



Strasbourg, 16 October 2008

DH-MIN(2008)005

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
(CDDH)

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF
NATIONAL MINORITIES
(DH-MIN)

ACTIVITY REPORT

Period between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2008

**Strasbourg
Council of Europe
Room G.2, Agora Building**

I. Introduction

1. In November 2004¹, the Ministers' Deputies adopted the specific terms of reference of the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN), for the years 2005-2006. On 18 January 2007², the Ministers' Deputies renewed the terms of reference of the DH-MIN, for the years 2007-2008 (Appendix I). The DH-MIN adopted the present report at its eight meeting on 15-16 October 2008, with a view to providing the CDDH and others concerned with an overview of the activities undertaken by the Committee in the years 2007-2008.
2. In the reference period the DH-MIN held four meetings, respectively, on 21-23 March 2007, 17-19 October 2007, 12-13 March 2008 and 15-16 October 2008 with Ms Judit Solymosi (Hungary) in the chair and Mr Detlev Rein (Germany) as the Vice-Chairperson in 2007 and Ms Bilge Tekin-Befrits (Sweden) as the Vice-Chairperson in 2008. At its 8th meeting the DH-MIN elected Ms Milena Klajner (Croatia) as its Chair (subject to the approval of the CDDH) and Ms Bilge Tekin Befrits (Sweden) as Vice-Chair, both for a term of one year starting on 1 January 2009, subject to the extension of the Committee's mandate.
3. In addition, an international Conference entitled "Ten years of protecting national minorities and regional or minority languages : Institutions and Impact" was organised in connection with the DH-MIN plenary meeting on 11 March 2008 and with the participation of the DH-MIN members. The Conference, organised under the auspices of the Slovak Presidency of the Committee of Ministers marked the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 1 February and 1 March 1998 respectively. It reviewed the experience accumulated over the last ten years and provided an opportunity to reflect on the role of the international and domestic institutions which implement both conventions. It examined also the impact of these conventions on national policies, legislation and practice regarding the protection of minorities and their languages. The agenda of the Conference is attached in Appendix II.

II. General approach and working methods

4. Drawing on the experience acquired in the years 2005-2006 and bearing in mind its terms of reference, the DH-MIN continued to focus on carrying out in-depth analysis of selected transversal issues relevant to Member States, mainly with a view to preparing overviews of existing legislation and good practices, and to contributing to a fuller information of its members as well as the possible formulation of proposals for consideration by the CDDH, including studies and draft recommendations on issues of general interest. The DH-MIN also contributed to the work of the Ministers' Deputies, *inter alia*, by preparing six comments on the draft responses of the Committee of Ministers to the Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Appendices III - VIII).
5. In carrying out its activities, the DH-MIN has taken due diligence to refrain from any interference, with the existing monitoring mechanisms in the field of minority protection, in particular with the Advisory Committee, which is involved in the monitoring of the Framework Convention for the

¹ Decision No. (CM/Del/Dec(2003)845/11.6) adopted at the 902nd meeting of the Committee of Ministers held on 3 November 2004.

² Decision No. (CM/Del/Dec(2007)984/4.1b/appendix13E) adopted at the 984th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies held on 17-18 January 2007.

Protection of National Minorities (hereafter: the Framework Convention). This was particularly stressed in the DH-MIN comments on the draft responses of the Committee of Ministers to the PACE Recommendation 1772 (2006) “on the Rights of national minorities in Latvia” and PACE Recommendation 1775 (2006) “on the Situation of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples”.

6. The DH-MIN acted as a forum for the exchange of information among Member states and with other bodies active in the field of protection of national Minorities. Representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE took part in all the meetings of the DH-MIN in the reference period and actively participated in a number of discussions, e.g. on the regulations contained in electoral laws and the laws on political parties that are relevant for national minorities, the use of the existing instruments concerning the protection of national minorities and non-discrimination in relation to new communities and the role of states on establishing and maintaining links with kin-minorities abroad.
7. The Advisory Committee’s representatives participated in a number of DH-MIN meetings and exchanges of views were held between the DH-MIN and the representatives of the ACFC on a number of issues of common interest, such as the findings of the Advisory Committee with regard to the needs and expectations of minorities in the field of media, the participation of persons belonging to National Minorities in Public Affairs and the outline for third cycle state reports under the Framework Convention.
8. The DH-MIN broadly sought advice from such bodies as the Venice Commission, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the European Committee on Migration, the Consultative Committee established under the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data when discussing issues on which these bodies developed specific expertise relevant from the perspective of protection of national minorities.
9. The DH-MIN members regularly held exchanges of views and experience on policies and good practices for the protection of national minorities, through, *inter alia*, regular *travaux de table*.
10. The DH-MIN based its work on i) elaboration of the draft responses of the Committee of Ministers to the Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities; ii) information provided by Member States supplied in response to questionnaires relating to “ethnic data collection and appropriate methods for gathering such data” and “access of national minorities to new media”; and iii) exchanges of information, views and experience with experts in the fields concerned, as well as with other bodies dealing with issues relating to national minorities (this method was particularly well developed in connection with the exchange of information on the promotion of use of native languages in minority communities, with individual presentations being made by the national experts having specific experience in this area).

III. Work on selected themes

A - Ethnic data collection and appropriate methods for gathering such data

11. At its fifth meeting, the DH-MIN decided to examine the issue relating to ethnic data collection and the appropriate methods for gathering such data, taking into consideration the standards

developed and applied by the Council of Europe, its member states, and in the context of the European Union.

