written requests for public services and other documents to the relevant local authorities in the minority language under Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended.

### *Paragraph 4*

*With a view to putting into effect those provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 accepted by them, the Parties undertake to take one or more of the following measures:*

- c compliance as far as possible with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used.*

*149. [T]he Committee of Experts ... requested the Slovak authorities to comment on this undertaking in their next periodical report.*

State and local government employs members of national minorities, many of whom work in the departments that use the languages of national minorities, but their central



registration (the registration of employees speaking regional or minority languages) is not kept under this kind of categorisation.

## ***Article 11 – Media***

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*
  - iii to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

157.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to increase the broadcasting time and the frequency of the time-slots allocated to the Hungarian language on public television.*

The annual extent of the national broadcast in Hungarian within the broadcast of Slovak Television in 2011 was 113 hours. In 2012 it was 134 hours and in 2013 it was 108 hours.<sup>5</sup>

- b ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

161. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Hungarian on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

Slovak law does not restrict licensed broadcasters from broadcasting in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic. Under Section 5(1)(b) of Act No. 270/1995 Coll., on the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended, it is possible to broadcast radio programmes or other elements of radio programme service within the regional broadcast or local broadcast intended for members of a national minority, including live events, exclusively in the language of the national minority.

In order to promote and develop the culture and language of national minorities, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic provides for an additional programme called Culture of National Minorities. The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities is in charge of the implementation of this subsidy programme. Among other things, the subsidy programme is also focused on the promotion of respect, understanding and tolerance toward minority languages in the mass media,

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Information message on the status of the national broadcast of the RTVS of 9 May 2013.

The broadcast of commercial electronic media in the Slovak Republic as such is not supported (regardless of the language of the broadcast) and financial assistance is provided only for the production of programmes and audio-visual works. An opinion on the promotion of audio-visual works and programmes is included in the answer to question No. 169 of the assessment report.

*c ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

*164-165. ... 22 private television channels broadcast programmes in Hungarian. ... The Committee of Experts requests the Slovak authorities to provide information on the regularity of these programmes. It further asks the Slovak authorities to report on the degree to which the Audiovisual Fund had been used to cover the costs for subtitling.*

In 2012, there were 17 licensed television broadcasters in the Slovak Republic broadcasting programmes in Hungarian. A statistical survey of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic shows that within private television broadcasts, 20,121 hours were broadcast in Hungarian in 2012.

The Audio-Visual Fund, as a part of promotion within programme No. 2 "Distribution and Other Broadcast of Audio-Visual Works in Public" (it includes a sub-programme No. 2.1 "Distribution of Audio-Visual Works" and sub-programme No. 2.2 "Public Cultural Events with the Participation of Audio-Visual Works in the Slovak Republic"), also promotes the production of other than Slovak versions of Slovak and foreign audio-visual works.

The production of subtitles is one of the eligible budget items of projects submitted by applicants. Subsequently, the subtitles are used for the presentation of Slovak audio-visual works abroad (or in Slovakia in minority languages) or in the Slovak Republic in connection with the distribution of foreign audio-visual works either as a part of produced DCP carriers or DVD.

The fund, however, does not keep separate records of the specific amount of financial support for subtitles. Only the percentage of the support activity of the fund can be determined. The activity is focused on the promotion of distribution within programme No. 2.

In 2012, within programme No. 2 the total support accounted for EUR 826,200 (of which specifically for sub-programme No. 2.1 in the amount of EUR 227,350 and sub-programme No. 2.2 in the amount of EUR 598,850) which accounted for 14% of the total support granted by the fund.

Applications submitted to the fund also include a framework budget which, among other things, includes a "dubbing and subtitling" item. The framework budget includes the breakdown of the requested amount by individual items, and after the application is approved, the support granted is further divided. Therefore, based on an individual project basis it is possible to determine the amount of the support granted for the "dubbing and subtitling" item. However, there is no aggregated database that would provide an overview of the total support granted to this budget item (and it is not possible to determine the amount of the support granted to the subtitling). Based on a random selection of projects it is, however, possible to state that the amount of the support granted within the "dubbing and subtitling" item represents several hundreds of euros up to EUR 3,000 per project according to the complexity of the project and the quantity of produced language versions.

*d to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;*

*169. ... It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect.*

The structure of the support activity of the fund is reassessed according to the current needs and determined on an annual basis. The Fund Board, based on the proposal of the director of the fund, decides on the support activity of the fund under Act No. 516/2008 Coll., on Audio-Visual Fund and on Amendments and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended. In 2011, the structure of the support activity also included support for minorities and disadvantaged groups in compliance with the answers sent. In subsequent periods, however, this priority was not included in the structure of the support activity. It does not mean, however, that an application submitted for the promotion of the work that does not meet the above priority would be rejected. The support is granted on a selection basis. Priorities are only indicative and all the works supported do not have to meet them. The purpose of setting priorities is to name the areas that require special attention with regard to the existing gap on the market.

The fund is not a mechanism of public support specifically created and focused on supporting the culture of national minorities in the Slovak Republic. There is a separate subsidy programme for the promotion of the culture of national minorities under the auspices of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities for these purposes. Within this specifically minority-oriented programme there is also the possibility to ask for audio-visual support (the objective is to promote original, national audio-visual records or documentary films mapping the social and cultural activity of national minorities in Slovakia), within sub-programme No. 1.1. "editorial activity, the promotion of periodicals and non-periodicals, sound and multimedia carriers and electronic outputs". In 2014, 230 projects were supported in the total amount of EUR 1,208,085 within the Culture of National Minorities programme and within the above priority.

In the context of supporting audio-visual works it is necessary to clarify that the fund does not keep special records that would monitor whether the supported audio-visual works are produced in regional or minority languages. Therefore, it is impossible to specify "whether the supported audio-visual works are produced in regional or minority languages". In general, however, it applies that the support is intended primarily for the professional production of Slovak audio-visual works, which does not exclude the fact that some of these works, with regard to their topics or depicted environment, will include parts in some of the languages of minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

Based on the subsidy programme of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic – Culture of National Minorities it is possible to support the production of original national audio-visual records or documentary films mapping the social and cultural events of national minorities in Slovakia. Authors can use their finished works for television broadcast or for the production of publicity television programmes. A project is submitted in the form of a theme (in the case of the production of an audio-visual record) or a scenario that includes the description of the author or implementation plan (in the case of a documentary film). In the project the applicant will state the estimated length (we recommend short documentary films) of the finished record/film, technology used to produce the record/film and the timetable of the project.

170. ... *The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in Hungarian.*

Within programme No. 1 focused on the promotion of "the production and implementation of Slovak audio-visual works", the structure of the support activity of the fund includes a cross-cutting priority focused on "Slovak audio-visual works intended for child viewers". Furthermore, programme No. 1 includes sub-programme No. 1.3.3 focused on the promotion of the "development of animation audio-visual works intended for a child viewer" and sub-programme No. 1.3.6 focused on the "promotion of production of animation audio-visual works intended for a child viewer". As regards distribution, programme No. 2 "distribution and other presentation of audio-visual works in public" includes a cross-cutting priority "distribution of cinematographic works intended for a child viewer in the Slovak Republic (including the production of a Slovak version)".

As mentioned in the answer to questions Nos. 164 – 165 and 169, the fund does not keep special records mapping the language versions of works that were supported either in the production or distribution process. Therefore, it is not possible to specifically determine the information on supported children's programmes produced and distributed in minority languages.

As to the availability of further data on children's programmes produced and distributed in minority languages, according to the information acquired, there are no available data that would monitor the language versions of audio-visual works produced in the Slovak Republic. Under Act No. 343/2007 Coll., on the Conditions for Records, Public Distribution and Preservation of Audio-Visual Works, Multimedia Works and Sound Recordings of Artistic Performance and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, which came into effect on 1 January 2008, the Ministry of Culture keeps publically available records of Slovak audio-visual works, sound recordings of artistic performance and multimedia works, but the records do not include data on the language versions of these works.

171. *The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in Hungarian relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.*

Due to the lack of information on the language versions of produced audio-visual works it is not possible to estimate the quantity of audio-visual works produced in individual minority languages.

Based on the current audio-visual production, however, we know several examples of audio-visual works that, with regard to their topic or depicted environment, include parts that are in the language version of the languages of minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

With regard to the high prevalence of the Hungarian language in the Slovak Republic and mutual Slovak-Hungarian topics, this language is often used in Slovak audio-visual works, especially in documentary films.

In the case of the Hungarian language, examples of such works are as follows:  
- film *Felvidék – Upper Land*, produced in 2014 in Slovak and Hungarian. "This documentary film is about the solution of "Hungarian issue" in post-war Czechoslovakia and about an imaginary chess game between the Slovaks and the Hungarians, but where nothing is black

and white. The documentary film revamps the old stories of people whose lives were affected by the decisions of the powerful and the more powerful."

- film *Thank you, good*, produced in 2013 in Slovak and Hungarian. The feature-length film *Thank you, good* consists of three stories and an epilogue. Individual stories play out against the backdrop of the current economic crisis that enters the intimate lives of the characters and reveals the distorted relationships in which they live."

*e i to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages;*

175. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to create a legal basis for the continued support of newspapers in regional or minority languages. It asks the Slovak authorities to provide information, in the next periodical report, on how public advertising is allocated.*

The publishing of periodicals in the language of national minorities or ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic is not restricted in any way. The records of periodicals kept by the Ministry of Culture show that from all the languages of national minorities the most titles published up to now have been published in Hungarian (45 titles), in German (five titles), in Ruthenian (three titles), in Ukrainian (two titles), in Czech (eight titles) and in Polish (three titles). There are no titles in the Roma language. In addition to the above quantity of titles published in the languages of national minorities, there are titles that are currently published in Slovakia in the Slovak language in combination with the language of a national minority. There are three titles of periodicals published in a combination of Slovak and Ruthenian and five titles published in a combination of Slovak and Roma. In terms of periodicity, daily periodicals are published only for members of the Hungarian nationality (*ÚJ Szó* daily). A fortnightly is published for the members of the Ruthenian national minority, and monthlies are published, for instance, for the German and Polish national minority.<sup>6</sup>

In the context of the publishing of periodicals in the languages of national minorities it must be stated that the existence of periodicals is not exclusively conditioned only by the system of financial support, but primarily depends on the interests and needs of the minority concerned. In the past, the newspapers were published in regional or minority languages by one information source on events in the community that were available in the relevant language. A sharp increase in information technologies and the media, especially the Internet, has resulted in the interactive search and dissemination of information practically in any language. An overall decline in interest in printed media also in the state language has occurred due to this technological development and therefore it is possible to expect lower interest in periodicals published in minority languages.

On the other hand, if there is interest in the publishing of periodicals in minority languages the government provides for the support mechanism in this field. The publishing of periodicals in the languages of national minorities is promoted under the auspices of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities. The promotion of the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities is one of the priorities of the 2014 Culture of National Minorities subsidy programme. The promotion of the publishing of periodicals focused on the cultural life of national minorities has been implemented within sub-programme 1.1. "editorial activity, the promotion of periodicals and non-periodicals, sound

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<sup>6</sup> Source:

[http://old.culture.gov.sk/pertlac/modul/tlac?ept\\_nazov=&ept\\_uzregpos=&ept\\_jazyk=2&ept\\_periodicita\\_id=&ept\\_tematickaskupina3\\_id=&ept\\_podvys1\\_vys=](http://old.culture.gov.sk/pertlac/modul/tlac?ept_nazov=&ept_uzregpos=&ept_jazyk=2&ept_periodicita_id=&ept_tematickaskupina3_id=&ept_podvys1_vys=)

and multimedia carriers and electronic outputs". In this field the applicants can ask for a subsidy to publish dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies, monthlies, bimonthlies, quarterlies and occasional newspapers. Priority in this field consists in the publishing of at least one periodical for each national minority.

The issue of the placing of advertisements paid by the state does not fall under the competence of the Section of Media, Audio-Visual Affairs and Copyright.

*f i to cover the additional costs of those media which use regional or minority languages, wherever the law provides for financial assistance in general for the media;*

*178. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information, in the next periodical report, on how the additional costs of other media using Hungarian are covered.*

The analysis of the additional costs of the media that use the Hungarian language does not fall under the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

*182. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

The Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission (the "Council") is a body responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and plurality of the media. The status and activity of the Council are governed by Act No. 308/2000 Coll., on Broadcasting and Retransmission and on Amendment to Act No. 195/2000 Coll., on Telecommunications, as amended, (the "Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission").

Under Section 4(1) of the above Act, the mission of the Council is to promote the interests of the public in the exercise of the right to information, freedom of speech and the right to the access to cultural values and education and to execute the state regulation in the field of broadcasting, retransmission and the rendering of audio-visual media services on request. The Council consists of nine members elected and removed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic. Nominations for the members of the Council can be submitted to the National Council of the Slovak Republic by members of the Parliament, professional institutions and civic associations operating in the field of audio-visual affairs, the mass media, culture, science, education, sport, registered churches and religious societies and civic associations of citizens with disabilities by means of a Coordination Committee for the Issues of Citizens with Disabilities of the Slovak Republic. It follows from the above that a representative of a national minority can also become a member of the Council.

## ***Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities***

### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage and/or provide appropriate cultural activities and facilities in accordance with the preceding paragraph.*

*190. The Committee of Experts ... would welcome specific examples of such cultural activities and facilities concerning Hungarian.*

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic fulfils its tasks in the field of the culture of national minorities by means of organisations falling under its competence – specialised (national) museums falling under the Slovak National Museum, which, within their museum specialisation, have a nationwide nature. They are documentation, scientific-research, methodological and presentation workplaces focused on the history and culture of individual national minorities living in Slovakia. The museums are responsible for fulfilling professional, scientific-research, professional-methodological, acquisition and presentation tasks and for effectively spending allocated funds and tangible assets within an approved budget.

The Museum of the Culture of the Hungarians in Slovakia also belongs to the specialised, "national" museums. The Slovak National Museum – the Museum of the Culture of the Hungarians in Slovakia is a specialised, scientific-research, documentation and methodological museum department that examines the history and development of the material and spiritual culture of the Hungarians in Slovakia. The following branches belong to the museum: Memorial House of Kálmán Mikszáth in Sklabina and Manor House of Imre Madách in Dolná Strehová.

### Activities in 2012

Exhibition activity:

- Madách – Dolná Strehová – Kass (24 January 2012 – 24 January 2013, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava) – the exhibition presents the atmosphere of a 19<sup>th</sup> century mansion where a noted Hungarian writer Imre Madách (1823 – 1864) lived. In the study of the manor house – the Lion Cave – he wrote Tragedy of Man from 1859 – 1860 that is read in 40 languages and is almost permanently presented on theatre stages. The exhibition presents documents on theatrical adaptations of Tragedy of Man on the stages of Slovakia.

- János Kass: Tragedy of Man 1975, 1980 (24 January – 28 October 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava) – the Slovak National Museum – the Museum of the Culture of the Hungarians in Slovakia has in its collections two graphic cycles of János Kass that are the illustrations of well-known literary work Tragedy of Man written by Imre Madách, a native of Dolná Strehová. This is the first time that the exhibition presented these two graphic cycles from 1975 and 1980 in one place in order to point to the important period of illustration work of this eminent person of Hungarian graphics.

- Franz Liszt and his Bratislava friends (until 31 October 2012, venue: Exhibition hall of the SNM, Bratislava) – the exhibition described the character, life and work of Franz Liszt and his relationship to the citizens of Bratislava based on historical documents. Documents on the

topic of Franz Liszt and his Bratislava friends were borrowed from the collection, archive, book and church institutions.

- The Month of Photography – Tamás Schild (3 November 2012 – 27 January 2013, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava) – the exhibition of colour photographs of T. Schild My Beautiful Gypsies was included in the Month of Photography programme after the premieres in Belgium. The photographs by this Hungarian photographer seek the aesthetic and artistic dimension of marginal life situations emphasising human dignity.
- 60 years on theatre stages that mean the world (12 October 2012 – 30 June 2013, Jókai Theatre, venue: Komárno) – exhibition for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Hungarian theatre in Slovakia.

#### Exposition activity:

The preparation of a scenario of a new, permanent exposition in the manor house of Imre Madách in Dolná Strehová.

#### Scientific-research activity:

- Personality cult of Hungarian literature in Slovakia (4 phases: 2012 – 2015): 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the project: year 2012 (period 1918 – 1938);
- the documentation of Hungarian works of art in a public space, final evaluation of the project in 2012;
- Hungarian artists in (Czecho)-Slovakia 1985 – 2010, studies (OPUS: Tihanyi, Kosziba, Csillag, etc.), the project is to end in 2013;
- historical films of the 20<sup>th</sup> century about the Danube in the central film archives of the Danube countries.

#### Editorial activity:

- Acta Museologica Hungarica – a yearbook of the museum for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the SNM – the MCHS
- Franz Liszt and his Bratislava friends – catalogue.

