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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

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

HUNGARY

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The Republic of Hungary was one of the first signatories to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter: Language Charter). In its capacity as signatory to the document, the country's first Periodical Report following the coming into force of the said document was submitted in September 1999, while its second and third periodical report was submitted to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in September 2002 and September 2005, respectively.

Following the submission of the written reports, the Language Charter's Committee of Experts visited Hungary in order to familiarize themselves with the situation outlined in the Report, and subsequently prepared a Report for the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers (hereinafter: Committee of Ministers). The Committee of Ministers had a debate on the content of the documents and approved recommendations regarding its expectations in regard of the course of action that the Republic of Hungary was to follow in strengthening the line of implementation vis-à-vis the measures set forth by the Language Charter.

While both the policy adopted by the Republic of Hungary regarding the regional or minority languages and the fundamental legislation providing safeguards for the protection of minority languages have, broadly speaking, remained unchanged – precisely as a consequence of the strengthening of the line of action adopted by the Language Charter, the implementation of both the obligations undertaken as part of that move and of the recommendations made by the Committee of Ministers – several amendments have been introduced with the purpose of widening the current scope of alternatives in the use of these languages through providing a more precise definition of the rights associated with the use of minority languages in various fields of public life.

The structure of the 4th Periodical Report (hereinafter: Report), submitted by the Government of the Republic of Hungary, which tackles the issues of the implementation of the country's obligations undertaken via the strengthening of the line of action adopted by the Language Charter, is in line with the Recommendations approved by the Committee of Ministers and issued for signatory member states. The introduction below is, first of all, a source of general information regarding both the Republic of Hungary and the minorities living on the territory of that country. The First Chapter of the Report deals partly with laws protecting minority languages and with corresponding measures taken by the Government, while also describing how information related to the Language Charter is made accessible, also presenting the institutional background backing up that procedure. This Chapter also gives an account of the measures related to the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers. The Second Chapter of our Report is, largely speaking, a summary of the line of action followed in the actual implementation in Hungary of what is set forth in Part II of the Language Charter. Finally, Part III is a summary of the course of action taken in the implementation of obligations contained in Part III of the Language Charter. In its summary of issues in focus, the Report encompasses a period ending in February 2008.

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the 10th century Hungary, a state formed in the course of history in the Carpathian Basin, was in existence as a multinational and multilingual state until the end of World War One. The official language of Hungary as a medieval state was, initially, Latin. Later it was German and subsequently Hungarian became the language of public administration.

A common feature of the larger group of national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary today is that they have lived within the boundaries of the Hungarian state for several centuries and that following their arrival in several stages during the past centuries, they all settled down on the territory of modern Hungary, the only exception being the indigenous Slovene population, which lives near Szentgotthárd/Monošter in the southwest of Hungary. The fact that most of them left the areas where their ethnic populace of origin used to live before the birth of the literary language is an important factor that determined that population historically, socially and ethnically; given the fact that the literary language exists via grammatical rules, the colloquial language spoken by these people is, generally speaking, an archaic variant of their native language.

During several centuries of co-existence with the Hungarians during the course of history, individual national minorities did as a group fully integrate into the majority society, which in turn led in several instances to the weakening of their linguistic and cultural ties with the homeland. Meanwhile, a new phenomenon, known as double-ties, also emerged. Today, an overwhelming majority of those who live in Hungary while belonging to a national minority are bilingual and in many cases their Hungarian is in fact better than the linguistic skills associated with their minority languages. More than half of the population belonging to a minority that has its own cultural heritage is also attached via strong ties to Hungarian culture, something that in the course of a century-long co-existence they not only became familiar with, but eventually accepted as their own.

There are, however, exceptions, such as communities which, although they have been living on the territory of this country for several centuries, have not ceased to be joined regularly by new arrivals from their homeland, or those communities that grew substantially when a significant number of people belonging to a particular minority group arrived at some point from their country of origin. Minority groups such as the Bulgarians, the Polish, the Armenians, the Ruthenians, the Ukrainians and the Greeks belong in that category.

As a result of the politics of assimilation during several decades preceding the outbreak of the Second World War, the marginalization of and subsequent ban on education in minority languages, followed by forced – and, occasionally, voluntary – population exchanges during post-war years, complete with the impact of a modernized society on local communities and on minority groups that previously had their distinctive cultural identity, these communities were transformed and the community language gradually ceased to function as a cohesive force. Add to that the fact that in the years following the Second World War it was the literary language of the homeland in question, not the archaic variant spoken by a particular minority group, which was used in minority education.

Following the political transition, the Republic of Hungary started to attach special importance to the issue of the rights of minorities living on its territory. From the 1990s onwards measures were taken to help minority groups organize themselves, as well as provide assistance in preserving their identities or passing their linguistic heritage on to younger generations. Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (hereinafter: Act on Minorities) is a key factor in this respect. It is this law that defines the fundamental principles, institutions and framework of the minority policy adopted by the Republic of Hungary. In view of the fact that the minority rights that provide a legal framework for the use of minority languages are of crucial importance in the text itself, this law is to be considered the first manifestation of new policy-making principles. According to the law a total of 13 minorities living on the territory of Hungary are to be regarded as being

indigenous. These are: the Armenians, the Bulgarians, the Croatians, the Germans, the Greeks, the Gypsies/Roma, the Polish, the Romanians, the Ruthenians, the Serbs, the Slovaks, the Slovenes and the Ukrainians.

The Act on Minorities stipulates that minority rights allowing the use of minority languages are to be exercised not only by individuals but also by minority groups. The right to use one's mother tongue is defined as a right that applies to individuals and minority groups as well. The right to use one's mother tongue is stipulated both as an individual and as a community right in all areas of public life, including the right to take part in education in minority languages or to attend courses where the language of minorities is taught, the right to foster, pass on and improve one's minority culture and the possibility of regular links with the homeland. In the Republic of Hungary both legislation and finances are geared to the needs of national and ethnic minorities in securing their rights to cultural autonomy by having control over their own institutions.

Information pertaining to the Republic of Hungary

In 2006 Hungary had a population of 10,076,581. According to data gathered during the 2001 census, 93.6 percent of the population speaks Hungarian as their mother tongue while 6.4 percent speaks a language other than Hungarian as their mother tongue. Additional data gathered during the census indicate that 92.3 percent of the population identified themselves as Hungarian, while 1.9 percent were Roma and 5.8 percent did not identify themselves as belonging to any nationality group.

According to 2006 statistical data, the GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) was at € 13,837. In 2006 3.4 percent of the country's GDP was generated by agricultural activity, 31.5 percent by industrial production and 61.5 percent by services. 5.5 percent of those in employment worked in agriculture, 33.3 percent held down a job related to industrial production and 61.2 percent worked in the services sector. Unemployment was at 7.4 percent in 2006.

Hungary has been a European Union member state since May 1, 2004. At the last parliamentary elections five parties got elected into Parliament and the subsequent government that took office was a coalition government, the members of which were, until April 2008, the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Alliance of Free Democrats. Since then the Hungarian Socialist Party alone formed a minority government.

The functions of the three branches of government are determined by the Constitution. The foremost state power is Parliament, the government being the executing power, while the independent status of the judiciary system ensures that power will be exercised in a democratic manner. The principal guarantee of constitutionality is the existence of the Constitutional Court.

The administrative system of the Republic of Hungary is divided into a total of 3152 municipalities, complete with a traditional division into 19 counties and Budapest, the country's capital city. To supplement the current division into counties of the country's territory, recent years have seen the emergence of (a total of seven) regions based on considerations related to statistics and planning, along with that of cooperation initiatives aimed at improving the level of public services and embarked upon in adjacent, small-size regions. The capital is run on a two-tier system of self-governments with 23 districts

functioning independently with the Municipality of Budapest coordinating the city's overall administration. Apart from the existing system of public administration, minority self-governments at all three levels (local, county and national) function as bodies representing the special interests of individual nationalities other than the one which the majority of the population is composed of.

Parliamentary representation of national and ethnic minorities is a problem that has yet to be solved. Although individuals representing certain parties have in fact got elected into Parliament, they are not regarded by their own minority groups as Members of Parliament representing those minorities. At the same time, all minorities have set up their lower-level (counties and municipalities) minority self-governments. These minority self-governments are bodies entitled to make their comments on and have their say in issues of crucial importance from the perspective of the life of local minority groups (education, culture, use of language) and they do function as such alongside the local governments of municipalities and counties. Since 1994 they have been participating in minority policy-making in every municipality, and, since 2006, in every county where a particular minority group reaches a certain level.

The national minority self-governments are to be found at the national level of the system of minority self-governments; they are partner organizations for the central administration and the Government in the work aimed at solutions for specific problems in the field of minority policy-making.

Individuals speaking regional or minority languages

The rights related to regional or minority languages are assigned to individuals belonging to specific minorities (individual rights) and their communities (collective rights). In accordance with Article 1 paragraph (2) of the Act on Minorities *“a national or ethnic minority (hereinafter ‘minority’) is an ethnic group which has been living on the territory of the Republic of Hungary for at least one century, which represents a numerical minority among the citizens of the state, the members of which are Hungarian citizens, and are distinguished from the rest of the citizens by their own language, culture and traditions, and at the same time demonstrate a sense of belonging together, which is aimed at the preservation of all these, and at the expression and the protection of the interests of their historical communities.”*

The minority languages listed in the Act are: Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Greek, Gypsy (‘Romani’ and ‘Beash’), Polish, Romanian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian and Ukrainian.

Article 13 of the Act on Minorities stipulates that *“Persons belonging to a minority have the right to learn, foster, enrich and pass on their mother tongue, history, culture and traditions.”* In accordance with Article 16 tackling the issue of the collective rights of minorities *“it is the right of minorities to cultivate and to develop their historical traditions and language, as well as to preserve and to enrich their intellectual and material culture”*.

In accordance with the above, laws in the Republic of Hungary stipulate that, based on the principle of individual and collective rights, a person who speaks a minority language can freely identify herself or himself with a minority by preserving, fostering and passing on to younger generations the language of that minority.

Statistical data pertaining to minorities

In view of the fact that the last census was conducted in Hungary in 2001 and the micro-censuses organized since that date have not surveyed the composition of the population in terms of the various nationalities, this report is based primarily on data obtained from the 2001 census. It should be borne in mind that an important aspect of the census was to obtain accurate information regarding the actual number of individuals belonging to various minorities. It was for that reason that minority self-governments were involved at national level in the preparatory procedure of the organizational aspects of the census. The outcome of several rounds of negotiations aimed at the issue of what the census questionnaire should include was that the final version of the questionnaire containing four questions – compared with two questions formerly used in surveys – which focused partly on the identity and mother tongue of those belonging to a minority, partly on the issues of cultural attachment as well as that of languages used among family and friends. The four questions – raised in a way so as to comply with the stipulations of the Act on the Protection of Personal Data in recognizing the individual's free choice in answering them – were as follows:

- Which minority do you feel you belong to?
- Which minority's cultural values and the traditions are you affiliated to?
- Which language is your mother tongue?
- Which is the language you usually use in the family and with friends?

The answers given to the two questions, regarded as being of crucial relevance from the point of view of the use of languages, were the ones to be seen below (supplementary data is provided regarding numbers reflecting the degree to which individual minority languages are spoken by the population as a whole):

Table 1: *Data pertaining to minority and linguistic figures obtained during the 2001 census*

Minority	Mother tongue	No. of Hungarian citizens	Language spoken in family and among friends	No. of individuals speaking language in question (whole population)
Croatian	14,326	13,587	14,789	42,549
German	33,774	29,073	52,912	1,040,786
Romanian	8,482	5,603	8,215	94,721
Serb	3,388	2,282	4,186	25,483
Slovak	11,817	11,160	18,057	60,664
Slovene	3,180	3,123	3,108	5,643
Gypsy/Roma	48,438	48,402	53,075	77,071
Armenian	294	129	300	501
Bulgarian	1,299	739	1,118	3,513
Greek	1,921	1,459	1,974	5,159
Polish	2,580	1,117	2,659	11,206
Ruthenian	1,113	685	1,068	2,226
Ukrainian	4,885	3,197	4,519	13,989

The table above clearly shows that the number among the population as a whole of those who speak minority languages is insignificant. We cannot, however, disregard the fact that answers to be given to questions pertaining to one's belonging to a minority, one's minority mother

tongue or the use of minority languages in one's family or among friends were optional, not obligatory. Figures provided in connection with basic information regarding Hungary as to the number of individuals whose mother tongue is not Hungarian (minority or unknown mother tongue) are, therefore, based on information obtained under such circumstances.

Given the fact that rights pertaining to the use of minority languages apply to national and ethnic minorities and their members, the table below contains numbers of individuals who identified themselves during the census as members of a particular minority and also of voters who had their names registered on the electoral list of a minority for the 2006 minority elections. (It was in 2006 that an electoral list was compiled for the first time prior to minority elections by having minority voters registered on a voluntary basis. Only individuals who had themselves registered previously as members of a particular minority by voluntarily identifying themselves as such were entitled to vote during minority elections.)

Table 2: *Data pertaining to the 2001 census and the 2006 electoral list*

Minority	Number of individuals belonging to a minority (2001)	Number of minority voters on electoral list (2006)
Croatian	15,597	11,090
German	62,105	45,983
Romanian	7,995	4,404
Serb	3,816	2,143
Slovak	17,693	15,049
Slovene	3,025	991
Armenian	620	2,361
Bulgarian	1,358	2,110
Greek	2,509	2,451
Gypsy/Roma	189,984	106,333
Polish	2,962	3,061
Ruthenian	1,098	2,729
Ukrainian	5,070	1,084

Mention should be made of the fact that the electoral list contains only individuals who are Hungarian citizens over the age of 18 and thus qualifying as eligible voters. The numbers in this table are an indication of the fact that the political transition marked the beginning of a new trend – where there was a perceptible increase in the number of those identifying themselves with a particular minority – and that this trend continued during the elections.

Languages not under the protection of Part III

Various national and ethnic minorities, often in scant numbers, live in communities scattered all over the territory of the country. In the vast majority of cases they live in settlements where they do, even at a local level, constitute a minority group within the local population. The number of individuals belonging to minorities such as the **Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Polish and Ruthenians** is hardly ever higher than 100 in settlements outside Budapest (i.e. in very few counties nationwide). As for the Ukrainians, the situation is slightly different. The number of those who identify themselves as having Ukrainian as their mother tongue is in excess of 100 in almost every county. However, many of them (34.55 percent) are non-Hungarian citizens. According to data obtained during the 2001 census, their requirements and preferences regarding the use of language and culture are hardly tangible

due to their scant numbers and the characteristics of their presence at local level, therefore, although rights pertaining to the use of mother tongue can be guaranteed on the basis of the Act on Minorities, the geographical units or regions of languages spoken by these groups cannot be properly identified due to the fact that they are scattered and difficult to perceive locally due to their low numbers.

Table 3.: *Minorities whose mother tongue is not under the protection of Part III, in a breakdown of individual counties*

Minority/ County	Bulgarians	Greeks	Polish	Armenians	Ruthenians	Ukrainians
Budapest	755	1,185	1,059	162	382	1,341
Bács-Kiskun	25	9	85	6	56	246
Baranya	41	61	120	11	26	139
Békés	11	5	28	18	23	146
Borsod-Abaúj- Zemplén	42	90	90	3	110	282
Csongrád	39	35	82	2	30	194
Fejér	19	296	117	13	46	199
Győr-Moson- Sopron	13	12	78	8	24	119
Hajdú-Bihar	18	26	70	8	30	217
Heves	10	6	57	1	28	121
Jász-Nagykun- Szolnok	22	9	43	2	31	158
Komárom- Esztergom	35	23	91	8	32	126
Nógrád	7	2	30	0	8	82
Pest	202	124	319	13	129	527
Somogy	13	7	64	13	20	113
Szabolcs- Szatmár-Bereg	18	6	39	12	39	434
Tolna	8	1	38	8	11	89
Vas	6	7	39	2	16	79
Veszprém	8	9	94	4	59	190
Zala	7	7	37	0	13	83
Total	1,299	1,921	2,580	294	1,113	4,885

The above data shows that the density of inhabitants living in the above counties - belonging to groups with a mother tongue such as Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Armenian and Ruthenian - is nowhere at a level which makes it possible for institutions operating in individual counties to adjust plans for a higher demand in the use of these languages. Despite the fact, as indicated above, that the number of individuals speaking Ukrainian as a minority language is significantly higher than that of speakers of other minority languages exempt from the specifications of Part III of the Charter, no specific requirements regarding the use of minority languages were indicated by those affected in any of the regions above.

The evolution of the languages spoken by Gypsies living in Hungary ('Romani' and 'Beash'), concurrently with the gradual emergence of those languages as instruments used in education, has led to a demand in the extension regarding the said languages of obligations pertaining to

the Language Charter. The negotiations required to harmonize elements of the professional planning agenda were concluded by February 2008 and preparatory work was subsequently started to create the legal framework for the extension of obligations. (Meanwhile Parliament has passed the pertinent Act XLIII of 2008.)

Regional distribution of speakers of languages specified in Part III.

By joining the Language Charter, and based on the infrastructural facilities available for minority educational and cultural purposes in the period specified, and taking into account data obtained from the previous census, the Republic of Hungary undertook obligations under Part III with regard to the languages of the Croatian, German, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak and Slovenian minorities. The regional distribution of these minorities is presented by the following table containing data based on the 2001 census in a breakdown of counties.