12. In order to assist the DH-MIN in its work on this subject, the Secretariat of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) presented the study on the existing legal and practical framework for ethnic data collection in the Council of Europe member States, and a member of the Consultative Committee established under the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS N° 108) presented the work of that committee.
13. The EU standards were outlined by an independent expert Mr Timo Makkonen, lawyer and researcher based in Helsinki, Finland, author of the European Handbook on Data Collection, who made a presentation on data collection from the perspective of data and privacy protection and on the work that has already been carried out in this field by the European Commission.
14. In the ensuing discussion, various delegations welcomed the contributions of the experts. A number of delegations emphasised the necessity to take into account the diversity of opinions and approaches expressed within the DH-MIN on the protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities with regard to personal data collection and processing. The Committee decided to elaborate a “Questionnaire on ethnic data collection”, doc. ref. DH-MIN(2007)012 (Appendix IX) which was subsequently submitted to member States which a view of collecting information in such areas as census and non-census sources of ethnic data collection, legal framework for data collection, storing, processing and access to data, as well as the question of self-determination of the individual concerned. The responses have been compiled in the document DH-MIN (2008)001rev.1 which is available on the Council of Europe web-site. The expert analysis of these responses to the questionnaire is currently under way.

B - Access of national minorities to the new media

15. Drawing on the experience acquired in the years 2005-2006 with regard to the access of national minorities to media, the DH-MIN carried out an in-depth analysis of the situation concerning the access of national minorities to the new media. In this regard, rapid technological developments in recent years have led to profound changes of broadcasting services and to the development of new channels of communication between citizens and their government.
16. The discussions in which representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention and the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages took an active part raised specific issues such as cross border access to media, compatibility of alphabets and availability of platforms supporting minority language-specific diacritical marks, impact of digitalisation on access to media both within a state and across borders.
17. In order to identify best practices which could be emulated by other interested member States, the Committee drew up a “Questionnaire on the access of national minorities to the new media in the information society” doc. ref. DH-MIN(2007)001 (Appendix X). The collection of responses encountered understandable difficulties, given the breadth of the media field, the number of interested parties and the differences in the technological awareness required to provide comprehensive answers. The compilation of responses (ref.doc.: DH-MIN(2007)009rev.3) has been published in June 2008 on the Council of Europe web-site and the expert analysis is currently under way.

C - Use of the existing binding and non-binding instruments concerning the protection of national minorities and non-discrimination in relation to new communities

18. Acting on a proposal formulated by a member state at the fourth meeting of the DH-MIN in October 2006, the Committee examined the issue of the pertinence of the existing binding and non-binding instruments concerning the protection of national minorities and non-discrimination in relation to new communities. Before engaging in the discussion on the topic, the Committee heard the views of representatives of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) on the main principles of the Report on Non-citizens and Minority Rights and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population of the Parliamentary Assembly on the rights of migrant workers and integration of new communities within society.
19. It further got informed by the representatives of the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) on the main principles of the European migration policies, with particular emphasis on integration, community relations and relationships with the countries of origin, and by the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE on the High Commissioner's work, especially with regard to migration and integration. In the discussion, member States raised specific issues such as professional integration, teaching of the language of the country of origin and respect for cultural identity. There were varying opinions presented and no consensus could be reached with regard to the applicability of the existing norms concerning the protection of national minorities and non-discrimination in relation to new communities. The majority of the DH-MIN members was of the view however that the examination of this topic was not the primary task of the Committee.
20. However, being aware of the Opinions of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention and of other international bodies to adopt a flexible approach to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the DH-MIN strives to follow with attention the evolving standards and circumstances in this field.

D - Promotion of use of native languages in minority communities

21. The Committee developed a practice in the current reference period of examining case-studies of good practices in the field of the promotion of use of native languages in minority communities, with a view to drawing on the experiences of the member States and promoting worthy examples of practice in particular in the field of education, administration of justice and at local government level.
22. Seven hearings were held over three meetings of the Committee. Mr Ján Hero, Director of the Private Primary School in Kremnica, Slovak Republic, made a presentation on specific provisions for, and experiences stemming from, teaching Roma children in the Romani language. In his presentation on the situation of the Croatian minority in Romania, Mr Mihai Radan, MP, President of the Croatian Union of Romania focused on the education in the Croatian language in the villages of Carasova and Lipova in western Romania.
23. Due attention was paid to the question of promotion of languages spoken by small linguistic communities. Mr Dragan Knezevic, Advisor at the Agency for Human and Minority Rights made a presentation on "the education in minority languages and the official use of minority languages of small minority communities in the Republic of Serbia", focusing in particular on the Ruthenian minority residing in Serbia. Mr Ivo Berther, Head of the Languages Promotion Service (Sprachenförderung) at the Graubünden (Grisons) Cantonal Office of Culture outlined the plan of

the government of the Canton of Graubünden (Grisons) for the Rumantsch Grischun language at schools, while Dr. Roland Verra, Head of Ladin School Education Board in Bolzano presented a multilingual model of education for the Ladin minority.

24. Finally, Ms Marie-Gabrielle Merloz, member of the DH-MIN with respect of France made a presentation on the “Position of France on the use of languages of origin and mother tongues in the field of education”. The presentation focused on the very rich linguistic heritage of France and the practical steps taken by the authorities to teach seventy-five regional or minority languages traditionally spoken by French citizens.