#### Other events:

- The Kálmán Mikszáth Day (16 January 2012, venue: Memorial House of K. Mikszáth, Sklabiná) – commemoration of the birthday of writer K. Mikszáth;
- Lectures about the work of Imre Madách (29 March 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava): Kovács Anna, Praznovszky Mihály;
- Museum nights (19 May 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava) – Lectures about Tragedy of Man by Imre Madách – Dr. Antal Babus and Béla Mázi of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences;
- Presentation of Kálmán Mikszáth and His Contemporaries almanac (22 May 2012, venue: the Slovak Institute, Budapest);
- Museum salon (28 May 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava): interview with ethnographer Margit Méry;
- Museum salon (14 June 2012, venue: Komárno): interview with actress Ica Németh;
- Museum salon (2 July 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava): interview with former fencing champion Katalin Rácz and sports journalist Károly J. Mészáros;
- 10<sup>th</sup> seminar Traditions and Values (12 September 2012, venue: Memorial House of K. Mikszáth, Sklabiná) – the meeting of experts from regional museums;
- Museum salon (3 October 2012, venue: Gbelce): interview with former mayor Ferenc Kovács;
- Open day (13 October 2012, venue: Memorial House of K. Mikszáth, Sklabiná);



- Museum salon (24 October 2012, venue: Žižkova 18, Bratislava): interview with ballet expert Miklós Vojtek;
- Lecture about Franz Liszt and his relationship to Bratislava (29 October 2012, venue: Žižkova 16, Bratislava): Imre Szabó;
- Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Mirror of Our Ten-Year Activity symposium (14 December 2012, venue: Žižkova 16, Bratislava) on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the SNM – the MCHS.

### Activities in 2013

#### Exposition activity:

- Traditions and values The Hungarians in Slovakia Venue: Brämer Mension, Bratislava. A permanent exposition of the Museum of Culture of the Hungarians in Slovakia presents the material and spiritual heritage (historical, ethnographical, literary-historical and artistic-historical traditions) of Hungarian ethnicity in Slovakia.
- Here lived... – a Kálmán Mikszáth commemorative exhibition, venue: Kálmán Mikszáth memorial house in Sklabiná – the exposition shows the life and literary work of renowned Hungarian writer Kálmán Mikszáth.
- Where am I, anyway? Where are my dreams? – a commemorative exhibition in the manor house of the Madách family in Dolná Strehová that was opened on 4 October 2013 – it presents the life of dramatist Imre Madách and the Madách family in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is the first part of a new, permanent exposition in the manor house of the Madách family in Dolná Strehová.

#### Exhibition activity:

- Reborn monuments – a presentation of the activity of three renowned restorers from south Slovakia, venue: the SNM – the MCHS, Bratislava, duration: 13 March – 30 April 2013.
- The Gemer Treasury – 130 years of the Gemer-Malohont museum in Rimavská Sobota, venue: the SNM – the MCHS, Bratislava, duration: 15 May – 31 August 2013,
- 60 years on the theatre stages that mean the world – a commemorative exhibition on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hungarian theatre in Komárno, venue: Jókai Theatre, Komárno, duration: 12 October – 30 June 2013.
- Literary figures of Veľký Krtíš region – a travelling exhibition, venue: Príbelce, duration: 6 June 2012 – 10 January 2013, venue: evangelical parish, Veľký Krtíš, duration: 10 January 2013 – 18 May 2013, venue: Veľké Zlievce, duration: 18 May 2013 – 31 December 2013.
- Bend me, mother – a joint exhibition of minority museums of the SNM, venue: the Spiš Museum in Levoča, duration: 20 June 2013 – 31 September 2013;
- István Dúdor – an exhibition of a tragically deceased Gemer painter, venue: the SNM – the MCHS, Bratislava, duration: 5 September 2013 – 31 January 2014.
- The codes of reality – an exhibition of photographs of contemporary Hungarian photographers within an international festival FOTOFO, venue: the SNM – the MCHS, Bratislava, duration: 7 November 2013 – 31 January 2014.

#### Scientific-research activity:

Audio-visual documents of the history of the Hungarians in Slovakia 2<sup>nd</sup> phase; The history of Hungarian advertising in Czechoslovakia 1<sup>st</sup> phase (1918 – 1938); Personality cult of Hungarian literature in Slovakia 2<sup>nd</sup> phase; The preparation of a new, permanent exposition of Imre Madách manor house; The 100<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the First World War – a documentary-exhibition project called Family Stories of the First World War.

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic continues to create conditions for the development and presentation of the culture of the members of national minorities in all the fields of arts and literature even after the Culture of National Minorities programme was moved to the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. An example is the Slovak Folk Art Ensemble, which is a subsidised organisation of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. Its repertoire includes a dance performing programme dominated by dances and music from the regions of Šariš, Zemplín, Spiš, Gemer, Podpoľana, Orava, Myjava and folk material of the Ruthenians, Hungarians and Roma. Individual dance and music performances respect their historical basis, regional and thematic forms. The repertoire also includes a Christmas concert of folk music, women's singing group, soloists and guest of the SLUK. It is a rich tapestry of songs and Christmas carols from all over Slovakia connected with Christmas music of nationalities living in the Slovak Republic: the Ruthenians, Croatians, Germans, Hungarians and Poles. This unique 70-minute programme presents the Christmas music of Slovakia in its wide diversity from the national and language point of view and also from the interpretation, instrumental and style point of view.

Regional minority theatres in Slovakia are given space for presentation within the framework of nationwide theatre festivals, for instance Touches and Connections in Martin, Astorka Festival, Theatrical Nitra international festival. Minority theatres appear as guests on the scene of the Slovak National Theatre within a project called "In the National as at Home". For instance, the Alexander Duchnovič Theatre performed here in 2010. The Slovak Chamber Theatre in Martin has been organising a theatre festival called Touches and Connections since 2005. This is a selective, non-competitive festival presenting the current work of professional theatres in Slovakia. The festival is characterised by its intercultural dimension. National minority theatres in Slovakia regularly perform there, such as the Jókai Theatre, the Alexander Duchnovič Theatre and the Romathan Theatre.

Hungarian ensemble Dance Theatre Ifjú Szivek – Young Hearts, as a subsidised organisation of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, performs under the founding authority of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. Recently, the ensemble has performed in the USA, Australia and Austria, and performs several times every year in Hungary and other countries.

### ***Article 13 – Economic and social life***

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

*195. The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

- b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

197. ... [S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in Slovak legislation.

The same statement can be found in the final Chapter No. 4 (Findings and Draft Recommendations, Part 4.1) of the third evaluation report, where the Committee of Experts stated, within the findings under point C, that the Act on the State Language continues to stipulate provisions that are contrary to the Charter, and despite the fact that it was amended twice in 2009 and 2011, it still contains provisions "that impede the appropriate implementation of certain provisions of the Charter" and in the opinion of the Committee of Experts there still is a need to amend the Act on the State Language in light of the commitments adopted by the Slovak Republic when ratifying the Charter.

The objection of the Committee of Experts to the strict restriction of the use of a minority language in relation to the commitment under Article 13(1)(a) of the Charter by stipulating the current, mandatory use of the state language is not substantiated, since the use of minority language that is explicitly allowed under the Act on the State Language in the areas defined in Section 8 of the Act on the State Language cannot be restricted by stipulating the current duty to also make a text in a minority language available in the state language. Using one language does not in itself restrict the use of another language, since both versions can be used side by side without one version being to a detriment to the other. The duty to prepare a document in the state language while it also can be prepared in a minority language cannot lead to the strict restriction of the use of the minority language.

On the other hand, on the basis of the non-discrimination principle, it is obvious that the duty of all persons to use the state language in certain specific documents where it is also substantiated by public-order reasons and the rights of speakers of the state language (in fact, also by the legal certainty of persons who prepare such documents) cannot be discriminatory, because the duty applies only in relation to the state language and to all. No one is favoured by the addition of another language. Another criterion is the prohibition or restriction on use of the minority language, which were legally removed on 1 September 2009.

It is possible to assume that arguments on the restriction of a minority language within employment acts and financial and technical documents come from the previous reports when minority languages were really restricted, since the Act did not make it possible to prepare such documents in a minority language in addition to the state language.

Since the moment when the Amendment Act on the State Language came into effect (September 2009) – legislative amendments to Section 8(2) and (3) of the Act on the State Language – there has been no restriction of the use of a minority language in documents related to social and economic life in the Slovak Republic.

The third evaluation report was prepared 33 months after the coming into effect of Amendment No. 318/2009 Coll., implementing the possibility to also prepare employment acts, financial and technical documentation, the statutes of unions, associations and companies in another language. In addition, visitors to healthcare institutions and social institutions can use their language in communication during admission to and stay in such institutions. The statement in the third evaluation report on the failure to meet the commitment on the part of the Slovak Republic was substantiated in the first and the second evaluation report, because legislative changes, which were to make it possible to use a minority language in the fields covered by Section 8(2) and (3), were only in the legislative process (May 2009). As regards the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts was right to say that it had been necessary

to include the legislative changes into an effective act – this occurred in September 2009. At present, therefore, there is no restriction on the use of the minority language, because these cases occurred before 31 August 2009. This is clearly proven by the assessment of the Committee of Experts in the second evaluation report, when the Committee of Experts itself stated that it was expecting the Amendment Act on the State Language that could comply with the obligation of the Charter not to prohibit, restrict and discourage the use of the minority language. Therefore, it is not possible to identify with the conclusion of the third evaluation report, since after the last Amendment Act on the State Language the obligation has been met – all the previous objections were accepted by the Slovak Republic and included into the legal system.

The mandatory, current use of other languages is in no case considered a restriction of the use of a minority language. The arrangement that makes it possible to prepare an employment contract in the state language and optionally in a minority language meets all the guarantees of non-prohibition and non-restriction of minority languages. At the same time, Paragraph 122 of the Explanatory Report to Article 13(1)(a) contains a specific example of the fulfilment of the non-discrimination principle.

## *Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

*203. The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

The Act on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities originally did not regulate this issue. Amendment Act on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities adopted by the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 25 May 2011 (effective since 1 September 2011) stipulates in Section 5(3): "A citizen of the Slovak Republic who is a person belonging to a national minority may use the minority language in communication with personnel of healthcare institutions and social care institutions or institutions for social and legal protection of children and social probation in a municipality referred to in Section 2(1). The healthcare institution or social care institution or institution for social and legal protection of children and social probation, as referred to in the preceding sentence, shall allow use of the minority language under this Act and special laws insofar as the conditions prevailing at the institution so permit."

Practice in this field shows that the clients living in social services institutions who are interested in communication in the language of national minority can do so since the local staff usually speak the language.

## **Article 14 – Transfrontier exchanges**

*The Parties undertake:*

- b for the benefit of regional or minority languages, to facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory the same language is used in identical or similar form.*

207. *The Committee of Experts ... requests again the authorities to provide information, in their next periodical report, on the financial involvement of the Slovak authorities in cross-border cooperation.*

The promotion of cross-border cooperation is also carried out by means of intergovernmental commissions for cross-border cooperation formed on the basis of bilateral agreements on cross-border cooperation. The Slovak Republic has concluded such agreements or a framework agreement on cross-border cooperation with all neighbouring countries.

The main objective of the activity of intergovernmental commissions for cross-border cooperation is to support activities focused on the creation of conditions for the development of cooperation between citizens, local authorities and interested institutions, including cooperation activities which the citizens belonging to national minorities participate in. At the same time, the commissions create a platform for all players of cross-border cooperation to exchange their experience and examples of good practice, and make it possible to identify obstacles preventing the development of cross-border cooperation and to contribute to the elimination of these obstacles in the form of delivering specific recommendations to the relevant authorities.

The commissions primarily deal with the topics related to the development of cross-border transport infrastructure, situation in cross-border public transport, the current issues of cross-border cooperation in the field of education, culture, employment, healthcare, cross-border cooperation operational programmes, preparation for the next 2014 – 2020 programming period, and possibilities offered by cooperation within the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

Twelve joint Slovak-Hungarian commissions formed under a Treaty of Good Neighbourship and Friendly Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and the Hungarian Republic, signed on 19 March 1995 in Paris, still continue their activities. An overview of joint Slovak-Hungarian commissions:

- for the Issues of Minorities;
- for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration;
- for the Issues of Education, Science, Sport and Youth;
- for the Issues of Culture and Press;
- for Cross-Border Cooperation;
- for the Issues of Cooperation in the Fields Belonging to the Competence of the Ministry of Interior;
- for Military and Other Security-Political Issues;
- for the Issues of Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection;
- for the Issues of Transport, Links and Their Infrastructure;
- for the Issues of Economic Cooperation;
- for the Issues of Agricultural, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Care;
- for the Issues of Health, Health Insurance and Social Care.

Cross-border cooperation is financed from own resources of the cooperation players and also from the funds acquired from European Union resources and other donors. It can be concluded that, at the intergovernmental level, the relevant ministries actively participate in the co-financing of cross-border cooperation.

The Slovak Republic strives to create conditions for the development of cross-border cooperation in all its fields (including culture, education and training, promotion of the teaching of languages and promotion of the creation of partnerships between the public administration bodies and citizens). The use of the cooperation tools itself depends primarily on the activity of interested entities.

## ***Ruthenian***

### ***Article 8 – Education***

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

- a ii to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- b ii to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- c ii to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- d ii to make available a substantial part of technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

222.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take measures to ensure that a substantial part of pre-school, primary, secondary and technical and vocational education is available in Ruthenian and that there is a continuous offer at all levels of education.*

In 2013, in Slovakia there were two kindergartens, one with Ruthenian educational language (Čabiny kindergarten, Medzilaborce district) attended by 10 children (four children in preparation phase and six children in the age of 3 to 6 years) and one with Slovak-Ruthenian educational language (kindergarten at Bajerovce elementary school, Sabinov district) attended by six children.

Similarly, there are two elementary schools with instruction in Ruthenian: Čabiny elementary school, Medzilaborce district attended by 17 children (three children in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade; three children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; five children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; six children in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade) and an elementary school with instruction in Slovak-Ruthenian in Bajerovce, Sabinov district attended by eight children (one child in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade; one child in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; three children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; three children in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade). The teaching of Ruthenian language in the form of an optional subject or a course is conducted in the Elementary School with Kindergarten of Michal Sopira in Radvaň nad Laborcom, Medzilaborce district and in the Religious Elementary School of Saint George in Svidník.

In schools administered by the Prešov region or in their allocated workplaces, no subject is taught in Ruthenian language despite the fact that pupils and their legal representatives have been informed of this possibility.

Secondary Vocational School of A. Warhol in Medzilaborce (number of pupils belonging to Ruthenian nationality: nine, and the number of pupils belonging to Ukrainian

nationality: three) organises a History of the Ruthenes course (the school also organises a "Roma Culture" course).

A bachelor's and subsequently a master's course of Ruthenian and Literature (combined) provide the possibility to study at the Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture at Prešov University in Prešov. The staff of the institute continuously work on innovating both study programmes taking into account the needs of the school and cultural practice so that university graduates are prepared for the current requirements of schools.

The Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture in Prešov is a research-teaching workplace of the Prešov University focused on four areas: a research and development area for standardisation of the Ruthenian language, a pedagogical-educational, publishing and documentation activity, and as the only university workplace in Slovakia it provides for the preparation of teachers of the Ruthenian language. Twenty-two students enrolled in bachelor's and master's study programmes in the academic year 2013/2014.

The number of students of the Ruthenian Language and Literature course in combination was as follows:

- Bachelor study programme: 14 students (1<sup>st</sup> year – four; 2<sup>nd</sup> year – seven; 3<sup>rd</sup> year – three students)
- Master study programme: eight students (1<sup>st</sup> year – three students; 2<sup>nd</sup> year – five students)

The Ruthenian Language and Literature course graduates and the teachers of the Ruthenian language can study within the framework of continuing education organised by the Methodological-Pedagogical Centre in Prešov in the form of methodological meetings and innovative educational programmes. A continuing education project has been submitted to an Accreditation Commission as an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval.

Regarding the possibility to study in the Ruthenian minority language within extracurricular area (informal education), the KOLYSOČKA-KOLÍSKA (CRADLE) civic association was established in Prešov in 2013 with ten priorities that also include the teaching of the Ruthenian language in schools. The founder of the civic association tries to encourage enrolment among children in elementary and secondary schools that teach the Ruthenian language and focuses on adult Ruthenes who do not know their mother tongue, especially in written form.

*f ii to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;*

*223. ...[T]he Committee of Experts ... was of the view that a more decentralized offer of Ruthenian as a subject of adult and continuing education was necessary to fulfil this undertaking, beyond the Department of Ruthenian Language and Culture at Prešov University and the independent Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture.*

Within the 2013 Culture of National Minorities subsidy programme, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic allocated EUR 3,000 to support, for instance, the project "Nigh Schools of the Ruthenian Language (the teaching of the standard Ruthenian language) for Adults and Children" – project number: KNM-649/2013/1.1.9. As a pilot project of the civic association the project was implemented in seven towns and municipalities: Snina, Pčoliné – Snina district, Svidník, Šarišský Štiavnik – Svidník district, Prešov, Olšavica – Levoča district and Kamienka, Stará Ľubovňa district.



- g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

228. *According to the representatives of the Ruthenian-speakers, there are still no textbooks for Ruthenian history, only one auxiliary book published in 1994. Teaching the Ruthenian history and culture depends on the initiative of the schools. As to the teaching of Ruthenian history to non-speakers, the Slovak curricula and textbooks do not include at all information on local history.*

Schools are autonomous units. They prepare their own curriculum that must include the local, regional requirements and supplemented based on the needs of the pupils.

- h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

234. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to provide the basic and further training of teachers for Ruthenian-language education.*

The continuing education of teachers and professional staff is mainly governed by Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Teachers and Professional Staff and on Amendment and Supplementation of Certain Acts, as amended. Education is provided by schools and education establishments, organisations established by the Ministry of Education or other ministries, universities, the church or religious societies, or other legal entities after meeting the conditions laid down by law.