Table 4.: *The number of native speakers of minority languages specified in Part III in a breakdown of individual counties*

Minority/ County	Croatians	Germans	Romanians	Serbians	Slovaks	Slovenes
Budapest	630	3,511	1,173	893	1,513	394
Bács-Kiskun	1,332	3,096	201	263	310	60
Baranya	4,388	10,478	156	265	50	52
Békés	31	319	4,018	345	3,567	94
Borsod-Abaúj- Zemplén	12	305	120	11	547	77
Csongrád	100	334	525	556	369	45
Fejér	61	1,008	168	63	96	41
Győr-Moson- Sopron	2,036	1,713	114	29	62	96
Hajdú-Bihar	14	210	336	16	29	33
Heves	7	185	146	5	237	23
Jász-Nagykun- Szolnok	9	189	114	9	49	31
Komárom- Esztergom	27	2,212	100	20	1,384	50
Nógrád	10	212	59	4	769	22
Pest	188	2,956	582	748	2,629	184
Somogy	784	704	107	57	24	46
Szabolcs- Szatmár-Bereg	6	147	111	12	61	38
Tolna	56	3,798	92	55	37	43
Vas	2,286	885	79	13	20	1,768
Veszprém	55	1,150	210	16	46	40
Zala	2,313	380	71	8	18	50
Total	14,345	33,792	8,482	3,388	11,817	3,187

It is clear from statistical data that the overwhelming majority of *Croatians* in Hungary live in the following counties: Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala. Also, there is a Croatian community, significant in number, living in Budapest and one in Somogy county. During the 2006 elections of the minority self-governments a total of 115 settlements

had a Croatian minority self-government elected. Following that, additional regional Croatian minority self-governments were established in the capital and in six counties (Baranya, Bács-Kiskun, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Somogy, Vas and Zala).

The **German** minority is of some significance in the capital and in counties such as Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Komárom-Esztergom, Pest, Tolna and Veszprém, although there are communities living in Somogy and Vas counties whose numbers are also significant. Following the 2006 election of minority self-governments 378 local minority self-governments were established. In addition to that, a total of 11 German regional minority self-governments were set up (in Budapest, Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Komárom-Esztergom, Pest, Tolna, Vas and Veszprém counties).

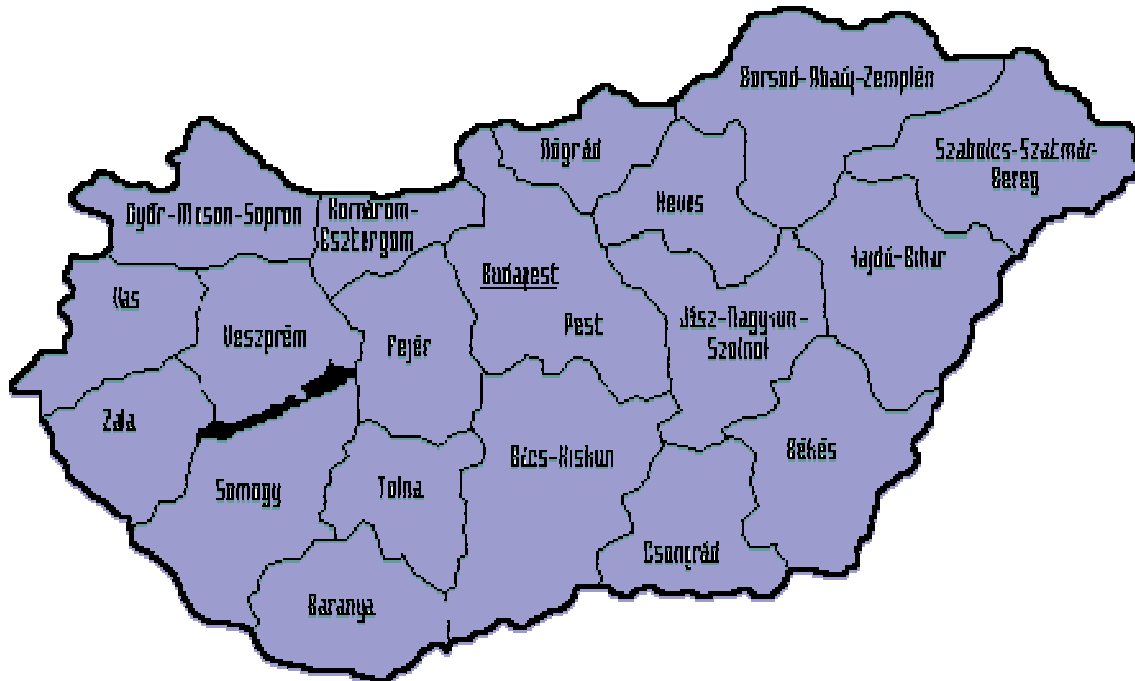
The highest number of **Romanians** is to be found in Budapest and Békés county, and there are minority settlements in Hajdú-Bihar as well, traditionally known for their Romanian population. Following the last election of minority self-governments 46 local minority self-governments were established, followed by the setting up of a regional minority self-government in Budapest as well as in Békés and Hajdú-Bihar counties.

The **Serbian** communities with the highest number of individuals living on Hungarian territory are to be found in Budapest and in Békés, Csongrád and Pest counties. In 2006 a total of 40 Serbian local minority self-governments were formed, while voters elected regional minority self-governments in Budapest and Pest county.

Budapest aside, the highest number of minority native speakers of the **Slovak** language live in Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Komárom-Esztergom and Pest counties. Additional groups of some significance are to be found in Nógrád and Csongrád counties. Following the elections a total of 116 Slovak minority self-governments were set up, followed by five regional minority self-governments (in Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Esztergom-Komárom, Nógrád and Pest counties).

The total number of individuals in the **Slovene** community is barely above those exempt from the ones not included in Part III, this minority group does, however, live in a geographically easily definable region in Vas county, off the western frontier of Hungary. A total of 11 Slovenian local minority self-governments have been established. No Slovenian regional minority self-government has been set up.

Counties of the Republic of Hungary



The Government's most significant move during the reporting period in question in connection with the use of regional or minority languages was the 2005 amendment of the Act on Minorities and regulations regarding minority elections. Although this amendment contained only minimal changes with respect to regulations regarding the use of minority languages, it had a positive effect on the legal framework created to strengthen the foundations upon which national and ethnic minorities are to exercise their rights, by modifying the system used in the election of minority self-governments and by providing a more accurate definition regarding the competence of elected minority self-governments.

In the context of the amendment of the pertinent law, Government Decree No. 375/2007. (XII. 23.) was issued in connection with the conditions under which task-based subsidy can be accessed from the central budget to minority self-governments and the manner in which corresponding accounting can be performed. The aim of the Decree was to ensure that the annual subsidy provided to local and regional minority self-governments should be assigned to where funds are needed by taking into account the amount of public affairs attended to. In line with the parameters determined by the Decree, such prioritized public affairs are the initiatives taken in connection with the language spoken by a community along with requirements regarding the use of minority languages in public administration (in voicing need for dual-language documents), along with assistance in religious studies and other religion-related needs to be made available in one's mother tongue. On the form used to apply for subsidy, which is an enclosure to the Decree, the name of the minority self-government in question can also be printed in the language of that minority. Experience based on the one-year period since the Decree came into effect has been included in an impact study, the findings of which regarding the use of minority languages will be dealt with later.

CHAPTER I

The most important laws and legal regulations serving the protection of regional or minority languages

Article 68 of the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary (Act XX of 1949, hereinafter: the Constitution) guarantees minorities the right to foster their culture and to use their mother tongue, and their right to their mother tongue as the language of instruction and the use of their names in their own language.

General minority rights – more specifically, linguistic rights – of minority groups are included in the Minorities Act, which has been ratified by a qualified majority. The Act has been amended in November 2005. The current text of the Minorities Act, embodied in a coherent structure, is available in Croatian, German, Romanian and Slovak languages in addition to English and French. The translated text of the Act is available on www.nek.gov.hu, the website of the State Secretariat for National and Minority Policy of the Prime Minister's Office.

The 2005 amendment of the Minorities Act has brought advancement in two fields. On the one hand, the Act has thoroughly revised the regulations of minority self-government elections, on the other hand, it has regulated the operation of institutions taken over or founded by minority self-governments, and it has also specified management regulations of national minority self-governments.

The regulations of the electoral system have defined the meaning of “minority voter” and “minority nominative body” expressions in order to bring the scope of minority self-governments closer to voters.

By laying down management regulations, the legal background of the institutions run by minority self-governments has become more secure, and the management stability of national minority self-governments has been consolidated.

With **Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education** (hereinafter: Act on Education) and its subsequent amendments, the most fundamental steps have been taken towards establishing harmony with the Minorities Act. The Act on Education, referring to the relevant article of the Minorities Act, states that the language of kindergarten, primary and dormitory education shall be, apart from Hungarian, the language of national and ethnic minorities. Legal powers laid down in the Minorities Act have been included in the Act on Education by means of which minority self-governments shall substantially influence the development of minority education, as well as its content and framework. This Act has also established the National Committee for Minorities, made up of delegates of all minorities, operating as the counselling board of the Minister in the field of minority education.

Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education (hereinafter: Higher Education Act) regulates the take-over of higher educational institutions, as well as the conditions of operation by national minority self-governments. The Act also specifies regulations related to the use of the mother tongue by students belonging to national and ethnic minorities in the course of the admission procedure, as well as during their academic studies. Furthermore, the Higher Education Act summarises the conditions regarding the training of minority language teachers, as well as the related minority rights.

The **Act on Radio and Television Broadcasting** (Act I of 1996, hereinafter: Media Act) has made obligatory for the public service media the broadcasting of programmes presenting minority culture and life. Media providers with public service obligations are obliged to provide minorities information in their mother tongue.

The provisions of **Act LXXIV of 2007 on Broadcasting and Digital Switchover** guarantee national and ethnic minority groups the right to mother tongue information subsequent to the digital switchover, in line with the conditions of the broadcasting permission procedures.

Act CXL of 1997 on the Protection of Cultural Goods, Museum Institutes, Public Libraries and Cultural Education defines, as common tasks of the society, the preservation and worthy continuation of national and ethnic minority traditions; the improvement of personal, intellectual and economic conditions of public and personal education; the promotion of activities improving the quality of life; as well as the endorsement of institutions and bodies established for the purpose of the goals referred to above.

Act XLV of 2002 on the Amendment of Law Decree 17 of 1988 on Registration, Marriage Procedures and the Bearing of Names has adjusted the regulations of bearing minority names and the changing of names, with regard to the undertakings of the Language Charter; furthermore, it has permitted marriages to be contracted in a minority language.

The provisions of **Act XCVI of 2001 on Business Advertisements, Shop Signs, and Certain Announcements of Public Interest in the Hungarian language** stipulate that signs and titles of business advertisements, as well as announcements of public interest shall be presented in the Hungarian language, in such a manner that the Hungarian language text shall be displayed in identical length and content next to the foreign language sign and content.

The Act recognises only one exception from this general obligation. Pursuant to paragraph (4), Article 6 of the Act, *“The provisions laid down in the present Act do not affect the business advertisements and signs published in the languages of the minority languages defined in Article 42 of Act LXXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities in settlements having a minority self-government representing the minority of the relevant mother tongue”*.

Act I of 2002 on the Amendment of Act XIX of 1998 on the **Criminal Code** came into force on 1 July 2003, which harmonised the order of criminal proceedings with the provisions of the Charter. Pursuant to paragraph (2), Article 9 of the current legislation, *“in criminal proceedings every person may use his/her mother tongue, his/her regional or minority language in speech and in writing, based on an international agreement promulgated by law, in the scope determined therein, or – in case the person does not speak the Hungarian language – he/she may use another language designated by him/her as the language spoken”*.

Act III of 1952 on the Code of Civil Procedure regulates the rules of civil proceedings. The Act states that, on the one hand, *“the language of court proceedings is Hungarian. No one may suffer disadvantages for not speaking the Hungarian language”*, and, on the other hand, it also determines that *“in court proceedings – within the scope established by an international agreement – every person is entitled to use his/her mother tongue, regional or minority language.”* In such cases *“the court is obliged to use an interpreter (...)”*.

Act CXL of 2004 on the General Rules of Official Proceedings and Service in Public Administration incorporates separate articles on minority rights related to the use of minority languages. As of 1 November 2005, this Act provides that the representative body or general assembly of minority self-governments shall determine the official language, apart from Hungarian, used in administrative proceedings within its scope of authority. The regulation has a great significance, as it enables minority organisations, as well as natural persons falling under the minority law, to use their minority language before public administrative authorities, both in speech and in writing. Petitions submitted in a minority language must be judged and returned in the form of a resolution in the Hungarian language, and upon the request of the client, translated into the language in which the petition was made. Furthermore, this regulation also applies to decrees.

Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (hereinafter: Equal Opportunities Act) defines in general and in the context of the entire legal system the content of equal treatment, those entitled to and obliged by equal treatment, as well as the possibilities of legal remedy for those concerned. The Act does not only relate to employment status and other service relations, but also to other legal relations related to employment (e.g. the legal status established by an entrepreneurial contract, a part-time contract, etc.). The Act specifies the cases in which the prohibition of discrimination must be observed in particular. Thus, for example, it must be observed in access to work, open job advertisements, admission to work, employment conditions, establishment and termination of a legal status, the calculation and provision of wages, indemnification and disciplinary obligations.

New administrative measures facilitating the use of regional and minority languages

The Minorities Act, as amended in 2005, has essentially adjusted the regulations pertaining to minority self-government elections and operations, as well as certain provisions of the previous Act. The wording of some of the amendments clarifying the text of the previous Act aims to strengthen the protection of minority languages and cultures by specifying concrete areas of competence and the representation of interests of minority self-governments.

Article 6/A of the amended Act on Minorities defines the term of “minority public affair”. Pursuant to the Act, *„1. minority public affair: a) any affair related to the provision of certain public services to those belonging to minorities in the interest of the enforcement of individual and collective minority rights enshrined in this Act and the voicing of the interests of persons belonging to national or ethnic minorities – particularly in the field of the preservation, the safeguarding and the enrichment of the mother tongue as well as the implementation and the preservation of cultural autonomy by minority self-governments (...)”*.

The Act on Minorities also clarifies the term of minority public educational institution and minority mass communication. Accordingly, a minority public educational institution is *“a public educational institution, the founding charter of which contains the fulfilment of tasks related to national and ethnic minorities as required by the Act on Public Education, provided that the public educational institution performs those tasks de facto, and that at least of 25 % of pupils of kindergartens, schools and dormitories in question take part in the national and ethnic minority kindergarten or school education”*.

Minority mass communication is “*regular or periodical information and broadcasting provided in written or in electronic forms (television or radio) of mass media which enables the informing and the education of minorities, the preservation and the extension of their cultural autonomy (...)*”. These two paragraphs are intended to facilitate the resolution of debates that may arise in the course of laying down the rights to services of national and ethnic minority communities.

The amended Act, apart from summarising the opportunities of using minority languages in a separate chapter (Articles 51-54), also summarises in several paragraphs the regulations related to the use of languages within individual minority rights (Articles 11-13), as well as the community rights related to the use of languages within collective minority rights (Articles 16, 18, 28). Apart from the above, the Act also defines the language use of local, regional and national self-governments (Articles 30/D, 30/F, 42–50).

The full English translation of the amended Act on Minorities is attached to this report (*Annex I*).

During the reporting period, the Act on Public Education has also been amended. The amendment has specified the right of consent with regard to institutions performing minority language education as member institutions within a sub-regional cooperation. This Decree essentially expands the scope of the right of consent of the relevant minority self-government, previously exercised in relation to the local minority educational institution, to the jointly operated institution (Act LXXXVII of 2007, Article 28, Section (5)).

Decree No. 15/2006 (IV. 3.) of the Minister of Education on training and output requirements of basic and master’s majors lays down the detailed training competences, training purposes and the core training material of the following training tracks: German studies (philologist specialized in German as ethnic minority studies), Romanistics (philologist specialized in Romanian as ethnic minority studies), Romology (romologist), Slavistics (philologist specialized in Bulgarian studies, philologist specialized in Polish studies, philologist specialized in Croatian as ethnic minority studies, philologist specialized in Serbian as ethnic minority studies, philologist specialized in Slovak as ethnic minority studies, philologist specialized in Slovenian as ethnic minority studies, philologist specialized in Ukrainian as ethnic minority studies) which are also relevant in the context of minority languages. Among master’s majors, it also includes the description of the field of specialisation and the specialised methodology skills of the following qualifications: ethnic minority German teacher, ethnic minority Romanian teacher, Romany language and culture and Beash language and culture teacher within Romology teacher’s qualification, ethnic minority Bulgarian teacher, ethnic minority Polish teacher, ethnic minority Croatian teacher, ethnic minority Serbian teacher, ethnic minority Slovak teacher, ethnic minority Slovenian teacher, ethnic minority Ukrainian teacher, ethnic minority Greek teacher and the teaching of a specialised subject in a foreign language.

The usage of minority-language geographical names is affected by Government Decree 303/2007 (XI. 14.) on the laying down and registering of Hungarian official geographical names.

The Introduction already referred to Government Decree 375/2007 (XII. 23.) on the system of conditions of providing support to minority self-governments from the central budget and the rules of accounting thereof proportionate to the respective tasks, which basically changed

the system of state support granted to local and regional minority self-governments. The regulation substantially affects the protection and development of regional or minority languages as well. The impact study already referred to, analysing the new system of state support was prepared on the basis of applications (data sheets) submitted by minority self-governments. The data sheet is actually a summary of the performance of minority-related tasks of the relevant self-government in the previous year. Self-governments, *inter alia*, presented initiatives related to the use of the minority language, and on the contents thereof in relation to education, culture, and local public life.

