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**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**



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Fourth Report submitted by Latvia

**Pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Framework
Convention for the Protection of National Minorities –
received on 27 October 2021**

**Fourth Report
on the Implementation of the Framework
Convention for the Protection of National
Minorities by the Republic of Latvia**

Riga, 2021

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Part I

Introduction

Preparation and structure of the report

1. This Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention ('Convention') for the Protection of National Minorities by the Republic of Latvia ('Fourth National Report') has been prepared as part of the fourth cycle of monitoring, in accordance with the Council of Europe guidelines for the preparation of Convention reports.¹
2. The Fourth National Report encompasses a period between 1 September 2016 and the approval of the report in 2021.²
3. The Fourth National Report consists of three parts. The first, the introduction, discusses the structure and the development of the report, as well as the scope of Latvia's obligations. The second part of the report includes information about compliance with the Convention based on the recommendations of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers resolution ('Resolution'), separating the issues to be addressed immediately, and additional recommendations. The third part provides information on the implementation of the Convention by article.
4. The Fourth National Report has seven annexes.
5. The Fourth National Report has been approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. Prior to its approval by the Government, the Fourth National Report was sent for review by the Advisory Committee of Ethnic Minority Organisations Representatives of the Ministry of Culture.

Scope of obligations of Latvia

6. On 26 May 2005, the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia ratified the Convention, and it took effect on 1 October 2005.
7. Upon ratifying the Convention, Latvia declared that the notion "national minorities" in the meaning of the Framework Convention, apply to citizens of Latvia who differ from Latvians in terms of their culture, religion or language, who have traditionally

¹<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680095c78>

² The third cycle of the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention in Latvia ended as the Council of Europe Committee of Minister resolution was adopted on 3 March 2021. In order to make the results of the third Convention implementation monitoring cycle known to the general public the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported the adoption of the Resolution in Latvian, English and Russian, as required by the Council of Europe guidelines for the preparation of Convention reports: <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/arpolitika/sabiedribas-integracija-latvija/integracijas-politika-latvija-daudzpusiga-pieejja/eiropas-padomes-visparejas-konvencijas-par-nacionalo-minoritasu-aizsardzibu-ratifikacija>

lived in Latvia for generations and consider themselves to belong to the State and society of Latvia, who wish to preserve and develop their culture, religion or language.

8. The application of the Convention was significantly expanded stating that persons who are not citizens of Latvia or another State but who permanently and legally reside in the Republic of Latvia, who do not belong to a national minority within the meaning of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as defined in this declaration, but who identify themselves with a national minority that meets the definition contained in this declaration, shall enjoy the rights prescribed in the Framework Convention, unless specific exceptions are prescribed by law. Latvia believes that the definition of national minorities it chose, as well as the declarations submitted by Latvia upon ratification of the Convention are in line with the spirit and purpose of the Convention, and the established international practice in this regard.
9. Latvia continues the legal entity of the Republic of Latvia that existed prior to the occupation by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1940. Following the restoration of its independence in 1991, the democratic institutions of the former Republic of Latvia were reinstated, along with the population, its legal system, property rights and international obligations as important core elements of the national identity. Thus, in the sense of public international law, Latvia is neither a newly established state, nor a successor to the State of the USSR.
10. The occupation by the USSR significantly altered the ethnic composition of Latvian population, following the deportations of Latvian population implemented by the USSR, russification and internal migration within the USSR. Following the restoration of state independence and democratic state system, a restructuring of public administration and education systems were carried out in order to preserve and develop essential elements characterising the Latvian state, e.g. the state (Latvian) language skills and use in the country.

Part II

Information about the implementation of the Convention, based on the recommendations from the Resolution of the Council of Europe

11. On 3 March 2021, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted a Resolution on the Implementation of the Convention in Latvia. The Committee of Ministers urged Latvian national authorities to address five urgent issues and follow five additional recommendations to improve the implementation of the Convention in Latvia.
12. Latvia highly appreciates the praise of the Council of Europe Advisory Committee for the progress achieved in the implementation of the Convention since the restoration of the country's independence. Latvia acknowledges its intention to continue fulfilling its obligations under the Convention, in cooperation with the Convention Advisory Committee.
13. Furthermore, the Fourth National Report includes detailed information about the implementation of the recommendations contained within the Resolution adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 3 March 2021³.

Urgent matters

- a. *Promote the integration of society as a two-way process, in particular encouraging active participation of all segments of society in all relevant fields, such as education, culture and employment, particularly in the public sector, and enhance intercultural contacts within society as a whole, beyond the promotion of proficiency in Latvian; consider the establishment of a dedicated structure whose functions would include co-ordination of social cohesion policies in all relevant sectors;*
 - b. *Strongly encourage effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities including ethnic Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Polish, Lithuanians, Jews, Roma and others, in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them, in accordance with Article 15 of the Framework Convention.*
14. 35% of Latvia's residents belong to ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities are an integral component of the Latvian society. Latvia actively works on promoting social integration and fostering a sense of belonging to Latvia among all its social groups, ensuring that all social groups participate in the public sector, education and the job market.

³ Available on the website of the Council of Europe:
https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a14111

15. The right of ethnic minorities to preserve and develop their language, ethnic and cultural identity is protected by the Latvian Constitution and the provisions of international law binding to Latvia. Latvia pursues a policy of a cohesive society, with the principal goal of promoting the development of a national, united, open and civically active society.
16. Official state language skills enable ethnic minorities to actively and effectively participate in social life and in democratic processes. The ethnic minority Latvian language skills continue to improve: in 1989, only 23% knew Latvian, with 88% in 2019.
17. Studies show that the sense of belonging to Latvia among its ethnic minorities continues to improve.⁴ 84% of representatives of ethnic minorities feel a strong or very strong connection to Latvia, while 86% feel a strong or very strong connection to the city, in which they live. A 2018 survey showed that a significant share of ethnic minorities - 86% celebrated the Proclamation Day of the Republic of Latvia on 18 November; 86% of the ethnic minority respondents felt that they belonged to the cultural and historical heritage of Latvia, and 87% reported a sense of belonging to Latvia's regions. 77.5% of ethnic minority individuals believed that they shared much in common with Latvians (2020 survey of Latvia's population).
18. Latvia pays particular attention to promoting the dialogue between the Latvian youth and the youth belonging to ethnic minorities and to strengthening the sense of belonging to Latvia; Latvia encourages the youth to participate in building the civil society and to be aware of their cultural heritage. Latvia conducts the 'Ethnic Minority and Latvian Youth Cooperation Programme', funded from national budget, and the youth informal civil education 'Traces of Europe in Latvia'. The target group of the programmes are teenagers and young adults of Russian, Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Estonian and other ethnic origins.
19. Latvia provides special support for the participation of ethnic minority organisations and communities in its democratic processes. The Advisory Committee of Ethnic Minority Organisations Representatives, created in 2006, continues to operate under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. The purpose of the Committee is to promote the participation and representation of ethnic minority NGOs in the civil society. The Committee consists of 16 representatives of ethnic minority NGOs.
20. So far, the memorandum of cooperation between NGOs and the Cabinet of Ministers has been signed by 486 organisations, which include ethnic minority NGOs. Furthermore, ethnic minority NGOs can participate in the elections of the NGO members of the Committee to implement the memorandum of cooperation

⁴ The 2017 study 'Participation of ethnic minorities in democratic processes in Latvia' is available on the website of the Ministry of Culture: https://www.km.gov.lv/sites/km/files/media_file/ma%20za%20ku%20mtautibu%20lid%20daliba%20petiju%20ma%20zinojums%20201711_0.pdf

between NGOs and the Cabinet of Ministers. A candidate from the Roma Culture Centre participated in the 2021 elections.

21. In order to promote a meaningful and effective participation of the general public and greater openness in decision-making processes, the Latvian government plans to approve the “Fifth Latvian National Plan of Action for Open Governance for 2022–2025” (currently in development) by the end of 2022. The plan includes measures to foster social representation and maintaining a high-quality dialogue in all sectors. The plan also highlights that addressing the general public and the different target groups is the basis for meaningful and effective participation.
22. The ethnic minority forum ‘From Integration to Cohesive Society’ dedicated to the centenary of Latvia took place in 2018. It was organised by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Chancellery of the State President.
23. In order to promote the development of a cohesive society, the Latvian government has approved the “Development Guidelines for a Cohesive and Civil Society for 2021-2027”. It involves promoting the development and sustainability of the civil society, encouraging civil inclusion among all social groups. The guidelines include the provision of support for the participation of ethnic minority NGOs to promote participation and the preservation and development of ethnic minority cultures. A draft of the “Development Guidelines for a cohesive and civil society for 2021-2023” has been prepared and submitted for approval by the Cabinet of Ministers.
 - c. *Review whether language proficiency standards regulating access to public employment are necessary and proportionate for all occupations in state and public service; make sure that language proficiency standards regulating access to elected positions and those within civil society organisations do not create undue obstacles.*
24. The official language skills form the basis for public safety, unity and equal opportunities for every citizen in a multilingual reality. According to the recent study ‘Language situation in Latvia: 2015–2020’ [the original of the study has been prepared for publication and includes Latvian Language Agency data], 73% of ethnic minority respondents acknowledged that Latvian language skills promoted a sense of belonging to Latvia.
25. It is the duty of the state to ensure the acquisition of the official language for every its citizen. Latvia has invested a great deal of work and resources to reach the current high of national language skills (see Fourth National Report, Paragraph 16). As language skills improve, the number of ethnic minority respondents who want to use Latvian daily has increased from 37% in 2008 to 56% in 2019.
26. In order to ensure that the existing official state language skills standards governing access to employment in public services, are proportionate, the State Language Centre (SLC) regularly inspects the language skills standards (including checks to

determine if these standards are complied with, and if no excessively high requirements are set). A certain level of language skills is required to take elected positions and positions in civil organisations; this is an objective requirement, because communication in the official state language is an essential part of the duties linked to these positions.