One of the organisations in the field of the education of teachers is the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre that under Section 14(2)(c) of Act No. 596/2003 Coll., on State Administration in Education and Education Authority and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, is a centrally managed organisation of the Ministry of Education. Methodology and pedagogy centres carry out methodological activity, among others, also in the field of professional guarantee of further education of teachers in schools located in national territories (Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Roma). The methodological and pedagogy centre employs a teacher of the continuing education in order to provide for the continuing education of teachers teaching the Ruthenian language.

Three educational programmes have been sent for accreditation in the field of the education of teachers of the Ruthenian language. Another five programmes of the continuing education are being prepared. The number of Ruthenian language teachers and teachers teaching in the Ruthenian language is very low, which causes problems related to the number of participants in the education process in connection with the target group of the continuing education programmes. Seven pupils of the Ruthenian nationality enrolled in the first grade of the school year 2013/2014 in schools with instruction in Ruthenian in Slovakia. The last textbook was published in 2011. At present, methodological material for pre-primary education is needed.

- i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or*

*minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

238. ... *The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing teaching in and of minority languages, and of drawing up public periodic reports of its findings.*

The State School Inspection is an inspection body for kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools and education establishments. Based on the valid methodology, it also inspects instruction in the languages of national minorities and evaluates its findings in an annual Report on Education and Training in Schools and Education Establishments in the Slovak Republic for each school year.

The Register of Schools and Education Establishments includes a kindergarten with instruction in Ruthenian language – Materskaja škola, Čabiny 131, Čabiny. This kindergarten was not included in the inspection plan in the school year 2012/2013.

The Register of Schools and Education Establishments includes one school with instruction in Ruthenian – Elementary school with Ruthenian – Osnovna škola, Čabiny 131, Čabiny; and elementary school with kindergarten – Osnovna škola s materskov školov, Bajerovce 112. The above schools were not included in the inspection plan in the school year 2012/2013.

## ***Article 9 – Judicial authorities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

- a in criminal proceedings:*
    - ii to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*
    - iii to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language; and/or*
- if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

242. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use Ruthenian in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she*

*has also a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution. ... [I]t strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in Ruthenian, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

In the case of criminal proceedings, Act No. 301/2005 Coll., Code of Criminal Procedure, which came into effect on 1 January 2006, applies. The validity and subsequent application of the Code of Criminal Procedure applies throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic. The information in Point 91 is common.

243. ... *[T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 92.

*b in civil proceedings:*

*ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

*c in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*

*ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

246. ... *[T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

See the common information in Point 95 or 90.

247. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 96.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make available in the regional or minority languages the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of these languages, unless they are otherwise provided.*

252. ... [N]o legal texts concerning persons belonging to national minorities have been translated into Ruthenian.

No applicable legislation including the acts that exercise constitutional rights of persons belonging to the Ruthenian national minority have been translated into Ruthenian.

### **Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services**

#### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- a     iii     to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages;*

260.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Ruthenian-speakers may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in Ruthenian wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in the legislation.*

See the common information in Point 112.

In 124 Ruthenian municipalities, up to 96% of employees speak Ruthenian. The full official records in Ruthenian are kept by one municipality. The meetings of municipal authorities in Ruthenian municipalities are held 42.6% in Ruthenian, 17% in Slovak and 17.7% in both languages.

According to the information of the Svidník District Office, in practice the communication is conducted in both Slovak and Ruthenian. As regards written communication, no request for the issuance of a decision in Ruthenian has been submitted.

Ruthenian, as a minority language, is used in addition to the state language in district offices in Humenné, Medzilaborce permanent detached workplace, Prešov, cadastral departments Medzilaborce and Prešov, cadastral department Medzilaborce.

#### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of the local and regional authorities on whose territory the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages is such as to justify the measures specified below, the Parties undertake to allow and/or encourage:*

- b the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*

264.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to:*

*- take the necessary legal and organisational measures so that the Ruthenian-speakers may submit oral or written applications in Ruthenian in all municipalities with a sufficient number of speakers, including those municipalities where the Ruthenian-speakers represent less than 20% of the municipal population, but still a significant number for the purpose of the present undertaking;*

*- provide the legal basis required for Ruthenian-speakers to submit oral or written applications in Ruthenian also in relation to regional authorities where the speakers are present in sufficient numbers.*

See the common information in Point 120.

- c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

- d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

268. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to allow and/or encourage the publication by local and regional authorities of their official documents also in Ruthenian, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

See the common information in Point 125.

- g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

280. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to encourage the use of traditional and correct forms of place-names in Ruthenian within the meaning of the present undertaking and irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

See the common information in Point 140.

### *Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c *to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages.*

284. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to allow Ruthenian-speakers to submit a request in Ruthenian to public services, including in those municipalities where they do not attain the 20% threshold but represent nevertheless a sufficient number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

See the common information in Point 144; the same conditions apply to the Ruthenian language.

## **Article 11 – Media**

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a *to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*
  - iii *to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

297.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to increase the broadcasting time and the frequency of the time-slots allocated to the Ruthenian language on public television.*

As to the scope of Slovak Television broadcasting in Ruthenian, in 2012 there was an increase in the number of hours broadcast from five in 2011 to 21 in 2012. According to a 2012 Report on Broadcasting in the Slovak Republic and the Activity of the Council (the "Report of Broadcasting") the following topics dominated the Ruthenian broadcasts: the activity of the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov; the activity of the Ruthenian Revival and the Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia; the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Svidník; the issue of national minority schools – Elementary School in Čabiny; the activity of the Faculty of Ruthenian and Ukrainian Languages at Prešov University; scientific conferences focused on the Ruthenian minority; new books, interviews with the mayors of municipalities in the south-east of Slovakia and their problems in local administration.

In 2013, the RTVS (the Radio and Television of Slovakia), as an institution, focused on strengthening the structure of broadcasting in the languages of national minorities. Compared to 2012, the structure of the programme did not change, but the content of the programmes broadcast did.

National broadcasting of Radio Patria in Košice has strengthened the broadcasting in Ruthenian and Ukrainian. Upon agreement with the RTVS and the Orthodox Church, Orthodox Church services in the original language have been included in Radio Regina's Christian Sunday programme.

There have been no significant changes in the television broadcasting of the RTVS on the Second Channel. Regional and thematic documentary films have been produced in Hungarian, German, Roma and Ruthenian in addition to regular programming.

*b ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

*302. The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Ruthenian on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 161.

*c ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

*307. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Ruthenian on private television channels on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 161.

*d to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;*

*311. ... It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect.*

See the common information in Point 169.

*312. ... The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in Ruthenian.*

See the common information in Point 170.

*313. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in Ruthenian relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 171.

*Osadné*, a documentary film produced in 2009, is an example of a work thematically dealing with the issue of Slovak-Ruthenian relationships. "The film tells the story of the journey of Ladislav Mikolášek, the mayor of the *Osadné* municipality, Peter Sorok, an

Orthodox priest, and Fedor Vic, a Ruthenian activist, to Brussels to present their dreams: to build a funeral home and an Orthodox monastery in the municipality."

*e i to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages; 316.*

*The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to take appropriate measures to enable at least one newspaper to be published in Ruthenian with sufficient frequency.*

See the common information in Point 175.

As regards periodicals published in minority and regional languages, periodicals in Ruthenian are also published in the Slovak Republic. According to the records of periodicals kept by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, three titles in Ruthenian are published in the Slovak Republic. A monthly called *Narodny novinky* is published nationwide and focuses on the present and the past of the Ruthenians in Slovakia, their traditions and folklore. *Rusín*, a bimonthly, is another periodical published in Ruthenian that provides information about Ruthenians from the cultural and religious spheres. *ARTOS*, a quarterly, also includes a religious nature focused on the traditions of the Ruthenians.

*f ii to apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in the regional or minority languages;*

*320. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to apply existing measures for financial assistance to audiovisual works in Ruthenian and to provide concrete examples in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 169.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

*327. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

See the common information in Point 182.

## **Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities**

### *Paragraph 1*



*With regard to cultural activities and facilities – especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries, including inter alia the use of new technologies – the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used and to the extent that the public authorities are competent, have power or play a role in this field:*

*b to foster the different means of access in other languages to works produced in regional or minority languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

*330. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to foster access in other languages to works produced in Ruthenian.*

The Audio-Visual Fund, within programme No. 2 "Distribution of Audio-Visual Works" and sub-programme No. 2 "Public Cultural Events with the Participation of Audio-Visual Works in the Slovak Republic" also promotes the production of other than Slovak versions of Slovak and foreign audio-visual works.

*c to foster access in regional or minority languages to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

*333. The Committee of Experts ... requests again the Slovak authorities to include information about dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities in the next periodical report.*

The Audio-Visual Fund, within programme No. 2 "Distribution of Audio-Visual Works" and sub-programme No. 2.2 "Public Cultural Events with the Participation of Audio-Visual Works in the Slovak Republic" also promotes the production of other than Slovak versions of Slovak and foreign audio-visual works. The production of subtitles is one of the eligible budget items of projects submitted by applicants. Subsequently, the subtitles are used for the presentation of Slovak audio-visual works abroad (or in Slovakia in minority languages) or in the Slovak Republic in connection with the distribution of foreign audio-visual works either as a part of produced DCP carriers or DVD. Applications submitted to the fund also include a framework budget which, among other things, includes a "dubbing and subtitling" item. The framework budget includes the breakdown of the requested amount by individual items, and after the application is approved, the support granted is further divided. Therefore, based on an individual project basis it is possible to determine the amount of the support granted for the "dubbing and subtitling" item. However, there is no aggregated database that would provide an overview of the total support granted to this budget item (and it is not possible to determine the amount of the support granted to the subtitling). Based on a random selection of projects it is, however, possible to state that the amount of the support granted within the "dubbing and subtitling" item represents several hundreds of euros up to EUR 3,000 per project according to the complexity of the project and the quantity of produced language versions.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make appropriate provision, in pursuing their cultural policy abroad, for regional or minority languages and the cultures they reflect.*

344. *The Committee of Experts ... would welcome specific examples concerning Ruthenian.*

The Slovak National Museum – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov is a documentary, scientific-research, methodological and representative workplace focused on the history and culture of the Ruthenian minority in Slovakia. It belongs to specialised, "national" museums – i.e. museum workplaces with national coverage within their museum specialisation.

The Slovak National Museum – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov (the "SNM-MRC").

Primary mission:

The youngest museum within the SNM in Slovakia (founded on 1 January 2007), is a documentation, scientific-research and methodological workplace focused on the history and culture of the Ruthenian ethnicity in Slovakia. The mission of the specialised museum consists in the acquisition, protection, scientific and professional processing and making available of museum collections that document the development of the material and spiritual culture of the Ruthenians in the Slovak Republic and in the world. The museum is also a helpdesk for Ruthenians from abroad.

Long-term activities of the museum:

The museum was founded on 1 January 2007 and the multifunctional space for its activity was made available on 21 February 2008 in the rented rooms of an administrative building on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor, where it operated until 1 June 2012. Since the date of moving it has been operating in its own building that it acquired by the transfer of assets from the Ministry of Defence into the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and subsequently into the administration of the SNM. It is a building of a former brigade bandage facility in the complex of the former barracks of A. Zápotocký in Masarykova ulica no. 20 in Prešov. The building is to be reconstructed so that it can serve the needs of the museum. Direct contact of the museum with the public will make it possible to point out the strong historical presence and connection of everyday life of the Ruthenians not only with Eastern Slovakia, but also with the whole territory of the Ruthenian homeland (the recent history of the Ruthenians, the historical and current very close contacts between the Ruthenians and the Slovaks and other national minorities living in together in the same country, the culture of dressing, eating, crafts, religious and folk art, publications about the Ruthenians and for the Ruthenians, etc.). The MRC in Prešov cooperates with various institutions not only in Slovakia, but also in countries abroad where the Ruthenian population lives and with other foreign institutions and museums that have shown an interest in cooperation that represents a mutual benefit for the participating partners. The museum has signed a contract of cooperation with Ruthenians living in the USA and has prepared concepts of contracts of cooperation with Ruthenians living in Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Croatia, Romania and Ukraine.

Activities in 2012:

The SNM-MRC in Prešov has been closed for the public since 1 April 2012. This is due to the moving of the museum and its expositions into a new building. Since the move on 1 June 2012 the museum has been trying to adjust the new space to museum purposes. For

these reasons, the museum was not able in 2012 to fully implement the activities started in the previous years. Nevertheless, the SNM-MRC in Prešov supports the needs of intercultural education, intercultural dialogue and multicultural education of the population about the cultures of national minorities. This applies not only to the young generation, but also to adults living in the Slovak Republic. In its dealings with the media the SNM-MRC in Prešov has tried to raise awareness about the issues faced by Ruthenians living in the Slovak Republic and elsewhere.

Under a signed Contract of Cooperation of 2011 between the SNM-MRC in Prešov and a partner organisation CARPATHO-RUSYN SOCIETY (CRS) with its registered office in Pittsburgh, represented by its president John Righetti, whose membership consists mainly of Ruthenians living in the USA, a discussion took place on 12 July 2012 with J. Righetti during which the public was given answers to questions related to the issue in question. Both institutions are interested in promoting the development of a society based on knowledge of the Ruthenian culture and its traditions in the majority societies – Slovak and American – and other minorities living in these countries. The cooperation will continue in the form of a presentation of mutual cultural values in the Slovak Republic and the USA.

#### Other events:

- Discussion with the president of the CRS J. Righetti – USA (12 July 2012, Museum of Wines, Floriánova ulica 3189/1, Prešov) – Participants in the discussion and invited guests had a chance to become acquainted with the lives of the Ruthenians living in the USA, their activities and the promotion of their culture in America. Acceptance of gifts – collections from the president of the CRS J. Righetti – USA for the SNM-MRC in Prešov.
- Session of Molodych Rusiniv in Slovakia (28 September 2012, Stará Ľubovňa): The session of "Molodych Rusiniv in Slovakia" to which the director of the museum was personally invited – she spoke in the debate. The speech was broadcast nationally on Slovak Radio.
- Cooperation of the SNM, SNM-MRC in Prešov and the SNM-Historical Museum at the opening of an exhibition of photographs in Bratislava Castle (2 November 2012, Bratislava Castle) – Exhibition of amateur photography entitled The Ruthenians by Ondžík and Leňo.
- A scientific-professional seminar Theoretical-Practical Importance of Ivan Kizák and Štefan Gojdič in the educational-cultural life of the Ruthenians in Slovakia (24 November 2012, GRANT Restaurant, Prešov, Námestie Legiónárov No. 3) – The scientific-professional seminar was organised with the financial aid of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic – Programme: The culture of national minorities 2012. Ruthenian Cultural-Educational Association of A. Duchnovič in Prešov in cooperation with the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov and the Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture at Prešov University organised the above scientific-professional seminar for the almost forgotten Ruthenian figures of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – I. Kizák and Š. Gojdič – eight invited guests gave presentation speeches. The life, literary and educational-cultural activity of I. Kizák and Š. Gojdič were analysed. Their publishing, pedagogical and civil activity influenced the life of the population, mainly in north-eastern Slovakia, primarily among those of Ruthenian origin. The speakers' research focused on the individual areas of the lifelong activities of the figures so that they presented a holistic picture of their life and message for the current and future generations. The speeches were published in a Ruthenian magazine and a separate brochure will be published.
- International Open Air Painting of Sacral Architecture in Prešov (beginning on 30 November 2012 and a vernissage of the open air exhibition – 18 December 2012 at 3:00 p.m. in AG GALLERY, Hlavná 66, Prešov) – The International Open Air Painting of

Sacral Architecture in Prešov is organised with the financial aid of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic – Programme: The culture of national minorities 2012. Creative association KOPA in cooperation with the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov organised the above event dedicated to sacral architecture – mainly to the wooden churches located in north-eastern Slovakia. Participants in the open air painting will hand over their works (oil on canvas) to the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov, where they will become part of a permanent exposition.

Total volume of funds allocated within the SNM to the culture of national minorities from the budget heading Culture in 2012: EUR 101,002. The total volume of funds allocated to the culture of national minorities from other resources (the EU, etc.): not allocated.

Activities of the museum in 2013:

Since moving from a rented space to its own building, the museum was closed for the public from 1 June 2012 – 30 December 2013 due to the installation of its own electrical connections and water. There was a lack of funds for necessary small repairs and subsequent acquisition of official permit for the operation of the building on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor with the possibility to make it available to the public. At the time when the museum was closed for the public, the staff paid increased attention to collecting and acquiring pieces and processing and preparing a permanent exhibition entitled The History of the Ruthenians in Slovakia. The first permanent exhibition was opened on 30 December 2013 after the SNM-MRC in Prešov moved into its own building. Admission to the museum is free until the reconstruction. The museum will be open for the public each first Sunday in the month. A hundred and forty-two visitors attended the opening of the permanent exhibition.