The essence of the new system of financing of local and regional minority self-governments is that the full budget line intended to support the operation of minority self-governments is divided in a proportion of 75 to 25%. 75% of the support is granted to all operational minority self-governments in order to ensure the conditions of basic operation, while the remaining 25% is provided in a differentiated way to minority self-governments applying for the support in line with the activity and the performance of tasks of the minority self-governments. The application may be submitted by completing the application data sheet as laid down in the Annex of the Government Decree already referred to and by sending the data sheet to the competent directorate of the Hungarian State Treasury. The data sheet reviewed the performance of tasks by the local and regional minority self-governments in three basic areas, including the scope and contents thereof. The first such area includes the activities related to the enforcement of rights of the minority community, the interest representation, and the interest protection which is a substantial element of a self-government; the second area includes the tasks related to institution-founding, institution-maintenance, sustaining and organisational tasks related to the cultural autonomy of minorities (cultural, public educational, educational tasks, preservations of traditions, public collections and media), while the third thematic area was the performance of other tasks related to minority existence (religious life in the mother tongue, equal opportunities). All three thematic units highlight issues related to decisions, initiatives and execution of tasks related to the use of the minority language within the given area.

In the course of processing the received application data sheets, activities in each area were evaluated according to a scoring system also laid down in the Government Decree. The support for year 2008 granted in line with performance of tasks, resulting in different amounts on the whole for the various minority self-government was calculated based on the scores received in the three areas.

In the first major thematic unit of the data sheet, a separate question related to the submission and presentation of initiatives related to the use of the language spoken by the minority community and requirements related to language use in public administration, including its contents and results.

The second major thematic unit presents activities related to the respective institutions of each minority self-government and other activities related to public education, public collections and public education institutions operated locally and regionally bearing relevance for minority cultural autonomy and their relationships with the media on a local and regional level. A separate question here related to activities supplementing the work of educational institutions with the aim of presenting the language, culture and past of the minority and the organisation of local festivities and events of the minority.

In the third thematic unit, relevant areas primarily include the active participation in minority language religious life and the related initiatives for the fulfilment of the commitments in the context of the Language Charter.

The detailed processing of data sheets promotes the evaluation of a more accurate presentation of the activity of the local and regional minority self-governments in the use of minority languages, including the cooperation with municipality and regional bodies and organisations.

Following the primary processing, it was found that from the 122 operating *Croatian* (local and regional) minority self-governments, there were altogether 109 self-governments that submitted a valid application (89.3%). Their average score was 42.6 i.e. the activity of the Croatian minority self-governments in 2007 was 42.6% on the average, in view of the activities summarised in the data sheet presented in the Annex of the Government Decree on differentiated support. Within the entire activity, the following results were reached in performing the tasks primarily related to the language of the minority: in the first thematic unit of the data sheet, the average scoring of initiatives related to minority-spoken languages was 2, that is 20%. Within the second thematic unit, the average level of activity related to cultural institutions, local or regional media was 66% within the Croatian minority self-governments, while their level of activities related to educational institutions was an average of 62.5%. The initiation, organisation and support of other activities, primarily minority events and programmes, was at 61.6%. The average result in the third thematic unit, related to minority (language) religious activities was 38.5% within the Croatian community.

The presentation of activities related to minority language use, education, and the preservation of the mother tongue culture in the self-government activity in 2007, based on the data sheet for granting a task performance proportionate support in the case of the *German* minority resulted in the following scores: the 389 operating local and regional German minority self-governments submitted 333 valid applications (85.6%). The average of their total scores was 44.4. Accordingly, based on the application data sheets received, the average activity level of the German minority in 2007 was 44.4% as compared to the achievable maximum score of the data sheet. In the first thematic unit of the data sheet, the average score of initiatives related to the minority language was 1.4, i.e., 14%. Within the second thematic unit, the average of the activity level related to cultural institutions, local or regional media was 76.4% within German minority self-governments while their level of activity related to educational institutions and minority education was 69.3%. The initiation, organisation and support of other activities, primarily related to minority events and programmes, was at a level of 55.8%. From the third thematic unit, the average result in the context of minority (language) religious activities was 24.6% within the German community.

According to the same criteria, the self-governments of *Romanians* reached the following results based on their pronouncements presented in the data sheet referred to above: from the 49 local and regional Romanian minority self-governments operating in 2007, 43 submitted a valid application. The average of their scores was 24.9. Accordingly, the valid data sheets received show that in 2007, Romanian minority self-governments had a relatively low activity level of 24.9% based on the activity summarised in processed data sheets. In the first thematic unit of the data sheet, the average of scores related to initiatives in connection with the language spoken by the minority was 0.5, i.e. 5%. In the second thematic unit, the average of the level of activity related to cultural institutions and local or regional media was 22.2% within Romanian minority self-governments, while the average of their educational institution

related activities was 28.9%. The level of initiation, organisation and support of other activities, basically minority events and programmes, reached 52.7%. In the third thematic unit, the average result related to minority (language) religious activities was 26.7% within the Romanian community.

Based on the processed data sheets, the activity level of the **Serbian** minority showed the following result: of the 42 operating Serbian minority self-governments, 31 submitted a valid application (73.8%). The average score was 44.4. Accordingly, based on the submitted data sheets, the activity level of the Serbian minority self-governments was 44.4% in 2007 in comparison to the optimum level (100 points). In the first thematic unit of the data sheet, the average of scores reached regarding initiatives related to the language spoken by the minority was 2.3, i.e. 23%. Within the second thematic unit, the average of the activity level related to cultural institutions, local or regional media was 77.4% within the Serbian minority self-governments, while that related to educational institutions was 61.3%. The initiation, organisation and support of other activities, basically minority events and programmes, was at a level of 62.9%. In the third thematic unit, the average result of minority (language) religious activities was 57.4% within the Serbian community.

The activity level of municipality and regional **Slovak** minority self-governments was the following in 2007, based on the application data sheets: from among the 122 operating minority self-governments, 106 (86.9%) submitted valid applications. The average of their activity-related scores was 41.6. Accordingly, the activity level of the Slovak minority self-governments was 41.6% in 2007 compared to the maximum accessible level. In the first thematic unit of the data sheet, the average of scores in the context of initiatives related to the language spoken by the minority was 1.5, i.e. 15%. Within the second thematic unit, the average of the activity level related to cultural institutions, local or regional media was 61.5% within the Slovak minority self-governments, while their educational institution related activities were at 56.9%. The initiation, organisation, and support of other activities, basically minority events and programmes, was at a level of 63.3%. As regards the third thematic unit, the average result related to minority (language) religious activities was 30.8% within the Slovak community.

Information obtained from data sheets submitted by the self-governments of the **Slovenian** community shows the following results: each of the 11 Slovenian municipality minority self-governments (having no regional level self-governments) submitted a valid application (100%). The average of their scores was 40.73. Accordingly, the activity of the Slovenian minority self-governments was 40.7% on the average in 2007. In the first thematic unit of the data sheet the average of the scores related to initiatives in the context of the language spoken by the minority was 0.6, i.e. 6%. Regarding the second thematic unit, the average of activities related to cultural institutions, and local or regional media was 72.7% within the Slovenian minority self-governments, while the same related to educational institutions was 54.5%. The initiation, organisation, and support of other activities, basically minority events and programmes, was at a level of 68.2%. Regarding the third thematic unit, the average result for minority (language) religious activities was 49.1% within the Slovenian community.

The summary presented above was prepared on the basis of the application data sheets made by the minority self-governments submitted in relation to the 2008 budgetary support of local and regional minority self-governments. The data contained therein obviously do not cover the activities of organisations falling outside the scope of self-governments and the activities performed upon a number of civil minority initiatives.

The partial results, which are occasionally higher compared to the average of the total scores, can be explained by the fact that the data sheet also contained other topics and associated activities, not primarily related to the language of the minority.

The Working Group on the Funding and Support of Minorities of the State Secretariat responsible for Minority and National Policy of the Prime Minister's Office was established partly for the preparation of the task-proportionate support of minority self-governments, the assessment of the operational conditions and financing order of minority self-governments and the assessment of the financial support system of minority organisations. The following are involved in the activities of the Working Group: the responsible organisations of the central public administration, the delegates of the national minority self-governments, and the representatives of self-government associations. The Working Group offers recommendations to the Government and the relevant organisations regarding the financing of the minority affairs and the support of minority initiatives.

Organisational background of the protection of regional or minority languages

In Hungary, the legislative background necessary for the protection of minorities and minority languages stemmed from the coherent and stable minority policy of the Republic of Hungary. There are several state and self-government bodies and civil organisations primarily dealing with the protection of the languages and minorities referred to earlier.

The ***Committee for Human Rights, Minorities, Civil and Religious Matters*** of the Hungarian Parliament safeguards the principle of minority protection and the protection of minority languages at the highest level, i.e. the level of legislation. The institution of the ***Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights*** reports directly to Parliament. The Commissioner is responsible for investigating the complaints received, at times inspecting complaints related to the breach of language rights and for presenting recommendations for the solution thereof.

The Government designated the ***Prime Minister's Office*** as the administrative body responsible for executing the state tasks related to national and ethnic minorities in Government Decree 363/2006 (XII. 28.) on the provision of state tasks related to Hungarian national and ethnic minorities and the reform of the related institutional system. Within the Office, it is the ***State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy*** that is responsible for minority policy issues.

An important element of ensuring rights related to minority education is the ***National Committee for Minorities*** established as a consultative body of the minister of education and culture, the members of which are experts delegated by the national minority self-governments. The Committee has a right of consent regarding every educational provision related to minority education, and provides opinions regarding the drafts of other educational legislative texts. The operation of the Cultural Council for Ethnic Minorities of the Ministry of Culture was terminated in the reporting period.

The presence on the Internet of the national and ethnic minorities and the IT background of minorities is supported by the ***Minority Information Technology College*** as a consultative body.

The Minorities Act provided for the establishment of the ***Public Foundation for Hungarian National and Ethnic Minorities***. Its aims are the preservation of the identity of national and ethnic minorities, the preservation and passing-on of their traditions, the nurturing and development of the mother tongue, the preservation of intellectual and material heritage, and the support of activities to mitigate the cultural and political disadvantages of the minority status.

The task of ***national, regional and local self-governments of the minorities*** is the protection of the interests of the relevant minorities. Within this task, self-governments are the primary representatives on a local, regional and national level responsible for safeguarding that minority language rights are observed. Recently, guarantees for collective language rights of minorities were included in bilateral documents between the Republic of Hungary and the mother countries of certain minorities, adopted at the meetings of minority joint committees established for monitoring the situation of minorities.

Parallel to the EU accession of Hungary, the Hungarian member organisation (HUBLUL) of the ***European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages*** (EBLUL) was established, and its tasks include the collection and provision of information related to the language rights of Hungarian minorities on a national and international level.

List of addresses of organisations engaged, among others, in the protection of minority languages:

- ***Committee for Human Rights, Minority, Civil and Religious Matters*** of Parliament
H-1054 Budapest, Széchenyi rkp. 19.
Chairperson: Zoltán Balogh (Fidesz-MPSZ)
e-mail: emb@parlament.hu
Internet: **www.parlament.hu**
- ***Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights***
H-1051 Budapest, Nádor u. 22.
Dr. Ernő Kállai, Parliamentary Commissioner
e-mail: info@kisebbsegiombudsman.hu
Internet: **www.obh.hu**
- ***State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy of the Prime Minister's Office***
H-1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 4.
State Secretary: Ferenc Gémesi
e-mail: knfszat@meh.hu
Internet: **www.nek.gov.hu**
- ***National Croatian Self-Government***
H-1089 Budapest, Bíró Lajos u. 24.
President: Mihály Hepp
e-mail: hrsamouprava@chello.hu
Internet: **www.horvatok.hu**
- ***National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary***
H-1026 Budapest, Júlia u. 9.
President: Ottó Heinek
e-mail: ldu@ldu.datanet.hu

Internet: www.ldu.hu

- ***National Self-Government of Romanians in Hungary***
H-5700 Gyula, Eminescu u. 1.
President: Traján Kreszta
e-mail: atru@mailglobonet.hu
Internet: www.atruroman.hu

- ***National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary***
H-1055 Budapest, Falk Miksa u. 3.
President: Ljubomír Alexov
e-mail: ssm@t-online.hu
Internet: www.serbian.hu

- ***National Self-Government of Slovaks***
H-1114 Budapest, Fadrusz u. 11/a
President: János Fuzik
e-mail: oszo@slovaci.hu
Internet: www.slovaci.hu

- ***National Slovenian Self-Government***
H-9985 Felsőszölnök, Fő u. 5.
President: Márton Ropos
e-mail: samouprava@t-online.hu
Internet: www.slovenpages.hu

- ***National Bulgarian Self-Government***
H-1093 Budapest, Lónyay u. 41.
President: Dr. Dancso Muszev Dimitrov
e-mail: bolgonk@bul.hu
Internet: www.bul.hu

- ***National Roma Self-Government***
H-1076 Budapest, Dohány u. 76.
President: Orbán Kolompár
e-mail: oco@oco.hu
Internet: www.oco.hu

- ***National Self-Government of Greeks in Hungary***
H-1054 Budapest, Vécsey u. 5.
President: Laokratisz Koranisz
e-mail: grtitkar@t-online.hu
Internet: www.ellinismos.hu

- ***National Polish Minority Self-Government***
H-1102 Budapest, Állomás u. 10.
President: Zdzisława Molnárné-Sagun
e-mail: biuro@orlan.t-online.hu
Internet: www.polonia.hu

- ***National Armenian Self-Government***
H-1025 Budapest, Palatinus u.4.

President: Ádám Szárkiszján
e-mail: orszagosormeny@t-online.hu

- ***National Ruthenian Minority Self-Government***

H-1147 Budapest, Gyarmat u. 85/B
President: András Manajló
e-mail: ruszinok@freemail.hu
Internet: **www.rusyn.hu**

- ***National Ukrainian Self-Government***

H-1065 Budapest, Hajós u. 1.
President: Jaroslava Hartyányi
e-mail: muke@t-online.hu
Internet: **www.ukrajinci.hu**

- ***Hungarian Member State Committee of EBLUL***

H-1055 Budapest, Falk Miksa u. 3.
Secretary: Borisz Bekics
Tel./fax: (361) 331-5345
E-mail: borisbek2003@yahoo.com

During the preparation phase, our report was submitted for the purposes of complementing and providing opinions thereon to the national self-governments of all minorities and the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights. Their comments are included in the report.

Information related to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Based on the experience gained from the previous reporting periods, the Government body responsible for minority policy did not attempt to communicate to the stakeholders (the community of those speaking minority languages, the public administration, the courts and institutions) the information related to the Language Charter at centrally organised conferences during the past three years, but rather tried to incorporate the topic of language rights in the thematics of events organised by the communities and events organised by state and other organisations. During 2007, rights included in the Language Charter were presented at the conference of the Hungarian Institute for Culture, the conference of the Research Institute of Slovaks in Hungary, the conference of Sulinova Public Education Development and Pedagogical Training Kht. on language teaching and the conference on the Language Charter of the Public Foundation for European Comparative Minority Research. In this regard, we have to highlight the workshop meeting organised by the Public Foundation for European Comparative Minority Research (**www.eokik.hu**) in December 2007 on the application of the Language Charter in Hungary.

At the international meeting, the State Secretary for minority policy of the Prime Minister's Office provided detailed information on the work of the Government regarding the language rights of minorities and on the activities affecting the Language Charter. At the conference, the issue of the state of Hungarian minority languages in education and the media was on the agenda, and a lecture was delivered on the Hungarian Beash and Romany languages. At the meeting, issues related to the development of a comprehensive language policy were also analysed.

As to issues related to the Language Charter, continuous information was provided in the minority press based on case-by-case requests (*Barátság, Romaweb, Amaro Drom*).

Measures related to the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers

According to our third periodic report, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, following the recommendations of the Committee of Experts, provided the Republic of Hungary with six recommendations, the relevant measures of which are as follows:

1. *the Hungarian authorities [...] take resolute measures in language planning for Romany and Beás with a view to starting effective teaching of and in these languages at all appropriate stages;*

Roma minority education was first regulated by law in 1990. At that time, Act LXV on local self-governments required local self-governments to ensure national and ethnic minority education. Since 1991 the prevailing annual Budgetary Act provides supplementary support in order to facilitate the execution of this task. The Minorities Act and, accordingly, the Act on Public Education stipulates that minority education shall be mandatorily provided upon the request of eight parents or guardians.

The conditions regarding the organisation and content of Roma minority education were established in 1997 by Decree 32/1997 (XI. 5.) of the Minister of Education and Culture on the guidelines of the kindergarten education of the national and ethnic minorities and the school education of the national and ethnic minorities. Pursuant to these documents, children belonging to this ethnic group receive Roma cultural education in the kindergarten. Based on the request of parents, and complying with the individual background of the institution, mother tongue education may be part of the programme. In primary and secondary schools, pupils participating in Roma minority education can learn the Romany or Beash language as compulsory subjects within the framework of ethnic studies in line with the request of parents.

Language requirement systems for the Romany and Beash languages have been prepared and, related to this, Decree 32/1997 (XI. 5.) of the Minister of Education and Culture was also amended. This legal act lays down the language requirement system of the school education of Romany and Beash languages as well as the system of requirements for ethnic studies in Hungarian, Romany and Beash.

Apart from the increase in the number of language teachers, it is necessary for teachers teaching the language to be trained in Romology as well. The setting up of workshops for Romology training are under way, at the following locations: the University of Pécs, the Teacher's Training College Faculty at Nyíregyháza of the University of Debrecen, the Apáczai Csere János Faculty of the University of Western Hungary, the Tessedik Sámuel Training College for Teachers and Kindergarten Teachers and the University of Kaposvár.

The amendment of Government Decree 289/2005. (XII. 22.) is under way and Romology teacher's qualification were also developed as part of this. The training aims to prepare the students for educational and teaching research, planning and development tasks in public education, special education and adult training and further studies in PhD training based on

the qualification and knowledge obtained on the basic level or within the framework of another higher level qualification in the spirit of the Bologna process.