E - Guidelines on procedures for developing relations between a state and kin minorities residing in a different state

25. The question of the potential added value of elaborating guidelines on procedures for developing relations between a state and kin minorities originated in the context of the discussion on the DH-MIN comment on the draft reply of the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1735 (2006) on the concept of “nation”. The reply, adopted on 20 February 2008, invited the DH-MIN, to start considering at its meeting in October 2008, the potential added value of such guidelines, taking into consideration the work currently carried out in this field, notably by the Venice Commission, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention, the Expert Committee of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.
26. In this context the Committee invited representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities to present the recently adopted Recommendations of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE on national minorities in interstate relations. Mr Bogdan Lucian Aurescu, member of the Venice Commission outlined the findings and conclusions of the “Report on the Preferential Treatment of National Minorities by their Kin-State” of 2001 and more recent developments in relation to the protection of national minorities by their kin-states.
27. In the discussion which followed Member States, which adopted legislation on kin-minority relations, made presentations on their domestic legislation and practice concerning their kin-minorities.
28. Having analysed the work carried out so far in this field, an overwhelming majority of the members of the Committee was of the opinion that the existing Council of Europe and OSCE standards are of complementary character and lay down the basic principles to guide States in this field. The DH-MIN considered that, for the time being, there is no necessity of elaborating new guidelines. The Committee decided to continue to collect information, to follow new developments and to discuss how member States make use of the existing standards in their policies, and to revisit this issue when appropriate.

Miscellaneous

29. The Chairperson of the DH-MIN was invited to the 66th meeting of the CDDH in March 2008 in order to report on the work of the Committee. Upon the invitation of the Federal Union of European Nationalities, she also attended in her capacity of chairperson, together with a representative of the DH-MIN Secretariat, the 2008 Congress of FUEN organised in Hungary.

The chairperson and the vice-chairperson of DH-MIN were invited to take part in the work of the conference evaluating the impact of the Framework Convention in October 2008.

Themes for future work

30. As regards future work, the Committee agreed to discuss the distribution of public financial support for projects concerning persons belonging to national minorities and their associations, and to hold at its 9th meeting an exchange of views on the existing practices, criteria and models in this field. In addition, it decided to examine the draft questionnaire to be formulated by the Secretariat in consultation with the Bureau and the Austrian delegation

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APPENDIX I**Terms of reference of
the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN)**

1.	Name of committee:	COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES (DH-MIN)
2.	Type of committee:	Committee of Experts
3.	Source of terms of reference:	Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)
4.	Terms of reference:	
	Having regard to:	
-		the Declaration and the Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe member states (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005); CM(2005)80 final 17 May 2005) ;
-		the Road map for the implementation of the Action Plan (974th meeting of the Deputies – 27 September 2006, item 1.6), Chapter I.2 ;
-		Decision No. CM/Del/Dec(2003)845/1.6 containing the specific terms of reference of the DH-MIN adopted at the 902nd meeting of the Committee of Ministers held on 3 November 2004 ;
-		the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950, CETS No. 005) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995, CETS No 157).
		Under the authority of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) and in relation with the implementation of Project 2004/DG2/76 “Protecting and promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities”, the Committee is instructed to:
i.		act as a forum for the exchange of information, views and experience on policies and good practice for the protection of national minorities at domestic level and in the context of relevant international legal instruments, including those of the Council of Europe, without pursuing activities relating to monitoring the situation in individual member states ;
ii.		carry out a reflection on transversal issues relevant to member states, drawing on the results of the monitoring mechanism of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and, where appropriate, the work of other bodies dealing with related issues and especially the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities ;
iii.		identify and assess ways and means of further enhancing European co-operation on issues relating to the protection of national minorities and, where appropriate, to make proposals to this effect for consideration by the CDDH, including studies and draft recommendations on issues of general interest ;

iv.	prepare draft opinions for the CDDH on relevant issues, including in particular recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly or the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe ;
v.	In so doing, it shall, where appropriate,
-	carry out or commission relevant policy-research ;
-	involve in its work representatives of national minorities and non-governmental organisations with recognised competence in this field, notably by organising hearings with them.
	While carrying out its terms of reference, the DH-MIN shall ensure full respect of the functioning of the monitoring mechanism of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and other monitoring mechanisms in related fields.
5.	Composition:
5.A	Members Governments of member states are entitled to appoint representatives with the relevant qualifications in the field of protection of national minorities. The Council of Europe budget will bear the travel and subsistence expenses of one representative from each member state (two in the case of the state whose expert has been elected Chairperson). Each member state participating in the meetings of the Committee has the right to vote in procedural matters.
5.B	Participants
i.	The Parliamentary Assembly may send a representative to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of its administrative budget.
ii.	The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe may send a representative to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of its administrative budget.
iii.	The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights may send a representative to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of its administrative budget.
iv.	The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of its administrative budget.
v.	The Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of its administrative budget.
vi.	The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee, without the right to vote and at the expense of the body that (s)he (they) represent(s).
5.C	Other participants
i.	The European Commission and the Council of the European Union may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee without the right to vote or defrayal of

	expenses.
ii.	States with observer status of the Council of Europe (Canada, Holy See, Japan, Mexico, United States of America) may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee without the right to vote or defrayal of expenses.
iii.	The following bodies and intergovernmental organisations may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee without the right to vote or defrayal of expenses : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) / the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) - United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.
5.D	Observers The following non member states: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belarus - the Republic of Montenegro
	and the following non governmental organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amnesty International - International Commission of Jurists (CIJ) - International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) - European Coordinating Group for National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights - European Roma and Travellers Forum may send (a) representative(s) to meetings of the Committee without the right to vote or defrayal of expenses.
6.	Working Methods and Structures:
i.	Within the limits of available budgetary appropriations and to expedite the progress of its work, the Committee may entrust specific tasks to ad hoc advisory groups (i.e. groups of specialists, of limited composition, not necessarily drawn from the parent committee) and may, where necessary, call on external experts or consultants.
ii.	Within the limits of available budgetary appropriations, the Committee may organise hearings with representatives of NGOs and of national institutions for the promotion and the protection of human rights (NHRIs), as well as with any other third party in a position to contribute to its work. It is also entitled to establish any contact or have consultations with other bodies dealing with issues relating to national minorities.
7.	Duration:
	These terms of reference will expire on 31 December 2008.