Activities in 2014:

The MRC is not planning any new exhibitions to be opened in 2014 due to the preparation of the building for the reconstruction. Activities: January – December 2014 – a permanent exhibition of History of the Ruthenians in Slovakia – the exhibition will be opened until the approval of the reconstruction of the building; February – March 2014 – an exhibition Beauty of Winter in Ruthenian Countryside with the Eyes of Children; April – May 2014 – Easter Habits and Traditions of the Ruthenians in Slovakia; an exhibition dedicated to Ruthenian traditions and customs during Easter – Paschy – the preparation of Easter basket, the painting of Easter eggs, the preparation of meals, silverware, the presentation of religious rites and the overall atmosphere of Easter in the Ruthenian countryside; May 2014 – Night of Museums and Galleries 2014 in the MRC in Prešov – unconventional museum tours until evening hours – workshops, rich programme for children and adults, craft demonstrations and the tasting of traditional Ruthenian meals; June 2014 – the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Anatolij Kralický; the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Vasil' Hopka – professional seminars connected with discussion; June 2014 – Kubek's Days – professional seminar connected with discussion with schoolchildren in the MRC in Prešov (adults will attend, at their discretion, a memorial service in the Greek Catholic Church in Prešov); July – August 2014 – Crafts in the Life of the Ruthenians – an exhibition connected with practical demonstrations of individual crafts (weaving, tinker, etc.); October – November 2014 – Chronicles and Commemorative Books – third annual exhibition will present chronicles and commemorative books from eastern Slovakia region from both the Slovak and Ruthenian towns, municipalities, firms, sport clubs, parish and family chronicles; November 2014 – Monuments and Commemorative Plates of Important Ruthenians from Slovakia – the objective of the event will be to present research that documents locations in Slovakia where the monuments and commemorative plates of important Ruthenians are

located; December 2014 – Christmas Traditions of the Ruthenians – the museum visitors will become acquainted with Ruthenian traditions during Christmas, the singing of Christmas carols and prayers, eating, habits and religious rites related to Christmas in the Ruthenian countryside.

Funds allocated to the SNM-MRC in Prešov in 2013:

In 2013, EUR 99,202 for routine expenses, of which EUR 37,014 for wages was approved from the total contribution of the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov. In 2012, a binding indicator of capital expenditure (the building of a separate electricity and water connection) in the amount of EUR 5,702 was approved for the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov – the funds were transferred from own budget from which EUR 5,502 were transferred in 2013. The funds were fully used in the first half of 2013. On 5 December 2013, Poštová banka granted to the SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov EUR 7,000 for small repairs of the first floor of the building in order to make the museum available to the public and EUR 1,757 was dedicated to the purchase of collection pieces upon approval of an SNM commission. The SNM – the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov had no other funds for its activities in 2013.

### ***Article 13 – Economic and social life***

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

*349. The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

- b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

*351. ... [S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in the Slovak legislation.*

See the common information in Points 195 and 197.

#### *Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

*357. The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

See common information in Point 203.

### ***Article 14 – Transfrontier exchanges***

*The Parties undertake:*

- a to apply existing bilateral and multilateral agreements which bind them with the States in which the same language is used in identical or similar form, or if necessary to seek to conclude such agreements, in such a way as to foster contacts between the users of the same language in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education;*

*361. The Committee of Experts requests again the Slovak authorities to clarify in what way contacts between Ruthenian-speakers in the Slovak Republic and Ruthenian-speakers in Ukraine and other states where Ruthenian is spoken have been concretely fostered in the framework of the existing bilateral and multilateral agreements.*

In Medzilaborce, under a contract of cross-border cooperation, an annual Festival of Culture and Sport is organised and is actively attended by the members of Ruthenian minority from both sides of the border, using Ruthenian language in mutual communication.

## **Ukrainian**

### **Article 8 – Education**

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

- a ii to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- b ii to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*369. ... The Committee of Experts asks the Slovak authorities to provide information in the next periodical report on which subjects are taught in Ukrainian in primary education.*

At the first level of elementary school all subjects are taught in Ukrainian, and at the second level of elementary school it is "Ukrainian Language and Literature" and educational subjects.

- c ii to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*372. ... The Committee of Experts asks the Slovak authorities to provide information in the next periodical report on which subjects are taught in Ukrainian in secondary education.*

At the secondary school level "Ukrainian Language, Ukrainian Literature" is taught in Ukrainian.

Subjects taught in Ukrainian, Ukrainian language and literature, and educational subjects are taught in the United School of T. Ševčenko with Ukrainian Language Instruction in Prešov. At present, 234 pupils attend the school. Of these 12 pupils belong to the Ukrainian national minority, nine belong to the Ruthenian national minority and one belongs to the Roma national minority. The remaining 212 pupils have Slovak nationality.

- d ii to make available a substantial part of technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*376.*

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to increase the offer of pre-school, primary, secondary, technical and vocational education in Ukrainian and to ensure continuity of Ukrainian-language education at all levels of education.*

In terms of the emphasis put on the perspectives, possibilities and interest in the Ukrainian language, elementary schools try to meet the requirements of parents and pupils in

relation to the teaching of Ukrainian. The schools simultaneously draw attention to the fact that the inclusion of Ukrainian in the teaching process drains their funds. Schools with a lower number of pupils, whose number will decrease each year based on the demographic development (and so will the funds allocated within the framework of normative financing), see the situation as problematic (or they start to consider cancelling instruction in the national minority language, as occurred, for instance, in the kindergarten and elementary school in Nižná Polianka).

Most of the elementary schools that teach some of the national minority languages record lower interest among parents and children in instruction in the national minority language. The reason for the lower interest is the very weak or almost zero application of the minority language in everyday life and practice.

As to the extracurricular area (informal education), the teaching of Ukrainian is conducted by means of language courses for children in the Elementary School in Karpatská ulica in Svidník and the Regional Council of the Union of the Ruthenians – Ukrainians in the Slovak Republic in Košice.

*g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

382. ... *[I]t is not clear to the Committee of Experts to what extent the current provisions in the national curricula ensure in practice specific teaching about the Ukrainian history and culture. The Committee would welcome such information in the next periodical report.*

The main objective of the teaching of Ukrainian language and literature in elementary schools in the Slovak Republic is to form a nationally conscious, spiritually rich person who will be able to freely and correctly use the Ukrainian language in various language styles, genres and any type of speech activity. The basic tasks of the teaching of Ukrainian language and Ukrainian literature include: the leading to the conscious of the need to learn the mother tongue, to form universal human values, to develop communication skills and habits, to have good oral and written skills, to present the knowledge of the culture of the nation, to make it possible to get to know the own identity of pupils and to teach them how to accept and tolerate the identity of other nations and nationalities.

The objective of the teaching of the language is to: get an idea of the number of languages in Europe, understand the communication and working aspects of the Ukrainian language used in different parts of the country and in various social groups, learn how to be versed in a multilingual environment based on the perception of the national culture of the Ukrainians.

At present, communication skills in Ukrainian are being developed in all subjects, taking into account all specific needs; to develop all speech skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Elementary and secondary schools plan the teaching of individual subjects in Ukrainian language separately within the school educational programmes under School Act No. 245/2008 Coll., Section 12(3) (of 22 May 2008).

Ukrainian language as a teaching subject in schools with Ukrainian language as a language of instruction and with the teaching of Ukrainian language is taught from the first to the ninth grade and together with the state language it represents a means for learning all the subjects. Special attention in the teaching of Ukrainian is paid to the standards of Ukrainian pronunciation that differ from the pronunciation standards of Slovak.

The analysis and interpretation of texts is the most important aspect within the teaching process together with the creation of own oral and written works that will correspond



to a specific communication situation. Such an analysis will help the pupil to realise his surroundings and himself within the teaching process.

The teaching of Ukrainian is conducted in the form of a children's game and creative activities developing the communication skills of the pupils. The structure of the teaching of Ukrainian is adapted to the age skills of pupils, it focuses on the creation of communication situations that we create using pictures/illustrations to the texts, textbook texts, the reading of pieces from folk literature, the listening to the CD recordings, the dramatisation of texts, plays, songs and other stimulation activities.

From the systematic teaching point of view, linguistic expressions are not analysed in isolation, but in integration with other linguistic phenomena. Using adequate examples, pupils gain some idea of the language as a system of characters.

Language lesson starts with the listening to and understanding the spoken text, later the speaking in the form of dialogues, the formation of habits of automatic writing complying with the aesthetics of the writing, later expanded by grammar standards. This creates a basis of the primary language lessons. Adequately to their age skills, pupils acquire the basics from lexicology, morphology, phonetics and syntax. Pupils learn how to paraphrase the read text, create an outline of the read text, to create their own texts. Through their own dialect and sociolect they learn how to know and manage literary language, the basics of their own language culture are being created.

*h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

*387. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to provide the basic and further training of the teachers for Ukrainian language education.*

The continuing education of teachers and professional staff is mainly governed by Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Teachers and Professional Staff and on Amendment and Supplementation of Certain Acts as amended. Education is provided by schools and education establishments, organisations established by the Ministry of Education or other ministries, universities, church or religious societies, or other legal entities after meeting the conditions laid down by law.

One of the organisations in the field of the education is the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre that under Section 14(2)(c) of Act No. 596/2003 Coll., on State Administration in Education and Education Authority and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, is a centrally managed organisation of the Ministry of Education. Methodology and pedagogy centres carry out methodological activity, among others, also in the field of professional guarantee of further education of teachers in schools located in national territories (Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Roma).

Teachers of Ukrainian language and literature are offered further teacher training according to their interests.

Two programmes of continuing education are focused on the development of communication skills in Ukrainian:

- a) The development of communicative skills through texts of various language styles during Ukrainian language lessons,
- b) The development of communication skills during Ukrainian language lessons.

Training in the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre in Prešov focused on the Ukrainian language was provided by one employee. In 2013, seven teachers of Ukrainian language successfully completed the continuing educational programme entitled the Development of Communication Skills During Ukrainian Language Lessons. The education was conducted within a Professional and Career Growth of Teachers programme.

In 2013, the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre in Prešov welcomed a delegation from the Trans-Carpathian Institute of Postgraduate Education and they agreed on mutual cooperation. An official agreement on cooperation is prepared to be signed.

Several events were organised for national minority schools:

- a professional seminar National Minority Education in Slovakia and Neighbouring Countries – invited guests included directors of national minority schools and teachers of Ukrainian; a conference proceedings of studies was published as an output of the event;
- a seminar Orest Zilynskyj and his contribution to the Slovak-Ukrainian cultural relationships.

Within a Vega project of the Ministry of Education, two books, addressed also to national minority schools, were published by an external Ukrainian language methodologist as a co-author.

- i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

*391. ... The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing teaching in and of minority languages, and of drawing up public periodic reports of its findings.*

Within the inspection activity of the State School Inspection, four observations were conducted in a kindergarten where instruction is conducted in both Slovak and Ukrainian. The legal representatives did not show an interest in the instruction of children in Ukrainian.

## **Article 9 – Judicial authorities**

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

- a in criminal proceedings:*

- ii *to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*
- iii *to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language; and/or*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

396. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use Ukrainian in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she also has a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution. ... [T]he Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in Ukrainian, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

See the common information in Point 91.

397. *... [T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 92.

*b in civil proceedings:*

- ii *to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
- iii *to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

*c in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*

- ii *to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
- iii *to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

400. ... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters is available.

See the common information in Point 95 or 90.

An example is the educational programme of Prešov University: "Linguistic Training of Legal Translators and Interpreters in Ukrainian Language – Professional Translation and Interpretation", accreditation confirmation number: 1884/2011/31/6.

402. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.

See the common information in Point 96.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make available in the regional or minority languages the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of these languages, unless they are otherwise provided.*

407. ... [N]o legal texts concerning persons belonging to national minorities have been translated into Ukrainian.

No applicable legislation, including the acts that exercise constitutional rights of persons belonging to the Ukrainian national minority, have been translated into Ukrainian.

## **Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services**

### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- a*     *iii*     *to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages;*

416.

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|---|
| <p><i>The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures so that the Ukrainian-speakers may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in Ukrainian, wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.</i></p> |
|---|

See the common information in Point 112.

In practice, the Ukrainian minority has not submitted any request for the use of Ukrainian in official communication because the members of the Ukrainian minority living in Slovakia speak Slovak.

*Paragraph 2*

- b the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*

422.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to:*

- take the necessary measures so that the Ukrainian-speakers may submit oral or written applications in Ukrainian including in those municipalities where the Ukrainian-speakers represent less than 20% of the municipal population, but still a significant number for the purpose of the present undertaking;*
- provide the legal basis required for Ukrainian-speakers to submit oral or written applications in Ukrainian also in relation to regional authorities where the speakers are present in sufficient numbers.*

See the common information in Point 120.

- c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

426. ... *The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to allow and/or encourage the publication by local and regional authorities of their official documents also in Ukrainian, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, enables the relevant local authorities to publish documents in the Ukrainian minority language while the municipality is obligated to publish a part of these documents in the minority language on the official board, website and in periodicals.

- f the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;*

430. *The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to encourage the use of Ukrainian by local authorities in debates in their assemblies, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

The use of the Ukrainian minority language at the meetings of local councils is legislatively guaranteed by Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, based on which the members of the local council in the relevant municipality can use the minority language without limitation during the meetings of the council. Other participants in the meeting can use the minority language with the consent of the present members and the mayor of the municipality.

*g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

439. *... The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to encourage the use of traditional and correct forms of place names in Ukrainian within the meaning of the present undertaking and irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of Minority Languages, as amended, has made it possible since 1999 to use, in the relevant municipalities, local geographical names in minority languages, including the names of streets in the given municipality. Since 1994, Act No. 191/1994 Coll., has made it possible to use the names of municipalities stated in the Act in the minority language and there is a duty to display these names on separate traffic signs located under the traffic boards containing the name of the municipality in the state language that mark the start and end of the municipality.

### *Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

*c to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages.*

443. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to allow Ukrainian-speakers to submit a request in Ukrainian to public services, including in those municipalities where the users do not attain the 20% threshold but represent nevertheless a sufficient number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

Ukrainian-speakers can submit to the relevant local authorities oral and written requests for public services and other documents in the minority language under Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended.

#### *Paragraph 4*

*With a view to putting into effect those provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 accepted by them, the Parties undertake to take one or more of the following measures:*

- c compliance as far as possible with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used.*

The state and local government employ members of national minorities, many of whom work in the departments that use the languages of national minorities, but their central registration (the registration of employees speaking regional or minority language) is not kept under this kind of categorisation.

#### **Article 11 – Media**

##### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*
  - iii to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

456.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to increase the broadcasting time and the frequency of the time-slots allocated to the Ukrainian language on public television.*

See the common information to the Point 297 (Ruthenian language).

- b ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

461. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Ukrainian on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to the Point 161.

- c ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;

466. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Ukrainian on private television channels on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to the Point 161.

- d to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;

470. *... It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect.*

471. *... The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in Ukrainian.*

See the common information to the Point 169.

472. *The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in Ukrainian relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to the Point 170.

*The Border*, a documentary film produced in 2009, is an example of a work thematically dealing with the issue of Slovak-Ukrainian relationships. Ukrainian is used in the film in addition to Slovak. The story of the film is as follows: "The Red Army divided a Slemence village on the eastern border of Europe into two parts in the night of 30 August 1946. One part, Veľké Slemence, remained in Slovakia (former Czechoslovakia); the other part was named Malé Slemence and was added to the Ukraine (former Soviet Union). The senselessly demarked border, similar to the Berlin Wall, divides properties, cemetery and immediate families even today. The documentary film shows the bitter experience of the citizens of Slemence who, on the best-guarded border of the EU, are dreaming their dream about its opening."

- e i to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages;

476.

|   |
|---|
| <i>The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take appropriate measures to enable at least one newspaper to be published in Ukrainian with sufficient frequency.</i> |
|---|



- f ii to apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in the regional or minority languages;*

See the common information to the Point 175.

According to the current information of the Ministry of Culture, two titles have been published in Ukrainian at present. Namely, the *Nove žytt'a* biweekly with nationwide distribution, which provides information on the cultural and social life of the Ruthenians and the Ukrainians in Slovakia. The other title is the *Veselka* monthly, with nationwide distribution intended for pupils of elementary schools where Ukrainian is taught. It includes pictures, curiosities and current information on schools.

*480. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to apply existing measures for financial assistance to audiovisual works in Ukrainian and to provide concrete examples in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to the Point 169.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

*484. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

See the common information to the Point 169.

## ***Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to cultural activities and facilities – especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries, including inter alia the use of new technologies – the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used and to the extent that the public authorities are competent, have power or play a role in this field:*

- b to foster the different means of access in other languages to works produced in regional or minority languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

- c to foster access in regional or minority languages to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

488. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to foster access in other languages to works produced in Ukrainian and vice versa.*

See the information in Point 330.

## ***Article 13 – Economic and social life***

### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

505. *The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

- b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

507. *...[S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in the Slovak legislation.*

See the common information in Points 195 and 197.

### *Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

513. *The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

See the common information to the Point 203.

### **Article 14 – Transfrontier exchanges**

*The Parties undertake:*

- b for the benefit of regional or minority languages, to facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory the same language is used in identical or similar form.*

*517. The Committee of Experts requests again the Slovak authorities to specify in their next periodical report how the existing forms of co-operation with Ukraine have benefited the Ukrainian language in the Slovak Republic.*

Under concluded contracts of cross-border cooperation cultural events are being organised in Slovakia. Guests from Ukraine and members of the Ukrainian minority living in Slovakia are invited and attend the event.

As regards education, a "2005 – 2008 Programme of Cooperation Between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Ukraine in the Field of Education" contributes to the promotion of Ukrainian language in the Slovak Republic. This is a document signed in Bratislava on 12 December 2005. Its validity has been extended until the signing of a new cooperation programme.