In the reporting period, the Government, upon the initiative of the National Roma Self-Government and several Roma civil organisations and intellectuals, continuously examined whether our obligations in Part III can be extended to the Romany and Beash languages. Based on the opinion of the initiators, the entire language planning is based on having these two languages acquire the same rights as other minority languages, that is, to extend the undertakings to these languages as well. In the course of the preparation of the extension, we asked for the opinion of the representative of the Institute of Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights, the relevant ministries, and the Inter-ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs. All organisations contacted by us confirmed that they agreed with the extension.

2. improve the financial situation of minority language education and increase the stability of resourcing;

It evidently follows from the demographical conditions of the minority population that the number of pupils in institutions of national and ethnic minority education is predominantly low. As from 2000, the Budgetary Act has a separate budget line, which can be used by minority school operators via applications, in particular for the operation of mother tongue and bilingual schools. The measure aims at the individual operation of mother tongue and bilingual schools despite the low number of pupils so that the bilingual character of the institution is sustained.

As from 2006, this budget line was increased substantially (from 340 million HUF to 1,100 million HUF), and those operating the institutions could ask for support for the acquisition of ethnic minority schoolbooks, the use of teacher's professional services and for the execution of public educational tasks as provided for in the recommendations of bilateral minority joint committees, thus improving the level of minority education. As from 2007, mother tongue programmes in the mother countries were also eligible for support.

From among schools teaching national minority languages, only those operating in settlements with a population below 1,100 could apply for a support from the above budget line in an amount falling below the amount provided as a support to mother tongue and bilingual schools. There is no technical obstacle preventing the provision of minority education in co-institutions in some cases, whereby education can be provided in a more cost-effective way than before, without a deterioration in the quality of education. An important aspect is that the rights of minority self-governments should not be harmed as a result of institutional associations. The alliance of an ethnic minority institution is only possible upon the consent of the relevant local minority self-government, as it requires institutional restructuring. However, the 2007 amendment of the Act on Public Education also provided statutory guarantees, stipulating that if the criteria of being an ethnic minority institution are met in a member institution, the local minority self-government will continue to hold the right of consent in issues determined by law.

3. actively promote the establishment of further bilingual schools at all stages of education with a view to moving from the model of only teaching the language as a subject to bilingual education in Part III languages, increase accordingly the number of teachers able to teach

subjects in these languages, and set up the dedicated monitoring mechanism envisaged by Article 8, 1(i) of the Charter;

As already presented in a previous report, participation in national and ethnic minority education is voluntary, however, it is mandatory for the local self-government responsible for performing the task, to provide the necessary conditions if justly required so by the students and the parents. It is up to the students and parents to choose the form of education (mother tongue, bilingual, language teaching, complementary minority education) and conditions should be provided accordingly. The legislative and financial background, however, is available in all forms of education.

Financial regulators prefer minority mother tongue and bilingual education, as in this case the supplementary support is about one and the half times the amount of the supplementary support used in minority language education (HUF 71,500 per person per year as compared to HUF 45,000 per person per year). Additionally, the operators of ethnic minority mother tongue and bilingual schools can expect a substantially higher operational support from the source referred to in our answer to Recommendation No. 2., separated for national minority related tasks in point 6 of Annex 5 to the Budgetary Act (in the budget of the school, the proportion of budgetary support is supplemented to 90 to 100%, but by a maximum of HUF 30 million).

Consequently, and upon the initiative of the parents, in the past 2 or 3 years bilingual education was gradually introduced in line with the stipulations of the Act on Public Education in Felsőszentmárton/Martinci (Croatian), Szentpéterfa/Petrovo Selo (Croatian), Hetvehely/Hetfel (German), Apátistvánfalva/Števanovci (Slovenian) and Felsőszölnök/Gornji Senik (Slovenian).

We will make efforts to improve the special language skills of teachers teaching general subjects in minority languages as well. For this purpose, we have, for years been supporting the implementation of specialised further language trainings organised by higher educational institutions with ethnic minority departments and national minority self-governments, within the framework of which we impose the utilisation of help from the mother country, a 40-hour visit to an educational institution of the mother country, and a minimum of 40 hours of theoretical training.

As far as the German language is concerned, students participating in basic training within the technical language module developed at the language departments of Eötvös Loránd University and the University of Pécs, can deepen the special language skills of their general subjects and can obtain credits for these studies. As a mandatory element of the training, students have to participate at a practical training in Germany for a period of three weeks.

Table 5: *Support of further training in minority technical languages for teachers 2006*

Minority	Number of applications	Amount of support, thousand HUF
German	1	2,581
Romanian	1	1,140
Serbian	1	1,500
	Total	5,221

Table 6: *Further training in technical language 2007*

Minority	Number of applications	Amount of support, thousand HUF
Romanian	1	1,000
German	1	2,234
	Total	3,234

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Minority textbooks shall be provided by the state. General education textbooks in minority languages shall be translated according to translation plans agreed upon with the national minority self-governments, as afforded by the available professional capacities and financial resources. In the reporting period, measures were taken concerning the translation of 77 general education textbooks. In addition, minority educational institutions may use textbooks originating from the mother country of the given minority. Where no textbook developed and translated in Hungary is available for teaching a given subject, the national minority self-government concerned shall indicate this to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry shall request the National Committee for Minorities to investigate whether the requested publication or an equivalent textbook is available or not. If the answer is negative, on the recommendation of National Committee for Minorities, the Ministry shall get in touch with its partners in the country concerned, and order the necessary textbooks. The import of such textbooks shall be provided for by the Ministry of Education, which will then transfer the textbooks to the national minority self-government free of charge. Textbooks so received shall be kept in the library of the given school for three years, and lent to pupils as permanent textbooks.

One of the biggest challenges in the area of teaching Romany and Beash is the development of textbooks written in these languages.

The development of Gypsy ethnographical textbooks has started; books for grades 7-10 are available already. As in the case of the other minorities, a development programme shall be designed for the preparation of these textbooks, as suited to language development related tasks, in co-operation with the National Roma Self-Government (Gypsy ethnographical textbooks for grades 1-6 and 11-12, respectively; Romany and Beash language coursebooks, workbooks, anthologies for grades 1-12); these are expected to be realised as part of the programme entitled TÁMOP 3.4.1 Assistance to the education and training of minority and migrant pupils, to be launched in 2008 as part of New Hungary Development Plan.

4. take steps to ensure that the relevant local and regional authorities (which the Hungarian authorities are urged to identify in accordance with the previous recommendation of the Committee of Ministers) implement the obligations under Article 10 of the Charter, and specify those judicial districts where measures have to be taken with regard to the obligations under Article 9 of the Charter;

In order to identify the relevant regional and local authorities, the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy addressed a letter to the national self-governments of minorities, within the scope of Part III, requesting them to indicate in which regions and counties their communities traditionally lived. The request failed to achieve its objective, as no sensible answers were received. Further steps shall be taken to identify the relevant authorities, regions and settlements.

A Working Group on minority public law was set up beside the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy, primarily to establish the parliamentary representation of national and ethnic minorities. Contributors of the working group are the representatives of the administrative bodies concerned, the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights, and the delegates of the national minority self-governments. On the initiative of the minority representatives, the Working Group attempts to define, as part of its activity, the concept of the so-called “historical settlements” inhabited by minorities. If that definition is accepted by all the communities concerned, that may facilitate the compilation of the list of regions and settlements mentioned in the recommendation. This may open the way to the implementation of the measures indicated in the recommendation.

5. improve the offer of minority language programmes in the media, in particular by allocating a suitable radio frequency as well as developing and financing a comprehensive scheme for the training of journalists and other media staff using minority languages;

The Republic of Hungary acknowledges the right of the minorities to the free expression of their opinion in their mother tongue, and guarantees their access to the mass media.

The primary scenes of the assertion of minority media rights in practice are public service media institutions.

Several negotiations were held in the past three years with the participation of chairpersons of the national minority self-governments and the management of the Hungarian Radio (hereinafter: MR), the representatives of the Hungarian Radio Public Foundation, the National Radio and Television Commission (hereinafter: ORTT), the Government, respectively, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights to solve the problems of minority public radio broadcasts. As a result of the negotiations, as of 1 February 2007, the minority language programmes of MR can be heard on a new channel called *MR4*. The minority channel broadcasts programmes 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 20 p.m., at 1188 kHz frequency in eastern and western Hungary and at 873 kHz MW in central and south-western Hungary. Given this, all the 13 Hungarian minorities have public service radio programmes organised in a standard 12-hour structure. The broadcasts are prepared in MR’s regional (Pécs, Szeged, Miskolc) and Budapest-based studios, and in the studio of the Slovenian minority radio based in Szentgotthárd/Monošter.

Each of the Croatian, German, Romanian, Serbian and Slovak minorities have 2-hour minority language programmes daily on Channel MR4. The Bulgarians, Greeks, Poles, Ruthenians, Slovenians and Ukrainians have 30-minute-long programmes weekly in their respective mother tongues, and the weekly 30-minute programme of the Armenians is aired in Hungarian and in Armenian. The Roma make Hungarian-language programmes five times a week, from Monday to Friday, with 30-minute-long programmes a day. On Sundays, there is a Hungarian-language minority magazine programme called “*Egy hazában*” (*Sharing the Same Homeland*). Part of this programme is the section entitled “*Gyöngyszemek*” (*Pearls*), which gives a selection of the most beautiful literary works of minorities. The programmes of channel MR4 are broadcast by satellite 24 hours a day, and are also accessible on the website **www.radio.hu**.

Table 7: Programme structure of MR4

Time-slot	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
08:00–10:00	Croatian nationality programme						
10:00–12:00	German nationality programme						
12:00–12:03	Bell chime						
12:03–13:00	Music of the different nationalities						
13:00–13:30	Slovenian nationality programme	Ruthenian nationality programme	Bulgarian nationality programme	Greek nationality programme	Ukrainian nationality programme	Armenian nationality programme	13:00–13:55 “Sharing the Same Homeland”, nationality magazine
13:30–14:00	On the roads of Gypsy-land					Polish nationality programme	13:55–14:00 “Pearls” of minority literature
14:00–16:00	Serbian nationality programme						
16:00–18:00	Romanian nationality programme						
18:00–20:00	Slovak nationality programme						

(Source: www.radio.hu)

As of 2007, the Hungarian Radio expanded its previously 30-minute-long programme “Cigányfélóra” (Gypsy Half Hour) to a one hour-long programme, broadcast on national Channel M1. This magazine programme is aired on Saturdays from 13.00 to 14.00. The editor-in-chief is a Roma radio journalist, whose mother tongue is Beash.

As of 2006, the nationality programmes of the Hungarian Television (hereinafter: MTV) are also accessible on the website www.mtv.hu. The previous routine of taking the minority programmes off the screen on national and church holidays was cancelled. MTV’s minority programme policy contained several open questions in the reporting period, one of them being the time slot of 12.30 to 13.30 on workdays for minority programme broadcasting, deemed unfavourable by the minority self-governments. MTV broadcasts the rerun of minority programmes on Channel M2 – on workdays, in the morning – receivable by satellite only.

In June 2007, a Working Group on Minority Media was formed by the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy of the Prime Minister’s Office to review the problems concerning the media and media presence of minorities, and to work out related recommendations for the Government. The members of the Working Group are delegates of the national minority self-governments, representatives of the competent administrative bodies, the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights, the Hungarian Radio and the Hungarian Television, respectively.

The conference on minority media, organised by the Prime Minister's Office in June 2007, discussed media-related rights of the minorities and the expected consequences of media digital switchover. The objective of the event was to prepare the minorities for the changes expected in the media in the near future.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Working Group, the head of the State Secretariat requested the management of the Hungarian Television in writing to take steps concerning the problem of the broadcasting times of minority programmes. MTV's representative promised that the management of the public service television would rework the draft of the agreement to be concluded with the minority self-governments. The relevant negotiations have not been terminated yet.

MTV launched a Roma television apprentice training programme in 2006. Central budget support of HUF 10 million has been provided for the implementation of the project. At the end of the 12-month-long course, 4 Roma youth per year may acquire apprentice skills in public service television MTV. Those who have completed the programme are now on the staffs of various programmes of the Hungarian Television.

The Working Group initiated with the managements of the public service media an extension of the formal on-the-job journalist/reporter training programmes to the members of the minority press.

Furthermore, the Working Group urged the managements of public media to provide opportunities for language and professional skills training to the makers of minority programmes in the framework of co-operations between their institutions and the public media in the respective mother countries of the Hungarian minorities.

Staff members having achieved professional successes in the native media of the minorities are awarded high-level state distinctions. It has become a tradition in Hungary that on the Day of Minorities, i.e. 18 December, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary hands over decorations to persons having produced outstanding results supporting the cause of minorities in the areas of public life, education, culture, church life, science, the media and the economy. In line with this, in 2006, the Prime Minister awarded the editors of the Slovenian programmes of Radio Monošter and the Hungarian Radio with the Prize for Minorities for the promotion and nurturing of Slovenian minority culture and language and the preservation of Slovenian identity. Also in 2006, the editor of the Roma programmes of the Hungarian Radio received the Prize for Minorities for his journalistic activity facilitating the combating of prejudices and for his extensive public activity. In 2007, MTV's Editorial Board for Minority Programmes was awarded the Prize for Minorities. The Prime Minister rewarded the high-level of professional activity of journalists making programmes for the public service television in the native tongues of the 13 minorities by awarding them this high-level state distinction. Furthermore, the Prize for Minorities was also awarded in 2007 to the editorial board of the RomNet internet portal. Young journalists launched the first iwiw-type community-building portal in Lovari, Croatian, Slovenian, Czech, German and Romanian under the name of "Zhoriben!" (Contact) to promote the dialogue of Roma and non-Roma cultures and to reinforce language reform efforts.

The Hungarian Radio and the Hungarian Television provide for the preparation and broadcasting of the electronic media programmes of the Hungarian minorities partly in the

framework of the public service media, by allocating them a separate budget. The programmes are funded from the central budget.

In addition, the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary (MNEKK) issues annual calls for tenders for the support of minority electronic media projects. In the past three years, it granted the following supports.

Table 8: MNEKK granted minority electronic media supports, 2005–2007

Minority	2005 – no. of projects/support (HUF thousand)		2006 – no. of projects/support (HUF thousand)		2007 – no. of projects/support (HUF thousand)	
	no. of projects	support (HUF thousand)	no. of projects	support (HUF thousand)	no. of projects	support (HUF thousand)
<i>Bulgarian</i>	2	300	1	250	1	300
<i>Gypsy</i>	4	950	5	1,750	8	1,320
<i>Greek</i>	1	150	2	600	2	350
<i>Croatian</i>	3	800	15	2,000	3	650
<i>Polish</i>	1	500	3	750	1	300
<i>German</i>	8	950	14	3,000	6	1,100
<i>Armenian</i>	1	150	0	0	0	0
<i>Romanian</i>	2	400	9	1,220	2	300
<i>Ruthenian</i>	1	160	1	250	2	400
<i>Serbian</i>	3	700	12	1,930	3	900
<i>Slovak</i>	6	880	12	2,680	2	400
<i>Slovenian</i>	0	0	2	700	0	0
<i>Ukrainian</i>	1	300	0	0	1	300
Total:	33	6,240	85	15,680	31	6,320

In addition to the two major sources, in the past three years the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy of the Prime Minister’s Office granted ad hoc support to the Slovenian Minority Radio, Radio Monošter, to Radio Croatica, the Internet radio of Croatians in Hungary, and to the National Roma Media and Information Centre established in 2007, in the following breakdown:

Table 9: Media supports granted by the Prime Minister’s Office, 2005-2007

Institution	2005	2006	2007
Radio Monošter	HUF 16,197,800	HUF 7,000,000	HUF 5,000,000
Radio Croatica	HUF 6,500,000	HUF 2,700,000	HUF 8,000,000
National Roma Media and Information Centre			HUF 20,000,000

6. improve the conditions for the transferral of educational and cultural bodies and institutions to minority self-governments.

The legislative and financial conditions of the transfer/take-over of the minority educational institutions have been established. As reported already, the 2003 amendment of Article 47 of the Minorities Act defined the conditions of the take-over, establishment and maintenance of public education institutions by minority self-governments. According to the amendment, the maintenance right of nationality public education institutions carrying out national, regional or district tasks shall be transferred to the national minority self-governments upon their request, whereas institutions carrying out local tasks may be transferred to these national minority self-governments by the local

municipality acting as their maintainer. In cases where public education institutions performing national, regional or district tasks are concerned, the details of the take-over of the institution shall be set out by public education agreements concluded with the Minister of Education or, for local public education institutions, with the local self-governments concerned, respectively. As a further guarantee of the operation of public education institutions taken over by a minority self-government, the minority self-government maintaining the institution may request, under the same title and conditions as the local self-governments, the contributions, supports and supplementary contributions determined in the actual Budget Act. Furthermore, they shall be eligible (through different procedures, depending on the nature of the institution concerned) for minority maintainer's supplementary support per child/pupil enrolled, as defined in the Budget Act annually.

Where the above sources do not cover the maintenance costs of the institution, the institution shall be eligible for a further maximum HUF 30 million supplementary support on the basis of the tender announced for the utilisation of the budget earmarked for minority tasks under Point 6 of Annex No. 5 of the Budget Act.

Table 10: *Public education institutions maintained by national minority self-governments*

National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary	Pécs/Fünfkirchen (2004) Pilisvörösvár/Werischwar (2004)
National Self-Government of Slovaks	Szarvas/Sarvaš (2004) Békéscsaba/Békeška Čaba (2005) Sátoraljaújhely/Nové mesto pod Šiatrom (2007)
National Croatian Self-Government	Hercegszántó/Santovo (2000)

As shown in the above list, the take-over of institutions of education has so far been initiated by the national minority self-governments. The institutions taken over by them now provide bilingual education, and their central funding amounts to 100%.