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APPENDIX II



05.03.2008

Conference

TEN YEARS OF PROTECTING NATIONAL MINORITIES AND REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

Institutions and Impact

TUESDAY, 11 MARCH 2008, STRASBOURG
G BUILDING, ROOM G3

Rationale

This Conference will mark the 10th anniversaries of the entry into force of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 1 February and 1 March 1998 respectively. It will take place during the Slovak Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Charter and the Framework Convention share a number of similarities. Many countries, such as the Slovak Republic, are Parties to both treaties. Both treaties have a large number of provisions that are relevant to linguistic minorities. Both treaties employ similar methods for monitoring State compliance.

In spite of the many similarities, both conventions have different objectives. The principal aim of the Framework Convention, as set out in its Preamble, is “the effective protection of national minorities and of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to those national minorities”. Therefore, the Framework Convention proceeds from a human rights base. By contrast, the overriding concern of the Charter is cultural, as it is designed to protect and promote regional or minority languages as a threatened aspect of Europe’s cultural heritage. Thus, the core objectives are cultural diversity and the maintenance and development of cultural wealth.

During the last decade, the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention adopted 61 Opinions which led to the Committee of Ministers adopting 54 Resolutions. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts on the Charter has adopted 35 evaluation reports, which have been followed up by 30 Committee of Ministers' Recommendations. The experience gathered during the last ten years calls for reflection on the role of the international and domestic institutions which implement both conventions as well as of their impact on national policies, legislation and practice.

As regards the Framework Convention, this Conference will look into the role of the Ombudsman Institutions and other Human Rights Protection agencies which draw on the resolutions and recommendations of the monitoring bodies. The Conference will then address the impact of the Charter in general with specific examples of its importance for Frisian language education in the Netherlands and the promotion of the Sami language in Norway.

Programme

8:30-9:00 *Registration of participants*

Chair: Ambassador Emil Kuchár, Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the Council of Europe

9:00 Opening of the conference

Ms Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Mr Dušan Čaplovič, Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Government for Knowledge Based Society, European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities

Ambassador Christian Oldenburg, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights

Ambassador Bruno Gain, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Legal Co-operation

9:40 Protection of National Minorities and Regional or Minority Languages in Europe: Where do we stand?

9:40 Mr Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe

9:50 Mr Brendan F. Moran, Director of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

10:00 Mr Boriss Cilevičs, Representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, member of the Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities

10:10 Mr Gianni Buquicchio, Director, Secretary of the Venice Commission, Council of Europe

10:20 Coffee break

10:40 Ms Judit Solymosi, President of the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN)

10:50 Mr Alan Phillips, President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

11:00 Professor Stefan Oeter, Chair of the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

11:10 Mr Igor Grexa, Ambassador, Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

11:20 Discussion

11:40 Ten Years of Protecting National Minorities under the Framework Convention

11:40 Ms Ilze Brands-Kehris, 1st Vice-President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention: The experience of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention

- 11:55 Mr Jenő Kaltenbach, former Ombudsman for National and Ethnic Minorities of Hungary: The experience of Ombudsman for National and Ethnic Minorities in using the Framework Convention
- 12:10 Mr Mark Lattimer, Director, Minority Rights Group, London: Civil society's role in protecting national minorities rights
- 12:25 Discussion
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Ten Years of Promoting Regional or Minority Languages under the Charter**
- 14:30 Professor Vesna Crnić-Grotić, 1st Vice Chair of the Committee of Experts on the Charter: The Impact of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
- 14:45 Discussion
- 15:10 Ms Jannewietske de Vries, Minister of Language and Education of the Province of Fryslân (Netherlands): The Importance of the Charter for the Frisian Language
- 15:25 Mr Bjørn Olav Megard, Deputy Director General of the Department of Sami and Minority Affairs at the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (Norway): The Charter and the Promotion of the Sami Language in Norway
- 15:40 Discussion
- 16:10 Coffee break
- 16:30 Conclusions by the Chair
- 17:00 End

Languages: English, French

APPENDIX III**Opinion of the DH-MIN considered at its fifth meeting, 21-23 March 2007
Draft reply of the Committee Ministers****Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1735 (2006)
The concept of “nation”**

Further to a request by the Ministers' Deputies, the DH-MIN has examined the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1735 (2006) on the concept of nation and agreed to recommend that the CDDH forwards the following draft reply to the Committee of Ministers for consideration:

1. The Committee of Ministers commends the significant contribution of the Parliamentary Assembly to furthering the protection of national minorities in Europe, and it welcomes the Assembly's Recommendation 1735 (2006) on the concept of nation as a continuation of these efforts.
2. The Committee of Ministers agrees that the term “nation” has a different meaning in different contexts, and that in these circumstances it is not possible to arrive at a common definition of this concept. It further underlines that such a definition is not necessary for the effective implementation of Council of Europe standards pertaining to national minorities, notably the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
3. The Committee of Ministers shares the Parliamentary Assembly's view on the importance of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as well as of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and it continues to encourage the states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify these instruments. The Committee of Ministers recalls that developments regarding ratification of the Council of Europe treaties relating to minorities are regularly discussed in the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN), operating within the framework of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), and it welcomes the fact that the number of States Parties to the Framework Convention has increased to 39 and the number of Parties to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has increased to 22.
4. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers recalls that the protection of national minorities forms an integral part of the international protection of human rights and that it is also advanced by ensuring full respect for the principle of non-discrimination, guaranteed in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and in Protocol N° 12 to the Convention and interpreted by the European Court of Human Rights. It recalls also the important work carried by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which monitors the application of the principle of non-discrimination in all Council of Europe member states.
5. As regards the Parliamentary Assembly's Recommendation that the Committee of Ministers invite the member states to promote in their national legislation the recognition of the cultural rights of minorities, the Committee of Ministers recalls that, in the context of the monitoring processes of the Framework Convention and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Committee of Ministers regularly adopts recommendations to individual States Parties on the promotion of minority cultures and languages. In this respect, due account is taken of the pertinent recommendations issued by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

6. The Committee of Ministers fully agrees that the “promotion of ethnic purity” has no place in a democratic society, where diversity is an important and widespread feature, and it firmly condemns all demonstrations of, and incitement to, ethnic hatred and tensions between majority and minority populations. The Committee of Ministers’ monitoring findings under the Framework Convention demonstrate that the efforts to protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities need to be pursued further and developed and that this needs to be done in a manner that facilitates contacts between all persons, irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in accordance with Article 6 of the Framework Convention. Similar aims are pursued under Article 7.3 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, by which the Parties undertake to promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective. The Committee of Ministers will continue to examine developments in this respect and make, as appropriate, pertinent recommendations.

7. As regards the Parliamentary Assembly’s recommendation on ensuring that constitutions facilitate integration of citizens within a civic and multicultural entity, the Committee of Ministers stresses that, although constitutional traditions and contexts differ, all member states are committed to the inclusion of all their citizens in decision-making processes and to the development of an inclusive and cohesive society, with full respect to the principle of non-discrimination. The Committee of Ministers continues to support dialogue and exchanges of experiences on various means to achieve these goals, including in the DH-MIN, where the contribution of the Parliamentary Assembly has been significant.

8. As regards the relations between a state and kin minorities residing in a different state, including in neighbouring states, the Committee of Ministers recalls that, according to Article 18 of the Framework Convention, the Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with these States in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to national minorities. In this context, the Committee of Ministers acknowledges the importance of the 2001 report by the Venice Commission on the Preferential Treatment of National Minorities by their Kin State. As concerns the Assembly’s recommendation that the Committee of Ministers draws up guidelines on procedures for developing such relations, the Committee of Ministers is of the opinion that the proposal merits in-depth reflection, which needs to take into account the pertinent work of such bodies as the Venice Commission, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention, the Expert Committee of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. It therefore supports the initiative of the DH-MIN to consider as part of its work programme the potential added value of such activities, in order to ensure that an informed decision is subsequently taken on the issue.

9. Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union has continued to be a priority for the Committee of Ministers, and the report by Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, presented in April 2006, contains a range of valuable ideas in this respect. The report also recognises the importance of developing further co-operation on minority issues and stresses the Council of Europe’s expertise in this area. In particular, the report mentions the assessment of implementation in practice of the Framework Convention as one of the benchmarks for co-operation between the Council and the EU. As was recognised at the Warsaw Summit, the field of human rights is one of the key areas where further cooperation should be developed between the two Organisations. In the context of its follow-up to the Juncker report, the Committee of Ministers will continue to pay particular attention to co-operation on human rights issues, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. Co-operation on human rights issues include important new elements, such as the participation of an independent person appointed by the Council of Europe in the management structures of the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency, inaugurated on 1 March 2007.

APPENDIX IV**Comments by the DH-MIN**

Considered by the DH-MIN at its fifth meeting on 21-23 March 2007

**Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1773 (2006)
The 2003 guidelines on the use of minority languages in
the broadcast media and the Council of Europe standards:
need to enhance co-operation and synergy with the OSCE**

1. The Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN), acting under the authority of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) and within the limits of its terms of reference, has examined the Recommendation and the report upon which it was based and wishes to submit the following comments.
2. The DH-MIN welcomes the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1773(2006) on the 2003 guidelines on the use of minority languages in the broadcast media and the Council of Europe standards: need to enhance co-operation and synergy with the OSCE. The DH-MIN shares the Assembly's view that linguistic diversity is a source of enrichment of societies and it recognises the importance of ensuring full and effective equality of persons belonging to national minorities and preservation and development of their identities and languages, as provided for in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and other pertinent documents. It is clear that the media play an important role in this respect, as well as in the fight against intolerance.
3. The DH-MIN agrees with the view that it is essential to guarantee access to information on a non-discriminatory basis, including to persons belonging to national minorities. It recalls that right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Committee also agrees that states should abolish any undue restrictions on the establishment and functioning of private media broadcasting in minority languages.
4. The DH-MIN has launched new activities in this domain, notably to examine how the development of various forms of new media affects media access by persons belonging to national minorities. In pursuing this work, the DH-MIN takes into account not only the key Council of Europe treaties, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the Framework Convention and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, but also relevant OSCE documents, notably the detailed Guidelines on the Use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media. Furthermore, the pertinent recommendations issued by the Committee of Ministers are valuable references in this domain. These include Recommendation (97)21 on the media and the promotion of culture of tolerance and Recommendation Rec(2007)2 on media pluralism and diversity of media content, which encourages member states, inter alia, to assess how economic developments affect the structure of the media and their ability to perform their cultural role.
5. The DH-MIN agrees that the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages have played an important role in improving minority protection in Europe. The DH-MIN notes that the monitoring bodies of these two instruments

have regularly made substantial findings pertaining to broadcast and other media, and that in a number of cases the Committee of Ministers has also highlighted these issues in its recommendations.