In compliance with the above contractual document, the following annual events are organised on the basis of reciprocity:

- a) the exchange of five students within university study and five trainees and doctoral students/aspirants with a total duration of up to 10 months for each,
- b) participation in summer language courses:
  - The Slovak side will welcome five participants in Studia Academica Slovaca, a summer seminar of Slovak language and culture,
  - Ukrainian side will welcome five participants in a summer school of Ukrainian language,
- c) the exchange of lecturers of:
  - Slovak language – Uzhhorod National University,
  - Ukrainian language Faculty of Philosophy of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
    - if, during the validity of this cooperation programme, the contracting parties show interest in other lecturers, the contracting parties will agree on this by diplomatic means,
- d) the granting of government scholarships:
  - Slovak side grants to Ukrainian citizens of Slovak nationality government scholarships within development aid to the Slovaks living abroad,
  - Ukrainian side grants government scholarships to Slovak citizens of Ukrainian nationality,
- e) the granting of 15 scholarships for language-professional courses for teachers of elementary and secondary schools with the language of national minorities with duration of 14 days,

f) the promotion of the development of direct cooperation between secondary schools and universities and local school administrations of both countries that are also in charge of the issues of the study and recreation of pupils and students.

Unilateral commitments of the Slovak side

- the organisation of schools in nature and recovery stays for children from Ukraine, while the Slovak side covers the costs of the stay of the children and the sending side covers the travelling costs.

## **Romani**

### *Article 8 – Education*

#### *Preliminary issues*

522.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to adopt a structured approach and, in co-operation with the speakers, introduce Romani-language education for Roma children on a large scale.*

More details are included in all points in relation to the Roma language.

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

- a i to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- ii to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- iii to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient;*

527.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide facilities for pre-school education in Romani and to raise awareness of the Romani-speaking population of their right to pre-school education in Romani, its availability and advantages.*

An "Inclusive Model of Education at Pre-Primary Level of School System" national project (the "MRK II") is intended for those kindergartens in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice regions in which they educate at least 8% of children from marginalised Roma communities or are located in a location/municipality in which the members of these communities live. The objective of the project is to improve professional competence of teachers and professional staff participating in the education of children from marginalised Roma communities and to promote their social inclusion at pre-primary level of the school system.

The philosophy of the MRK II project is to achieve the inclusion of as many children from marginalised Roma communities as possible into kindergartens and to improve their readiness for entering the primary level of education through the education of their parents.

The main activities of the project are as follows:

- The education of teachers and professional staff.
- The promotion of the inclusive model of education for the needs of the pre-primary level of the school system.
- The technical support for the national project activities.

As of September 2013, 110 teachers' aides were admitted within the project, of which 80% speak Roma language. Several activities were carried out within the MRK II in 2014.

Within the MRK II national project, 4,456 participants participated in the following programmes of continuing education, of which 1,026 graduates completed the education with certificate:

- Teachers' aides in an inclusive school and his work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities.
- Cooperation between family from marginalised Roma communities and school within educational process.
- Multicultural education within inclusive education.
- Through the development of communication skills to the inclusion of pupils from marginalised Roma communities.
- The current approaches and innovations in the education of pupils from marginalised Roma communities.
- Cooperation between professional staff and the family of the pupil from marginalised Roma communities.
- Information-communication technologies within the full-day education system.
- Teacher – a creator of teaching resources for pupils from marginalised Roma communities.
- Education and training of the Roma in religion/religious education classes.

Another activity in this field is represented by an "Investment in Early Childhood – Promoting the Social Innovation and Integration of the Roma" project that was, from January 2013 until the end of 2014, implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities in cooperation with the Slovak Governance Institute, the Roma Education Fund and the World Bank. The project is financially supported by the European Commission, Progress programme (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic – the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities.

The objective of the project is to support the quality of child services, to engage mothers in the pre-school education of children, to decrease the language barrier between pupils, parents and education establishment, to improve cooperation between teachers and parents, to develop cognitive skills of mothers and children, to change the approach to the education of children in segregated communities, to establish a support network of Roma mothers in communities and to improve awareness in the Roma community of the importance of education.

Seven facilitators, 315 Roma mothers and 525 children from zero to six years of age participate in this project in 21 locations of Slovakia. In addition to the target locations, the seven facilitators of the project are active in other 28 municipalities in order to improve cooperation between families and education institutions. The activities will be evaluated by the World Bank experts under the auspices of J-PAL. The overall evaluation of the project will be offered to the Slovak government as a basis for resolving the pre-primary education of pupils in the future.

- b      iii      *to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*
- c      iii      *to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*
- d      iii      *to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*

532.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to systematically introduce the teaching of Romani as an integral part of the curriculum at primary and secondary school level, as well as in technical and vocational education, and to ensure continuity between the different levels of education.*

Applicable school legislation enables elementary and secondary schools to teach Roma language by means of a school education programme (within optional classes). Schools that show an interest in this subject will have access to educational standards for Roma language and literature (for primary education, lower secondary education and higher secondary education) on the website of the National Institute for Education. At the National Institute for Education there is a subject commission for Roma language and literature and Roma life and culture. The commission develops educational standards and proposes alternative possibilities for the teaching of Roma language in schools.

Within an "Innovative Education of Teachers Focused on the Improvement of Their Intercultural Competence in the Process of the Education of Roma Pupils" project, the beneficiary of which is the National Institute for Education and which is financed from the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and the state budget of the Slovak Republic, we plan the following: 1) the education of teachers of primary education that will also include the practical use of Roma language as an auxiliary language for education in elementary school attended by pupils from Roma communities; and 2) the preparation of publications focused on Roma language (for beginners).

- f      ii      *to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;*

539. *The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to clarify in the next periodical report whether there is a systematic offer of Romani as a subject of adult and continuing education or only some irregular initiatives.*

540. *The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to systematically offer Romani as a subject of adult and continuing education.*

Examples of educational programmes:

- "Advisory Course for the Roma", organiser: Korona, n.o., Svidník, accreditation confirmation number: 2883/2010/43/19;
- "Advisory Course (for the Roma) I", organiser: Advantage Commerce, s. r. o., Banská Bystrica, accreditation confirmation number: 3207/2010/182/4;

- "Roma Assistant in Elementary School", organiser: Econ vs, s. r. o., Ožd'any, accreditation confirmation number: 3195/2010/152/23.

*g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

545. *...[I]t is not clear to the Committee of Experts to what extent the current provisions in the national curricula ensure in practice specific teaching about the Roma history and culture. The Committee of Experts would welcome such information in the next periodical report.*

A national project called "Through the Education of Teachers to the Inclusion of Marginalised Roma Communities" (the "MRK I") is co-financed from the European Social Fund in the operation programme Education and is intended for elementary schools in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice regions that educate at least 20% of pupils from disadvantaged social backgrounds. The objective of this project is, by means of the education of teachers and professional staff, to improve the educational level of persons from marginalised Roma communities and to create necessary competence for their further education and successful adaptation to the needs of the labour market.

The specific objective of the project is to improve the professional competence of teachers and professional staff participating in the education of children from marginalised Roma communities.

The main activities of the project consist in the education of teachers and professional staff, the promotion of the full-day education system and technical support for the national project activities.

A list of accredited educational programmes of the MRK I:

- Multicultural education within inclusive education;
- Teachers' aides in an inclusive school and work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Through the development of communication skills to the inclusion of pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Cooperation between family from marginalised Roma communities and school within educational process;
- The current approaches and innovations in the education of pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Cooperation between professional staff and the family of the pupil from marginalised Roma communities;
- Teacher – a creator of teaching resources for pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Information-communication technologies within the full-day education system.

546.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take steps to improve the teaching of Roma history and culture in mainstream education.*



Applicable school legislation enables elementary and secondary schools to teach Roma life and culture (the content of the subject consists primarily of Roma history and culture) by means of a school education programme (within optional classes). Schools that show an interest in this subject will have access to educational standards for Roma life and culture (for lower secondary education) on the website of the National Institute for Education. Educational standards for higher secondary education are being developed right now. At the National Institute for Education there is a subject commission for Roma language and literature and Roma life and culture. The commission continuously develops educational standards and proposes alternative possibilities for the teaching of Roma life and culture in schools.

Within an Innovative Education of Teachers Focused on the Improvement of Their Intercultural Competence in the Process of the Education of Roma Pupils project, the beneficiary of which is the National Institute for Education and which is financed from the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and the state budget of the Slovak Republic, we plan the following: 1) the education of teachers of primary education that will include Roma history and culture; 2) the preparation of publications focused on Roma history and culture; 3) the translation of Roma History, published by the Council of Europe, into Slovak.

*h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

551.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to intensify and accelerate their efforts in the field of basic and further teacher training for Romani.*

The education under the conditions of the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre (MPC) is conducted by **ROCEPO – Roma Educational Centre Prešov**, as an integral part of the MPC Prešov. The MPC Prešov provides for the education of teachers mainly in the field of Roma language, Ukrainian language and Ruthenian language. The MPC Prešov has a 90-hour accredited innovative educational programme called Roma Language in Education. The target group consists of: a teacher, an educator, a teachers' aide and a master in vocational education, the content of the education consists of the basic knowledge of Roma language and Roma life and culture. The programme represents the improvement of professional competence in the field of the teaching, communication of the language, while it is also focused on the comprehensive understanding of the issue, origin and development of Roma language.

In the field of the promotion of professional development and continuing education of teachers and professional staff of schools and education establishments in relation to the work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities there are, within the framework of the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre, two national projects that are being implemented. These projects are focused on the education of not only teachers and professional staff, but also the parents of children from marginalised Roma communities. Full-day education system has been implemented in selected schools.

The Roma Language in Education, an educational programme of innovative education, was accredited for the MPC in December 2012. 16 teachers completed the programme in 2013. 16 teachers have been attending the programme this year. The content of the innovation educational programme (90 hours) consists of the morphology of Roma language, flexible and non-flexible word classes and the practical use of Roma language. In addition, the MPC is devoted to this issue also by means of national projects ESF Through the Education of Teachers

to the Inclusion of Marginalised Roma Communities and Inclusive Model of Education at the Pre-Primary Level of the School System.

- i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

555. ... *The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing teaching of Romani, and of drawing up public periodical reports on the development of Romani teaching.*

There is no kindergarten nor classes with instruction in Roma language in the territory of the Slovak Republic. (See The Register of Schools and School Establishments: <http://web.uips.sk/script/webreg.exe?DRUHSK=1&EP=0&UZEMIE=0&ZRIADZ=0&VYUJAZ=19&POZN=1&NAZOV=1&VOLBA1=0&VOLBA2=0>)

During a school inspection in Prešov region, children of two classes with instruction in Slovak language communicated in Roma language. A teachers' aide was helping younger children in communication and understanding.

At present, there is no school or education establishment with Roma language of instruction. The network of schools and education establishments of the Slovak Republic includes only one school that teaches the Roma language (Private Grammar School of Z. J. Mall in Kremnica).

At the pre-primary and primary education level for pupils from Roma communities, only the Private United School (Private Elementary School with Kindergarten, Private Basic School of Art) in Kremnica and the Private Elementary School in Košice provide for the exercise of the right to teach national minority language. No school provides instruction in the language of the Roma national minority at the level of state schools. Non-governmental organisations founded the schools listed in the table.

Table – A list of schools in the Slovak Republic teaching the Roma language

| Name  | Registered office                       | Founder                            |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Private United School – private elementary school with kindergarten | Angyalova ulica 417/31, 960 01 Kremnica | eMKLUB Kremnica, civic association |
| Private Elementary School   | Galaktická 9 040 12 Košice              | "Good Roma Fairy Kesaj" Foundation |
| Private Grammar School  | Galaktická 9, 040 12 Košice             | "Good Roma Fairy Kesaj" Foundation |
| Eight-Year Private Grammar School of Zefyrin Jiménez Malla          | Dolná 48/19, 967 01 Kremnica            | eMKLUB Kremnica, civic association |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | Private Education and Social Academy                       | Jegorovovo námestie 5<br>04 022 Košice         | Cultural Association of Citizens of Roma Nationality of Košice Region, not-for-profit organisation |
|  | Private Music and Dramatic Conservatory                    | Požiarňická 1,<br>040 01 Košice                | Cultural Association of Citizens of Roma Nationality of Košice Region, not-for-profit organisation |
|  | Private Secondary Vocational School                        | Biela voda 901/2<br>060 01 Kežmarok            | Carpe diem, not-for-profit organisation  |
|  | Private Secondary Vocational School                        | Budatínska 61<br>851 06, Bratislava            | Edukacia – Amaro drom, Grosslingova 25, Bratislava   |
|  | Institute of Romologic Studies                             | Kraskova 1<br>949 74 Nitra                     | Constantine the Philosopher University Nitra   |
|  | Institute of Romani European Studies                       | Tatranská ulica č.10<br>974 11 Banská Bystrica | St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work not-for-profit organisation                        |
|  | Department of Romani Studies                               | Pod brehmi č. 4/a<br>841 03, Bratislava        | St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work not-for-profit organisation                        |
|  | Institute of Romani Studies                                | Ulica 17.novembra č.1<br>080 01 Prešov         | Prešov University in Prešov  |
|  | Institute of Z. J. Malla focused on Roma national minority | Požiarňická 1,<br>040 01 Košice                | St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work not-for-profit organisation                        |
|  | Research Workplace for Roma Language and Social Work       | Požiarňická 1,<br>040 01 Košice                | St. Elizabeth College of Health and Social Work not-for-profit organisation                        |

Further education of teachers and volunteers in the Roma minority language is supported and provided by:

- a) The teaching of Roma language at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra – the Institute of Romologic Studies – the education and preparation of students and future teachers (professional staff) for the work in marginalised Roma communities in individual fields of the Roma life.
- b) Methodology and Pedagogy Centre in Prešov – ROCEPO – carried out several activities focused on the teaching of Roma language.
- c) In the context of the development and promotion of Roma language and literature in elementary and secondary schools, there is a subject commission for Roma language and literature and Roma life and culture established at the National Institute for Education. It deals with conceptual issues of the content of the education and training of Roma pupils.
- d) The National Institute for Education has published the first publications for pupils and teachers of elementary and secondary schools in the field of the development of Roma language and literature. In 2013, the National Institute for Education obtained from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism a grant for a project aimed at the innovative education of teachers of elementary schools focused on the intercultural and inclusive education in relation to the work in mixed Roma-Non-Roma pupil teams. The project also includes the development of methodology, textbooks and worksheets.

A free Roma language course was organised by the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Košice within a cross-border project called the Regional Social Map. The objective of the project was to contribute to the improvement of the life conditions of the citizens of Košice region and Hungarian Boršod-Abov-Zemplín County. The Philosophical Faculty of the University in Miskolc was a foreign partner of the project.

The course was also attended by three teachers from the kindergarten in Lunik IX, teachers teaching social work at universities, workers of the Institute of Social Science of the Slovak Academy of Sciences focused on Roma ethnicity and executive manager of the Roma Media Centre in Košice. The teaching is conducted by Anna Koptová, director of the Private Grammar School in Galatická Street in Košice who is the author of Slovak-Roma and Roma-Slovak Dictionary together with her daughter Martina.

In 2010, the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre published a methodological handbook called "The Use of Roma Language at the First Level of Elementary Schools" written by: S. Cina a E. Cinová, available on the website [http://www.mpc-edu.sk/library/files/romsky\\_jazyk.pdf](http://www.mpc-edu.sk/library/files/romsky_jazyk.pdf)

In addition to the exercise of the constitutional right of pupils who are members of the Roma minority to education in their mother tongue, the teaching of Roma language helps eliminate communication problems of Roma pupils in the Slovak language that arise from insufficient knowledge of the Slovak language and mainly from insufficient understanding of its word creation and morphologic level. Teachers are interested in education in the Roma language since several teachers have passed state examinations in the Roma language in order to be adequately qualified to teach this language.

## **Article 9 – Judicial authorities**

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

- a in criminal proceedings:*
  - ii to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*
  - iii to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language;*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

558. ... *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

See the common information in Point 90.

559. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use Romani in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she has also a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution ... [I]t strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in Romani, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

See the common information in Point 91.

560. *... [T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 92.

*b in civil proceedings:*

*ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

*c in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*

*ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

563. *... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

See the common information in Point 95 or 90.

564. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 96.

## **Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services**

### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- a     iii    to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages;*

574.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Romani-speakers may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in Romani wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in the legislation.*

See the common information in Point 112.

No request or submission has been recorded in practice because most Slovak Roma do not know the codified form of the Roma language and use it only as a spoken language.

Practical experience shows that the Roma language is normally used in verbal communication in municipalities with a Roma mayor.

### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of the local and regional authorities on whose territory the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages is such as to justify the measures specified below, the Parties undertake to allow and/or encourage:*

- b           the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*

578.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary legal and organisational measures so that the Romani-speakers may submit oral or written applications in Romani in all municipalities with a sufficient number of speakers, including those municipalities where the Romani-speakers represent less than 20% of the municipal population, but still a significant number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

In municipalities with a significant Roma minority and Roma mayors people communicate in the Roma language. No official request for communication in the Roma language within official communication has been received so far.

A "Pilot Project of Police Specialists Working with Communities" was approved in 2004 in the context of the solution of unfavourable, especially security situation of Roma community. Thanks to its success, the project has expanded in terms of territory (originally: 17, now: 40 police districts) and in terms of personnel (originally: 18 police officers, now: 231 police officers).

*c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

*d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

582. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to allow and encourage the publication by local and regional authorities of their official documents also in Romani, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

Slovak authorities have already taken such measures. Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, enables the relevant local authorities to publish documents in the Roma minority language while the municipality is obligated to publish a part of these documents in minority language on the official board, website and in periodicals.

In practice, no request by the Roma minority for the publishing of official documents in the Roma language has been received.

*f the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;*

586. *The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to encourage the use of Romani by local authorities in debates in their assemblies, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

The use of the Roma minority language at the meetings of local councils is legislatively guaranteed by Act No. 184/1999 Coll., on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, as amended, based on which the members of the local council in the relevant municipality can use the minority language without limitation during the meetings of the council. Other participants in the meeting can use the minority language with the consent of the present members and mayor of the municipality.