27. In recent years, the attitude of ethnic minorities towards the use of the official state language has become more positive, and people are eager to become participants of the public as whole, and to join publicly significant activities. It is worth noting that in recent years, the SLC has been regularly receiving complaints about breaches of the laws and regulations governing the use of the official state language from people with ethnic minority backgrounds (stating that the official language is not used properly), thus preventing ethnic minorities to be fully included and integrated in Latvian society.

d. Ensure the continued availability of teaching and learning in languages of national minorities throughout the country with a view to meeting existing demand; representatives of national minorities, including parents, should be consulted closely to ensure that their interests and concerns with regard to the languages of instruction in minority language schools are effectively taken into account;

28. The teaching of school subjects in ethnic minority languages is provided at a significantly higher proportion than in other European countries. Latvia continues to support bilingual education and to fund ethnic minority programmes in seven languages: Russian, Polish, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian and Hebrew. Ethnic minority students maintain their ability to learn school subjects in their first language as well as to preserve their ethnic minority identity.

29. In order to ensure equal opportunities in the labour market, an education reform is being implemented in Latvia, involving a gradual increase in the use of the official state language in education. The education reform in the ethnic minority education programmes is closely linked to the broader reform of the Latvian education system, with a transition to competence-based learning content (new learning content, structure and methodology). The transition to an increased use of the Latvian language will promote a more successful implementation of the new education content and learning approach to teaching in all education institutions in Latvia.

30. The development of the reform involved consultations with representatives of ethnic minorities and discussions of proposed changes in the pre-school, primary and secondary education at the Advisory Council for Ethnic Minority Education at the Ministry of Education and Science. After the entry into force of the reform (following a transitional period until 2022), state/municipal and private ethnic minority schools will be able to continue teaching bilingual programmes. The

proportion of the ethnic minority language used in them will be as follows: up to 50% of the content may be taught in the ethnic minority language to pupils up to Year 6, and up to 20%, to pupils in Year 7–9; for Year 10–12 pupils, ethnic minority languages may be used to teach subjects linked to the corresponding ethnic minority language and culture. The reform will result in increased use of the Latvian language in pre-school education facilities; ethnic minority pre-school education programmes will continue to be taught.

31. The Constitutional Court has assessed the compliance of a number of aspects of the education reform with the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution and with Latvia's international obligations, finding that the reform does not discriminate against ethnic minorities. The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe has found that the reform does not contradict Latvia's international obligations, and the goal of the education reform being implemented in Latvia, i.e. improving official state language skills, is legitimate, while the overall direction of education policy in Latvia is sufficiently balanced and justified.

32. In 2022, the Ministry of Education and Science plans to conduct an extensive study about the effect of the education reform on teenagers and young adults, and their access to the job market.

e. Step up efforts to identify and remedy the shortcomings faced by Roma children in the field of education with a view to ensuring that they have equal opportunities for access to all levels of quality education; take measures to prevent Roma children from being wrongfully placed in special schools.

33. In order to promote the inclusion of Roma pupils and to provide them with education and job opportunities, the Ministry of Education and Science has been monitoring the academic performance of Roma pupils since the 2010/2011 academic year. As a result, data for the following aspects were collected and analysed over the 2016/2017 academic year: the number of Roma pupils enrolled in general education programmes, including pre-school, primary and general secondary education programmes; the number of Roma pupils who did not attain a document certifying completion of mandatory primary education; the number of Roma pupils who, in accordance with the teacher council of their education institution, were subject to support measures intended to improve their academic performance; teacher assistants of Roma background who work in general education institutions; aid for the early pre-school education of Roma children as a part of the comprehensive early inclusion programmes; measures to prevent Roma children (especially girls) from dropping out early, and to foster their transition to higher levels of education; transition to secondary education and further/adult education, and attainment of that education through the development of career growth support measures. The results obtained are analysed in cooperation with representatives of the Roma community, the Ministry of Culture, education institutions and NGOs. The monitoring has showed that the number of general

education institutions where Roma pupils study, has increased. The number of Roma children enrolled in mandatory primary education has risen significantly. Over the last 3 years the increase has been 7.5%. The number of Roma pupils who do not attain mandatory primary education by the age of 18 has fallen considerably within the last 3 years. The next monitoring activity is to take place during the 2021/2022 academic year.

34. Support for Roma pupils is also provided through European Structural Fund projects to increase professional competence and to include youth in education and the civil society.
35. The re-established Advisory Council of the Ministry of Education and Science includes representatives of education institutions that teach curricula in Polish, Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian and Hebrew. The Council includes representatives of the Jewish, Polish and Roma communities, as well as representatives of government agencies. In 2020, the Council's meetings were devoted to examples of good practices in ethnic minority schools (especially Polish ones), and to ensuring quality in the education of Roma pupils. At the same time, there were discussions about the quality of education in ethnic minority education programmes. It was decided to conduct an extensive study of the effect of ethnic minority reforms on the quality of education, which will be completed in 2022.

Additional recommendations

- f. *Review legislative provisions related to personal identity documents and ensure that the right to free self-identification, as stipulated in Article 3 of the Framework Convention, is fully respected;*
36. Currently, whenever a person obtains a passport in Latvia, the legislation provides for the right to choose whether the passport includes an entry regarding the nationality of the person. Consequently, it is concluded that the right to free self-identification is respected, as provided for in Article 3 of the Framework Convention.
 - g. *Combat stereotypes and prejudices in political discourse and promote tolerance and intercultural dialogue throughout society as a whole; take specific, targeted measures to counteract manifestations of xenophobia in society;*
37. The Society Integration Foundation (SIF) actively works on promoting knowledge and understanding among the general public to achieve better social inclusion, and to prevent and eliminate discrimination. The SIF regularly conducts information campaigns to promote public awareness of the opportunities for each individual to contribute to the development of an inclusive society; raise awareness of the

different forms of discrimination, unequal treatment and how to deal with it; strengthen the rise of self-worth of persons at risk of discrimination, the awareness of their rights; as well as focusing on issues of discrimination, tolerance and unequal treatment. One of these campaigns is “Dažādības veicināšana” (“Promoting diversity”) (see paragraph 39 of the Fourth National Report).

38. Themes are selected for every calendar year, and a variety of activities are implemented each year as part of the campaign (environmental advertising, youth debate, Shadow Day events, examples of good practices among employers, examples of good practices for people at risk of discrimination, thematic day events and other thematic activities).
39. Since 2016, the SIF has been conducting the Promotion of Diversity project in cooperation with the Office for Citizenship and Migration Affairs and the Provision State Agency. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund. Its goal is to promote the employment and socioeconomic inclusion of people who are subject to social exclusion and discrimination risks, simultaneously working on informing the public and promoting the general understanding of the elimination of discrimination and inclusive society. The target groups of the project are people who are subject to risks of discrimination, due to their gender, age or disability, including unemployed people with disabilities, people with disabilities and low level of education, as well as people subject to risk of discrimination due to their ethnic background, including the Roma and other ethnic minorities. The project also includes a programme of motivation, support activities for members of the target groups, and measures to promote their understanding of defending their rights, attaining of education and professional qualifications, and their inclusion in the job market, including as self-employed individuals. So far, assistance as part of this project has been provided to 2038 people.
40. The Promotion of Diversity project also involves activities to prevent discrimination among employers and employees, by organising educational events covering the issues of social inclusion and prevention of discrimination. In order to increase the awareness of employers and employees of the issues of prevention of discrimination, inclusive environments and diversity management, the education programme ‘Skatu punkti’ (‘Points of View’) was created and implemented between November 2017 and December 2020. Anyone interested can familiarise themselves with these education programmes and apply to one. Furthermore, there are support activities promoting inclusive working environments and diversity management, to increase the interest and motivation of employers in creating an inclusive working environment, being open to diversity management and to implementing the principles of diversity in their organisation. The Promotion of Diversity project includes training for employers. Between 2019 and 2021, a total of 16 support activities were carried out, training 176 employees.

h. Reconsider the approach to the quota requirements in the broadcasting media; develop, in close consultation with minority representatives and media professionals, more appropriate means to ensure that Latvian language speakers and speakers of national minority languages benefit from a diverse and shared media space; pursue efforts to promote the State language through incentive-based and voluntary methods rather than through the imposition of quotas or sanctions;

41. Public broadcasting organisations in Latvia provide a considerable amount of content in ethnic minority languages, in accordance with the Latvian social integration policy. An example of this is the Latvijas Radio program 'Latvijas Radio 4 — Doma laukums', which is an integration program with content in 11 languages (Russian, Estonian, Polish, Lithuanian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Hebrew, Georgian, German, Armenian and Tatar). Electronic mass media in Latvia have the possibility to broadcast up to 35% of their air time for content in other languages, including those of ethnic minorities. Additionally, some amount of the broadcasting time of the Second Latvian Television is dedicated to broadcasts in other languages, including films and theatre shows provided with subtitles in the official state language. An ethnic minority multimedia platform is available, extending the content of the media available in ethnic minority languages.
42. The Public Advisory Council, which is a consultative body of the National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEMMC), continues operating in Latvia, has the task of ensuring continuous public participation in the development of the National Strategy for the Development of Electronic Mass Media, making decisions of advisory nature. The Public Advisory Council includes representatives of associations, foundations, professional bodies and other organisations (including those representing ethnic minorities) that operate in the fields of media, education, culture, science and human rights. One of the goals of the Electronic Mass Media Law is to promote the integration of Latvian society on the basis of the Latvian language. The Electronic Mass Media Law determines procedures corresponding to the public interest in which electronic media in the jurisdiction of Latvia shall use the official language during the transmission time, while providing for the right to use minority and other languages in electronic media.
43. As regards broadcasting and advertising language, Latvian law permits broadcasting both in the official state language, and in other languages. The broadcast or a broadcast fragment shall be translated into the official language of the radio programme, which is in the official language. A broadcast or a broadcast fragment may not be translated into a foreign language in the national language of a radio programme which is a foreign language. These provisions do not extend to language teaching programmes, interactive direct transmissions, music performances, and broadcasts of interstate cooperation during live broadcasting.

