

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 16 May 2014

MIN-LANG (2014) 42

**EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES**

**Statement by the Committee of Experts  
of the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages  
on the situation in Ukraine**

## **Statement by the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) on the situation in Ukraine**

*(unanimously adopted by the Committee at its 47th meeting, Strasbourg, 13-16 May 2014)*

The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) recalls that the Charter is designed for pluralist and multilingual societies and reiterates that “the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages in the different countries and regions of Europe represent an important contribution to the building of a Europe based on the principles of democracy and cultural diversity within the framework of national sovereignty and territorial integrity” (Preamble of the Charter).

Referring to its evaluation report on the application of the Charter in Ukraine of 15 November 2012 and its reassessment report of 25 March 2014, the Committee recalls that in respect of the Russian language, it had found that most undertakings chosen by Ukraine under the Charter were fulfilled or partly fulfilled. However, as far as the other minority languages are concerned, several of the Charter undertakings still needed to be implemented. This was also the case in Crimea.

Particularly in the current situation in Ukraine, the protection granted by the Charter constitutes an additional European safeguard for minority languages. The Committee of Experts expresses its deep concern for the situation of the minority languages and their users in Crimea. Under the present conditions, Ukraine cannot implement the Charter and consequently the Committee of Experts cannot monitor the application of the Charter to Bulgarian, Crimean Tatar, German, Greek, Krimchak and Karaim in Crimea.

With reference to the Secretary General’s report on the *State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe (May 2014)*, the Committee of Experts offers its expertise on regional or minority languages and their users to the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe as well as the Ukrainian authorities, also on an ad hoc basis.