In municipalities with a Roma mayor, the Roma language is used in oral communication as mentioned in the previous report.

*g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

593. *It is not clear to what extent place-names in Romani (including names of smaller territorial units and streets) are used in municipalities where the 20% threshold is met or what measures have been taken to encourage the use or adoption of place-names in Romani also in those municipalities where the Romani-speakers do not attain the 20% threshold but represented nevertheless a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

The members of the Roma national minority living in the Slovak Republic use in their language the Slovak names of geographical objects and municipalities in the territory of the Slovak Republic, because the names of most of these objects do not exist in the Roma language. For this reason, under Slovak Republic Government Regulation No. 534/2011 Coll., Establishing a List of Municipalities in which Citizens of the Slovak Republic Belonging to National Minority Account for at Least 20% of Citizens, the names of municipalities in the Roma language corresponds with the names of municipalities in the state language.

In practice, no interest has been expressed in writing the names of towns and municipalities in the Roma language.

### *Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages.*

599. *The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to allow Romani-speakers to submit a request in Romani to public services, including in those municipalities where they do not attain the 20% threshold but represent nevertheless a sufficient number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

The above possibility is not used in practice, mainly due to lack of knowledge of the codified Roma language on the part of the Roma minority.

## **Article 11 – Media**

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*



- iii *to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

609.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to increase the broadcasting time and the frequency of the time-slots allocated to the Romani language on public radio and television.*

The broadcasting of the Slovak Television in Roma language was as follows: 32 hours in 2011, 38 hours in 2012 and 30 hours in 2013.<sup>7</sup> As regards broadcasting on Slovak Radio there was a slight decline in the broadcasting time in Roma language from 131 hours in 2011 to 129 hours in 2012. With regard to the broadcasting for the Roma, Slovak Radio has been focusing for a long time on current events, mapping the values of important figures and on introducing an educational dimension. In 2012, Radio Patria broadcast a news magazine called Romani Word (*Le romengro lav*) twice a week and the programmes Roma Cultural Revue, Romani Music and Romani Discussion were broadcast once a week.

Cooperation between the Radio and Television of Slovakia and the Roma Media Centre in 2012 was beneficial for public broadcasting. At present, the Roma Media Centre is a quality supplier of programmes with Romani content; Roma respondents believe the Roma editorial staff and the centre has trained Roma editors who know the codified version of Roma language. The Roma Media Centre has produced 260 half-hour news programmes for Roma minority intended for the radio broadcast of the Radio and Television of Slovakia. The Roma broadcasting focused on human trafficking with an emphasis on the educational dimension. A co-production with the Roma Media Centre was also demonstrated in relation to the television broadcasting within which 30 parts of the Roma Magazine were broadcast. This cooperation should continue in the following years because experience to date shows that if the Roma language is made available by the members of this ethnicity, then it brings effective results.

- b ii *to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

613. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Romani on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the information in Point 609.

- c ii *to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Information message on the status of the national broadcast of the RTVS of 9 May 2013.

617. ... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Romani on private television channels on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.

See the information in Point 161.

*d* to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;

621. ... It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect. ...

See the information in Point 169.

622. ... The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in Romani.

See the information in Point 170.

623. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in Romani relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.

*e* *i* to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages;

See the information in Point 170.

With regard to the timeliness of topics related to the Roma minority in the Slovak Republic, the topics related to the minority are very often used as a theme of Slovak audiovisual works (either documentary films or fictions). The Roma language is often used in the parts of these works. Examples of the current works:

- a film *All My Children* produced in 2013 was made in the Slovak and Roma languages. The story is as follows: "Marián Kuffa, a Roman Catholic priest from Žakovce, with "his children" – the homeless, alcoholics, drug addicts, criminals – starts a new mission in Roma settlements in eastern Slovakia. This is a drama of a quixotic struggle with the harsh reality of the Roma settlements."
- a documentary film entitled *Gypsies Go To Elections* produced in 2013 was made in the Slovak and Roma language. The film is about Vlado Sendrei, a Roma activist, who, together with his election team, tries to succeed in the elections in the "white society". The film offers an unbelievably spontaneous election campaign, tragicomic situations and also an expedition to Roma ghettos on the edge of the society."

626. ... *The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take appropriate measures to enable at least one newspaper to be published in Romani with sufficient frequency.*

See the information to Point 175.

As mentioned above, nothing restricts the publishing of newspapers in the languages of national minorities, i.e. also in Roma. Nevertheless, at present there are no periodicals exclusively in the Roma language published in the Slovak Republic. Three periodicals are published in a combination of the Slovak and Roma languages. The independent, cultural-social newspaper of the Roma is represented by a quarterly called *ROMANO NEVO LIL* – Roma New Letter published nationwide. The quarterly *Myš(u)lienka* and the monthly *LULUĎI* focus on children and young people from disadvantaged population groups.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

634. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

See the response to the common information in Point 182.

## **Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities**

### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to cultural activities and facilities – especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries, including inter alia the use of new technologies – the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used and to the extent that the public authorities are competent, have power or play a role in this field:*

- b to foster the different means of access in other languages to works produced in regional or minority languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*
- c to foster access in regional or minority languages to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

638. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to foster access in other languages to works produced in Romani and vice versa.*

The Museum of the Culture of the Roma in Slovakia, which is a specialised unit of the Slovak National Museum in Martin, plays an important role in making Roma culture and language accessible. The museum is chiefly engaged in the acquisition of collections, their processing, and the protection and presentation of Roma culture. In 2013, the museum's collection consisted of 396 exhibits. A year-round, permanent exhibition called Romano drom/The Roma Journey – the SNM plays an important role in terms of supporting Roma culture and language. An event called Te prindžaras amen – Get to Know Each Other is one of the museum's regular activities (since 2002). Two travelling panel exhibitions belong to the successfully implemented projects of the museum – The Story of the Children of Wind (a pilot exhibition to a permanent exposition of the museum) and The Gallery of the Roma Figures (2010) are regularly repeated in cooperation with various cultural, educational and community institutions. The total annual volume of funds allocated within the culture budget heading: EUR 31,629.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make appropriate provision, in pursuing their cultural policy abroad, for regional or minority languages and the cultures they reflect.*

649. *The Committee of Experts ... would welcome additional specific examples concerning Romani.*

On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Slovak Film Institution, the Slovak Institute in Vienna screened the film *Gypsy* on 24 April 2013. The film was directed by Martin Šulík and was awarded international prizes. The film presentation was accompanied by the performance of Pokošovci, a Roma music group.

A "Slovak Evening" took place in the premises of an avant-garde cinema Brunnenpassage on 7 November 2013 as part of a prestigious film festival in Vienna. The film "Gypsies Go to Elections" of Jaro Vojtek, a documentary filmmaker, was shown during this event. A discussion with J. Vojtek, the filmmaker, and V. Sendrej, the main protagonist, was followed by a concert of Kokavare – Sendrejovci.

## ***Article 13 – Economic and social life***

### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

654. *The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

*b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

656. ... [S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in the Slovak legislation.

See the common information in Point 195 and 197.

## *Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

*c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

662. *The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

See the common information in Point 203.

## **Article 14 – Transfrontier exchanges**

*The Parties undertake:*

*a to apply existing bilateral and multilateral agreements which bind them with the States in which the same language is used in identical or similar form, or if necessary to seek to conclude such agreements, in such a way as to foster contacts between the users of the same language in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education;*

665. ... *The report does not provide information on how agreements concluded with other states foster contacts between Romani-speakers living in these various countries.*

In 2013, the Slovak Republic joined a Council of Europe campaign called "No Hatred on the Internet". Department of Youth of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has initiated the formation of a National Committee on the Campaign in the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, IUVENTA – the Slovak Institute of Youth and the representatives of non-governmental organisations active in the field of human rights also engaged in the activity of the committee. A website and a Facebook

page to disseminate and exchange information on the campaign have been created. The campaign has both an on-line and off-line form and events focused on information about hate speech and training for the multipliers of the campaign took place in the course of the year.

The Department of Youth of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the youth sector of the Council of Europe, hosted a Summer University of the Council of Europe that took place from 19 – 22 August 2013 in Košice. The main topic was "Participation of the Roma Youth, Its Inclusion and the Fight Against Discrimination". Thirty-five participants from abroad accepted the invitation to the summer university, among them the representatives of ministries of the member states of the Council of Europe who participate in the creation of a youth policy, experts in the field of the work with the youth, the representatives of the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities of the Council of Europe and also the representatives of international non-governmental youth organisations. The Slovak Republic was represented by the leaders of the Roma youth and experts in the field of work with youth.

As regards lifelong learning, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (MESRS SR) supports the use of funds within educational bilateral aid programmes. It participates in the implementation of the projects of the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA), the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the Swiss Financial Mechanism primarily as a member of the National Monitoring Committee and a member of commissions for the evaluation of applications for grants. A project under the auspices focused on the quality of vocational education and training is being implemented within the Swiss Financial Mechanism. A scholarship programme for scientific-research workers has been prepared since 2013 within the Financial Mechanism of the EEA.

In 2013, a section of regional education of the MESRS SR cooperated with the Government Office of the Slovak Republic on the preparation of a programme from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (NFM) SK04 Local and Regional Initiatives for Elimination of National Inequalities and Promotion of Social Inclusion. The opening conference of the programme took place in September 2013. The conference was opened by Inga Magstad, ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Slovak Republic. The programme SK04 Local and Regional Initiatives for Elimination of National Inequalities and Promotion of Social Inclusion applies to the department of education; the Education of the Roma about the Roma and for the Roma. After other official speeches, the department of education had the main speech in the event: Baseline situation in the field of social inclusion of the Roma in Slovakia and the basic information on the SK04 programme, including the introduction of the Council of Europe as a donor partner of the programme and the European Centre Wergeland as a programme partner of the programme. At the beginning of the event, the representatives of the MESRS SR focused their presentation on the baseline situation in the field of inclusion of the Roma pupils in the education process in relation to the SK04 programme.

The Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism represent contributions of the donor countries, i.e. Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein to multiple member states of the European Union. The contribution for the Slovak Republic in the period from 2009 until 2014 was more than EUR 80 million and is divided between nine programmes. One of the programmes is called "Local and Regional Initiatives for Elimination of National Inequalities and Promotion of Social Inclusion" (the EEA and NFM Programme) that to a large extent relates to the education and training of the members of the Roma national minority and Roma language.

The EEA and NFM Programme consists of three parts:

1. Open call – small grants for the promotion of Roma inclusion and intercultural projects in elementary and secondary schools.

2. Predefined project: The development of an accredited study programme of innovative education for elementary school teachers in order to improve their intercultural competence within the education of the Roma pupils. A programme decision (Appendix No. 1 of a Programme Agreement Between the Committee for Financial Mechanism formed by Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway and the Government Office of the Slovak Republic as a "National Contact Point" representing the Slovak Republic as to the financing of the EEA and EFM Programme) defines the objective, outputs, results, indicators and intention of the EEA and NFM Programme.

The basic information on the state of individual parts of the EEA and NFM Programme:

a) Open call – small grants for the promotion of Roma inclusion and intercultural projects in elementary and secondary schools:

- a call for applications for grant was published on 20 August 2013 and closed on 31 October 2013;

- eligible applicants were elementary and secondary schools; if they did not have legal capacity then they were represented by their founders;

- the applicants could ask for a grant from EUR 5,000 – EUR 40,000;

- 35 applications for project were delivered, one did not pass the check on administrative compliance and one did not pass the check on eligibility of the applicant, thus 33 applications were forwarded for professional evaluation;

- the applications passed the check on administrative compliance and eligibility of the applicant, an order of applications for project will be prepared and a meeting of a selection board will take place;

- contracts with successful applicants will be signed from April until May 2014 and subsequently the projects will be implemented.

b) Predefined project: The development of an accredited study programme of innovative education for elementary school teachers in order to improve their intercultural competence within the education of the Roma pupils

- the National Institute for Education is the beneficiary;

- the total estimated cost of the project is EUR 322,000;

- a project contract was signed on 13 November 2013 and other processes necessary for the implementation of the projects are going on.

## **German**

### **Article 8 – Education**

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

- a i to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- ii to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- iii to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient;*

673.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to make available at least a substantial part of pre-school education in German to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient.*

See response to Point 695.

- b iii to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*

675. ... [T]here is not an offer of teaching German in all areas where there is a sufficient number of German-speakers.

Answers are included in Points 678 and 695. At the same time, German is one of the foreign languages that are offered in elementary and secondary schools.

- c iii to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*
- d iii to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*

678. ... The Committee of Experts ... emphasizes the need to promote teaching of German as a regional or minority language in education, not only teaching of German as a foreign language.



The promotion of the teaching of German language as a minority language within education is ensured by a Framework Curriculum for Elementary Schools and Secondary Schools with the Language of Instruction of National Minorities. A Framework Curriculum for Elementary Schools with the Language of Instruction of National Minorities has been developed for the basic level and primary and lower secondary education. This curriculum enables elementary schools with instruction in German to teach the German language from the first to the fourth grade (21 hours) and from the fifth to the ninth grade (23 hours). Elementary schools can teach non-language subjects in German or they can use a CLIL methodology (Content and Language Integrated Learning).

679. *The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of German as an integral part of the curriculum and to ensure that there is an offer of teaching of German in all areas where there is a sufficient number of German-speakers.*

See the information in Points 678 and 695. In addition, German is one of the foreign languages that are offered in elementary and secondary schools.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide for the teaching of German as an integral part of the curriculum at primary, secondary, technical and vocational education in all areas where there is a sufficient number of German-speakers and to ensure continuity between the different levels of education.*

See the information in Points 478 and 695.

German School Bratislava (DSB), a joint German-Slovak school and kindergarten with instruction in German. DSB was opened in September 2005 and is a full-day facility with a kindergarten, elementary school – from the first to the fourth grade – and a gradually expanding grammar school. Unlike other international schools, DSB offers Slovak pupils additional teaching of topics according to the Slovak curricula. The objective is to help Slovak pupils and Slovak-speaking pupils in DSB to obtain a German and Slovak high school diploma.

In the school year 2014/15 the school offers:

A day care for children younger than two years.

A pre-school – preparation for the first grade.

Elementary school: grades 1 – 4

Grammar school: grades 5 – 12

*f ii to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;*

682. *... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to offer German as a subject of adult and continuing education.*

Examples:

- "German language for tourism", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/3;

- "German language for economy", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/6;
- "German language for hotel industry and gastronomy", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/2;
- "German language for agriculture", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/5;
- "German language for crafts and services", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/1;
- "German language for health and social practice", organiser: First Contact Centre for Entrepreneurs in Poltár, accreditation number: 1672/2010/212/4;
- "German language for care services", organiser: Mgr. Jarmila Pastoreková – ACADEMY, accreditation number: 2824/2010/235/1;
- "German language for care services", organiser: Unisun, s. r. o., Zvolen, accreditation number: 3206/2011/88/1;
- "Professional language training in German language for tourism", organiser: Educational Institute COOP, a. s., Mojmirovce, accreditation number: 0481/2011/96/2
- "Professional language training in German language for tourism", organiser: Top Trial, s. r. o., Prešov, accreditation number: 3145/2011/90/5;
- "German language for auxiliary staff in tourism, hotel industry and restaurants", organiser: RNDr. Andrea Majerníková NEXT, Košice, accreditation number: 1514/2012/140/1;
- "Professional language training in German language for care services", organiser: V a V Servis, s. r. o., Prešov, accreditation number: 3259/2012/5/1;
- "Professional language training in German language for construction industry", organiser: IDEX, s. r. o., Prievidza, accreditation number: 3324/2013/38/1;
- "Translation of professional texts in the context of translatology and selected departments – German language", organiser: Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, accreditation number: 3341/2013/83/1.

*g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

See the information in Point 687.

687.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the German language.*

The educational standard for history for the relevant school level is a basic document for the teaching of history in elementary schools and secondary schools (especially grammar schools).

The educational standard, part called characteristics of the subject of history for elementary schools and secondary schools, says that "...history leads pupils to a relationship to their own past through the prism of the present as a part of the development, adjustment and preservation of their historical consciousness in which the relation to other nations and ethnicities resonates. Also, to the understanding of and respect for cultural and other differences between people, various diversified groups and societies..."

Furthermore, the educational standard for history itself includes the content and requirements for the pupil/student related to the past and the culture of national minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

The above starting point for the teaching of history can be further modified and adapted to the needs and possibilities of parents, pupils and schools depending on the environment in which the school operates. As to the teaching of history, it is possible to expand the teaching about the past of each national minority in the Slovak Republic. It can be done so that the number of lessons in the School Educational Programme is increased or the topics related to the past and history of a national minority (Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Polish, Croatian, etc.) are included in the teaching of the subject of history.

*h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

*691. ... The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to plan and provide basic and further training of teachers as required to implement the undertakings chosen by the Slovak Republic under Article 8.*

Pursuant to Section 5 (1)(f) of Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Teachers and Professional Staff and on Amendment and Supplementation to Certain Acts, as amended, teachers have the right to continuing education and professional development in the language in which they carry out educational or professional activity. The Methodology and Pedagogy Centre is governed by this provision and draws upon the specific requirements of teachers and the interest in education in individual languages.

*i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

*695. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing teaching in and of minority languages, and of drawing up public periodic reports of its findings.*

The Register of Schools and Education Establishments includes Private German-Slovak Kindergarten in Bratislava. This kindergarten was not included in the inspection plan in the school year 2012/2013.