44. In accordance with the Plan to Implement the Latvian Media Policy Guidelines for 2016–2020, media may obtain national budget funding for publicly important content via the open tenders of the Media Assistance Fund. One of the goals of the programme is creating publicly important and high-quality content specifically for the ethnic minority audiences in Latvia, with the goal of strengthening national consciousness and a sense of belonging to Latvia. A total of 15 projects for 380,000 euros were approved over four tenders (in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020), in the ethnic minority audience category.

45. Additionally, during the COVID-19 crisis, the Latvian government provided financial aid to ethnic minority mass media: NEMMC awarded 200,000 euros for the production of content for private regional and/or ethnic minority mass media as part of a public contract.

i. Review the legislative and policy provisions related to the use of languages in relations with administrative authorities, for topographical indications and other signage, as well as regards spelling of names and surnames in a minority language in official documents; continue efforts to raise awareness among officials and the public at large of the conditions and terms under which minority languages may be used;

46. When ratifying this Convention, Latvia stated that it viewed Article 11 Part 3 of this Convention as binding, to the extent that it does not contradict the Latvian Constitution and other Latvian laws and regulations that govern the use of the official state language. Regarding the communication with state authorities, the Official Language Law states that official communication with state authorities takes place in Latvian. In certain cases, regarding the communication with the police, medical and rescue services, communication may take place in another (ethnic minority) language.

47. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 99–102 of its Fourth National Report.

j. Enhance efforts to prevent and combat inequality and discrimination suffered by the Roma; improve the living conditions of the Roma by increasing employment opportunities and promoting integration within society.

48. Measures promoting Roma participation and inclusion in society are regularly implemented in Latvia. Cooperation between Roma and state authorities responsible for the field of education, employment, healthcare and housing is ensured. This was included in the “Implementation Plan for the National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy Guidelines for the Period 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 and 2019–2020”, and is included in the “Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civil Society for the Period 2021-2027”. A working group established at the Ministry of Culture in 2021 prepared a draft Project for the

Implementation of the Roma Strategic Framework Measures for 2021–2023, in accordance with the recommendations on the equal rights, inclusion and participation of Roma approved by the Council of the European Union on 12 March 2021. This work group includes representatives of government institutions, Roma NGOs and NGOs that collaborate with Roma representatives and community in general.

49. A Roma Integration Policy Implementation Advisory Council was created under the Ministry of Culture in 2012, followed by the establishment of the Advisory Council for the Promotion of Participation of Roma in 2021. The purpose of the Council is to supervise the implementation of measures to promote the participation of Roma and the development of these measures in accordance with the “Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civil Society for the Period 2021-2027” and the recommendations on the equal rights, inclusion and participation of Roma approved by the Council of the European Union on 12 March 2021. The members of the Council include representatives of Roma NGOs, and organisations whose purpose is to promote the integration of Roma.
50. Latvia continues to maintain regular exchange of information and experience among Roma integration specialists in its local governments. Particular attention is paid to the collaboration between ministries and the Roma community in the more effective implementation of Roma integration policies. For this purpose, the Ministry of Culture has established a Regional Expert Network for Roma Integration, which in 2020 included representatives of 19 municipalities in Latvia. Seven good practice visits and regional expert meetings have been organised in various Latvian municipalities since 2017. In order to provide clear information to the general public, the Ministry of Culture regularly prepares an annual report on the measures to promote the inclusion of Roma in various fields and posts the report on its website.⁵
51. The Ministry of Culture regularly provides financial support to various efforts of Roma NGOs in implementing measures and initiatives to implement Roma integration, cultural and interest advocacy activities and initiatives. The Ministry of Culture pays particular attention to combatting prejudice and negative stereotypes, to increase the working capacity of Roma communities, and to foster the social inclusion of Roma. Roma NGOs regularly organise cultural events, including Roma dance and music festivals, as well as creative workshops and projects for Roma youth at national and local level. Awareness-raising activities on the history of the Roma community in Latvia and the commemorative activities of the victims of the Roma genocide play an important role.
52. Roma mediators have been working in five cities in Latvia since 2017: Jelgava,

⁵The reports are available on the website of the Ministry of Culture, at <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/dokumenti-3>.

Riga, Valmiera, Ventspils, Viļaka [1] (Jelgava, Riga, Talsi, Ventspils, Tukums, Viļaka, as of 2021). The main task of Roma mediators is to encourage and support the dialogue between Roma families and municipal institutions and government agency specialists in such fields as education, social issues, employment, child rights etc. They help to identify the situation with Roma and issues relevant to them at local level, and find appropriate solutions in cooperation with representatives of the local governments' social, education and other bodies. Roma mediators regularly inform local Roma residents of social support opportunities available to them, and motivate Roma to gain education, enter the job market, and participate in cultural events.

53. The implementation of projects funded by the European Union's (EU) programme to promote the inclusion and participation of the Roma community was launched, providing funding for activities covering different areas. The Ministry of Culture continued to implement the Latvian Roma Platform as part of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship EU programme since 2017; its purpose was to promote the dialogue between the Roma community and civil organisations, and to develop an effective process for coordinating the Roma integration policy at national level. Integration events have taken place as part of the platform project, including those intended for regional experts to share experience among each other, as well as seminars and practical workshops for local government specialists and Roma, especially Roma women and youth.
54. The interests and problems identified in the Roma community are an important aspect in the process of Roma integration. Latvia took note of the recommendations provided by the Roma civil society and organised the seminar "Better job market access for Roma" as part of the Latvian Roma Platform projects, with the purpose of promoting cooperation between employers and social partners, and potential employees with Roma background, and fostering the sharing of information and experience on the involvement of Roma in the job market. The Latvian Roma Platform project has included various measures to strengthen the civil society among Roma, for example, by supporting the participation of representatives of Roma NGOs in the Advisory Council for the Implementation of the Roma Integration Policy, by providing English language and other courses intended to increase the capacity of Roma, including training for Roma mediators. A coordination meeting of the Latvian Roma Platform project takes place once every year, during which representatives of the Advisory Council for the Implementation of the Roma Integration Policy, regional experts in Roma affairs, Roma NGO representatives and active members of the community discuss project results, achievements and proposals for future activities.
55. In order to raise public awareness of Latvian Roma culture, history and social issues, as well as to promote the elimination of prejudices and stereotypes, the Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the association "Roma Culture Centre",

the association “Latvian Centre for Human Rights” and the “Cooperation Network for Latvian Women’s Organisation”, regularly implemented activities between 2015 and 2020 as part of the DOSTA! (‘Enough!’) campaign. Since 2015, the “Roma Culture Centre” regularly organises exhibitions about Roma genocide and the international Roma culture festival “Roma World”, which is a major international event broadcasted on national television, becoming an example of good practices for other countries. The “Roma Culture Centre” also provides individual consultations to Roma. The Ministry of Culture uses funding from the national budget to support the operation of the Museum of Roma History and Art. Several information materials have been prepared in cooperation with Roman NGOs about the culture and history of Roma in Latvia⁶, as well as the lecture cycle and exhibition “Roma Holocaust in Latvia (1941–1945)” in three municipalities. There are plans to organise workshops for teachers and to prepare information materials about Roma culture and history for teachers in five regions in Latvia.

56. In order to ensure that the level of education does not limit the opportunities of Roma in the labour market, the State Employment Agency (hereinafter - SEA) offers Roma to participate in training and employment activities. Roma that are registered at the SEA as unemployed and job seekers may participate in any employment promotion activity if they match the criteria set for that activity (see the details provided in Table 4 and 5). In order to help understanding the labour market requirements, promote inclusion in society and placement in permanent work, the SEA offers Roma unemployed people to participate in both active employment measures and preventive measures to reduce unemployment (career counselling, recruitment support).

⁶ The information material ‘On the genocide of Roma people in Latvia (1941–1945)’ is available on the website of the Ministry of Culture <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/627/download>; the information material ‘Overview of the Roma culture in Latvia’ is available on the website of the Ministry of Culture <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/901/download>.

Part III

Information about the implementation of the Convention article by article

57. This section offers information on implementation of the provisions of the Convention in 2016–2021 by Latvia, broken down by the Convention’s articles, additionally taking into account the recommendations of the Third Opinion on Latvia of the Advisory Committee of the Convention (‘Opinion’).⁷

Article 1 of the Framework Convention

The protection of national minorities and of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to those minorities forms an integral part of the international protection of human rights, and as such falls within the scope of international co-operation.

58. Historically, Latvia has been a place where different ethnic and religious groups live together. The right of ethnic minorities to preserve and develop their language, ethnic and cultural identity is guaranteed by the Latvian Constitution and the provisions of international law binding to Latvia. Latvia protects the languages, education and culture of its ethnic minorities, and provides them with extensive support.

Article 2 of the Framework Convention

The provisions of this framework Convention shall be applied in good faith, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and in conformity with the principles of good neighbourliness, friendly relations and co-operation between States.

59. The Latvian Language Agency (LLA) provides learning, teaching and information materials for Latvian diaspora schools and diaspora parents whose children do not attend Latvian schools (available on www.maciunmacies.lv, ‘Diasporai’ (‘For the diaspora’) section). The LLA provides education and advanced training to diaspora teachers who are often not professional educators. Once a year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LLA organised professional training courses (three-day camps) for diaspora school teachers in Latvia, which were also regularly attended by representatives of the U.S. schools. During the pandemic, remote training – educational webinars – is regularly organised for diaspora teachers. In 2020, distance learning courses for ClassFlow distance learning environments were organised to support diaspora teachers in remote training. Currently many Latvian diaspora schools have succeeded in taking their digital opportunities and work productively online. It is expected that even after normal in-person classes resume, forms of distance learning will remain a permanent part of the teaching process in diaspora schools, for example, as activities in addition to in-person classes. Information is provided to the schools via e-mail and the LLA website. Diaspora

⁷ Adopted on 23 February 2018.

teachers have a Facebook group, 'LVA diaspora', which has 2226 followers. The teacher group 'Daļsimies pieredzē' ('Let's share our experience') is also hosted on Facebook, and it is used by diaspora teachers.