Similarly to take-over of educational institutions, the 2005 amendment of the Minorities Act regulates the process of the transfer/take-over of cultural institutions (Articles 49–49/D). However, the experience is that minority self-governments mostly establish new cultural institutions and apply for – and are granted – support from central funds for these institutions; exceptions in this respect are institutions that satisfy exclusively the cultural needs or serve the presentation of the cultural heritage of a given minority.

Table 11: *The following new institutions operated by national minority self-governments were created in the reporting period*

National Roma Self-Government	National Roma Museum Collection and Exhibition Premises (2005) National Roma Library and Archives (2005)
National Croatian Self-Government	Croatian Training and Education Centre (2005) Croatica Radio (2005) Christian Collection of Croats in Hungary (2005)
National Self-Government of Romanians in Hungary	Romanian Folklore Museum (2006)
National Armenian Self-Government	Armenian Cultural, Documentation and Information Centre (2007)
Ukrainian National Self-Government	Ukrainian Cultural and Documentation Centre in Hungary (2007)

Financial support for the operation of newly created institutions is approved by Parliament, and is incorporated in the annual budgets of national minority self-governments.

For the purpose of support to institutions and for cases, events and institutions important from a minority policy point of view and not eligible for support from other application-based funds, the following supports were granted in the past three years from the budget chapter of the Prime Minister's Office.

Table 12: *Utilisation of the minority co-ordination and intervention budget, broken down by minority, 2005 to 2007, HUF*

Minority	2005	2006	2007
Bulgarian	112,500	1,100,000	
Gypsy			13,224,550
Greek	750,000	1,160,000	
Croatian	4,080,594	4,400,000	650,000
Polish			3,455,000
German	8,858,317	12,080,000	7,400,000
Armenian	1,061,625	800,000	500,000
Romanian	8,751,964	6,200,000	4,955,000
Ruthenian			
Serbian	2,600,000	5,400,000	2,000,000
Slovak	3,305,000	7,499,200	1,915,000
Slovenian	5,000,000	1,850,000	
Ukrainian			
Inter-ethnic	6,580,000	7,165,200	3,550,000
Total:	41,100,000	47,654,400	37,649,550

Source: Prime Minister's Office

Table 13: *Support for the take-over and maintenance of minority institutions, 2005 to 2007, HUF*

Minority	2005	2006	2007
Bulgarian	33,000,000	12,000,000	7,000,000
Gypsy	53,000,000	1,000,000	20,000,000
Greek	12,000,000		1,700,000
Croatian	55,660,000	10,000,000	9,000,000
Polish	38,820,000	14,000,000	2,500,000
German	80,000,000	12,648,766	7,000,000
Armenian			4,700,000
Romanian	21,150,000	18,000,000	3,000,000
Ruthenian	4,400,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Serbian	27,500,000	6,000,000	2,500,000
Slovak	97,472,200	23,351,234	
Slovenian	16,197,800	6,000,000	5,000,000
Ukrainian			6,000,000
Total:		104,500,000	69,900,000
Chapter: Parliament		380,500,000	380,500,000
Grand total:	439,200,000	485,000,000	450,400,000

Source: Prime Minister's Office

Note: a major part of the support from the central budget for minority institutions is figured in the budget chapter of the Parliament (in 2006 and 2007: HUF 380.5 million).

CHAPTER II

General Minority Policy of the Republic of Hungary, with special regard to Article 7 of Part II of the Charter

Objectives and Principles

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

a) *the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth;*

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

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

d) *the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;*

e) *the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages;*

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

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

h) *the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions;*

i) *the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.*

2. *The Parties undertake to eliminate, if they have not yet done so, any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it. The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages.*

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

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

5. *The Parties undertake to apply, mutatis mutandis, the principles listed in paragraphs 1 to 4 above to non-territorial languages. However, as far as these languages are concerned, the nature and scope of the measures to be taken to give effect to this Charter*

shall be determined in a flexible manner, bearing in mind the needs and wishes, and respecting the traditions and characteristics, of the groups which use the languages concerned.

The guarantees for the assertion of the language rights of minorities in Hungary are incorporated in both the Constitution and the legal regulations reviewed above. As compared to our previous reports, these have been amended to a minimum extent only, and the new provisions are described under the new measures concerning minority languages. Therefore, in what follows, we shall answer the specific questions raised by the Committee of Experts.

Article 1.a

The Government of the Republic of Hungary considers the language and culture of minorities a value to be preserved. To acknowledge the activity of persons and communities active in the preservation of the linguistic-cultural values of minorities, in 1995 Hungary created the “Prize for Minorities”, which is handed over by the Prime Minister every year. In each of the three reference years, the awardees included teachers active in minority education, actors of minority cultural life, staff members of the minority media and other actors of minority public life.

Article 1.b

The legal regulations of the Republic of Hungary do not associate the use of minority languages with geographical areas. The main reason for that is that, due to internal migration, the members of every community are found in every region of the country. Over the past three years, no measure was taken which would have restricted the language use of the minorities in a geographical sense.

Article 1.c

The minority policy of the Republic of Hungary is based on the principle of minority self-government. In order to define direction and contents, wide-scale consultation is held before a step is taken in the area of minority policy. Accordingly, the State Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Office responsible for minority affairs asked the representations of the communities affected by Hungary’s undertakings made with reference to Part III of the Charter, and the presidents of the national self-governments of the thirteen minorities in Hungary, to indicate in which region they felt it was necessary to pay special attention to guaranteeing language rights.

The self-governments of minorities not named specifically with reference to Part III of the Charter were requested to investigate, with the involvement of the relevant organisations of their community, whether the situation allowed for the extension of part or all the undertakings under Part III of the Charter in terms of the languages spoken by them.

Three of the national representations of the six communities affected by our previous undertakings responded to the request. The self-governments of all three minorities expressed their satisfaction with regard to their language rights, and expressed their hope that it would be possible to use their mother tongues in the future, too, to the extent the members of the communities would so require.

The answers of the self-governments not falling under the scope of our undertakings show that the minorities pursued no inquiry to see whether the extension was a realistic demand. The minorities instead indicated in general that, in terms of their language use, they claimed to use every possibility provided for them under the Minorities Act and wished to use all opportunities the members of other communities may enjoy.

Article 1.d

The total headcount of native speakers of Polish in Hungary – as indicated in the table above – is 2,580, and the total number of speakers of this language among the total population of the country is 11,206. The proportion of persons belonging to the Polish minority exceeds 10% in only one settlement, Ládbesenyő in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, where 40 of the 338 inhabitants declared that they belonged to the Polish minority, but none among them indicated that Polish was their native tongue or that they used that language in their family or among friends. No institution operates in the settlement; the notary's functions are performed by a district notary's office.

As for the other settlements, there are some dozens of people belonging to the Polish minority in towns with county right, but their proportion is less than one thousandth of the population of these settlements. All in all, the statistical data show that the number and proportion of speakers of Polish does not attain a perceptible level, and hence their demand concerning language use occurs individually and at random. No information is available to us concerning non-compliance with such demands.

The situation is similar for the users of the Ruthenian language. Their proportion is somewhat higher in one settlement only – in Komlóska in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County –, where 60 of the 330 inhabitants indicated that they belonged to the Ruthenian minority. A total of 91 persons use the language in their families and among friends. Similarly to the situation in the Polish settlement, local administration functions are performed by a district notary's office. The settlement hosts the Ruthenian General Cultural Centre, the place where the Ruthenian language is being taught and the Ruthenian-language cultural heritage of the settlement is nurtured.

Article 1.e

The tenders for the organisation of intercultural programmes announced by the Public Foundation for Minorities promote the preservation of contacts between minority language users. From the budget of the Foundation, HUF 17.5 million support was granted for the support of such inter-ethnic programmes in 2005; HUF 23.8 million in 2006, and HUF 27.3 million in 2007.

Minority languages in the media falling under the scope of Part II

Support for the written press in languages falling under the scope of Part II is granted in the same way as for Part III newspapers. The Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary supports the publication of papers by tenders, through financing minority-language editions. The new quarterly called *Glinda* made for Roma children and youth has been published since 2007. The paper dedicates more and more space to the use of the Beash and Romany languages.

In 2007, the last full year of this reporting period, support for the papers of these minorities were as follows.

Table 14: *Support for Part II minority papers in 2007*

Support provided by the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary in 2007 for papers falling under the scope of Part II of the Charter					
Title of paper	Frequency of publication	Number of pages	Number of copies (re one issue)	Frequency of publication, 1 May 2007– 29 February 2008	Support granted
Arménia népe (People of Armenia) (Armenian)	Bi-monthly	28+4	1,200	6	HUF,5,488,053
Balgarski Vesti (Bulgarian)	Monthly	16+4	1,350	8	HUF,4,775,982
Hromada (Ukrainian)	Bi-monthly	36+4	1,000	5	HUF,5,553,277
Kafeneio (Greek)	Quarterly	64	1,500	4	HUF,6,609,688
Polonia Wegierska Glos Polonii (Polish)	Monthly, quarterly suppl.	24 24	2,100 2,100	10	HUF,8,788,442
Ruszin Világ (Ruthenian world) (Ruthenian)	Monthly	16+4	1,000	10	HUF,4,750,857
<i>Total:</i>					HUF,35,966,299
<i>Gypsy/Roma papers</i>					
Amaro Drom	Monthly	36	2,500	10	HUF,8,120,866
Kethano Drom	Quarterly	32+4	3,000	4	HUF,1,000,000
Lungo Drom	Monthly	36	800	10	HUF,3,000,000
Világunk (Our world)	Monthly	28+4	2,000	10	HUF,10,000,000
Glinda	Quarterly	28	2000	4	HUF,2,500,000
<i>Total:</i>					HUF,24,620,866
Grand total:					HUF,60,587,165

In the reporting period, the ministry responsible for IT developments provided budgetary support for the IT development of the written press published in the native tongues of the Hungarian minorities and for the design and expansion of Internet websites. The ministry provided HUF 1 million to the newspaper editorial boards of each of the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Ruthenian and Ukrainian communities in October 2005.

The appearance of the said languages in the programmes of public service MTV is restricted exclusively to the minority programmes. The Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Ruthenian and Ukrainian minority programme (*Rondó*) takes 78 minutes a month. The weekly broadcasting time of *Roma Magazin* prepared for the Roma is 26 minutes, and *Roma Fórum*, which also lasts for 26 minutes, is shown every three months.

In connection with the commemoration of the anniversary of the events of 1956, Duna Television (DTV) reported on the celebrations of the Polish community in 2006. On 25 April 2005, a thematic day was held in commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the Armenian

genocide. The situation of the Roma was also discussed in the programmes. DTV reported on the causes and consequences of the emigration of Gypsies from Baranya County to Sweden. They showed positive Gypsy courses of lives and examples from Bács-Kiskun County. On 18 July 2006, a Gypsy solidarity day was broadcast in Duna Television.

Information on the new minority channel, Channel MR4, which was launched by public service Hungarian Radio on 1 February 2007, pertaining to this point also, has been provided under Point 5 above in the part entitled “Measures related to the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers”.

The air time of public service radio programmes broadcast in languages falling under Part II is as follows: Channel MR 4 broadcasts the Ruthenian programmes on Tuesdays from 13.00–13.30; the Bulgarian programme on Wednesdays at the same time; the Greek one on Thursdays at the same time; the Ukrainian on Fridays; the Armenian on Saturdays, and the Polish programme likewise on Saturdays, from 13.30–14.00. The programmes made for the Roma communities are broadcast Monday to Friday daily from 13.30 to 14.00. Let us note here, too, that the broadcasts prepared for the Roma community are primarily Hungarian-language programmes. The producers of the programmes consider the expansion of the air time of Romany and Beash language programmes one of their future tasks.

Let us note, moreover, that the possibility of creating a European Roma television was discussed in May 2006, in Budapest. At the international forum organised by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture, actors of public life and media experts discussed the cultural and professional conditions of the project which requires international co-operation.

With the spread of the Internet, support for the development of the websites of minority organisations and self-governments has been given growing emphasis. The table below shows support provided to minority electronic media by the Public Foundation for Minorities in the past three years.

Table 15: *MNEKK minority electronic media supports, 2005–2007*

Minority	2005 – no. of projects /support (HUF thousand)		2006 – no. of projects /support (HUF thousand)		2007 – no. of projects /support (HUF thousand)	
Bulgarian	2	300	1	250	1	300
Gypsy	4	950	5	1,750	8	1,320
Greek	1	150	2	600	2	350
Croatian	3	800	15	2,000	3	650
Polish	1	500	3	750	1	300
German	8	950	14	3,000	6	1,100
Armenian	1	150	0	0	0	0
Romanian	2	400	9	1,220	2	300
Ruthenian	1	160	1	250	2	400
Serbian	3	700	12	1,930	3	900
Slovak	6	880	12	2,680	2	400
Slovenian	0	0	2	700	0	0
Ukrainian	1	300	0	0	1	300
Total:	33	6,240	85	15,680	31	6,320

Article 1.f

To date, young children may take part in *Romany* language classes in Luludyasli bar in Hosszúpályi, and in Zoltán Kovács Foundation Kindergarten in Budapest. Romany language is taught in 14 elementary schools (in Nagyecsed, Hodász, Tiszabő, Csobánka, Nagyrábé, Hencida, Tereske, Oroszlány, Tatabánya, Budapest) as part of curricular classes and in one school (in Decs) in the form of a post-curricular activity. Four secondary schools (Gandhi Public Foundation General Secondary School and Boarding School, Foundation for Integrated Education – Dr. András Hegedűs T. Foundation Special School, Montessori General Secondary School of Erzsébetváros – Budapest, and Kalyi Jag Romany Minority Technical School, Vocational Secondary School and Basic Level Arts Education Institution – Budapest) provide Romany language teaching. Pupils may learn the *Beash* language in 7 elementary schools (in Darány, Magyarmecske, Nagyharsány, Gyulaj, Istvándi, Zalakomár, Csapi) as part of curricular classes, in 3 schools (in Bába, Decs, Vásárosdombó) in the form of a post-curricular activity or during specialised classes, and *Beash* is taught in 1 secondary school (Gandhi Public Foundation General Secondary School and Boarding School – Pécs).

In higher education, Romany language training is provided at 5 training sites (University of Pécs; University of Debrecen, Nyíregyháza Teacher Training College Faculty; University of Western Hungary, János Apáczai Csere Faculty; Tessedik Sámuel Teacher and Kindergarten Teacher Training College; University of Kaposvár), and Beash is taught at 2 institutions (University of Pécs, University of Kaposvár). At Vilmos Apor Catholic College of Vác, both Romany and Beash were taught in 2007, and Romany language training is provided in 2008.

We have already referred to developing the teaching of Romany and Beash languages and related government activities in the report section concerning the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers.

The Budapest-based *Bulgarian* school, which is maintained jointly by the Hungarian and the Bulgarian states to educate children of the Bulgarian minority living in Hungary, used to have a kindergarten group as well, but this form of education was terminated this year. To meet the relevant demand, the Bulgarian National Self-Government founded a kindergarten for Bulgarian minority children. In the kindergarten, 13 Bulgarian kindergarten pupils are provided Bulgarian language education in one extended kindergarten group.

Bulgarian complementary minority school training in fact means elementary school education. Secondary school education is provided by the Budapest-based Hriszto Botev Bulgarian–Hungarian Primary School and General Secondary School, operating on the basis of a bilateral Hungarian–Bulgarian inter-departmental work plan.

Teacher training for Bulgarian minority education is provided by the University of Debrecen and the Faculty of Arts of Eötvös Loránd University. As indicated in the introductory part, the learning outcomes of the programme of Bulgarian major and of the teaching programme of Bulgarian as a minority language were issued in the past period.

Bulgarian language training in primary schools is realised with the help of textbooks imported from the mother country and a Bulgarian ethnographical textbook developed and published in Hungary. Moreover, a textbook of Bulgarian language and literature was published in 2006 for secondary schools.

Greek complementary minority education operating in Budapest has 12 classes, that is, both primary and secondary school pupils are educated. In the past two school years, 11 pupils passed a final examination in Greek. Teacher training arrangements are similar to those for the Bulgarian minority, that is, the Faculty of Arts of Eötvös Loránd University provides for the training of the necessary minority language teachers. The education of Greek as a minority language is promoted by textbooks received from the mother country; by textbooks of Greek language and literature for primary school grades 1-3 and grades 9-12, published in 2007; and by a Greek ethnographical textbook on the ethnography and history of the Greek minority.

Polish complementary minority education operates at 18 premises. Similarly to education in Greek, it has 12 grades. In previous years, teacher training was arranged for by the community, primarily with the help of the mother country. Since the publication of the learning outcomes of professional teacher training, it has been made possible to train teachers in Hungarian higher education institutions, primarily at the Faculty of Arts of Eötvös Loránd University. Textbook related needs of the Polish complementary minority education are satisfied by textbooks coming from the mother country.

Progress in **Ruthenian** minority education is hindered by the fact that three – independent – language versions are present in the educational institutions of the adjacent countries. Previously – since the number of Ruthenians living in Hungary does not allow for independent linguistic standards –, Ruthenians in Hungary took part in codification in Slovakia, and started education first in Múcsony and subsequently in Komlóska, with textbooks procured from Slovakia with the help of the Ministry of Education. In the meantime, the National Ruthenian Minority Self-Government came to prefer the Ukrainian – Transcarpathian – linguistic variant, but so far the teaching of this language has not been commenced at any institution.

Article 1.g

The minority education related legislation refers to how persons not belonging to the minority may learn the language of minorities and take part in education in minority languages. Accordingly, where the institutional capacity allows, after satisfying the demands of the members of the given minority, persons who are not members of the minority in question may join programmes given in the minority language or join language learning programmes. However, since the Hungarian data protection legislation does not allow for the collection of data on ethnic affiliation, no data are available to gauge the participation of non-minority persons in minority education programmes.