Schools in Bratislava, Nitrianske Pravno, Kežmarok, Chmeľnica, Gelnica and Medzev provide expanded teaching of German or the teaching of some subjects in German if there is a suitable teacher. Instruction in the German language does not exist in schools in Slovakia, only in the German School in Bratislava and the Grammar School in Poprad where all subjects are taught in German. However, these schools are not largely attended by children of the members of the German minority in Slovakia. The Goethe Institute also organises German language courses in Slovakia.

Kindergartens that use the German language are located in Bratislava and Kežmarok. Education in German is sporadically organised in cooperation with the Carpathian German Union in Slovakia in its Meeting Houses.

The teaching of a minority language was mainly based on the interest of legal representatives – parents living in the environment in which this language has its place in the

historical context of the given region. Conditions for the teaching of this language created in schools provide space for the teaching of it in the future.

## ***Article 9 – Judicial authorities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

*a in criminal proceedings:*

*ii to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*

*iii to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language;*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

698. ... *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

See the information to Point 90.

699. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use German in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she has also a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution. ...[I] strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in German, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

See the common information to Point 91.

700. ... *[T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to Point 92.

*b in civil proceedings:*

- ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
- iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

*c in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*

- ii to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
- iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

703. *...[T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters is available.*

See the common information in Point 95 or 90.

704. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

See the common information in Point 96.

## ***Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services***

### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- a iii to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages;*

715.

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures so that the German-speakers may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in German,*

*wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.*

See the common information in Point 112.

In municipalities with a large German-speaking minority oral communication in German is provided for by a municipal authority employee (e.g. Devínska Nová Ves). The Slovak authorities have not obtained any request from the German minority to use German in official communication.

#### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of the local and regional authorities on whose territory the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages is such as to justify the measures specified below, the Parties undertake to allow and/or encourage:*

- b the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*

721.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to:*

- take the necessary measures so that the German-speakers may submit oral or written applications in German, including in those municipalities where the German-speakers represent less than 20% of the municipal population, but still a significant number for the purpose of the present undertaking;*
- provide the legal basis required for German-speakers to submit oral or written applications in German also in relation to regional authorities where the speakers are present in sufficient numbers.*

See the information in Point 120.

- c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*

725. ... *The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures to allow and encourage the publication by local and regional authorities of their official documents also in German, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

See the information in Point 125.

*f the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;*

*729. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to encourage the use of German by local authorities in debates in their assemblies, irrespective of the 20% threshold.*

See the information in Point 145.

*g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

### *Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

*c to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages.*

*742. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to allow German-speakers to submit a request in German to public services, including in those municipalities where they do not attain the 20% threshold but represent nevertheless a sufficient number for the purpose of the present undertaking.*

See the common information in Point 144.

If the German-speaking minority submits a request to use the German language in official communication, the Slovak authorities will deal with these requests by means of German-speaking employees or interpreters.

### *Paragraph 4*

*With a view to putting into effect those provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 accepted by them, the Parties undertake to take one or more of the following measures:*

*c compliance as far as possible with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used.*

748. *The third periodical report does not contain any specific information concerning this undertaking.*

The state and local government employ members of national minorities, many of whom work in the departments that use the languages of national minorities, but their central registration (the registration of employees speaking regional or minority language) is not kept under this kind of categorisation.

## **Article 11 – Media**

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*
  - iii to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

755.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to increase the broadcasting time and the frequency of the time-slots allocated to the German language on public radio and television.*

- b ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

Broadcasting time reserved for German language on Slovak Television was as follows: three hours in 2011, four hours in 2012 and 3.5 hours in 2013.<sup>8</sup> The annual scope of the national broadcast in German language within the broadcast of the Slovak Radio was decreased from 18 hours in 2011 to 16 hours in 2012.

Broadcasting for the German, Czech and Polish minority in 2012 was executed in the form of a news magazine separately for each minority with a three-week periodicity.

759. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in German on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

- c ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

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<sup>8</sup> Source: Information message on the status of the national broadcast of the RTVS of 9 May 2013.



763. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in German on private television channels on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

*d to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;*

See the information to Point 161.

767. *... It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect. ...*

See the information to Point 169.

768. *... The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in German.*

See the information to Point 170.

769. *The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in German relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.*

*e i to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages;*

See the common information to Point 170.

In the case of German, an example of such a work is the feature film *The Return of Storks* (2009). German language is used in the film in addition to Slovak. "The story is about the search for values and home. Vanda, a young German stewardess, decides to solve her relationship problems by escaping temporarily to Runina, a village in eastern Slovakia. The municipality is the home of Vanda's grandmother who, after decades, has returned to the place from where she was deported after the Second World War and where her love was waiting for her all that time. New meetings are dragging Vanda into a world of trading with peoples' destinies."

772. *... The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to take appropriate measures to enable at least one newspaper to be published in German with sufficient frequency.*

See the common information to Point 175.

In the context of the publishing of German language periodicals, the Ministry of Culture registers six titles as of today. *Karpatenblatt* monthly is published under the regional name of *The Germans' Monthly in Slovakia – Monatsblatt der Deutschen in der Slowakei*. As

to the content, it focuses on history and contemporary culture and also on the activities of German minority living in Slovakia. *Pressburger Zeitung*, a German bimonthly, focuses on economic problems for investors and also provides information on tourism. The *Hurra!* monthly and *Spitze* illustrated bimonthly are published in order to promote education in the German language and to increase the interest in the teaching of this language especially among young people. *Slowakische Zeitschrift für Germanistik* is a professional magazine for specialists in German studies and research workers in this field that is published twice a year. The *NPZ – NEUE PRESSBURGER ZEITUNG* monthly focuses on the cultural, social and economic topics for the general public.

*f ii to apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in the regional or minority languages;*

776. *The Committee of Experts considers ... encourages the authorities to apply existing measures for financial assistance to audiovisual works in German and to provide concrete examples in the next periodical report.*

See the common information to Point 169.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

780. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

See the common information in Point 182.

## ***Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to cultural activities and facilities – especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries, including inter alia the use of new technologies – the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used and to the extent that the public authorities are competent, have power or play a role in this field:*

*c to foster access in regional or minority languages to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling activities;*

784. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to foster access in German to works produced in other languages.*

The Museum of Culture of the Carpathian Germans (a branch of the Slovak National Museum) plays an important role in the improving of access to German language. A documentation and information centre focused on the issue of history and culture of the Carpathian Germans constitutes a part of the institution. The basis is a library that includes periodicals and non-periodicals published in Slovakia and abroad. In this respect, the institution represents the most complete institution in Slovakia. The library is used by students and professionals from Slovakia and abroad. The museum also publishes its own edition Acta Carpatho-Germanica. Twenty volumes were published in this edition until 2014. The museum has also published multiple catalogues of exhibitions, one monograph and promotional materials on the history and culture of the Carpathian Germans. The total annual volume of funds allocated within the 2014 culture budget heading accounted for EUR 104,783.

#### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage and/or provide appropriate cultural activities and facilities in accordance with the preceding paragraph.*

792. *The Committee of Experts ... would welcome specific examples of such cultural activities and facilities concerning German.*

In 2014, the Slovak Film Institute released a DVD of the film "Signum Laudis" with German subtitles for the members of German speaking minority.

#### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to make appropriate provision, in pursuing their cultural policy abroad, for regional or minority languages and the cultures they reflect.*

795. *The Committee of Experts ... would welcome specific examples concerning German.*

Lumière Cinema – a cinema of the Slovak Film Institute provides the public with Slovak, European and world audio-visual culture. It focuses on Slovak film, European cinematography and archive cinema. It organises regular cycles as well as reviews and festivals. More than 90% of films shown in the cinema are shown in original sound with subtitles.

### ***Article 13 – Economic and social life***

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

*800. The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

- b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

*802. ...[S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in the Slovak legislation.*

See the common information in Points 195 and 197.

#### *Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

*808. The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

See the common information in Point 203.

### **Article 14 – Transfrontier exchanges**

*The Parties undertake:*

- a to apply existing bilateral and multilateral agreements which bind them with the States in which the same language is used in identical or similar form, or if necessary to seek to conclude such agreements, in such a way as to foster contacts between the users of the same language in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education;*

812. *The Committee of Experts ... requests again the Slovak authorities to clarify in the next periodical report to what extent agreements with Austria and other German-speaking countries foster contacts between the users of German in the Slovak Republic and in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education.*

Based on a contract of cooperation concluded with Austria within a 2007 – 2013 Slovak-Austrian Cross-Border Cooperation programme, the Bratislava region, as a project partner together with an Austrian leading partner Niederösterreich Werbung implement a project under priority Learning/Knowledge Region and Economic Competitiveness, area 1.2. The main objective of the project is to strengthen cooperation in tourism between boarder tourist destinations Lower Austria and Bratislava region. This project also creates an institutional network of destination management in the territory of the Bratislava region – by means of the transfer of know-how of the Austrian partner. The level of tourism in both regions is very different because in Lower Austria there has been a professional tourism organisation since 1995. As of 15 February 2012, the Bratislava region established a district tourism organisation under the name "Tourism of Bratislava Region" whose main objective is to provide for destination management and to promote destinations inside and outside its borders. Thanks to this organisation, the Austrian destination organisations have acquired the missing relevant cooperation partner. It has several instruments and strategic approaches for the bilateral exchange of know-how. Knowledge in the field of tourism development is provided in the form of the development of professional skills and awareness of the target groups and also in the form of the improvement of qualification of employees of the future tourism organisation.

The project target groups consist of professional workers and the staff of the tourism organisation as well as users, experts, tourism entrepreneurs, representatives of local authorities, associations, not-for-profit organisations and the population of the Bratislava region. Representatives of the above target groups are engaged in the project by means of participation in seminars, workshops and events (study tours).

Simultaneously, the project has created several important marketing and communication tools – newsletters, mobile presentation, website, e-marketing.

The created network structures provide each other with support within the cross-border promotion of their own regions and they also create common products, such as an image brochure, a map and an event. All the above components have one thing in common – Genuss – "pleasure in the segments of gastronomy, wine and events". Slovak partners of the project can get insight into the internal system of work and processes of Austrian partner and to acquire experience directly from the "kitchen of Austrian destination marketing" so to speak.

- b for the benefit of regional or minority languages, to facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory the same language is used in identical or similar form.*

815. *The Committee of Experts ... requests again the Slovak authorities to clarify in the next periodical report how the Framework Agreement between the Slovak Republic and Austria on Cross-border Cooperation between Territorial Units or Bodies benefits the German language in the Slovak Republic.*

Cooperation in education takes place under an Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on Cultural

Cooperation signed in 1997 and valid for five years with automatic renewal for another five years. The forms and scopes of the cooperation are defined in the Minutes of Meeting of Joint Slovak-German Commission of 2001.

Within the framework of academic mobility, Slovak applicants make use of the offer of scholarships of the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD that is the biggest provider of scholarships in Slovakia according to the number of the granted scholarships. The teaching of German language in Slovak schools is promoted by German teachers and German university lecturers. In 2013/2014, there were 27 teachers in secondary schools and 5 university lecturers (Comenius University Bratislava, Economic University Bratislava, Martin Bel University Banská Bystrica, Constantine the Philosopher University Nitra and Prešov University).

In order to promote the teaching of Slovak language, there are three lecturers of Slovak language and culture in universities in the Federal Republic of Germany (Regensburg University, University of Cologne in Cologne, Humboldt University in Berlin). In the school year 2011/2012, the Joint German-Slovak School in Bratislava was included into the network of schools of the Slovak Republic. The school provides education from the level of kindergarten up to the level of grammar school in German language.

#### Cooperation with Austria:

Cooperation in the field of science and education between Slovakia and Austria takes place under an Agreement Between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Austria on Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science signed on 13 October 1999 in Vienna and a Protocol of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Joint Slovak-Austrian Commission on Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science for 2013 – 2018 signed in June 2013 in Vienna.

One of the priorities is the promotion of the teaching of German language in Slovakia within which four Austrian teachers are sent to the Imrich Karvaš Trade Academy in Bratislava and five lecturers are sent to Slovak universities (Comenius University Bratislava, Economic University Bratislava, Prešov University, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica).

Academic mobility between Slovakia and Austria takes place within a bilateral programme Austria – Slovakia Action, Cooperation in Science and Education. Scholarships for the following activities are granted every year by means of the above programme:

- a) the study of German language and scholarships for a summer Slovak language course (SAS)
- b) study and scientific visits for diplomats, doctoral candidates and post-doctoral candidates
- c) financial support for the implementation of joint research projects.

## ***Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech and Polish***

### ***Article 8 – Education***

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:*

- a i to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- ii to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or*
- iii to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient;*

*844. ... The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to become more involved in the provision of pre-school education in Bulgarian in order to ensure that the demand is met.*

See the information in Point 869.

*846. The Committee of Experts ...encourages the Slovak authorities to support the provision of pre-school education in Bulgarian in order to ensure that the access is possible for all those interested and make available at least a substantial part of pre-school education in Croatian and Polish.*

Kindergartens are not restricted so that a significant part of education can be conducted in the language according to the interest of legal representatives.

- b iii to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*
- c iii to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*

*852. The Committee of Experts has no information with respect to the extent to which the Croatian varieties spoken around Bratislava could be included (e.g. oral use) in the teaching of standard Croatian. It urges the Slovak authorities to clarify this matter, in co-operation with the speakers.*

As in Point 846.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the relevant geographical areas, within pre-school, primary and secondary education, for the teaching of Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish as an integral part of the curriculum.*

The promotion of the teaching of national minority languages is ensured by a Framework Curriculum for Elementary Schools and Secondary Schools with the language of instruction of national minorities or by the use of disposable lessons to teach this subject. In the relevant geographic territories it is possible under applicable legislation, namely the school educational programme.

- d iii to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum;*

855. *According to the information available to the Committee of Experts, there are no technical and vocational schools where Bulgarian, Croatian or Polish are taught as an integral part of the curriculum.*

In the last two years the transformation of vocational schools to the dual training system has been going on, including amendment to the legislation and the organisation of practical training by employers with an emphasis on the decrease of the number of unemployed graduates and their chance to enter the labour market.

- f ii to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;*

859. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to offer Bulgarian, Croatian or Polish as subjects of adult and continuing education.*

- g to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;*

861. *The third periodical report provides no information on Bulgarian. As to Croatian and Polish, it states that no measures have been taken to ensure the teaching of the history and culture reflected by these languages.*

The objection in the first sentence was answered in Point 869.

As regards the second sentence – educational standard for history for the relevant school level is a basic document for the teaching of history in elementary schools and secondary schools (especially grammar schools).

The educational standard, in the part called characteristics of the subject of history for elementary schools and secondary schools, says that "...history leads pupils to a relationship to their own past through the prism of the present as a part of the development, adjustment and preservation of their historical consciousness in which the relation to other nations and



ethnicities resonates. Also, to the understanding of and respect for cultural and other differences between people, various diversified groups and societies..."

Furthermore, the educational standard for history includes the content and requirements for the pupil/student related to the past and the culture of national minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

The above starting point for the teaching of history can be further modified and adapted to the needs and possibilities of parents, pupils and schools depending on the environment in which the school operates. As to the teaching of history, it is possible to expand the teaching about the past of each national minority in the Slovak Republic. It can be done so that the number of lessons in the School Educational Programme is increased or the topics related to the past and history of a national minority (Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Polish, Croatian, etc.) are included in the teaching of the subject of history.

A methodical teaching material called "Let's Get to Know Each Other – National Minorities in the Slovak Republic" is being prepared since 2014.

*h to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;*

*865. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to provide the basic and further training of the teachers of Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish.*

The Methodology and Pedagogy Centre has not obtained any request for continuing education in these languages so far.

*i to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.*

*869. The Committee of Experts ... urges the Slovak authorities to set up or commission a supervisory body with the task of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing teaching in and of minority languages, and of drawing up public periodic reports of its findings.*

The Register of Schools and Education Establishments includes the Christ Botev Private Kindergarten with Bulgarian language in Bratislava. This kindergarten was not included in the inspection plan in the school year 2012/2013. There is no kindergarten or classes with instruction in Croatian or Czech in the Slovak Republic.

Bulgarian national minority

- Christ Botev Private Kindergarten, Záporožská 8, 851 01 Bratislava. The kindergarten was founded by the Civic Association of Friends of the Christ Botev Bulgarian School in Bratislava. The kindergarten is attended by 50 children of Bulgarian, Slovak and other nationalities.

- Christ Botev Private Bulgarian Elementary School and Private Bulgarian Grammar School, Záporožská 8, 851 01 Bratislava. The school was founded by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria in Sofia. In Slovakia, it is included in the network of schools and education establishments as a private school with instruction in the Bulgarian language. The school is attended by pupils and students of Bulgarian, Slovak and other nationalities. Ninety-seven students attended the school in the school year 2013/2014. Instruction is provided in Bulgarian and English is taught as a foreign language. Slovak is taught according to the curricula of the Slovak Republic. There is mandatory graduation from Slovak language and literature, Bulgarian language and literature; other mandatory optional subjects and other graduation courses can be selected as well. Graduates are given secondary school leaving certificates in Slovak and Bulgarian languages. In November 2013, the school celebrated its 65th anniversary.

- Christ Botev Private Bulgarian Elementary School and Private Bulgarian Grammar School. The school has established contact with an elementary school in Svätý Anton and they have jointly organised two events. Textbooks and teaching aides are provided by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Bulgaria in the Bulgarian language. Teachers do not have the possibility of further education within continuing education in the minority language.