60. Latvian diaspora schools have had access to direct co-financing making it possible for them to better plan their long-term activities and use the tuition paid by parents on other relevant necessities since 2013. The co-financing for Latvian diaspora schools is also used to buy equipment (computers, tablets, everything that is necessary to conduct distance learning), renovate school premises, buy furniture, and cover other costs necessary to enable the teaching process.
61. The Ministry of Education and Science closely cooperates with the countries, with which it has intergovernmental agreements for cooperation in education and culture, for example, the Republic of Poland, working on the preservation and development of the Polish culture and ethnic identity in general education institution in Latvia.
62. Every year guest teachers from Poland work at the following general education institutions: Riga Ita Kozakēviča Polish Secondary School, J. Pilsudski Daugavpils State Polish Grammar School, Rēzekne State Polish Grammar School, Krāslava Count Plāters Polish Grammar School, and Daugavpils 29th Pre-School Education Institution.

Article 3 of the Framework Convention

1. Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right freely to choose to be treated or not to be treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.

2. Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and enjoy the freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention individually as well as in community with others.

63. Historically, Latvia has always been a multi-ethnic state. As the country's constitution was adopted in 1922, Latvia's parliament and legal scholars recognised that in addition to Latvians, the people of Latvia represented other ethnic groups (ethnic minorities). Historically, a number of ethnic minorities, including Jews, Russians, Lithuanians, Poles, Roma, Germans have lived in Latvia. There are ethnic groups in Latvia that do not meet all the criteria required for them to be deemed an ethnic minority (e.g. their long-term presence); however, people belonging to these groups are also allowed to enjoy the rights guaranteed for ethnic minorities.
64. The Latvian Constitution states that persons with an ethnic minority background have the right to preserve and develop their language, and ethnic and cultural identity, and that everyone has the right to form and join associations, political parties and other public organisations.

65. Social integration has been a priority of the Latvian government since early 1990, and the government continues with its social integration policy. Social integration is viewed as a horizontal issue.
66. Latvia additionally wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 15 of its Third National Report.

Recommendations provided in the opinion

Scope of application of the Framework Convention

- k. National authorities should choose an open and inclusive approach to the scope of application of the Framework Convention, extending it to the country's permanent residents without Latvian citizenship, including non-citizens.*
- l. Permanent residents of Latvia who do not have the citizenship of any country should be motivated to acquire Latvian citizenship. The Advisory Committee strongly recommends that national authorities automatically grant citizenship to all children of non-citizens born in Latvia.*
67. Latvia has taken note of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to automatically award citizenship to all children of non-citizens born in Latvia. On 19 November 2019, the Law on the Termination of the Granting of the Status of a Non-Citizen to Children entered into force, which provides for the granting of Latvian citizenship to non-citizen children born after 1 January 2020, unless the parents of the child have agreed to apply for the granting of citizenship of another country and the child will not be a citizen of another country. Consequently, since 1 January 2020, newborns are no longer granted the status of Latvian non-citizen.
68. Latvia continues motivating its non-citizens to naturalise. The Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) regularly organises information day events in Riga, Ventspils, Liepāja and Ventspils where people can obtain information about the naturalisation process. One can also try the naturalisation exam during these events.
69. Additionally, as part of the national programme of the EU Asylum and Migration Fund, the OCMA conducts the project 'Improvement and development of information systems and related processes supporting naturalisation'. The goal of the project is to improve the quality of the naturalisation process, which resulted in the opening of a free digital tool on 16 July 2021: it can be used to check the Latvian language skills online and reduce anxiety about the naturalisation exam. The OCMA intends to carry out information campaigns on the naturalisation process as a whole, which includes informing the public about the availability of the digital tool.
- m. National authorities should continue their dialogue with representatives of the Latgalian community, in order to jointly develop appropriate measures to*

promote the Latgalian language and culture more effectively, including by considering the possibility of extending the protection of the Framework Convention to this community, particularly in relation to its language rights.

70. The preamble of the Latvian constitution states that: ‘The State of Latvia, proclaimed on 18 November 1918, has been established by uniting historical Latvian lands [...]’ The ‘historical Latvian lands’ are Vidzeme, Latgale, Kurzeme, Zemgale and Sēlija. Thus, Latvia believes that the Latgalian community should not be included as a target group in the Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Republic of Latvia.

Right to free self-identification

n. The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on national authorities to review the legal framework for personal identification documents and to ensure that the right to free self-identification laid down in Article 3 of the Framework Convention is fully respected.

71. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 15 of its Fourth National Report.

Article 4 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right of equality before the law and of equal protection of the law. In this respect, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.

2. The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.

3. The measures adopted in accordance with paragraph 2 shall not be considered to be an act of discrimination.

Protection against discrimination

72. *The Advisory Committee calls on the national authorities to review their approach to language skills standards regulating access to employment in the public sector in such a way as to eliminate the obstacles contained in the law that restrict access to employment for persons whose mother tongue is not Latvian. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 33–36 of its Fourth National Report.*

o. The Advisory Committee calls on the national authorities to continue to support

to the Ombudsman Office and to continue their cooperation to enable it to carry out its functions effectively, particularly as regards the implementation of recommendations.

73. Latvia continues supporting the Ombudsman Office, which includes expanding its funding. The funding awarded by the government in 2017 was EUR 1,344,645; in 2018, it was EUR 1,489,808, and in 2019, EUR 1,538,953. Furthermore, the number of Ombudsman Office positions was expanded from 46 to 51 in 2018.

p. The Advisory Committee strongly recommends that national authorities in close cooperation with the relevant civil society organisations, improve the awareness of relevant officials and also of the public (particularly the Roma) of the applicable non-discrimination standards, including those applicable to multiple discrimination. Particularly, the work should focus on individuals from communities who are known to be the most exposed to discrimination.

Collection of data and promotion of effective equality

The Advisory Council urges the national authorities to step up their efforts to eliminate inequalities and discrimination against Roma, and to combat it in consultation with the relevant community. National authorities should make efforts to improve the living conditions of Roma and to promote effective equality, with particular attention to the aspect of gender equality. This calls for coordinated work to ensure adequate access to education, employment, healthcare and social services.

74. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 48–53 of its Fourth National Report.

Article 5 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

2. Without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation.

75. Latvia continues to promote conditions that preserve and develop the essential elements of the identity of persons belonging to minorities, namely, their culture, religion, language and traditions.

76. Latvia continues to ensure the teaching of ethnic minority languages in its education institutions. According to the latest data available to the Ministry of Education and

Science, 643 pre-primary education institutions and 678 general education institutions were active in Latvia on 1 September 2020, of which 66 (10.2%) pre-school education institutions implemented an educational programme in minority languages, 112 (16.8%) institutions implemented an educational programme in the minority language and Latvian; 25 (3.68%) educational institutions implemented a minority education programme in Russian; 115 (16.96%) general education institutions implement a minority education programme in both Latvian and Russian languages, four in Latvian and Polish, two in Latvian and Jewish languages, one in Latvian and Belarusian languages, one in Latvian and Ukrainian languages. In addition, Latvia also has one Lithuanian and one Estonian educational institution that implements educational programmes in Latvian. Furthermore, in the context of secondary education, the teaching of school subjects in the official state language has been at least 3/5 of the total number of academic hours (including those for foreign-language teaching) since 1 September 2004, and these curricula included the teaching of content associated with ethnic minority language, identity and culture in the ethnic minority language.

77. Latvia continues ensuring possibility for the pupils to learn an ethnic minority language and literature as a specialised course.⁸ According to the latest information collected in the State Education Information System of the Ministry of Education and Science, in school-year 2020/2021, 24% of pupils used an ethnic minority language as one of the languages of studies, 1% used other languages, and 75% studied in Latvian only.
78. Additionally, Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 26–28 of its Fourth National Report.
79. Latvia continues to promote the preservation and development of ethnic minority culture, including through support to culture. For example, the Mikhail Chekhov Riga Russian Theatre is the oldest⁹ theatre outside Russia that offers repertoire in Russian. The theatre is a state-funded professional theatre whose theatre performances are solely in Russian. The theatre organises an average of 460 performances every year. The Daugavpils Theatre and the Latvian Puppet Theatre simultaneously provide Latvian and Russian theatre performances. Private theatres also offer performances in Russian. Since 2016, the number of amateur theatres, including those performing in Russian, has grown. The Latvian National Opera offers guided group tours in Russian, and ‘Latvijas koncerti’ organises series of music performances for Russian-speaking audiences. Information in Russian is available on the websites of both organisations. The Mikhail Chekhov Riga Russian Theatre, ‘Latvijas koncerti’, the Latvian National Opera, and the museums receive annual subsidies from the Ministry of Culture to ensure their activities.

⁸ Since 1 September 2020.

⁹ Opened on 2 October 1883.

80. 41% of Latvia's museums have information in Russian on their websites, and a large proportion of museums offer guided tours in Russian.

Support in preserving and developing the culture and identity of people with ethnic minority backgrounds

q. In addition to promoting projects aimed at presenting traditional folklore to the public, national authorities are also asked to support contemporary culture projects. This support should be extended initiatives involving ethnic minority youth and individuals who take care of the daily needs of minority representatives.

81. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 54 of its Fourth National Report.

82. Latvia provides annual financial support to the Ita Kozakēviča Latvian National Cultural Association Union (LNCAU), while delegating a task to the LNCAU – to ensure the preservation and development of ethnic minority culture, and promote intercultural dialogue through ethnic minority NGO events. The LNCAU combines cultural societies and associations of more than twenty different nationalities living in Latvia. The LNCAU ensures the development of a set of measures for the conservation and development of minority culture, and promote intercultural dialogue and the integration of minority representatives into the local community through the implementation of concerts, performances of minority organisations, the organisation of language clubs, festivals and other events, ensuring their regularity, diversity and accessibility to the various target groups of society. Since 2003, the LNCAU has been organising a large-scale minority arts festival “Vienoti dažādībā” (“United in Diversity”) every year.

83. Since 2016, the Latvian National Centre of Culture has been implementing the programme ‘Latvijas kultūras vēstnieki’ (‘Latvia’s culture ambassadors’, including outstanding athletes and creative personalities of various ethnic backgrounds who feel that they belong to the Latvian cultural space) in order to promote the Latvian cultural space among various audiences, including the youth. The programme also involves the creative camps for minority collective leaders and activities for the development of professional competence.