6. The DH-MIN agrees that co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE on issues related to national minorities, including on media-related issues, is of great value. Such co-operation increases the combined impact and effectiveness of our work. In this respect, the DH-MIN itself has highly appreciated the regular and active participation of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Committee's work, which has helped to increase synergies. Therefore, the DH-MIN agrees with the proposal to enhance such co-operation further, including through practical projects of common interest, in which civil society representatives could be involved.

APPENDIX V

Comments by the DH-MIN

Considered by the DH-MIN at its fifth meeting on 21-23 March 2007

Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1772 (2006) Rights of national minorities in Latvia

1. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) is to “act as a forum for the exchange of information, views and experience on policies and good practice for the protection of national minorities at domestic level and in the context of relevant international legal instruments, including those of the Council of Europe, *without pursuing activities relating to monitoring the situation in individual member states*” (emphasis added). Against this background, the DH-MIN wishes to limit itself to the following comments on the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1772 (2006) on the rights of national minorities in Latvia.
2. The DH-MIN welcomes the attention paid by the Parliamentary Assembly to minority issues, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in Latvia. Without wishing to comment on the actual minority situation in Latvia, the DH-MIN recalls that a number of the issues raised in the recommendation relate to the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force in Latvia on 1 October 2005. In October 2006, the Latvian authorities transmitted, in accordance with Article 25 of the Convention, their first state report on implementation of the Framework Convention. The next steps in the monitoring procedure include a country-visit and adoption of the first Opinion by the Advisory Committee, which will help the Committee of Ministers to adopt conclusions concerning the implementation of the Framework Convention by Latvia.
3. As regards the proposal to “consider the possibility of issuing guidelines to be observed with regard to the rights of people belonging to ethnic or cultural minorities in the event of a state’s secession, reconstitution or the emergence of a new state”, the DH-MIN is prepared to carry out, if requested, an exchange views on the topic, with a view to determining whether the proposed theme would be an appropriate topic for thematic work and whether such guidelines would be likely to produce any added value in relation to the existing instruments. At the same time, the DH-MIN recalls that it is not competent to address issues such as citizenship or state succession *per se*.
4. Concerning the Parliamentary Assembly’s call to ensure “the same political approach, the same level of protection of minorities and the same level of inter-ethnic integration in all Council of Europe member states”, the DH-MIN stresses that, while “double-standards” are to be rejected and human rights are to be guaranteed throughout the continent, there is no rigid “one-size-fits-all” model for the protection of national minorities. This is reflected also in the formulation of the legal standards of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

APPENDIX VI

Comments by the DH-MIN

Considered by the DH-MIN at its fifth meeting on 21-23 March 2007

Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1775 (2006) Situation of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples

1. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) is to “act as a forum for the exchange of information, views and experience on policies and good practice for the protection of national minorities at domestic level and in the context of relevant international legal instruments, including those of the Council of Europe, *without pursuing activities relating to monitoring the situation in individual member states*” (emphasis added). Against this background, the DH-MIN wishes to limit itself to the following comments on the “Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1775 (2006) on the situation of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples”¹.

2. The DH-MIN welcomes the attention paid by the Parliamentary Assembly to minority issues, including to the situation of the peoples mentioned in the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1775 (2006), which covers a wide range of linguistic groups living in diverse situations. Without wishing to comment on the actual situation of the said populations in the Russian Federation, the DH-MIN recalls that a number of the issues raised in the recommendation are being addressed in connection with the monitoring of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force with respect of the Russian Federation on 1 December 1998. During the first monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers adopted, on 10 July 2003, Resolution ResCMN(2003)9 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Russian Federation and the second resolution is currently being prepared, on the basis of the on second Opinion on the Russian Federation, adopted by the Advisory Committee at its 26th meeting on 11 May 2006.

3. The DH-MIN further notes that the Council of Europe has organised training seminars in the Russian Federation on minority issues, involving both non-governmental and governmental actors and that the authorities of the Russian Federation have taken part in a range of related international events, including in a seminar organised by the Council of Europe and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities on the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minorities Languages in Vienna in October 2006. Moreover, the Russian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers organised an international seminar on the “International legal guarantees for the protection of national minorities and the problems in their implementation, with a special focus on minority education” in Strasbourg on 18 October 2006. The programme of the seminar, in which members of the DH-MIN participated, included in-depth presentations and discussions on the situation of Finno-Ugric peoples in the Russian Federation.

4. With regard to the specific recommendation to establish a European Centre for Finno-Ugric languages based on the model of the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages (EBLUL), the DH-MIN considers that the Council of Europe should indeed support, and cooperate with, valuable independent initiatives devoted to the promotion of minority cultures, but it does not necessarily follow that the Committee of Ministers, an intergovernmental body, would be best placed to “establish” such initiatives. Moreover, the optimum scope of such initiatives, including the question as to whether they should be devoted to specific languages or have a more general mandate, is an important issue to be addressed when such proposals are developed.