- Department of Slavic Philology of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Comenius University in Bratislava. Eleven students of Bulgarian, Slovak and other nationalities have been attending the department this year. In addition to Bulgarian language, they can choose other Slavic languages.

- Prešov University – The university has been cooperating for a long time with the University of Episkopi Constantine Preslavski in Šumen (Bulgaria).

- Bulgarian Cultural Institute – Bulgarian language courses in the institute are another educational option for members of the Bulgarian national minority.

#### Czech national minority

At present there is no education establishment with Czech language of instruction in Slovakia. Under applicable laws and inter-governmental agreements, the students of secondary schools and especially universities in Slovakia can study in a relevant secondary school and university in the Czech Republic after they have successfully passed entrance exams. This also applies to citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the Czech and Moravian national minority who make use of it according to possibility and interest.

#### Croatian national minority

The teaching of the standard Croatian language at the secondary school level is conducted in the Private Grammar School, Žitavská 1 in Bratislava and at the university level at the Department of Slavonic Studies of the Comenius University in Bratislava. Instruction in the standard Croatian language conducted by a Croatian teacher is organised for the members of the Croatian national minority (especially children and young people). Instruction is provided once a week in each municipality where the Croatians live and the course is voluntary. The costs of instruction are covered by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Croatia. In addition, other voluntary types of the teaching of Croatian language are organised for candidates born in Devínska Nová Ves (by means of the CROats project in SlovaKia and AusTria implemented within a programme of the European Union for the European Territorial Cooperation).

Teachers teaching the Croatian language during leisure time activities in each municipality participate in annual seminars organised by the "Hrvatska matica iseljenika" in Croatia.

Polish language

Education in the Polish language in Slovakia as such is exclusively provided for by not-for-profit organisations.

Language learning for children and young people is provided by:

- The Polish Saturday-Sunday School in Žilina with registered office in the Romuald Zaymus Religious Elementary School in Žilina. The Polonus Association is the initiator and administrator of the school. Professional teachers from Bielsko-Biała, Poland, teach at the school. Professional sponsor is Mgr. Renata Rosovská – quaestor of the Public Administration University in Bielsko-Biała. The school is registered in the Polish school system and pupils are given Polish certificates. Lessons with teachers are organised once or twice a month on Saturday and Sunday. The teaching takes place mainly in Žilina, but trips to elementary school in Bielsko-Biała are organised for pupils. The following subjects are taught: Polish language and literature, history, civic education and music education.

- The Polish Language Course at the Religious Leisure Time Centre in Nitra in Hviezdoslavova Street. The teaching of the basics of the Polish language is conducted once a week for two hours as an extracurricular activity. The Polish Club – Nitra Region is the initiator. The course is attended by pre-school age children and the pupils of the first level of elementary school. Most of the children are of Polish origin for whom Polish is a mother tongue, but there are also children from Slovak families for whom Polish is a foreign language.

- The School Consulting Centre at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bratislava was established in 2003 for the children of the embassy staff and Polish firms delegated for business in Slovakia and for the children of the Polish minority in Slovakia. The founder is the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Poland. The teaching is conducted on Saturday; it is intended for pre-school education and for the first level of elementary school.

- Language teaching for adults is conducted in the Interactive Academy of Polish Language and Literature in the form of internet teaching. A meeting with teachers is organised once a month in Žilina. The Polonus Association is the organiser and administrator of the internet platform and lecturers are professional teachers from Poland. Technical equipment used in the school is owned by the Polonus Civic Association. Textbooks and teaching aides are provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

- A Department of Slavic Languages is established at the Faculty of Humanities of the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. Within the framework of a "Polish Language and Literature" study programme it is possible to acquire a second-level university education.

## ***Article 9 – Judicial authorities***

### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:*

*a in criminal proceedings:*

- ii *to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or*
- iii *to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language;*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned;*

872. ... *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.*

See response to question No. 90.

873. *The Committee of Experts ... strongly urges the Slovak authorities to guarantee the right of the accused to use the Bulgarian, Polish or Croatian language in the criminal proceedings irrespective of whether he or she has also a command of Slovak and to ensure that the accused will be specifically informed of this right as of the beginning of criminal prosecution. ... [T]he Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to provide in the legislation that requests and evidence may be produced in Bulgarian, Polish and Croatian, and that the use of interpreters and translations where necessary does not involve any extra expense for the person concerned, even if the latter has a command of Slovak.*

See response to question No. 91.

874. *[T]he Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.*

*b in civil proceedings:*

- ii *to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*
- iii *to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

*c in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:*

- ii *to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or*

*iii to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages,*

*if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations;*

877. ... [T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take measures to ensure that a sufficient number of trained interpreters are available.

See response to question No. 95 or 90

878. The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to take proactive measures facilitating the implementation of these undertakings in practice and asks them to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report.

See response to question No. 96.

## **Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services**

### *Paragraph 1*

*Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:*

*a iii to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages;*

886. The representatives of the Croatian-speakers have informed the Committee of Experts that the new provision concerning the 15% threshold will only apply to municipalities as such, not to those that are suburbs of a larger municipality. In this case, it would not be applicable to the suburbs of Bratislava, where the Croatian speakers live in significant numbers. The Committee of Experts invites the authorities to provide clarifications in this respect.

Under Section 2(3) of Act No. 184/1999 Coll., the act also applies to the districts of Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, and Košice that in this context have the status of a municipality. The act further stipulates that in municipalities in which the citizens of the Slovak Republic who belong to a national minority and have their permanent residence in a given municipality account for at least 15% of the total population of that municipality after two consecutive population censuses, such citizens shall have the right to use their minority language in official communication in this municipality.

City districts with a larger number of members of the Croatian national minority (e.g. Devínska Nová Ves, Jarovce, Čunovo) constitute an organic part of the city of Bratislava. Neither part of the above city districts meets the 15% legal condition.

In the above city districts, communication with members of the Croatian minority is provided for by at least one employee speaking Croatian. The same applies to a municipality that is not a part of Bratislava (Chorvátsky Grob).

*The Committee of Experts urges the Slovak authorities to take the necessary measures so that the speakers of Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish may submit oral or written applications and receive a reply in these languages, wherever there is a sufficient number of speakers for the purpose of the present undertaking, regardless of the 20% threshold still existing in Slovak legislation.*

See response to question No. 112.

Members of the Bulgarian and Polish national minority have so far not made use of the possibility to communicate with Slovak authorities in the language of minorities, because due to the similarity of their languages with Slovak they all speak Slovak. The Croatian minority is the biggest one, while Slovak authorities are ready to provide for communication with the members of this minority in these municipalities in Croatian by means of their employees or by means of at least one of their employees. Slovak authorities have not obtained any request for communication with them in the languages of the above minorities so far.

*Paragraph 2*

*In respect of the local and regional authorities on whose territory the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages is such as to justify the measures specified below, the Parties undertake to allow and/or encourage:*

- b the possibility for users of regional or minority languages to submit oral or written applications in these languages;*
- c the publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- d the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in the relevant regional or minority languages;*
- f the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;*
- g the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages.*

See the information to questions 120, 125, 140.

*Paragraph 3*

*With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority*

*languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages.*

See the information to question 144.

#### *Paragraph 4*

*With a view to putting into effect those provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 accepted by them, the Parties undertake to take one or more of the following measures:*

- a translation or interpretation as may be required;*
- c compliance as far as possible with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used.”*

893.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to assess where in the Slovak Republic there are sufficient numbers of speakers of Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish for the purpose of these undertakings and to take flexible measures regarding the implementation of the undertakings entered into by the Slovak Republic under Article 10 paragraphs 2 to 4 of the Charter.*

If these national minorities require communication with Slovak authorities in the language of national minorities in the territory in which they live, Slovak authorities will deal with these requirements in accordance with their commitments.

### **Article 11 – Media**

#### *Paragraph 1*

*The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of the media:*

- a to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:*
  - iii to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;*

899.

*The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Slovak authorities to:*

- make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer radio programmes in Bulgarian and to increase the frequency of the time-slots allocated to Bulgarian on public television;*
- make adequate provision so that public broadcasters offer radio programmes in Croatian and to increase the frequency of the time-slots allocated to Croatian on public television;*
- increase the frequency of the time-slots allocated to Polish on public radio and television.*

*b ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of radio programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

Due to the number of Polish speakers in the Slovak Republic, the Polish language has long had the largest space in the public service broadcasting among all minority languages stated in this part. In 2012, three hours of television broadcasting were dedicated to Polish language and it did not change compared to 2011. Also, television broadcasting in Bulgarian in the duration of two hours remained the same in this time period. A positive change was recorded in 2012 in relation to television broadcasting in Croatian. The broadcasting in this language was not included in the programme structure of Slovak Television in 2011; nevertheless, in 2012 two hours of public service television broadcasting in Croatian language were recorded.

The radio broadcasting of the public service broadcaster offers a wider space for the inclusion of minority languages in the programme structure. This is primarily possible through the Radio Patria broadcasting. The radio broadcasting in Polish in 2012 was the same as in 2011, i.e. 17 hours. Neither the RTVS nor the Council keeps records of radio broadcasting in Polish and Croatian, so it is not possible to estimate the time provided to them. Here too there are no restrictions for broadcasters if there is interest in broadcasting in these languages.

For 2015, the RTVS has also included in the programme structure for radio broadcasting the languages that have not been included in the radio broadcasting – Croatian, Bulgarian and Serbian.<sup>9</sup>

903. *The Committee of Experts encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish on private radio stations on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

See the information to Point 161.

*c ii to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis;*

907. *...[T]he Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to provide information on measures taken to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of programmes in Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish on private television channels on a regular basis, such as financial incentives or licensing criteria in the next periodical report.*

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<sup>9</sup> Source: The 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic groups, <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/vybor-pre-narodnostne-mensiny-a-etnicke-skupiny/>



See the information to Point 161.

*d to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in the regional or minority languages;*

911. ... *It is not clear to the Committee of Experts whether the support of audiovisual works dealing with national minorities and disadvantaged groups will always be a priority under Programme 1 [of the Audiovisual Fund], thereby ensuring regular funding, nor whether the supported audiovisual works are produced in regional or minority languages. It would welcome specific information in this respect. ...*

See the information to Point 169.

912. ... *The Committee of Experts would welcome more information in the next periodical report on children's programmes produced and distributed in Croatian, Bulgarian and Polish.*

See the information to Point 170.

913. *The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide concrete examples of audiovisual works in Bulgarian, Croatian, and Polish relevant for this undertaking in the next periodical report.*

See the information to Point 170.

Examples related to Croatian language: a fiction film All Right of 2012. Croatian language is used in the film in addition to Slovak. "This is a light romantic, musical comedy about three friends on a bad vacation in Croatia, where they experience many adventures, funny situations and where there is always something or someone that should not be there."

*e i to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages;*

917. ... *Bearing in mind the numbers of the Croatian, Bulgarian and Polish speakers, [the Committee of Experts] encourages the Slovak authorities to facilitate the regular publication of one periodical in each language, in accordance with the wishes of the speakers, which could develop into a newspaper over time.*

See the information to Point 175.

There are three Polish language periodicals registered in Slovakia: *Monitor Polojny*, a Polish monthly, focuses on the social and cultural life of the citizens of Polish nationality living in the Slovak Republic and also provides information on current events in Poland. *Kurier Pieňinski*, a periodical published twice a year, includes information on tourism. *Wieści prosto z gór / News Directly from the Mountains*, published twice a year, has a similar content and focuses on tourist topics. One Croatian language title *HRVATSKA ROSA* has been

published since 2012 providing information on the life of the Croatian community in Slovakia. *Sanarodnik* (Compatriot) is a quarterly issued in a combination of Slovak and Bulgarian. It focuses on the lives of children in the Bulgarian school and kindergarten in Bratislava and on the lives of members of the Bulgarian minority in Slovakia contributing to the fostering of friendship between the two nations. It also includes reports on events organised by the Bulgarian minority in Slovakia and publishes the most important information on events in Bulgaria.

*f ii to apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in the regional or minority languages;*

921. ... *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the authorities to apply existing measures for financial assistance to audiovisual works in Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish and to provide concrete examples in the next periodical report.*

See the information to Point 169.

### *Paragraph 3*

*The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

925. *The Committee of Experts ... encourages the Slovak authorities to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within the bodies responsible for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media.*

See the information to Point 182.

## ***Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities***

### *Paragraph 2*

*In respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage and/or provide appropriate cultural activities and facilities in accordance with the preceding paragraph.*

936. *The Committee of Experts ... would welcome specific examples of such cultural activities and facilities concerning Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish.*

The Slovak National Museum – the Museum of Culture of the Croatian in Slovakia (MCCS) is a documentation, science-research and methodological museum workplace focused on the history and culture of citizens of the Croatian minority since their arrival to

Slovakia until now. Its mission is to acquire, preserve, professionally process and make available museum collections and funds evidencing the roots, history and culture of the Croatians living in Slovakia or in other countries (especially Gradish Croatians).

Activities in 2012:

Exhibitions:

- Winter in the work of naive painters (from Ivan Melicherčík collection) – 15 December 2011 – 28 March 2012;
- Look children, something is flying – 30 March – 23 May 2012 with many accompanying activities for schools;
- Bend me, mother (Martin, Bratislava, Levoča);
- Franz Liszt and his Bratislava friends – 21 October 2011 – 30 October 2012 (Under the Castle Exhibition Hall, Bratislava);
- The Night of Museums and Galleries – 19 May 2012;
- Ethnographer Antonín Václavík – Záhorie Museum Skalica – 18 May – 18 June 2012, Bratislava, 2 September – 7 November 2012;
- Photoforum 2012 – 8 November 2012 – 31 January 2013;
- I wish you, I wish – 13 December 2012 – 31 December 2012 – a traditional Christmas exhibition.

Lectures:

- Josip Moser, The Life and Work of Rudžer Boškovič – 29 May 2012 – in the SNM-MCCS
- Lubica Chorváthová, The Life and Work of Ethnographer Antonín Václavík – 30 October 2012 – in the Czech Union in Bratislava.
- Josip Moser, The Life and Work of Nikola Tesla – 11 December 2012.

Concerts:

- Two concerts of Franz List – 14 – 15 May 2012 – within the exhibition of Franz Liszt – Under the Castle;
- Three Summer Chamber Concerts – July-August 2012.

The total volume of funds allocated within the SNM to the culture of national minorities from the budget heading Culture in 2012: The 2012 budget determined by a budget measure of 16 February 2012 to the amount of EUR 60,468 was adjusted by a budget measure of 24 October 2012 to EUR 46,968. The total volume of funds allocated to the culture of national minorities from other resources (the EU, etc.): not allocated.

Activities in 2013:

In 2013, the museum focused mainly on revision of the collection fund and completion of the museum documentation. The 2013 exhibitions were mainly borrowed and had a regional character – naturalistic and photographic. The museum participated in six exhibitions: The History and Culture of the Croatians in Slovakia, a permanent MCCS exhibition, Špirhač, gacek. Trúlelek – February – March; the Morava River – April – May; Slovak Country – May; From the Work of the Children of Basic School of Arts – May; Mirna Šišul – Animals and Music – June; Photographs from All Over the World of Photograph and Traveller Erik Madera – August – September; Cyril and Method on Stamps – October; PhotoForum 2013 – November; Croatian Christmas Heritage – Hrvatski Božić – December. Cooperation with the Ethnographic Museum and Historical Museum in Zagreb was established in 2013.

Activities in 2014: acquisitions, lectures, establishing cooperation with the documentation centre of Gradish Croats in Vienna, research related to the preparation of own exhibitions, establishment of professional library.

Thematic exhibitions in 2014: Homeland – June – textile work of elementary school children with motifs of Croatian costumes from Istria and Zagreb – in cooperation; Hrvatska glazba i identitet – August – October – an exhibition borrowed from the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb; Hrvatski Božić – an exhibition thematically focused on Christmas in the families of the Slovak Croats; the opening of own exhibition of the SNM-MCCS – Ethnographer Antonín Václavík – (Hodonín – June – August, the SNM-Museum of the SNR – September). The total funds allocated to the SNM-MCCS from the state budget were EUR 63,468.

The Croatian language was represented in seven films with the majority or minority representation of Croatian language and Slovak subtitles (*Priest's Children*, director: Vinko Brešan, 2013; *Velvet Terrorists*, director: Pavol Pekarčík, Ivan Ostrochovský, Peter Kerekes, 2013).

In 2014, in relation to the Bulgarian language, the Slovak Film Institute organised two special projections of Bulgarian films with Slovak subtitles: *Goat Horn* (director: Metodi Andonov, 1971) and *Thou, Who Art in Heaven* (director: Dočo Bodžakov, 1989).

The Lumière Cinema has showed more than 70 films in original Polish language (with Slovak subtitles).

### **Article 13 – Economic and social life**

#### *Paragraph 1*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country:*

- a to eliminate from their legislation any provision prohibiting or limiting without justifiable reasons the use of regional or minority languages in documents relating to economic or social life, particularly contracts of employment, and in technical documents such as instructions for the use of products or installations;*

*945. The Committee of Experts observes that the current legislation still severely limits the use of minority languages in documents relating to economic and social life. ...*

- b to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language;*

*947. ...[S]uch prohibitions as required by the undertaking are not expressly laid down in the Slovak legislation.*

See the common information to Points 195 and 197.

*Paragraph 2*

*With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:*

- c to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons;*

*953. The Committee of Experts points out that the undertaking requires the authorities to ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers in their own language.*

See the common information to the Point 203.