84. Groups of ethnic minority performers actively participate in the Latvian Song and Dance Festival movement. In order to promote the visibility of ethnic minority culture, the ethnic minority festival ‘Pinu, pinu sietu’ (‘Weaving, weaving the sieve’) took place in Daugavpils in 2016, bringing together more than a thousand of ethnic minority people. To continue this tradition, the Ministry of Culture began the preparation of a new festival in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival could not take place in 2020; however, the programme of the festival was prepared, along with the concept of ‘Zeme zied’ (‘The Earth Blossoms’) festival.

Ultimately, the festival was held in Jelgava, on 14 August 2021.

85. Latvia promotes projects aimed not only at promoting the traditional culture of minorities, but also at minority projects involving young people. The ‘European Movement — Latvia’ association regularly conducts discussions for ethnic minority youth, to promote their civil participation. The association has also implemented creative contests and games covering the shared values of Latvian society. The democracy summer school ‘Demokrātijai nav demo versijas’ (‘Democracy Has No Demo Version’) took place in 2019 and 2020, involving youth (including those from ethnic minorities) from all over Latvia.
86. Latvia pays much attention to the preservation of the material heritage of ethnic minorities, including through government funding provided to the Orthodox churches (see Annex 7).

Article 6 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons’ ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.

2. The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.

Protection against discrimination, hate or violence based on ethnic background

r. The Advisory Committee urges the national authorities to ensure stronger, faster and more effective action to prevent and investigate offences committed on a racist or xenophobic basis and to prosecute such an offence and to ensure the continued monitoring of this phenomenon in society.

87. As part of a European Commission programme, the State Police, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, and the Prosecutor General Office¹⁰, examined the regulatory framework and practice of various EU member states pertaining to simplified criminal proceedings, investigation of offences proportionate to the severity of the offence, termination of criminal proceedings, and other procedural matters. According to the project, it was concluded that a reform of the Criminal Procedure Law was necessary, and amendments to that law were drafted to make it simpler, more effective and faster functioning in preventing and investigating offences motivated by racism or xenophobia, and to bring persons

¹⁰ ‘Simplification of the investigation of minor offences with the purpose of balancing the social hazard and harm caused by the crime, and the resources expended as part of the investigation.’

to justice for committing such an offence. The amendments to the Criminal Procedure Law that entered into force on 1 September 2018 were aimed specifically at increasing the effectiveness of the pre-trial proceedings, and not on investigating offences motivated by racism or xenophobia.

88. In order to promote the efficiency of investigating authorities, the Prosecutor Office and courts, and to achieve the provision of modern, people-oriented, convenient and transparent court services, Latvia implements a Programme¹¹ to digitise court proceedings. The Programme involved the digitisation of criminal proceedings, with a transition from paper-based cases to digital cases.

89. Latvia provides its police officers with training on hate crime, including that motivated by racism and xenophobia. The State Police College implements a series of training programmes focused on working in a multicultural society and respect for human rights.

90. In order to identify the problem of hate crimes from the perspective of internal affairs, to assess the potential obstacles in identifying and detecting such crimes as well as identifying the possible directions for actions, a working group was established on 30 June 2021 under the order of the Ministry of Interior that issued a report on short- medium- and long-term measures to be taken in the field of internal affairs. These measures focus on three areas: 1) improving data quality; 2) improving the legal base; 3) improving the practical application. On the basis of these proposals, the Minister of Interior has tasked the working group to implement the short-term measures and to submit proposals for medium- and long-term measures.

s. The Advisory Committee urges the national authorities to fight stereotypes and prejudices in political discourse, and to promote tolerance and intercultural dialogue in society as a whole. It is particularly important to immediately take such targeted measures as information campaigns (including in the media) to counteract the forms of xenophobia in society.

91. In 2021, in order to prevent and combat intolerance in Latvia, the Faculty of Law of the University of Latvia, in cooperation with the Social Integration Fund, the Courts Administration, the State Police and the Prosecutor Office of the Republic of Latvia, have commenced to increase the capacity of law-enforcement agencies in preventing and combatting hate crimes as part of the European Commission programme 'Rights, Equality and Citizenship'. During the project, it is planned to raise the expertise of 64 judges, attorneys, prosecutors, state and municipal police officers in identifying and effectively investigating hate speech and hate crimes, in

¹¹ The gradual implementation of the 'E-lieta: izmeklēšanas un tiesvedības procesu pilnveide' ('E-Case: Improvement of Investigation and Court Proceedings') programme is to begin on 30 November 2021.

using applicable law; the current legal framework will be assessed in cooperation with project partners, and if necessary, changes will be initiated to bring it in line with international law practice.

t. The Advisory Committee reiterates its call for national authorities to properly punish all those who show intolerance and publicly condemn disrespect to minorities

92. In order to protect people with ethnic minority backgrounds, Latvia has adopted amendments to its Criminal Law¹², supplementing the penalty for inciting social hatred and discord with a prison sentence of up to one year, thus reinforcing responsibility for this intolerance.

Integration and promotion of tolerance

u. The Advisory Committee calls on national authorities to involve minority representatives in discussion on the integration of Latvian society. This process should be based on respect for diversity, and on the understanding that minority representatives are an equal and an integral part of Latvian society.

v. National authorities should complete their work on the Social Integration Policy Guidelines for 2019–2020 and publish this document; they must also ensure that the initiatives introduced under these Guidelines are implemented in close cooperation with minority representatives in a way that promotes and protects the identity, culture and language of ethnic minorities as an essential part of Latvian society.

w. National authorities should aim to promote the integration of society as a two-way process, in particular, by promoting the active participation of all segments of the society in all relevant areas, such as equal access to employment, education and culture, and by promoting intercultural contacts with other members of society, going beyond mere improvement of Latvian language skills. In view of this objective, national authorities consider establishing a specialised body, e.g. a secretariat or an office, whose functions would include the development of action plans for the Guidelines, as well as the coordination of social cohesion policies in all relevant sectors.

93. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 16–23 of its Fourth National Report.

94. Latvia has prepared “Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civil Society for 2021-2027” The primary goal of these guidelines is to achieve a national, joint, open and active civil society which is based on democratic values and human rights enshrined in the Constitution, the Latvian language and the

¹² Took effect on 1 January 2018.

Latvian cultural space. The general principle for attaining the overall goal of these guidelines is inclusive participation, enabling every individual to participate in public administration and ensuring the representation of the society in all its diversity; is the basis for the acquisition of knowledge and skills in order to strengthen the national identity, the Latvian language, social trust, solidarity and cooperation of the population. The initiatives of the guidelines were prepared in cooperation with representatives of ethnic minorities, and intend to promote and protect their identity, culture and language as an essential part of the country's cultural space. The preparation of the guidelines involved extensive public discussions, including with the representatives of ethnic minorities in all regions of Latvia. The guidelines were prepared in accordance with the objectives of the 2021–2027 National Development Plan, aimed at building a cohesive society. Specific measures, including those intended to support ethnic minority participation and the preservation of their cultural identity were defined in the draft “Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civil Society for 2021-2023”.

95. Latvia promotes opportunities for minority NGOs to participate in tenders in order to receive financial support for strengthening operational or administrative capacity. The Ministry of Culture implemented the Regional NGO Programme¹³, which included all Latvia's regions. Within this framework, funding may be provided by associations and foundations implementing projects to support civil society and minority associations and foundations. The programme includes teaching workshops covering issues important to the development of foundations and associations, providing free consultations on issues relevant to NGOs; there is provision of up-to-date information about the possibility of receiving regional, national and international funding to strengthen NGO capacity, promote intercultural dialogue, develop the civil society and achieve other similar goals; there is training provided for ethnic minority (including Roma) associations and foundations, covering civil participation and intercultural dialogue and increasing their capacity; measures to support the intercultural dialogue (including Roma) for various target audiences.

Article 7 of the Framework Convention

The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Freedom of assembly and association

- x. *The Advisory Committee strongly recommends that the national authorities of Latvia do not impose language skills requirements, which create barriers that prevent minority representatives from freedom of association guaranteed by the*

¹³ Between 2014 and 2020.

Framework Convention.

- y. *National authorities should ensure that all minority representatives can enjoy freedom of assembly effectively and without unnecessary obstacles, including the promotion of minority rights and representation of special interests, such as education and language rights.*
96. Latvia respects the freedom of association guaranteed by the Convention. The official state language requirements are only required for those activities that affect legitimate interests of the general public, and only to the extent that such restrictions are proportional to the rights and interests of people with ethnic minority backgrounds.
97. The Law on Associations and Foundations does not restrict people with ethnic minority backgrounds in participating in the activities of non-governmental organisations.
98. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 45 of its Fourth National Report.
99. Latvia does not regulate the use of the official state language in the unofficial and internal communication of people belonging to ethnic minorities and religious organisations. The Latvian State Language Center respects the rights and interests of ethnic minorities, without setting any unreasonable requirements in the use of the official state language.

Article 8 of the Framework Convention

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to manifest his or her religion or belief and to establish religious institutions, organisations and associations.

Freedom of religion

- z. *The Advisory Committee urges the national authorities to choose a more flexible approach to the issue of religious festivals, in consultation with the relevant parties, to demonstrate the understanding of the faith of Orthodox and Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, and to ensure respect for the right to express religion or belief, in accordance with Article 8 of the Framework Convention.*
- aa. *The Advisory Committee calls on the national authorities to complete the process of restitution of properties of religious communities without delay.*
100. The Latvian Constitution provides for freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Religious intolerance is not acceptable in Latvia.

Article 9 of the Framework Convention

1. *The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.*
2. *Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.*
3. *The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.*
4. *In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.*

Use of minority languages and participation of ethnic minorities in the media

- bb. *The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on the national authorities to consider their approach to quota requirements for broadcasting media, in close cooperation with minority representatives and media professionals, to develop more appropriate means to allow Latvian-speaking and minority-speaking communities to benefit from a different and at the same time shared media space. Efforts to promote the use of the official state language should be based on motivational methods and flexibility, and not quotas or sanctions, ensuring that ethnic minorities are not subjected to disproportional influence or excluded from the media.*
 - cc. *The Advisory Committee calls on the national authorities to take appropriate measures to ensure that minority representatives, especially those lowest in numbers, have greater access to radio and television broadcasts in their native language.*
101. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 40–42 of its Fourth National Report.