Article 1.h

In the past three years, the activity of the administration concerning the **Beash** and **Romany** languages focused on the extension of Part III of the Charter to these two languages. As part of this effort, the Institute of Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the staff of the Romology Department of the University of Pécs and teachers of the Beash and Romany languages have been contacted. The staff of the Institute of Linguistics, in co-operation with the teachers speaking the languages concerned, carried out basic research in the Romany- and Beash-speaking communities, within the framework of the project “Dimensions of Linguistic Otherness – Possibilities for the Preservation of Minority Languages”.

Financial support for the research of the Beash and Romany languages has not been solved, but a change is expected in this respect following the extension of Part III of the Charter.

Every language of the minorities in Hungarian may be learned in Hungary. The minority communities do take the opportunity afforded by language education. The only exception is the *Armenian* language, which used to be taught in Sunday Schools, with central budget support, but that practice was abolished by the National Armenian Self-Government. From among the private language schools, Selyemút Language School is the only one where Armenian is taught.

Teachers and speakers of languages subject to Part II of the Charter are granted support for the exchange of cultural values similarly to the speakers of the other languages falling under Part III. In the past three years, the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary supported the publication of 9 Romany/Hungarian bilingual publications. Four Bulgarian/Hungarian publications, the Ellisimos Hungarian/Greek periodical, four Polish/Hungarian, two Ruthenian/Hungarian, one Armenian/Hungarian and two Ukrainian/Hungarian bilingual volumes were published in a similar way.

Table 16: *Number of pupils of languages not falling under Part III, in academic year 2006/2007*

Minority	Number of pupils
Bulgarian	18
Greek	8
Polish	151
Ukrainian	44

In the absence of accredited subjects, it is not possible to learn Ruthenian or Armenian in Hungarian higher education.

The tenders of the Public Foundation are still open to the applications of speakers of Part II languages of the Charter.

CHAPTER III

Fulfilment of the undertakings entered into by the Republic of Hungary over the past three years

With the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Hungary took on undertakings for six minority languages with regard to the provisions of Part III of the Charter. Considering that the Minorities Act, formulated and adopted parallel to our ratification to the Charter, ensures the individual and collective rights of minorities, including their rights related to language use, education and culture, for the whole territory of the country, the Government decided that it would extend the undertakings it had taken on in connection with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to the entire area of the country. The undertakings are the same in the case of the six languages concerned.

Languages: Croatian, German, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian.

(The concrete undertakings entered into by the Republic of Hungary are included in italics in the individual points.)

Article 8 – Education

The Republic of Hungary accords high priority to the financing of minority education. As from the 2007/08 school year, the financing scheme of public education in Hungary has changed. The former normative financing, which was based on student number per academic year, has been replaced by a form of support which aims at group financing and is determined by performance indicators per year. The purpose of this change is to enable maintainers of institutions that operate in small villages with a small headcount to seek educational cooperation in small regions in order to be able to provide quality education. The process also affects minority institutions, as the statistical tables reflect. However, the relevant legal regulations have left the rights of minority self-governments intact, i.e. the re-organisation of education provision is still subject to their approval.

Besides schools offering bilingual and minority language education, the neediest maintainers, i.e. maintainers of minority kindergartens and minority language teaching schools in municipalities with fewer than 1,100 inhabitants – whether operated independently or in the framework of an association – could also receive additional supplementary support.

The legislative and financing guarantees for the takeover of minority educational institutions by minority self-governments are ensured. Yet our experience suggests that no grand-scale takeover of institutions can be expected in the near future. The primary reason for this is that local minority self-governments are not sufficiently prepared for the continued operation of such institutions, as their apparatus is not capable of providing the conditions of operation. In 2005, the National Self-Government of Slovaks became the maintainer of another school, the Slovak Grammar, Primary and Boarding School and Kindergarten in Békéscsaba, and later on, in 2007, it also took over the maintenance of the Slovak–Hungarian Bilingual Minority Primary and Boarding School in Sátoraljaújhely. In 2007, the National Self-Government of Romanians in Hungary embarked on taking over the Nicolae Balcescu Romanian Primary, Grammar and Boarding School of Gyula. The takeover is still pending.

The financing of Hungarian public and higher education does allow for support granted for minority purposes to be channelled as ‘labelled’ funds to the maintainers of educational institutions, excluding the use of such funds for other uses. Changing the financing scheme would require that laws, which need to be passed by qualified majority, such as Act LV of 1990 on Local Governments, be amended.

As already mentioned in our earlier report, higher education institutions maintaining departments or department sections offering minority education receive grants awarded under restricted competition announced by the Ministry of Education in 2003. Such grants are disbursed annually in one amount, and as from 2006, targeted support available for small departments in the framework of competition has been awarded to higher education institutions for the specific functions indicated in their bids. It is partly because of these funds that there have been no problems in connection with the maintenance of departments or department sections offering minority education.

Article 8, paragraph 1) a) (iv):

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

(iv) if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of pre-school education, to favour and/or encourage the application of the measures referred to under (i) to (iii) above.”

The legal framework of pre-school education is defined – besides the Minorities Act and Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education (hereinafter the ‘Public Education Act’) – by Government Decree No. 137/1996 (VIII.28.) on the Issuing of the National Core Programme for Kindergarten Education, and by Decree No. 32/1997 (XI.5.) of the Minister of Culture and Public Education on Issuing the Guidelines on Kindergarten Education of National and Ethnic Minorities, which serve the implementation of the provisions of the Public Education Act. On the basis of the general context determined by the Decree on the issuance of the core programme for kindergarten education, the Guidelines concerning kindergarten instruction define the types of minority kindergartens and the contents of the education provided by them.

Pre-school minority education in Hungary takes place in two types of institutions, in mother tongue (minority language) kindergartens and in bilingual kindergartens involved in minority education. In minority language kindergartens, the language of kindergarten education, and, in general, of kindergarten life, is the minority language. In bilingual kindergartens providing minority education, both languages, i.e. the minority language and Hungarian, are used. Emphasis, however, is laid on the development of the minority language.

The legislative conditions of minority pre-school education did not change during the reporting period.

Table 17: *Number of participants involved in minority kindergarten education in the 2005/2006 school year*

	Minority language kindergartens	Children in minority language kindergartens	Bilingual kindergartens	Children in bilingual kindergartens	Total number of kindergartens	Total number of children
German	8	455	214	14,302	222	14,757
Slovak	7	192	45	2,444	52	2,636
Croatian	2	144	26	912	28	1,056

Romanian	1	96	7	440	8	536
Serbian	3	57	3	102	6	159
Slovenian	-	-	4	86	4	86
Total	21	944	300	18,297	321	19,230

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

The number of **German** language kindergartens increased by three over the past three years, and the number of children attending such kindergartens rose from 178 to 455. As it can be seen, demand for minority language education in German grew considerably during the reporting period.

The number of kindergartens providing bilingual education in German and in Hungarian fell by 17, and the headcount of children attending these institutions dropped by 37 on the whole, which, in view of the current demographic processes in Hungary, cannot be regarded as a relevant change.

The number of kindergartens offering minority language education in the **Slovak** language has remained unchanged, and the number of children taught in such institutions grew by a mere 4. The number of pre-school education institutions that have a bilingual education programme decreased from 66 to 45, while the degree of the decline in the number of children was a bit more significant, 502 fewer children attend such institutions.

There was no change in the number of institutions providing minority language education in **Croatian** either; the headcount of children grew only minimally, by 7. Kindergartens with bilingual programmes increased by one, yet the number of children enrolled in these dropped by 275 on the whole.

The number of kindergartens offering **Romanian** language instruction is the same as before the reporting period, with 11 fewer children attending these institutions. At the same time, the number of bilingual kindergartens fell by three, and 62 more children are enrolled in them.

The number of **Serbian** language pre-school institutions decreased from two to one in recent years, and the number of children involved in minority language education is now forty percent lower. The number of institutions providing bilingual education in Serbian and Hungarian decreased by two, with the number of children enrolled falling by 39.

There is still no kindergarten that would offer minority language education in **Slovenian**, and the number of bilingual institutions remained four, with slightly more (5) children attending.

Article 8, paragraph 1) b) (iv):

(iv) to apply one the measures provided for under (i) to (iii) above at least those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient;

Based on the provisions of the Public Education Act, Decree No. 32/1997 (XI. 5.) of the Minister of Education on Issuing the Guidelines on Kindergarten Education of National and Ethnic Minorities (hereinafter the ‘Guidelines’) was promulgated. The Guidelines contains the goals, the organisational methods and types of minority education, and sets minority-specific requirements in terms of areas of educational (minority language and literature, ethnography) concerning the given minority.

There was no substantial change in the legislative conditions of minority primary education over the past three years. The financing scheme changed in a way similar to that of pre-school education.

The provisions of the Minorities Act give great emphasis to minority rights related to minority education. According to these provisions, local minority self-governments have the right of consent with respect to any measure that may affect the organisation and the content of minority education.

In 2005, the fundamental tool regulating the content of public education in Hungary, i.e. the National Core Curriculum was modified. In line with the new core curriculum, in the first half of 2005, the detailed requirements regarding minority language and literature, and ethnography were restructured and simplified for each minority.

Table 18: *Minority primary schools in the 2005/2006 school year*

	Minority language schools	Pupils in minority language schools	Bilingual schools	Pupils in bilingual schools	Language teaching schools	Pupils in language teaching schools	Total number of schools	Total number of pupils
German	4	234	33	5,216	271	41,953	308	47,403
Slovak	1	78	5	888	45	3,562	51	4,528
Croatian	-	-	5	484	29	1,781	34	2,265
Romanian	-	-	8	795	6	364	14	1,159
Slovenian	-	-	1	56	1	33	2	89
Serbian	2	87	1	53	3	54	6	194
Total	7	408	53	7,492	355	47,747	415	55,638

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Basically, demand for education in the **German** language did not change. During the past period, the number of minority language schools doubled, while the headcount of pupils fell slightly, by 37. The number of bilingual schools providing education in German and Hungarian remained unchanged, albeit the number of their pupils decreased by some 3 percent. On the contrary, the number of both German language-teaching schools (+1) and their pupils (0.7 percent) increased.

The number of **Slovak** language schools did not change, and now there are slightly more pupils attending these institutions. With a constant number of bilingual schools, the number of pupils rose somewhat, too. The past period brought about important changes in language teaching schools. Their number dropped by 13 percent, and similarly, student headcount also fell (by 215 persons).

The only **Croatian** language primary school was terminated. However, in Felsőszentmárton (Martinci) and Szentpéterfa (Petrovo Selo), the earlier language teaching structure is gradually being replaced by bilingual education, hence the number of bilingual schools rose from the former three to five with over 40 percent more pupils enrolled. The number of schools teaching Croatian increased, just as the number of pupils attending these schools did, which indicates that demand for the Croatian language grew over the past three years. At the request of the parents and propelled by the initiation of the National Croatian Self-Government, in 2005 the Vas County Self-Government launched complementary minority education in Croatian in Kőszeg.

There is still no Romanian language school for the *Romanian* minority in Hungary. The number of bilingual institutions rose slightly, resulting in a higher number of pupils enrolled in such programmes. The number of institutions teaching Romanian remained the same; however, some 12 percent fewer pupils attend such courses.

The past three years saw some minor changes in *Serbian* minority education. There is the same number of minority language schools, with only two more pupils attending. The number of bilingual primary schools, just as the headcount of their pupils, is identical with the figures given in our previous report. There is one more primary school teaching Serbian, even though the headcount of the pupils of such schools decreased by 19 in the past three years.

There have been some positive tendencies in *Slovenian* minority education. The primary schools of Apátistvánfalva and Felsőszölnök have both switched from language teaching to bilingual education, yet the number of pupils studying the Slovenian language, on the whole, fell by seven.

(The increase or decrease in the number of institutions does not necessarily represent, in statistical terms, the establishment or liquidation of institutions, as such changes in figures could also be the result of restructuring.)

Article 8, paragraph 1) c) (iv):

(iv) to apply one of the measures provided for under (i) to (iii) above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient;

Similarly to the provisions regarding the organisation of minority kindergarten education and primary school instruction, in line with the Minorities Act and the Public Education Act, the provision of secondary education has to be initiated by the parents of 8 students. Since the minorities in Hungary are regionally scattered, in the previous decades, secondary schools – the majority of these being grammar schools, which consist of four grades and provide general secondary education – with regional or countrywide enrolment were established. Over the years, as the transformation of the education system continuously advanced, requirements related to the teaching of language and literature, as well as to the teaching of ethnography in minority secondary schools appeared, and so did later on the framework curricula for minority secondary schools. Similarly to the provisions concerning primary schools, framework curricula have also been modified, concurrently with the latest reform of public education.

Since our previous report, no change has occurred in the conditions of minority secondary education.

Table 19: *Secondary education in minority languages in the 2005/2006 school year*

Grammar schools

2005/2006	Bilingual		Minority language		Language teaching	
	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students
German	8	1,716	-	-	8	530
Slovak	1	56	1	59	-	-
Croatian	2	193	-	-	-	-
Romanian	1	182	-	-	-	-
Serbian	-	-	1	111	-	-

Slovenian	-	-	-	-	1	28
Total	12	2,147	2	170	9	558

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Secondary education in **German** still lacks institutions that would provide monolingual education in the minority language. Eight bilingual secondary schools providing instruction in German and Hungarian continue to exist in the country, with slightly more students enrolled than before. The situation is the same with grammar schools that teach German 5 hours per week.

No change took place in the network of **Slovak** minority secondary schools. There is one minority language grammar school and one bilingual grammar school operating in the country, the student headcount of which increased minimally in the past three years.

The figures pertaining to **Croatian** secondary education have not changed: the total number of students enrolled in the two grammar schools rose by 7.

The number of students attending the **Romanian** grammar school in Gyula (Giula) has increased somewhat, the institution hosts at least two classes in each grade.

There has been a slight rise in the headcount of the students of the **Serbian** grammar school of Budapest, too.

The number of students studying **Slovenian** in grammar schools increased to a small extent over the past three years.

Article 8, paragraph 1) d) (iv):

(iv) to apply one of the measures provided for under (i) to (iii) above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient;

The legislative background is the same in the case of technical and vocational education. Again, it is sufficient if the parents of 8 students of minority origin request that a group or a separate class be set up or maintained in order to introduce instruction in or the teaching of the given language. In recent years – with the intensification of economic relations, trade, tourism, etc., and as a result of the free movement of persons between the countries concerned – based on the demand by parents, instruction in the minority language started to expand to technical and vocational education as well. This process still continues to these days.

The conditions for providing minority vocational secondary education have not changed since our latest report.

Table 20: *Vocational secondary education in minority languages in the 2005/2006 school year*

Vocational secondary schools

2005/2006	Bilingual		Minority language		Language teaching	
	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students
German	1	93	-	-	5	273
Slovak	-	-	1	18	-	-

Croatian	-	-	-	-	2	19
Total	1	93	1	18	7	292

Since our previous report, the number of vocational secondary schools teaching *German* and their student headcounts rose considerably. At the same time, the number of bilingual institutions did not change, there is still only one such institution operating in the country, albeit with a declining number of students.

The number of students in the only bilingual vocational secondary school offering instruction in *Slovak* and Hungarian increased by one during the past period.

Both the number of vocational secondary schools teaching *Croatian* and the number of students enrolled in such schools are unchanged.

With reference to vocational secondary education, the *Romanian*, *Serbian* and *Slovenian* minorities have not initiated the launch of a minority language teaching programme or a teaching programme involving the teaching of minority language.

Table 21: *Vocational schools teaching the minority language in the school year of 2005/2006*
Vocational schools (skilled worker training)

2005/2006	Bilingual		Minority language		Language teaching	
	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students	Institutions	Students
German	-	-	-	-	3	144
Croatian	-	-	-	-	1	77
Total	-	-	-	-	4	221

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

The number of vocational schools teaching the *German* language rose from two to three, while the number of their students decreased in the past three years.

There continues to be only one vocational school that teaches *Croatian*, and its student headcount has dropped.

The other minorities have not requested that minority language education or the teaching of the minority language in vocational schools be introduced.

Article 8, paragraph 1) e) (iii):

(iii) if, by reason of the role of the State in relation to higher education institutions, subparagraphs (i) and (ii) cannot be applied, to encourage and/or allow the provision of university of other forms of higher education in regional or minority languages or of facilities for the study of these languages as university or higher education subjects;

Over the past period, no independent minority higher education institution was established in Hungary. The primary reason for this is still not the lack of the necessary legislative background, but rather the number and the dispersion of minority populations. At the same time, the regulation of the admission procedure has made it possible for minority students to take the entrance examination in their mother tongue; students studying in a minority language continue to have the opportunity to take the secondary school leaving examination in the mother tongue and, if they apply for admission to higher education, such secondary

school leaving certificates will be considered by universities and colleges in their candidate ranking.

Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education, adopted in March 2005, has transformed the structure of Hungarian higher education into a multi-cycle training system, in which degrees are conferred to graduates of bachelor, master and doctoral programmes. Teacher's qualifications are only awarded upon the completion of a master programme. As of September 2006, higher education institutions can launch courses only in the Bologna system.

All minority language specialisations of bachelor programmes – with the exception of Armenian – were granted accreditation, and the same is true to the master programmes of teacher training.

It was again under Article 128, paragraph (1) (h) of the Higher Education Act that the Ministry of Education and Culture, for the first time in 2006, invited applications under a restricted competition with the aim of supporting programmes with a small headcount undertaking to preserve cultural and linguistic plurality and to cherish related values. Applications were invited for the support of the first cycle of the multi-cycle training programmes in line with the purpose of the competition: for bachelor programmes in Slavistics, ancient languages and cultures, Germanistics, oriental languages and cultures, Romanistics, Romology, and minority specialisation programmes related to these programmes, as well as minority language programmes with a small headcount offered as part of the bachelor-level training of primary school and kindergarten teachers. The competition sought to enhance the quality of training and to provide for and develop the infrastructural, staffing and operating conditions.

