



Resolution CM/ResCMN(2018)1 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the United Kingdom

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 February 2018
at the 1306th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as "the Framework Convention"),

Having regard to Resolution Res(97)10 of 17 September 1997 setting out rules adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention;

Having regard to the voting rule adopted in the context of adopting Resolution Res(97)10;¹

Having regard to the instrument of ratification submitted by the United Kingdom on 15 January 1998;

Recalling that the Government of the United Kingdom transmitted its State report in respect of the fourth monitoring cycle under the Framework Convention on 26 March 2015;

Having examined the Advisory Committee's fourth opinion adopted on 25 May 2016,

Adopts the following conclusions in respect of the United Kingdom:

The authorities are invited to take account of the observations and recommendations contained in Sections I and II of the Advisory Committee's fourth opinion. In particular, they should take the following measures to improve further the implementation of the Framework Convention:

Recommendations for immediate action:²

- Revert to previous legislation in England addressing specifically the provision of permanent and temporary sites to meet the needs of the Gypsies and Travellers minority, and reinstate a duty for local authorities to provide these sites when the need has been identified in order to ensure adequate availability; reintroduce a compliance duty for local authorities as regards the provision of sites in Scotland; and set up a multi-agency taskforce on Traveller sites in Northern Ireland to cater to the needs of Irish Travellers;
- Counter the climate of inter-ethnic prejudices and hate speech by stepping up efforts and initiatives to promote tolerance and intercultural dialogue; continue firmly to condemn provocative language in public discourse; engage with mass media outlets to promote a more nuanced understanding and reporting of facts that risk fuelling intolerant and ethnically hostile behaviour and reduce the use of derogatory language; and endeavour to establish an independent press regulator responding to the criteria enunciated by the Leveson Report;

¹ In the context of adopting Resolution Res(97)10 on 17 September 1997, the Committee of Ministers also adopted the following rule: "Decisions pursuant to Articles 24.1 and 25.2 of the Framework Convention shall be considered to be adopted if two-thirds of the representatives of the Contracting Parties casting a vote, including a majority of the representatives of the Contracting Parties entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers, vote in favour".

² The recommendations below are listed in the order of the corresponding articles of the Framework Convention.

- Adopt appropriate legislation protecting and promoting the Irish language and take measures to ensure progress on language rights of Irish Speakers; the UK Government should engage in a dialogue to create the political consensus needed for adopting legislation; the Northern Ireland Executive should endeavour to implement the “good relations” duty as provided under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in a manner that does not run counter to the equality duty and that does not prevent access to rights of persons belonging to all national and ethnic minorities;
- Take all necessary steps to ensure to the Cornish minority the continued access to the linguistic and cultural rights provided by the Framework Convention. To this end, assess and, if needed, prolong after April 2019 the provision by the government to the Cornish Culture Fund of means to support the development of Cornish culture, heritage and language.

Further recommendations:

- Take the necessary measures to include a Cornish “tick-box” in the next census in view of the Cornish people’s recognition as a national minority.
- Collect disaggregated data on Gypsies, Travellers and Roma³ to help devise policies targeting the socio-economic inequalities that persons belonging to those minorities experience in England; start collecting disaggregated equality data on the situation of persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities to help adopt and implement effective minority protection and equality-promoting policies in Northern Ireland.
- Adopt robust and comprehensive unified legislation on equality or otherwise strengthen racial equality in Northern Ireland, and harmonise protection across the UK; introduce definitions of “good relations” and “sectarianism” in Northern Ireland legislation in line with international standards relating to combating racism and promoting human rights in general.
- Ensure that policy documents, such as integration and race strategies, are complemented by appropriate action plans and adequate resources to ensure effective access to rights for persons belonging to minorities, in particular with regard to the Northern Ireland Racial Equality Strategy 2015-2025.
- Take resolute action to ensure that the revision of the BBC Charter improves access to mass media for persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities; increase funding and ensure a variety of programmes for minority languages, in particular for the Irish language, and introduce such support for the Cornish language.
- Monitor effectively the measures adopted to guarantee equal access to education and to enhance the achievements of pupils belonging to national and ethnic minorities, with particular attention to Gypsies, Traveller and Roma children across the country.
- In Northern Ireland, renew efforts to develop Irish-medium education and Irish language teaching; expand and facilitate shared education; ensure that access to education and attendance by Traveller children is effectively put in place and monitored by the Traveller Education Support Service; identify pragmatic and flexible solutions to accommodating the demands of national and ethnic minorities on bilingual signage.
- Engage in a dialogue with the Cornish minority to ensure that cultural policies are developed in a way respectful of the traditions and the identity of the minority; improve the use and visibility of Cornish in public life at the local level and consider flexible and pragmatic solutions to allow more systematic provision of education in the Cornish language and of the Cornish culture.
- Intensify targeted initiatives to maximise participation of persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities in employment, training and career progression in line with the Vision 2020 targets. Continue the good dialogue with the three devolved administrations and establish permanent ongoing dialogue and consultative mechanisms with Cornwall Council.

³ The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.