Article 10 of the Framework Convention

1. *The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national*

minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.

2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.

3. The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary, with the free assistance of an interpreter.

Legislation, policies and practice of language use

dd. The Advisory Committee urges the national authorities to revise the laws, regulations and policies relating to the use of languages in communication with the national authorities, in order to ensure an appropriate balance between the objective of promoting the use of the official state language and the language rights of ethnic minorities, as defined in Article 10 of the Framework Convention. The National authorities should take measures to raise awareness among officials and general public of cases where minority languages can be used.

102. Latvia respects the right of people of ethnic minority backgrounds to use languages they understand in communication with the state authorities, especially when it comes to solving personal and social problems, and certain legal matters. Individuals can receive services and information orally in ethnic minority languages or in a language that they understand.

Article 11 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronym) and first names in the minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in their legal system.

2. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to display in his or her minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public

3. In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account

their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications

103. When ratifying this Convention, Latvia declared that the third paragraph of Section 11 of the Convention is binding insofar as it is not in contradiction with the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and other regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia, which determine the use of the official language.

Personal names in minority languages

ee. The Advisory Committee strongly urges the national authorities to immediately exercise the right minority representatives to the recognise their personal names, including in official documents, and in particular to take immediate measures to amend legislation on the use of ethnic minority names, ensuring their full compliance with the provisions of Article 11 Paragraph 1 of the Framework Convention.

104. In Latvia, personal names shall be reproduced in accordance with the traditions of the Latvian language, and written in accordance with the applicable standards of the literary language as provided by Section 19 Part 2 of the Official Language Law. Latvia would like to emphasise the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) according to which state is allowed to define and regulate the use of the official state language in personal identification and other official documents (see the ECHR decision of 7 December 2004 in the case of *Juta Mentzen also known as Mencena against Latvia*). Furthermore, in declaring a language as its official language, the state undertakes to guarantee its citizens the right to use that language without restrictions not only in their private life, but also in any interactions with public authorities, submitting and receiving information in that language. Having compared the status of the official state language with the right to private and family life, the ECHR found in the *Mentzen* case that Latvian authorities had not overstepped the margin of appreciation granted to them regarding the rights of individuals to private and family life by reproducing the personal name in the official documents in accordance with the Latvian grammar requirements.

105. At the same time, Latvia would like to stress that in official documents addressed to ethnic minority representatives, their name and surname are both reproduced in accordance with the applicable Latvian language standards and the original form of the minority language (transcribed into the Latin alphabet), in order for the person to whom the document is addressed to recognise their name and surname.

106. If a person wishes so, the original form of their name (transcribed into the Latin alphabet) may be included in their personal identification documents issued in

Latvian, provided that the difference was not included in any prior personal identification documents. Personal names may be reproduced in the original language by presenting documents (issued in another language) showing the different spelling of the personal name. If a person wishes so, the historical form of their personal name or surname (transcribed into the Latin alphabet) may be included in their personal identification documents issued in Latvian, provided that the difference was not included in any prior personal identification documents. The historical form of personal names and surnames may be reproduced in the original language by presenting a document confirming the differences in spelling.

Use of ethnic minority languages in topographic designations and private signs

The Advisory Committee urges the national minorities to immediately harmonise laws and regulations on the use of minority languages in topographic terms, as well as in inscriptions and other publicly visible private information with Article 11 of the Framework Convention.

107. In accordance with the laws and regulations currently in place in Latvia, ethnic minorities may place inscriptions and other information in a minority language in a public place, along with the official state language.

Article 12 of the Framework Convention

1. *The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.*
2. *In this context the Parties shall inter alia provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to textbooks, and facilitate contacts among students and teachers of different communities.*
3. *The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.*

Equal access to education and intercultural education

- ff. *The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on national authorities to ensure that all pupils have access to high-quality information about the history and cultural heritage of ethnic minorities as an integral component of the Latvian society, which includes ensuring the teaching of history from many perspectives, regardless of the language of instruction. The Advisory Committee calls for further and increased efforts aimed at promoting mutual respect and intercultural dialogue.*
- gg. *National authorities should step up their efforts to identify and eliminate any deficiencies that Roma children encounter in education, and it must be ensured*

that Roma children have equal access to high-quality education at all levels. Measures must be taken to prevent children from being unduly placed in special schools. Admission to elementary schools should become the norm. Special education should be provided for in exceptional cases only after carrying out diagnostic studies based on appropriate testing methods, introduced with a view to ensure objectivity and non-discrimination.

'Loyalty requirements' in education

The Advisory Committee calls on national authorities to avoid false justifications such as 'loyalty requirements' that put unnecessary pressure on teachers and school directors. Loyalty requirements should not be used to reduce pluralism and to impose a uniform opinion onto all teachers and school directors.

108. Latvia ensures to every its resident the right to high-quality, inclusive education, regardless on their financial and social status, race, national and ethnic background, gender, religious and political views, medical condition, employment and place of residence.

109. As concerns the 'loyalty requirements' in education, Latvia would like to emphasise that in its ruling of 21 December 2017, the Constitutional Court gave its assessment to several sections of the Education Law which lay down professional and ethical requirements for people employed in the education system, including the requirement to be loyal to the Republic of Latvia and its Constitution. In its judgment, the Constitutional Court concluded that the requirement of loyalty to educators comply with the Constitution. In particular, the Constitutional Court acknowledged that "every educatee in Latvia has the right to receive an education that complies, inter alia, with the principle of a democratic legal state, the principle of Latvia as a national state and ensures that the educatee becomes a full member of a democratic civil society. Members of society who are aware of and respect the values on which the Constitution is based are a prerequisite for the existence of a democratic legal state. The prior objective of the educational process – ensuring the right of students to receive such education and education, which would allow them to develop and strengthen the feeling of belonging to Latvia – corresponds not only to the interests of the educatees but to the general public. Consequently, the legislator has, in adopting the contested rules, respected the balance between the interests of society and the individual, and the restriction imposed by the contested rules is proportionate."

110. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 27–31 of its Fourth National Report.

Article 13 of the Framework Convention

1. Within the framework of their education systems, the Parties shall recognise that

persons belonging to a national minority have the right to set up and to manage their own private educational and training establishments.

2. The exercise of this right shall not entail any financial obligation for the Parties.

111. In Latvia there are no restrictions on establishing and managing private education and training institutions. Out of the 66 pre-school education institutions that implement pre-school education programmes in an ethnic minority language, 16 (24.24%) are private education institutions implementing their programmes in Russian. Out of the 25 general education institutions implementing an educational programme in Russian, 5 (20%) are private. Out of the 115 general education institutions implementing educational programme in Latvian and in an ethnic minority language, 12 (10.7%) are private.

Article 14 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language.

2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language.

3. Paragraph 2 of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official language or the teaching in this language.

Teaching of minority languages and education in ethnic minority schools

hh. The Advisory Committee calls on national authorities to continue providing continuous access to learning and teaching in ethnic minority languages throughout the country, in order to meet the current demand.

ii. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee urges national authorities to closely cooperate with people from ethnic minority communities, including parents, to ensure that their interests and concerns pertaining to the language of instruction and the monitoring of the standards of quality in ethnic minority schools are given due consideration.

jj. National authorities are asked to continue working on providing an appropriate bilingual curriculum on the level of pre-school education, and to provide sufficient funding for quality Latvian training in pre-school education institutions. Methodological support should be provided for teachers in the field of bilingual education and the learning of language and integrated content.

112. The education policy in Latvia is based on two main considerations: the need to strengthen the status of the Latvian language as the only official language specified in the Constitution and to promote the cohesion of Latvian society. In strengthening of the official language and the integration of society, Latvia respects the principle of proportionality, ensuring that the education reform does not infringe on the right of ethnic minorities to the preservation and pursuit of their identity, which includes their language.
113. Latvia wishes to emphasize that the provisions of the international law and case-law binding to it do not create any subjective rights of people to an education in a language that is not the official state language (i.e. in a language that is an ethnic minority language); such education is to be considered in relation to either the preservation of ethnic minority identity, or the necessity to prevent the impending extinction of an ethnic minority language.
114. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 24–28 of its Fourth National Report.
115. The work on providing teachers with an extensive range of professional development courses on the issues of teaching Latvian continues (including integrated learning of language and content) as well as courses to improve the Latvian language skills for professional needs (between 2018 and the first six months of 2021, these courses were completed by 2822 teachers: 1162 pre-school, and 1660 primary and secondary school teachers). Various teaching and supporting materials have been developed for working in a linguistically heterogeneous environment and made freely available online, with particular emphasis on supporting pre-school teachers.
116. The Latvian Language Agency (LLA) provides an important support for teachers, offering Latvian language and other school subject teaching courses for teachers; and by the National Centre for Education, which provides teaching materials in ethnic minority languages, prepares ethnic minority education programmes, and develops the content of national exams in ethnic minority languages. In 2017–2021, the LLA regularly organised teaching courses for Latvian language teachers providing adult education (337 teachers underwent the training), and for advanced training providers (15 specialists prepared) for teachers who teach Latvian to adults as a foreign language.
117. In order to promote cooperation with minority pupils' parents, to improve the parents' awareness of educational changes and to increase their participation, the LLA regularly conducts various inclusion events (the 'Tiekamies skolā' ('Let's meet at school') cooperation project, open-door-day events for families, the Language Game Club whose members include at least 600 families, and other events).

Teaching of the official state language

ll. The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on national authorities to continue to ensure that all residents of Latvia have an easy access to learning Latvian. Particular attention must be paid to work on continuing the provision of opportunities to learn Latvian among adults.

118. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 20–23 of its Fourth National Report.

119. The Society Integration Foundation implements the national budget programme ‘Learning of the Latvian language by remigrants and their family members’. The aim of the programme is to enable access to learning the Latvian language among those remigrants and members of their families who return or permanently move to Latvia after having spent a longer period outside its territory, and for whom Latvian is not the first language or mother tongue, or who need improvements in their command of the language, to promote expansion of the Latvian language and better reintegration of remigrants and their family members in society.