Table 22: *Students enrolled in minority language programmes in higher education in the 2006/2007 academic year*

	Kindergarten teachers	Primary school teachers	Secondary school teachers	Philologists	Total	Graduates
German	24	93	13	75	206	90
Croatian	2	4	23	31	60	11
Romanian	12	15	13	11	51	17
Serbian	0	6	0	26	32	5
Slovak	7	7	11	22	47	27
Slovenian	0	0		1	1	1

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

Article 8, paragraph 1) f) (iii):

“if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of adult education, to favour and/or encourage the offering of such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;”

There were no substantial changes in the system of adult education over the past three years. The decline in the demand for minority language education is probably related to the slowdown of economic development. Only a part of the training courses organised by minority self-governments were launched again after the 2006 minority elections, basically with the aim of providing language training for professionals engaged in the field of public minority education. One such training programme is the course organised by the Slovak General Educational Centre of the National Self-Government of Slovaks for dance group

leaders, or another example could be the language courses organised by the German self-governments of Debrecen and Balmazújváros, or the language exam preparatory courses arranged by the Romanian Self-Government of the municipality of Bedő.

Article 8, paragraph 1) g):

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

Government Decree No. 243/2003 (XII.17.) on the Issuance, Introduction and Application of the National Core Curriculum (hereinafter: ‘NCC’) was renewed in 2006. This, however, had no impact on the obligation to include knowledge contents concerning the history and the culture of minorities in Hungary in the syllabi of Hungarian public education. The new NCC defines the following as common values in school education and instruction: *“...knowing the country and its broader surrounding area, the Carpathian Basin, being familiar with national traditions, and developing a national identity, including the preservation and maintenance of the identity of the members of the country’s nationalities and minorities. Students on all levels of school education shall get acquainted with the life and culture of the minorities that live in Hungary. At the same time, the NCC defines the development tasks and focuses on those European and humanistic values and contents that strengthen our identity as Europeans.”*

Within the Hungarian mainstream education, these contents are taught in grade 5 and above as part of the subjects Homeland and Peoples, History and Citizenship under the chapter “Man and Society” of the National Core Curriculum. In the framework of the regulation of learning outcomes, such contents are featured as knowledge that can be tested at all levels of education, and thus secondary school leaving requirements also include knowledge contents related to the history and culture of minorities.

Article 8, paragraph 1) h):

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

Hungarian higher education ensures the training of minority kindergarten and primary school teachers, as well as primary and secondary school teachers specialised in minority languages and literatures at places where minority teacher training is provided. Nonetheless, there is growing demand in bilingual and minority language education for teachers capable of teaching core subjects in minority languages. Hence, specialised linguistic in-service training of such teachers became one of the most pressing tasks of the past period. In 2006, Apor Vilmos Catholic College in Vác launched courses for drama teachers in German. Thanks to the support of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the leaders of the German student drama groups can attend a one-week-long continued training course.

The language training of teachers providing instruction in a minority language is facilitated through competitions announced by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In essence, the language training courses outlined by the Ministry seek to ensure that, based on a direct agreement concluded with a higher education institution of the mother country, the applicant minority departments of higher education institutions or national minority self-governments provide the in-service opportunity for teachers teaching core subjects in bilingual or minority language schools in a minority language to receive at least 40 hours of theoretical training and spend 40 hours as observers in a school of the mother country per semester.

The quality of minority education is greatly improved by the help received from the mother countries. Consequently, fulfilling the obligations that are defined in connection with Hungarian minorities in the bilateral inter-ministerial work plans is important. The Ministry of Education and Culture strove to ensure that the bilateral inter-ministerial agreements grant the opportunity for Hungarian youth belonging to a national minority in Hungary to win Hungarian scholarships for full-time training programmes in the mother countries, that studies in another higher education institution can be pursued, that doctoral programmes, in-service teacher training programmes in language, methodology and specialised language can be attended, that children belonging to a minority can take part in programmes offered in the mother country, that language and visiting teachers from the mother country can be invited, and that textbooks and methodological guides produced in the mother country can be imported and used.

During the past three years, the Ministry of Education continued to provide for (both language and professional) in-service training of teachers working in minority schools through announcements of competitions.

The table below presents the results of the competitions announced in 2005 and 2007:

Table 23: *Support for in-service training of minority teachers in 2005*

Minority	Number of applications	Support amount, HUF thousand
German	4	3,560
Roma	4	7,400
Serbian	1	1,500
Croatian	1	578
Romanian	1	600
Slovak	1	800
	Total:	14,338

Table 24: *Support for in-service training of minority teachers in 2006*

Minority	Number of applications	Support amount, HUF thousand
Croatian	1	600
Serbian	1	1,500
Polish	1	540
German	7	5,020
	Total:	7,660

Table 25: *Support for specialised language in-service training of minority teachers in 2006*

Minority	Number of applications	Support amount, HUF thousand
German	1	2,581
Romanian	1	1,140
Serbian	1	1,500
	Total:	5,221

Table 26: *Support for the specialised language in-service training of minority teachers in 2007*

Minority	Number of applications	Support amount, HUF thousand
German	6	6,670
Serbian	1	2,000
Polish	1	460
Roma	3	2,500
	Total:	11,630

Table 27: Specialised language in-service training in 2007

Minority	Number of applications	Support amount, HUF thousand
Romanian	1	1,000
German	1	2,234
	Total:	3,234

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

According to the data of the Hungarian Scholarship Board, 23 minority students enrolled in full-time bachelor training programmes in the mother country (5 in Croatia, 15 in Romania and 3 in Slovenia). Doctoral studies are currently pursued by 10 scholarship recipients (2 in Croatia and 8 in Romania).

Article 8, paragraph 1) i):

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

Minority education takes place under the rigorous control of the communities concerned as minority self-governments have the right to formulate an opinion in all issues related to minority education and have the right of consent with regard to all questions pertaining to the content of education on the local level. The Public Education Act also provides for the operation of the National Committee for Minorities, which, apart from acting as an advisory body to the Minister of Education with regard to minority education related issues, has the right of consent in this respect. It is no coincidence that each one of the 13 national minority self-governments delegates one member to the National Committee for Minorities, since the umbrella term of national and ethnic minorities represents national and ethnic minorities with very different characteristics, exhibiting diverging educational demands.

This system affords appropriate opportunities for Hungarian minorities to monitor the development of minority education and instruction, and to actually influence the legislative, financial changes and other measures that affect education in line with their own interests.

Article 8, paragraph 2):

“With regard to education and in respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage or provide teaching in or of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education.”

Article 86 (5) of the Public Education Act provides for, as of 1st September 1999, the introduction of *complementary minority education*, though in practice the implementation of the Act took place as late as in the 2004/2005 academic year. This new form of education allows small minority groups living in scattered communities to organise their minority

language education as part of the Hungarian public education system maintaining the same professional standards. Complementary minority education may only involve the teaching of minority languages and ethnography; the children involved must complete their compulsory education in another institution of public education. Nevertheless, the grades students achieve in the subjects of the minority language, literature and ethnography can be included in their school reports. As mentioned above, the National Croatian Self-Government set up an institution which provides complementary minority education in Kőszeg, where the number of resident Croatians originally had not been too high, but, as a result of the migration processes of recent years, demand for the teaching of Croatian rose and reached a level where this form of education seemed viable.

Article 9 – Judicial Authorities

Keeping with the spirit of the previous recommendation, the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy sent letters to the national self-governments of the minorities concerned requesting them to designate those regions within the country where their presence is traditionally relevant. Answers to these requests did not help resolve the matter; therefore, further personal negotiations have become necessary in order to designate the regions in question.

Unfortunately previous census data do not provide a realistic picture of the distribution of minorities, as, on the one hand, they contain very low headcounts, and, on the other hand, it seems clear that all minorities live in relatively great numbers in towns with county rights. Since our judicial bodies operate at county as well as at city levels, it is unlikely that there are regions that would fall outside of the guaranteed area of exercising the above rights.

No progress has been made regarding the direct provision of information to members of minorities who take part in legal proceedings concerning their rights of language use. In line with previous practices, the right to use one's mother tongue is explained in detail on the official website of courts (www.birosag.hu) under the heading "Constitutional Principles and Rights". In practice – in case it seems apparent to the court that the party participating in the proceedings does not have adequate command of Hungarian – the court provides comprehensive information on the right to use one's mother tongue.

We have been informed by several county court presidents that, at the executive and professional meetings of courts, they have once again called the judges' attention to the significance of the practical implementation of the requirements undertaken in the Language Charter (Baranya County, Veszprém County).

Article 9, paragraph 1) a):

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

a) in criminal proceedings:

(ii) to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language"

In accordance with the provisions of the Language Charter, Act XIX of 1998 on Criminal Procedure (hereinafter: Criminal Procedure Act) contains the following provisions:

Pursuant to Article 9 of the Criminal Procedure Act *“In criminal proceedings, everyone is entitled to use his/her mother tongue in speech and writing, and his/her regional or minority language [...] under an international treaty promulgated by a law, within the scope defined by the law.”*

Pursuant to Article 219 (3) of the same Act *“If the accused has no command of Hungarian, the sections of the indictment which concerns him/her shall be translated into his/her mother tongue or regional or minority language [...] and shall be submitted to the court in this language”.*

Within the framework of its activity, the Probation Service of the Central Office of Justice ensures the use of the mother tongue or the use of regional and minority languages for those participating in criminal proceedings within the boundaries set out by the relevant legislation. Within the new scope of the Service’s activities, in accordance with Articles 8 and 17 of Act CXXIII of 2006, the use of the mother tongue and the use of interpreters are guaranteed as part of mediation during criminal proceedings. For facilitating translation and aiding interpreters’ preparation, the Office ensures that interpreters receive the set text related to the proceeding prior to the meeting between the injured party and the accused.

Over the last three years, there was only one case where the regional Offices of Justice were to use the services of an interpreter. The interpreter was brought in by the investigating authority to aid the accused, who spoke Romanian, and it was the authority that covered the arising expenses.

In his statement, the president of the Budapest Metropolitan Court emphasised that they make continuous efforts in order for their employees to gain appropriate language skills. In 2007, more than 25% of employees had some language knowledge; however no details were released as to the knowledge of minority languages. (The institution employs a teacher of German.)

The Heves County Court encountered only one case where foreign language use was required. The language in question was German and an interpreter was employed to mediate.

In Zala County, the President of the county court ordered an employee – after obtaining his consent – of the City Court of Nagykanizsa, who spoke Croatian, to use his Croatian-language skills to provide information and help clients in Croatian – while performing his duties as a judge – should this become necessary.

All court presidents made mention of the fact that the budget necessary to cover translation and interpretation costs in accordance with the legislation was in fact at the courts’ disposal during the reporting period.

(iii) to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language,

The provision quoted above ensures that documents submitted in a regional or minority language, as well as requests and evidence, whether written or oral, formulated in the languages in question, shall be accepted by the proceeding court.

(iv) to produce, on request, documents connected with legal proceedings in the relevant regional or minority language, if necessary through the use of interpreters and translations at no extra expense for the persons concerned;

Article 9 (3) of the Criminal Procedure Act makes it unambiguous that the court, the prosecutor's office or the investigation authority that has passed the decision or issued the official document shall see to the translation of the decision and all other official documents to be delivered in accordance with the law.

The legislation includes several provisions referring to documents to be translated for the accused who speaks regional or minority languages. In such cases, according to the provisions of the Act, sections of the indictment that concern the accused (Paragraph (3) of Article 219) and the sections of the decision that concern the accused (Paragraph (6) of Article 262) shall be translated for him/her.

The Act states that interpreters shall be used even in case of a regional or minority language. According to the provisions of the Act, costs of translation and interpretation shall be borne by the State if the accused wishes to use his/her minority language during the proceedings (Paragraph (2) of Article 339).

In the form of Article 5 of Act LI of 2006, the following Paragraph (4) was added to Article 9 of the Criminal Procedure Act: *“(4) Unless provided otherwise by law, the document to be submitted shall not be translated, provided the concerned party specifically waives the right to obtain the translation.”* This waiver is performed in writing and can be withdrawn by the concerned at any given time over the course of the proceeding, after such withdrawal the translation of documents to be delivered to him/her will again become necessary.

1. b) in civil proceedings:

(ii) to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he/she use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expenses,

Article 6 (2) of Act III of 1952 on the Code of Civil Procedure states the following concerning the use of the mother tongue in court proceedings: *“In judicial proceedings – within the scope defined by international treaties – everyone shall be entitled to use his/her mother tongue or regional or minority language.”*

The same Article states that the court shall be obliged to use interpreters if this is required for the practical realisation of the principle quoted above. In accordance with Article 78 (4), these expenses be advanced or borne by the State. No interpreter is necessary if the proceeding council or judge has satisfactory command of the language used by the litigant party or the witness.

There have been no changes in legislation over the last three years. The website of the Office of the National Council of Justice of Hungary contains information on the rights regarding language use.

According to the reports of the presidents of the county courts, during the reporting period, in Komárom-Esztergom County there have been two cases where minority languages have been used in judicial proceedings. In the first case, the concerned party requested the use of Serbian language, while in the other case the language in question was Polish. The court approved these requests.

(iii) to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages, if necessary through the use of interpreters and translations;

The aforementioned legal background allows all parties participating in proceedings to use – whether in writing or in speech – their mother tongues, or in many cases regional or minority languages.

According to Article 6 of the Act on the Code of Civil Procedure *“The official language of judicial proceedings is Hungarian. No person shall bear disadvantage due to having no command of the Hungarian language.”* Paragraph (2) of the same Article states that *“In judicial proceedings – within the scope defined by international treaties – everyone shall be entitled to use his/her mother tongue or regional and minority language.”* Pursuant to Paragraph (3) *“The Court shall use interpreters if this is required to observe the principles contained in paragraphs (1) and (2).”*

Article 78 (4) of the Act also states that the cost of interpreters employed in the cases specified in Article 6 are advanced and borne by the State.

With respect to translations, Article 191 (6) of said Act states the following: *“Should this become necessary, the Court shall be entitled to order the party required to produce proof to also attach a certified or non-certified Hungarian translation of documents not submitted in Hungarian.”*

The above means that while the State assumes and bears the costs of interpretation in the case of regional and minority language use, the bearing of translation-related costs is performed in accordance with the general provisions. This means that in accordance with Articles 75–83, translation-related costs are advanced by the party required to produce proof and, with the closing of the proceedings, shall be borne by the party losing the case.

The report sent to us by the vice-president of the Tolna County Court states that in accordance with the relevant civil procedure regulations, the court ensures the use of regional and minority languages if such an application is submitted.

The president of the Zala County Court submitted a similar report to the Prime Minister’s Office with the addition of the fact that the funds and resources required to exercise linguistic rights were available in the Court’s budget. We received a report with similar content from the president of the Csongrád County Court.

According to the report of the president of the Budapest Metropolitan Court, HUF 100 million per annum is spent to ensure the exercising of linguistic rights (interpreter fees, translation fees). The report, however, did not go into details regarding the exact expenses related to regional or minority languages.

The president of the Baranya County Court informed us that, at the executive and professional meeting of the court, they have once again called judges' attention to the implementation of requirements undertaken in the Language Charter.

According to the report of the president of the Győr-Moson-Sopron County Court, the proceeding courts provide clients with comprehensive information on the possibilities of language use. The Court is equipped with adequate interpreting and translation systems and has the required resources at its disposal.

c) in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:

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

(iii) to allow documents and evidence to be produced in regional or minority languages, if necessary through the use of interpreters and translations;

There have been no changes in relevant legislation. According to the reports prepared by the county courts, over the last three years there were no requests to report.

2. The Parties undertake

a) not to deny the validity of legal documents drawn up within the State solely on the grounds that they are drafted in a regional or minority language; or

b) not to deny the validity, as between the Parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely on the grounds they are drafted in a regional or minority language, and to ensure that they can be invoked against interested third parties who are not users of these languages with the condition that the contents of the document are made known to them by the person(s) who invoke(s); or

c) not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely on the grounds they are drafted in a regional or minority language.

The laws of the Republic of Hungary provide for the use of minority languages with reference to cases involving judicial authorities. The use of regional and minority languages in various legal documents is ensured by the aforementioned Acts.

Of the Notaries' Codes in effect in the various Member States of the European Union, the Hungarian code is the only one that, for the consideration of applications for the post of notary public, obligates the decision maker to favour those candidates for appointment in regions populated by a given minority who speak the language of the said minority. In the regions populated by German minorities (Pécs, the Buda region, Western Hungary), there are several notary publics in employment licensed to manage cases in German. There is only one notary public in the Hungarian notarial community with a Romanian language license: this notary in question operates in Füzesabony, far from to the Romanian-speaking minority regions. There have been no Serbian, Croatian or Slovenian-speaking notaries appointed since 1992, as in the given minority regions no candidates have indicated such language skills. In possession of a language license, the notary public or the deputy notary becomes authorised to prepare and issue notary documents, which results in time-saving and cost efficiency for the clients, given the significant fees charged by translation agencies. Foreign language public documents prepared by notaries are suitable for domestic use without any further certification or other similar proceedings.

Article 10 – Administrative Authorities and Public Services

During the preparation of this report we requested information from the seven regional public administration offices regarding minority language use in their region. The information received showed the recession of minority languages and their infrequent appearance in public life. Since the last minority self-government elections were held during the reporting period, all public administration offices reported their experiences in connection with the elections, the establishment and taking of the oath of the self-governments as well as in connection with the sections of the Rules of Organisation and Operation (hereinafter: SZMSZ) of the various minority self-governments regarding languages used by the self-governments in question.