1. The DH-MIN took note of the position of the delegation of the Russian Federation that the term “Samoyed” has pejorative and humiliating connotations and is not commonly used in doctrine or in everyday life in Russia.

APPENDIX VII**Comments by the DH-MIN**

Considered by the DH-MIN at its fifth meeting on 21-23 March 2007

**Parliamentary Assembly recommendation 1740 (2006)
The place of mother tongue in school education**

The DH-MIN welcomes the possibility to comment on the draft reply to the Parliamentary Assembly recommendation 1740 (2006) on the place of mother tongue in school education.

The DH-MIN welcomes the draft received from the Secretariat of the Committee of Ministers. It notes that the recommendation goes beyond the protection of minority languages *per se* and covers mother tongue education in general. The State Parties' interpretation of the scope of application of the Framework Convention and of the Language Charter excludes a number of groups and/or languages of relevance to the recommendation.

The DH-MIN considers that the draft reply could highlight more clearly the value of bilingual education in many contexts, which is an issue stressed also in a number of country-specific Opinions of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention.

The DH-MIN stresses that the use of the term "mother tongue" may be problematic in certain contexts, such as in bilingual families and amongst minorities using a third language that is neither the official language nor the traditional language of the said minority.

APPENDIX VIII

Comments by the DH-MIN

Considered by the DH-MIN at its eight meeting on 15-16 October 2008

Recommendation 222 (2007) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities “Language education in regional or minority languages”

The DH-MIN welcomes the possibility to comment on the Recommendation 222 (2007) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on “Language education in regional or minority languages” and the draft reply of the Ministers’ Deputies.

The DH-MIN welcomes the support shown by the Congress for the Charter for Regional or Minority languages and its specific recommendations regarding the teaching of regional and minority languages. It notes with regret, however, that the recommendation does not mention the standards in the field of minority education under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which – in those thirty-nine State Parties which ratified it, i.e. in a much higher number of member-states than in the case of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Language – provide an extensive legally binding framework for teaching in and of minority languages. Article 12 and Article 14 of the Framework Convention are of particular relevance in this context as they encourage State Parties to promote minority language education, without prescribing a specific model, in order to take account of the variety of national situations. In this context, the Committee fully shares the views expressed by the Bureau of the Steering Committee for Education “that there is no uniform model that suits all situations and that models need to be developed that are appropriate to specific education contexts”.

The DH-MIN draws also the attention of the Congress and of the Ministers’ Deputies to the extensive experience of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention accumulated in the last 10 years of monitoring the implementation thereof, and in particular to the Advisory Committee’s “Commentary on Education” compiled on this basis and published in 2006, which provides invaluable guidance to the State Parties of the Framework Convention in the field of minority language teaching.

The DH-MIN considers that the reply could highlight more clearly the Committee of Ministers’ attention to the protection and promotion of linguistic rights of persons belonging to national minorities as reflected in the CM recommendations adopted on the basis of country-specific Opinions of the Advisory Committee, in accordance with the monitoring mechanism of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

APPENDIX IX**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ETHNIC DATA COLLECTION**

The usefulness of data broken down by categories such as nationality, national or ethnic origin, language and religion (henceforth ethnic data) is often recognised, however many European countries are still reluctant to collect such data. This is sometimes due to a lack of understanding of the type of data to be collected, and of the usefulness of such data, to a lack of guarantees that should govern the collection of this type of data and, more generally, to fearing the risks of misuse.

However, the collection of ethnic data is important for successfully combating racism and discrimination, for ensuring equal opportunities as well as for protecting and promoting the culture, language and identity of persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities. The collection of these data is also essential for shaping sound policies in these areas and evaluating their implementation.

The principles governing ethnic data collection, as also reflected in ECRI's recommendations in this area, include:

1. the principle of legality (the collection of data must be authorised by national law);
2. the principle of voluntary self-identification;
3. the principle of confidentiality;
4. and the principle of informed consent.

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In order to facilitate DH-MIN's further reflection on the topic Members are kindly asked to answer the questionnaire below and to return it to the Secretariat by 15 February 2008.

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Different sources of ethnic data collection**Censuses**

1. Is a census regularly held within your State? If so, does the recording of the population occur in the framework of a traditional, registration-based or combined system? Kindly describe the main features of the system.
2. Are questions concerning national, ethnic, linguistic or religious affiliation included in national censuses? Please include the relevant questions of the last census.
3. Were these questions compulsory to answer or were they optional?
4. What were the numerical results (please indicate not only the number of those who replied but also the number of those who refused to answer)
5. Have census forms been prepared also in regional or minority languages?

Other methods to record persons belonging to a national or ethnic minority

6. What other methods than census are used to record persons belonging to a national or ethnic minority within your country? Kindly describe the main features of the methods.

7. Do organs and institutions of public administration (e.g. school, police, health service, social assistance, the military service, labour administration, recruitment in the public service) keep administrative files related to ethnic, national, linguistic or religious data?
8. Are there ethnicity-based population registers for any purpose (e.g. in the registration of births, deaths and marriages, the registration of domicile and in elections)?
9. Are ethnic, national, linguistic or religious data collected in jurisdiction (e.g. court statistics, number of complaints, decisions rendered, etc.)?
10. Are records containing ethnic, national, linguistic or religious data kept by ombudspersons or specialised national bodies (bodies ensuring equal treatment, legal aid offices etc.)
11. Is it possible or obligatory to mention the fact that a person belongs to a national minority in identity documents (identity card, passport)?
12. Does the topic of ethnic data collection constitute a subject of research? Do scientific studies, surveys and investigations serve as a source of ethnic data?
13. Are different data collected on nationals and non-nationals?
14. Do minority communities themselves keep records on their size, composition, etc.?
15. What methods for collecting data are best perceived and accepted by minorities?