120. The State Employment Agency of Latvia (SEA) provides Latvian language courses without an intermediary language; in 2017, these courses were improved in accordance with the needs of individuals, and divided into six sublevels. Additionally, the SEA organises Latvian language course for the unemployed and job seekers as part of the ‘Learning of the official state language’ informal education programme. The Latvian language courses are divided into three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. Each of the levels comprises 150 hours. One can sequentially complete the different levels of the programme to learn the official state language three times a year. Having completed courses at each of the levels, unemployed persons and job seekers can take an official state language exam at the National Centre for Education. Furthermore, the SEA offers the ‘Development of the official state language skills’ course to the unemployed and job seekers. There is a course involving non-traditional teaching methods intended for individuals without prior knowledge of Latvian. Any individual registered at the SEA as unemployed or as a job seeker may enrol in these.

Article 15 of the Framework Convention

The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.

Institutional framework for the participation of ethnic minorities in decision-making

mm. National authorities should continue and develop measures aimed at promoting the participation of ethnic minorities (including those with the status of a non-citizen) in the public life at national and local level. Furthermore, the Advisory

Committee strongly encourages national authorities to prioritise democratic representation above the interest in promoting the exclusive use of the official state language.

- nn. The Advisory Committee calls on national authorities to promote and ensure the effective participation of ethnic minorities in governance, including by reviewing whether the requirements of the citizenship and language criteria are really necessary and proportional for all government and public service positions that are not available to people who do not know Latvian or who are non-citizens.*
- oo. The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on national authorities to take additional measures to promote the active participation of ethnic minorities whenever decisions associated with these minorities are made. National authorities are recommended to change the procedure for selecting and appointing the members of various advisory committees. Ethnic minorities should be given the opportunity to elect their own representatives in these structures. More attention should be paid to the inclusion of Roma people in local consultations and decision-making.*

121. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 14–19 of its Fourth National Report.

122. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraph 28–31 of its Fourth National Report.

Participation in social and economic life

pp. The Advisory Committee strongly recommends that national authorities in cooperation with Roma representatives and community members, step up their efforts to resolve the problems that Roma people face and that are critical to their participation in economic and social life. The programmes should include the aspect of gender equality.

qq. National authorities should aim to increase the level of employment, developing more effective training programmes and organising constructive events, conducting an information programme for the implementation of equal access to healthcare among Roma people and developing a more targeted social housing policy.

123. Latvia wishes to refer to the information provided in Paragraphs 45–53 of its Fourth National Report.

Article 16 of the Framework Convention

The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at

restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present Framework Convention.

124. Latvia notes that the administrative division reform recently adopted does not infringe on the rights and freedoms of ethnic minorities.

Article 17 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful contacts across frontiers with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage.

2. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organisations, both at the national and international levels.

125. Latvia would like to point out that the current legal framework does not prevent or restrict the rights of ethnic minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful cross-border contacts.

Article 18 of the Framework Convention

1. The Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to the national minorities concerned.

2. Where relevant, the Parties shall take measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation.

Bilateral cooperation

The Advisory Committee urges national authorities to implement the existing bilateral agreements and to continue fostering bilateral cooperation in what pertains to the protection of ethnic minorities in accordance with the principles of good neighbourhood, friendship and national cooperation, and taking into account the role of multilateral standards and procedures.

126. Latvia would like to stress that it already follows the principles of good neighbourhood, friendship and national cooperation, enabling the democratic growth of the united Europe and the world. The examples are provided in the Fourth National Report. For example, in cooperation with the Polish Embassy in Latvia, support is provided to all Polish schools in Latvia, jointly assessing the feasibility of implementing the educational programme in Polish. Representatives of ethnic minority education institutions are invited to participate in the Advisory Council

for Ethnic Minority Education of the Ministry of Education and Science, including those institutions that teach their education programmes in Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Polish, Estonian and Hebrew. The president of the International Roma Association is also represented in the Council. The Ministry of Education and Science regularly collaborates with communities and non-governmental organisations representing ethnic minorities.

127. Furthermore, state funding is used to support 'Golden Mask', the annual presentation of Russia's best theatre shows in Latvia (both in Riga and the regions).

Annex 1
Involvement of Roma in the SEA support measures

| Active employment measure | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | | 2019 | | 2020 | |
|---|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| | Total | Roma people | Total | Roma people | Total | Roma people | Total | Roma people | Total | Roma people |
| Employment promotion measures | | | | | | | | | | |
| Paid temporary welfare work | 10937 | 188 | 13032 | 282 | 12922 | 297 | 9000 | 228 | 8994 | 211 |
| Measures for certain groups of individuals (subsidised employment) | 979 | 2 | 870 | 2 | 919 | 5 | 822 | 1 | 1398 | 5 |
| Support measures of the 'Subsidised jobs' project | | | | | | | | | 995 | 19 |
| Development of skills necessary for work in the non-governmental sector | | | | | | | 409 | 2 | 637 | 3 |
| Promotion of regional mobility of workers | 161 | | 243 | 1 | 252 | | 288 | 1 | 140 | |
| Training measures | | | | | | | | | | |
| Professional training, re-training, advanced training | 5316 | 11 | 4650 | 8 | 3435 | 7 | 3519 | 4 | 2686 | 6 |
| Information education, including: | 13786 | 54 | 10931 | 43 | 11907 | 40 | 13039 | 48 | 10982 | 33 |
| Learning of the official state language | 2206 | 9 | 1817 | 14 | 2088 | 10 | 2730 | 22 | 1762 | 15 |
| Learning of the official state language without an intermediary language | 9 | | 30 | | 15 | | 13 | | 21 | |
| Practical training with the employer | 178 | | 313 | | 426 | | 463 | 1 | 393 | 5 |
| Measures to boost competitiveness (basic skills needed on the job market, incl. information days) | 4239 | 1 | 4975 | 1 | 5160 | 10 | 7079 | 6 | 4905 | 10 |
| E-learning | | | | | | | 15152 | 13 | 7526 | 9 |
| Support for regional mobility as part of active employment measures (mostly during training) | 2459 | 6 | 2672 | 6 | 3174 | 5 | 3864 | 12 | 3244 | 6 |
| Measures for long-term unemployed individuals | | | | | | | | | | |
| Support measures for long-term unemployed individuals (psychologist consultations, motivation programme with a mentor etc.) | 3723 | 32 | 54018 | 465 | 53711 | 593 | 32228 | 297 | 1731 | 29 |
| Support measure for people with additions — Minnesota | 241 | 1 | 300 | | 268 | | 187 | 2 | 122 | 2 |

| Support measures for young people¹⁴ | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|-------|-----|-------|----|--|--|--|--|
| Youth Guarantee (YG) measures, including.: | 19300 | 94 | 18301 | 115 | 13403 | 95 | | | | |
| YG Acquisition of non-formal education | 2363 | 14 | 2841 | 17 | 2312 | 18 | | | | |

Data source: SEA

Annex 2

Individuals who completed official state language training as part of informal education and found employment within 6 months after the completion of the training

| Ethnicity | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | | 2019 | | 2020 | |
|---------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Completed the training | Found employment within 6 months | Completed the training | Found employment within 6 months | Completed the training | Found employment within 6 months | Completed the training | Found employment within 6 months | Completed the training | Found employment within 6 months |
| Latvians | 183 | 49 | 111 | 37 | 251 | 89 | 180 | 70 | 153 | 44 |
| Russians | 1675 | 512 | 1010 | 338 | 1927 | 669 | 1400 | 483 | 1115 | 316 |
| Belarusians | 138 | 36 | 130 | 42 | 250 | 84 | 159 | 56 | 139 | 42 |
| Ukrainians | 135 | 43 | 115 | 43 | 214 | 92 | 160 | 56 | 116 | 40 |
| Poles | 91 | 18 | 64 | 27 | 134 | 49 | 79 | 16 | 58 | 14 |
| Lithuanians | 31 | 9 | 19 | 2 | 33 | 12 | 25 | 10 | 17 | 9 |
| Jews | 6 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| Roma people | 13 | 1 | 12 | 1 | 28 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 17 | 2 |
| Others | 55 | 23 | 42 | 18 | 126 | 49 | 81 | 35 | 64 | 17 |
| Not specified | 522 | 182 | 83 | 30 | 37 | 19 | 19 | 3 | 14 | 3 |
| Total | 2849 | 873 | 1593 | 540 | 3010 | 1068 | 2117 | 732 | 1699 | 490 |

Data source: SE

¹⁴ The Youth Guarantee project expired in 2019, so the data in the last columns is not available, but the employment measures for pupils continue.

Annex 3
Latvian national budget-financed programme
‘Ethnic Minority and Latvian Youth Cooperation Programme’
2017–2021

1. Funding

| Year | Total programme funding available (EUR) | Total funding available per project (EUR) | Funding awarded (EUR) |
|------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 2017 | 30,000.00 | 5,000.00 | 26,269.23 |
| 2018 | 31,303.00 | 5,200.00 | 24,670.35 |
| 2019 | 31,303.00 | 5,200.00 | 30,652.26 |
| 2020 | 31,303.00 | 5,200.00 | 26,575.86 |
| 2021 | 31,303.00 | 5,200.00 | n/a |

2. Partners

2017.

Projects had to include a partner that was another non-government organisation registered in Latvia that was not an ethnic minority organisation, and whose primary purpose in the project was to provide administrative support to the entity implementing project, in order to boost the capacity of ethnic minority organisations in administration and preparation of projects.

2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

The previous project partner conditions were removed. Potential partners may include various education institution in the Republic of Latvia: Latvian and ethnic minority schools and national/municipal bodies, including museums and archives.

3. Project applications

| Year | Submitted | Approved |
|------|-----------|----------|
| 2017 | 6 | 6 |
| 2018 | 8 | 5 |
| 2019 | 7 | 6 |
| 2020 | 6 | 6 |
| 2021 | 15 | 6 |

4. Organisations that submitted approved projects

| Applicant | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| ‘Jelgavas nacionālo kultūras biedrību asociācija’ association | X | X | X | - | - |
| ‘Rodacy’ association | X | - | - | - | - |
| ‘Goraļ’ association | X | - | X | X | X |
| Makss Goldins association ‘Ebreju kultūras mantojums’ | X | X | X | X | - |
| Riga German Culture Association | X | X | X | X | X |
| ‘Latvijas Vācu Savienība’ association | X | X | X | X | X |
| Latvian Ukrainian Association Union | - | X | X | - | X |
| ‘JATRAŅ’ Ukrainian association in Vangaži | - | - | - | X | - |
| ‘SAMŠOBLO’ Georgian association in Latvia | - | - | - | X | - |
| Lithuanian Community in Latvia | - | - | - | - | X |
| ‘Razdolje’ Belarusian culture association | - | - | - | - | X |

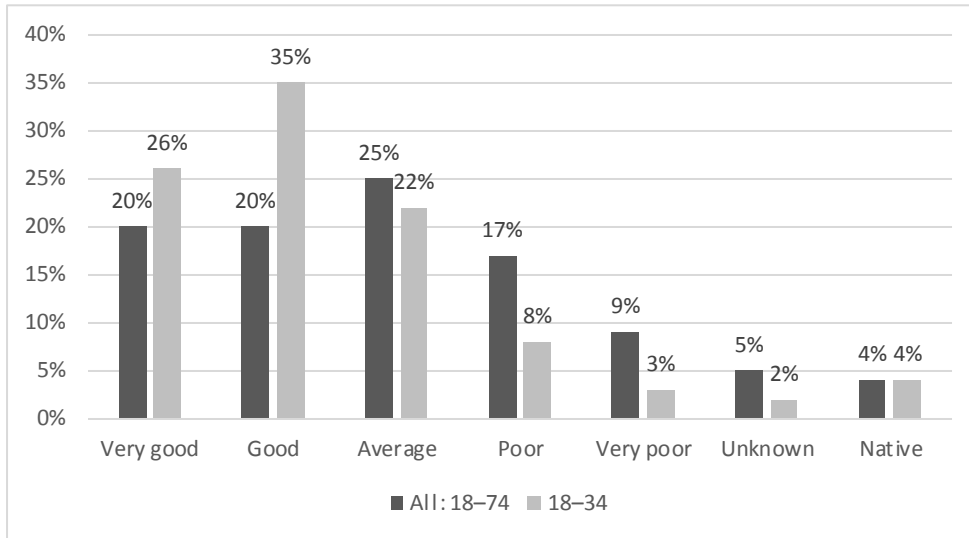
5. Number of activities conducted as part of the projects in the regions of Latvia, broken down by year:

| Year | Riga | Zemgale | Latgale | Vidzeme | Kurzeme |
|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2017 | 4 | 4 | 1 | - | - |
| 2018 | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| 2019 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 2020 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

6. Number of activities conducted as part of the projects, based on their content and goals, broken down by year:

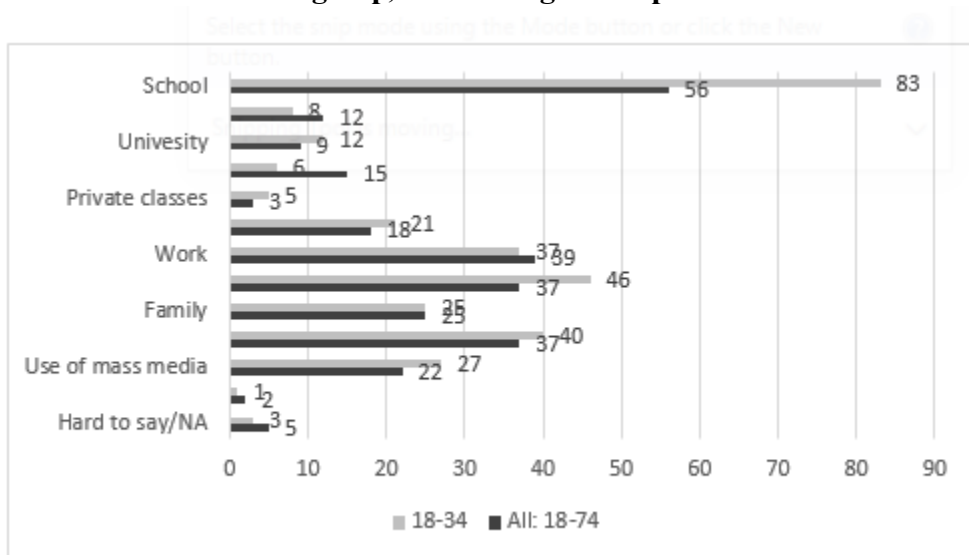
| Activities carried out | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| <i>Tours and expeditions</i> to learn, study and discover new and yet unfamiliar things about the life and work of various representatives of ethnic minorities to the benefit of Latvia. | 7 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| <i>Debates, analytical discussions, trivia contests, educational events to promote local patriotism, day-of-culture events</i> intended to boost a sense of civic participation among ethnic minorities and their desire to participate in social processes. | 5 | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| <i>Research or discovery process</i> covering the life and activities of individual representatives of ethnic minorities in Latvia's history, or to the benefit of the country, their role in the multicultural environment of Latvia; study of the ethnic background in among one's own relatives, and discovery of one's own ethnic roots. | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Preparation of photographic stories and short films, exhibitions, presentations</i> are used, more or less, in all the projects implemented, especially as the result of project activities presented at their final events. | 5 | - | 3 | 5 |
| <i>Use of folklore</i> as a way to promote the achievement of project goals; presentations and folklore performances. | - | 2 | - | - |
| <i>Day-of-culture events</i> whose participants acquaint each other with the traditions and values of the cultures associated with their ethnic backgrounds. | - | 1 | - | - |
| <i>Creative and educational workshops, contests</i> , during which the dialogue and interactions between the youth of different ethnic backgrounds helps them understand the features of other cultures and communicate with people from various environments and cultures. | - | - | 3 | 3 |
| <i>Informal schools, camps</i> | - | - | - | 2 |
| <i>Final events</i> that come at the end of investigative and research activities, with presentations by participants, and demonstrations of other results of cooperation among the youth. | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 |

Annex 4
Latvian language skill self-assessment



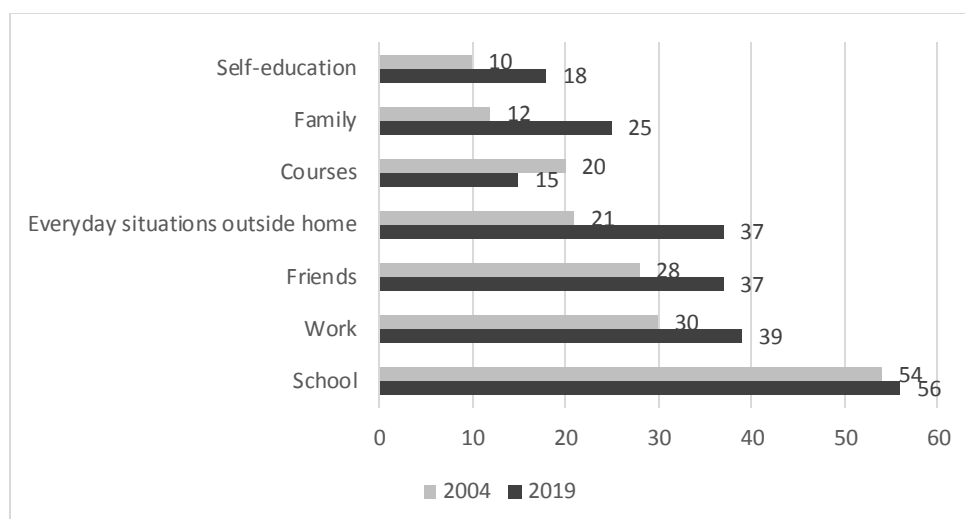
*(Respondents: those whose first language is not Latvian, %)
(2019 survey data)*

Annex 5
Approaches and forms of learning the Latvian language in the teenager/young adult group, and among all respondents



*(Respondents: representatives of ethnic minorities, %).
(2019 survey data)*

Annex 6
Approaches and forms of learning the Latvian language in 2004 and 2019



(Respondents: representatives of ethnic minorities, %).
(2019 survey data)

Annex 7 Conservation of material heritage of ethnic minorities

The Government's funding of Orthodox churches in 2017–2021

2017

| Site | Amount |
|--|-----------|
| Uniate Church | 10,000.00 |
| Ilzeskalns (Kuļņeva) Church and Chapel | 5500.00 |
| Holy Trinity icon | 5000.00 |

2018

| Site | Amount |
|---|-----------|
| Uniate Church | 6500.00 |
| Daugavpils St Boris and Gleb Orthodox Church | 3000.00 |
| Eži (Māļi) Orthodox Church | 50,000.00 |
| Liepāja Holy Trinity Orthodox Church | 70,000.00 |
| Ascension of Christ stained-glass window at the Liepāja Orthodox Church | 3000.00 |
| Ventspils Orthodox Church | 88160.00 |
| Vīksna Orthodox Church | 4000.00 |

2019

| Site | Amount |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Jelgava Orthodox Church | 10,000.00 |

2020

| Site | Amount |
|--|-----------|
| Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Church in Daugavpils | 10,000.00 |
| Eži (Māļi) Orthodox Church | 50,000.00 |
| Ķemeri St Peter and Paul Orthodox Church | 3000.00 |
| Vīksna Orthodox Church | 10,000.00 |

2021

| Site | Amount |
|---|------------|
| Daugavpils St Boris and Gleb Orthodox Church | 6500.00 |
| Daugavpils St Nicholas Orthodox Church | 7200.00 |
| Šķeltova Orthodox Church | 9982.00 |
| Buildings of the Jēkabpils Holy Spirit Orthodox Monastery | 14,000.00 |
| Eži (Māļi) Orthodox Church | 50,000.00 |
| Vīksna Orthodox Church | 100,000.00 |
| Ilzeskalns (Kuļņeva) Church and Chapel | 336.00 |
| Alūksne Orthodox Church | 4500.00 |
| Ķemeri Orthodox Church | 20000.00 |