Legal framework of ethnic data collection in the Member States

16. What are the main legal basis for data collection and data protection?
17. Do the regulatory measures with regard to the protection of personal data consider data on the affiliation to a national or ethnic, national, linguistic or religious minority as a special category of data?
18. What is the content of the regulatory measures with regard to the registration and processing of data on the affiliation to a national, ethnic, linguistic or religious minority?
19. For which purposes are ethnic data collected? Are they used for other purposes than the purpose for which they have been originally collected? What is the legal situation concerning these questions?
20. Where and for how long may the data stored and analyzed?
21. Is there an independent authority responsible for the supervision of the collection of sensitive (ethnic, national, linguistic or religious data)/ for data protection?
22. Is there an outright prohibition on the collection of data broken down by nationality, national or ethnic origin, language and religion (check grounds one by one) in your national legislation?
23. If not, are there provisions which make the collection of ethnic, national, linguistic or religious data conditional on the existence of certain guarantees and if yes, please indicate what they are.
24. Are you aware of any cases where the collected data have been misused?

Ethnic data collection in specific areas of policy

25. Which methods and sources for collecting data in the field of employment are used in your country?
26. Which methods and sources for collecting data in the field of education are used in your country?
27. Which methods and sources for collecting data on racist incidents are used in your country?
28. Do police services make use of crime statistics compiled on an ethnic, national, linguistic or religious basis?
29. Are the data collected used for evaluating the implementation of legal provisions and other measures and programmes affecting people belonging to national and ethnic minorities? Who is involved in the development and the implementation of the monitoring schemes?

30. Please provide examples of good practice in relation to ethnic data collection and the use of these data.

Self-determination of the individual concerned

31. Is it at the discretion of the individual concerned to choose and mention the fact that he/she belongs to a national minority?
32. If not, which authority decides on the applicable information, and on the basis of which objective or subjective criteria? Are national minority associations involved in identifying whether a person belongs to a minority? Who decides on whether a minor belongs to a minority, specifically in cases of mixed marriages?
33. Can an individual change or delete information identifying him/her as belonging to a minority in the course of his/her life?
34. How does data collection approach the issue of multiple identity?

APPENDIX X

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ACCESS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES
TO THE NEW MEDIA¹ IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY**

General

1. Describe what regulatory and other measures have been taken with regard to the new media and new communication services in order to promote the fundamental values of pluralism and diversity, respect for human rights and non-discriminatory access?
2. Has a code of ethics/professional code of conduct been adopted by the service providers? Does it address the questions of non-discriminatory access and hate speech or other illegal content?

Access to analogue and digital new media

3. What instruments have been developed to promote the passive and active access of national minorities to the new media?
4. What regulatory and other measures have been taken to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in the new media? Are there any specific legal provisions regulating the use of minority languages?
5. How has the development of new media affected the number and availability of the services in minority languages? Are the services on demand available in national minority languages? Are electronic programme guides available in national minority languages?
6. What is the number of households with access to satellite digital television? Do the regions with compact minority populations differ from the average in terms of such access?
7. What is the number of households with access to cable TV? Are any channels/programmes in languages spoken by persons belonging to national minorities transmitted via the cable network?
8. Do the "new media" initiatives on the part of the authorities involve transfrontier access of national minorities to the media, including in respect of "kin-state"? Have new media initiatives (e.g., digital television) had any negative effects on access of national minorities to the media caused by the disappearance of old media?"
9. What is the status of possible plans as regards digitalisation of public service media and are there any specific concerns related to minorities and their access to digital media? Are there, for example, gaps in the coverage of the digital television network that particularly affect areas with compact minority population?

¹ Analogue (old) new media: cable and satellite television, the VCR (Video Cassette Recording); digital (new) new media: DVB (digital video broadcasting), interactive broadcasting, the Internet, mobile telephony, etc.)

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

10. What instruments have been developed to promote the active use of new communication technologies by minorities?
11. What policy measures have been taken (if any) with regard to ensuring the digital inclusion and the effective and affordable access to the Internet and other ICTs for minority populations? To what extent are such policy measures based on (public) consultation exercises or other research aimed at ascertaining the needs and concerns of persons belonging to national minorities in the context of digital technologies?
12. Are there any differences detected as regards access to broadband by persons belonging to national minorities compared to the majority population?
13. Describe what legal and other measures have been taken (if any) to effectively counter/combat “hate speech” or other illegal content which affects national minorities in ICTs.
14. Describe what measures have been taken (if any) by public authorities when developing on-line public services (use of the Internet to facilitate participation in public affairs and democratic processes (e-democracy) at national as well as local and regional levels) to enable effective participation by persons belonging to national minorities?
15. Describe what measures (if any) have been taken to enable media professionals (including trainees/students) from national minorities to acquire the necessary skills for maximising their exploitation of new technologies, e.g. accessing government-held information online, use of technological innovations for various stages of content-production and distribution, etc.?
16. To what extent do strategies for the promotion of media literacy take the needs, interests and concerns of persons belonging to national minorities into account?
17. Please give a short description of a project or activity already running in your country that might be considered as good practice in the field of new media and new ICTs with relevance for national or ethnic minorities.