The very first legal act performed by newly established minority self-governments is the taking of the oath, which – in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Minorities Act – can be performed in Hungarian or in the language of the minority in question or in both languages. Based on the reports, it can be said that in most cases the taking of the oath was performed in Hungarian and that the use of minority languages for taking the oath was more an exception than the rule.

There is a similar situation regarding sections of the SZMSZs concerning the official languages of minority self-governments, the languages used at the meetings and for the preparation of the minutes of these meetings. In the majority of cases, local and regional minority self-governments indicate minority languages to be used as the language of meetings. In some cases, the minutes are kept in two languages – the language of the minority and Hungarian –, however, the language used to adopt decisions is Hungarian.

The Hungarian authorities, following the November 2005 adoption of the amendments of the Minorities Act and during the preparation and management of the minority elections, actively informed the communities concerned of their language use related rights. This provision of information was performed through various channels. On the one hand, related news were published in the minority and majority press, and, on the other hand, people who were present at regional and county meetings, organised jointly with minority civil organisations and self-governments, were directly informed of the commitments made on joining the Language Charter. These meetings were usually organised by county public administration offices and the county centres of the national network of the House of Opportunities.

1. Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are users of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible
a) (v) to ensure that users of regional or minority languages may validly submit documents in these languages;

In accordance with the provisions of the Minorities Act, local self-governments – in accordance with the needs of the minority self-governments operating within their area of competence – are obliged to ensure that forms used in administrative proceedings are also available in the language of the minority and that, after these forms have been filled out, these are regarded official documents.

The Ministry of the Interior has previously arranged for the translation of forms of civil status into minority languages. These forms are forwarded to the settlements concerned on demand.

In spite of the fact that minority self-governments and civil organisations of minorities were comprehensively informed of the above, request for and use of these forms is the exception rather than the rule.

According to the report of the Regional Public Administration Office of Western Transdanubia, Mayor's Offices in the settlements of the region populated by **Croatian** minorities (Bezenye/Bizonja, Hidegség/Vedešin, etc.) often have public officials who speak Croatian. This means that residents have the opportunity to conduct their official business in their mother tongue.

The Mayor's Office of Szombathely – county seat of Vas County – employs several public officials who speak Croatian. This means that minority language administration is possible here. However, all concerned counties reported that no such applications – submission of applications in Croatian – occurred over the last three years.

The head of the Regional Public Administration Office of the Southern Great Plain informed us that in the settlements in the region populated by Croatians (Gara, Dusnok/Dušnok, Hercegszántó/Santovo), the Mayor's Offices employ public officials who speak Croatian. At the same time, it was also noted that there were no written Croatian-language applications over the last three years.

According to information provided by the Regional Public Administration Office of Southern Transdanubia, a great number of the employees of Baranya County-based local governments speak Croatian. Local residency is a significant criterion when appointing officials to local public administration and, as a result, members of the Croatian minority are frequently employed at a local level.

There have been similar experiences regarding the use of the **German** language. According to information provided by the Regional Public Administration Office of Central Hungary, in spite of the fact that the number of minority language speaking public officials in settlements populated by minorities is on the rise, there are practically no cases where those contacting public administration use the minority language.

In Veszprém County, where there is a larger contingent of the German minority, German-speaking public officials are employed at all levels of public administration. At the same time, according to information provided by these officials, the language of administration is almost exclusively Hungarian, and the number of cases involving German language use – in cases of verbal procedures – is low.

In Komárom-Esztergom County, Mayor's Offices in Tát/Tat, Tatabánya/Totiser Kolonie, Tarján/Tarian, Környe/Kirne, Esztergom, Csolnok/Tscholnok, Leányvár/Leinwar, Vértestolna/Taunau, Gyermely and Máriahalom/Kirwall employ administrators who have an excellent command of the German language. In these settlements, the demand for the use of German primarily manifests itself with reference to cases involving verbal procedures made by older residents.

In Baranya County, members of the German minority submit their documents in Hungarian, in spite of the fact that the settlements populated by Germans employ administrators who speak German. We have received similar information from the Regional Public Administration Office of Northern Hungary.

Experiences from Győr-Moson-Sopron County show that in spite of the fact that minutes of the meetings of the German minority self-governments are prepared in two languages; the Public Administration Office is only sent the Hungarian version. In the settlements of the county populated by German minorities (Ágfalva/Agendorf, Kópháza/Kohlenhof), a number of public officials speak German.

In settlements populated by German minorities in Vas County, German language communication can be provided for. However, applications in German are only submitted in connection with tourism-related matters.

The report from Zala County stated that there were no instances of written German applications over the last three years.

The Regional Public Administration Office of the Northern Great Plain indicated that in recent years there were no written applications or submissions in German submitted to either the local authorities or the Public Administration Office. The region is also seeing a constant rise in the number of public officials who speak German. Opportunities to study and learn the German language are ensured throughout the region.

The report by the head of the Regional Public Administration Office of the Southern Great Plain states that they used a questionnaire to examine to what extent minority language administration is ensured in the settlements of the region. According to the information contained in the report, forms and documents translated and available to all are incomplete, but at the same time language use is still ensured because the number of German-speaking public officials is on the rise.

Information provided by **Romanian** settlements in Hungary confirm that members of the Romanian minority are aware of the possibilities regarding the use of their mother tongue provided to them by law. However, recently no written administration using Romanian was recorded either in the region of the Northern Great Plain or in the region of the Southern Great Plain, despite the fact that, according to a recent survey, 3 settlements have indicated the possibility for administration in Romanian. One settlement in Békés County confirmed an instance where a Romanian-language application was made. This happened in Gyula/Giula, where a Romanian-speaking administrator was assisting the client.

No information was received from settlements populated by **Serbian** minorities regarding cases involving written applications. The National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary exclusively uses Serbian at its meetings and for producing the minutes of these meetings, and also submits its decisions to the Regional Public Administration Office of Central Hungary in Serbian.

In connection to the **Slovak** minority, the head of the Regional Public Administration Office of Northern Hungary reported that in several settlements within its area of competency (Ózd, Bükkszentkereszt/Nová Huta, Répáshuta/Répásška Huta), there are administrators who speak Slovak. However, they have yet to record written applications submitted in Slovak.

According to reports by the Regional Public Administration Office of the Northern Great Plain, clients have not submitted any applications in Slovak that would have necessitated Slovak-language administration.

The Regional Public Administration Office of the Southern Great Plain considers it a sign of progress that in nearly 80% of the settlements Slovak-language registration forms are available, however there is no data regarding the use of said forms.

The Regional Public Administration Office of Central Transdanubia informed us that Mayor's Offices of the settlements of Komárom-Esztergom County populated by Slovaks (Esztergom/Ostrihom, Keszölc/Kestűc, Piliscsév/Čív, Sárísáp/Šápov,) employ Slovak-speaking administrators, but up until now they have had no written applications submitted in Slovak.

Members of the **Slovenian** minority primarily use Slovenian during register and probate related proceedings. Administration in Slovenian is further complicated by the fact that the members of the minority are not familiar with the technical terms used in public administration. In case the need for Slovenian-language administration arises, the parties concerned provide their own interpreters.

1. c) to allow the administrative authorities to draft documents in a regional or minority language.

When the Minorities Act was amended, the option previously available to local self-governments to declare themselves minority local self-governments was removed from the Act. At the same time, this fact does not restrict the authorities of settlements populated by minorities in publishing their decisions and other documents also in their minority language. The Minorities Act in effect obliges local public administrations to translate decisions concerning the community into the language of the minority inhabiting the settlement – upon the initiative of the local minority self-government – and to make these translations accessible.

Based on the reports of the counties populated by **Croatians**, even the minority self-governments themselves publish their decisions in Hungarian and have not requested local self-governments to publish such documents in Croatian. The only example of such a request in the Western Transdanubian region was made in Fertőhomok/Umok, where the Croatian minority self-government indicated their request for the publication of the decisions of the self-government in Croatian.

In Bács-Kiskun County the publication of announcements in Croatian is possible in settlements where this is required, such as in Hercegszántó/Santovo and Gara for example.

Reports from Baranya County indicate that invitations to public hearings of the Croatian minority self-governments are issued in Croatian.

One example for the use of **German** as a minority language in connection with public administration documents is the official local paper of the settlement of Etyek/Edeck, which contains information of public interest in German as well. In Csolnok/Tscholnok, German language publications are published to commemorate the holidays and festivals of the minority community. With reference to the settlement of Baja/Baje, we were informed of the German language publication of various announcements. In Békés County, information in German is available on the websites of settlements.

We have no information on the preparation and issuing of public administration documents in **Romanian**, and the same is true to **Serbian**-language documents.

The publication of announcements and the provision of information of public interest in **Slovak** are still quite rare. In Piliscsév (Čív), information of public interest is published in Slovak in the official paper of the local self-government. In 2005/2006, the website of Pilisszentkereszt/Mlynky also featured decisions and announcements in Slovak. In Békés county, three settlements have websites that offer information also in Slovak. Invitations to events of the Slovak minority are usually printed in bilingual format.

In the settlements of the **Slovenian** minorities in Vas County, publications and signs in Slovenian are primarily present for purposes of tourism.

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

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

In Hungary, minority language communities came into being well before the development of the literary language of the given community. Therefore, the language spoken today within some minority communities is an archaic form of the minority language, the renewal of which takes place with the incorporation of modern literary language. One of the results of this process is that the use of the minority language is often limited to speech and verbal communication.

The above finding is also reflected in the reports by the regional public administration offices.

The large majority of settlements that have a **Croatian** minority population have Croatian administrators in their respective local public administrations. Therefore, verbal applications can be submitted at every one of these settlements. For instance, there are two public officials who speak Croatian in Gara, and there is one official who speaks Croatian in Dusnok/Dušnok, but the notary informed us that this particular official only had to use Croatian once in recent years. The official bodies of the Croatian settlements of Vas County employ several Croatian-speaking officials, thus ensuring that verbal applications can be submitted in Croatian as well.

According to the information received on the number of requests and possibilities to cater for administrative services in **German**, almost every administrator working for the self-government of Hajós/Hajosch can speak German. Therefore, the self-government can provide anyone with administrative services in German, if they so desire. There have been reports of numerous instances of German-language verbal applications in Gyula.

The number of Romanian minority officials, who speak Romanian has increased slightly in the settlements of Hajdú-Bihar County with a **Romanian** minority population. Therefore, the quality of Romanian-language administrative services is improving. There have been reports of some instances of administrative procedures in Romanian from Nagylak/Nadlac in Csongrád County. Language skills are not a problem here either, because there are Romanian-speakers in the staff of the self-government. There have been reports of seven settlements in Békés County that employ Romanian-speaking administrators. We have received reports of

Romanian-language verbal applications from Gyula/Giula with reference to the three reporting years.

The report from Deszk (Деца) in Csongrád County states that there have been a few cases where **Serbian**-language verbal applications were submitted to local self-governments and these issues were dealt with by Serbian-speaking administrators. Battonya (Батања) in Békés County reported that they are able to deal with verbal and written applications in Serbian as the self-government has Serbian-speaking employees on staff. The same is true to Lórév/Ловра in Pest County, where the Mayor is Serbian.

Slovak-speaking administrators in local institutions are available in most settlements populated by Slovaks. According to our information, the majority of applications are orally submitted by elderly residents. Similar examples were reported from Dunaegyháza, Piliscsév/Čív, Pilisszentkereszt/Mlynky, Kesztlőc/Kestúc, Békéscsaba//Békeška Čaba and Kétsoprony/Šoproň.

Verbal and written administration in **Slovenian** is available in Alsószölnök/Dolnji Senik, Felsőszölnök/Gornji Senik and Szakonyfalu/Sakalovci as well, where administrators speak the local variety of Slovenian. Administration in Slovenian is performed exclusively in person.

2. e) the use by regional authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State.

With regard to this paragraph, the governing provisions are those of the Minorities Act. The basic provision is that within the Republic of Hungary any person can use their mother tongue anywhere. Naturally, this also extends to the debates in regional bodies.

The language used in the debates of counties' general assemblies is Hungarian. Nevertheless, if anyone – a member or an invited guest – present wishes to address the assembly in his/her minority language, he/she must indicate this intention in advance, still before the convening of the assembly in order to allow the organisers to arrange for interpretation.

Despite the fact that pursuant to new Article 30/R of the Minorities Act, the president of the regional minority self-government may attend the general meeting of the county self-government and exercise his/her right of giving his/her position in debates, there have been no reports of requests for minority language use by the representatives in any of the county self-governments. This might be partly because county level (regional) minority self-governments were founded in March 2007.

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

In this respect, the opportunities for minority language use correspond to those listed in the above section. The reports received indicate that minority self-governments are starting to use Hungarian to a larger extent as the language used at their meetings, which means that there has been no demand at these meetings to use minority languages.

The official language of minority self-governments is set out in their respective Rules of Organisation and Operation. According to the reports, representatives use both Hungarian and

the respective minority language during their meetings, but resolutions are made in Hungarian only.

Typical of **German** minority self-governments is the fact that the president greets participants in German after which the meeting continues in Hungarian (Veszprém County, Békés County). Members of minority self-governments took their oaths in German in four settlements in Baranya County, however, language use at their meetings is similar to those previously mentioned. German is primarily used at events organised by the German minority self-government. It is common practice for settlements in the Sopron region that the language used in meetings is German, but the decisions are drafted in Hungarian.

The practices of **Croatian** minority self-governments are very similar. It was primarily the counties in the Western Hungarian region that indicated that even though the language of the self-government meetings is Croatian, the texts of decisions are drafted in Hungarian.

Romanian minority self-governments use their minority language at events organised by them whereas during their meetings both languages, i.e. Romanian and Hungarian, are commonly used. As noted before, they also keep minutes in Hungarian. This minority explained this with the fact that members are not familiar with Romanian literary language.

We have received no information regarding the language use of **Serbian** minority self-governments.

It is common practice in self-governments of the **Slovak** minority that meetings are held both in Slovak and Hungarian, while decisions are drafted in Hungarian. The Slovak minority self-government of Kétsoprony/Šoproň in Békés County use Slovak as practically an exclusive language for meetings, and there are a few settlements in the vicinity of Budapest (Pilisszentkereszt/Mlynky, Piliscsév/Čív, Keszölc/Kestúc) where Slovak is also used as a language for meetings. The example of Pilisszentkereszt/Mlynky is quite interesting: the majority of the members of the local self-government are members of the Slovak minority, however, their meetings are held exclusively in Hungarian.

Slovenian minority self-governments hold their meetings in Slovenian; however, in local self-governments they conduct their meetings in Hungarian only, while at joint events both languages are used.

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

The Minorities Act stipulates that in settlements populated by minorities it must be ensured that signs indicating the names of settlements and streets, public offices, bodies performing public services, and announcements relating to their operations – apart from the corresponding Hungarian text – must also be displayed in the mother tongue of the minority with identical contents and in a similar form to that of the Hungarian text.

In accordance with this provision, practically all settlements traditionally inhabited by the given minorities have signs at the settlement borders displaying the traditional name of the settlement in the language of the minority in question. In 2007, the Prime Minister's Office

supported the placement of bilingual signs bearing the name of settlements through a tender application procedure.

Concerning the appropriate choice of settlement and other geographic names corresponding to traditional minority language use, the point of departure is always an expert's opinion issued by the Board of Geographical Names of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, based on the names in local colloquial language use. In 2007, a new government decree was passed on the Determination and Registration of Official Geographical Names in Hungary (Government Decree No. 303/2007. (XI. 14.)). Article 2 (4) of said Decree mentions official geographical names in minority languages among the types of geographical names. Pursuant to this Decree, historical, traditional geographical names used by national or ethnic minorities to denote settlement names and geographical surface details in Hungary are considered official geographical names in minority language.

Article 5 (1) of the aforementioned Decree stipulates that when determining official geographical names – among other things – the conditions with respect to the nationality populating the settlements must be taken into account as well as linguistic and grammatical requirements. Said Decree has allowed for the determination of minority language geographical names and thus the transcription of minority language geographical names using non-Latin script has also been regulated.

We informed the self-governments of national or ethnic minorities about the new regulation within the framework of workshop discussions.

Many self-governments feature the minority language place name of their respective settlements in their official correspondence headers next to the Hungarian place name (e.g. Pilisszentkereszt/Mlynky).

In accordance with the recommendations put forth by the Bilateral Minority Joint Committees in 2007, the Prime Minister's Office allocated a total of HUF 20 million to supply minority populated settlements with bilingual street and place name signs. This amount was allocated to supply certain minority settlements with bilingual street and other signs, to improve the technical conditions of the publication of a Croatian minority paper, and to supply five settlements of Slovenian minorities with bilingual street, place name and other signs. Accordingly, the following amounts were granted.

Table 28: *Grants allocated on the basis of the recommendations by the Minority Joint Committees and through individual government decisions in 2007 (HUF)*

Minority	Grants in 2007
Croatian	7,000,000
German	1,000,000
Romanian	3,000,000
Serbian	1,000,000
Slovak	3,000,000
Slovenian	5,000,000
Total:	20,000,000

Source: Prime Minister's Office

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

c) to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit requests in these languages.

Article 8 of Act LXV of 1990 on Local Self-governments lists the tasks and public service related responsibilities of local self-governments that enforce the rights of minorities, including the right to use minority languages in all areas of life.

Provisions of the Minorities Act ensure the use of minority languages in all areas of life, and consequently it is up to the petitioner to decide what language he/she uses for writing the application.

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

a) translation or interpretation as may be required;

c) compliance as far as possible with requests that public service employees with knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory where said language is used.

Necessary translation or interpretation is ensured if a preliminary request is submitted. If the documents submitted in a minority language have to be translated, public officials employed in the minority settlement who speak the said language shall perform the translation.

Croatian speaking administrators are present in public administration in the Croatian settlements of both Bács-Kiskun and Vas Counties. The situation is not quite as good in larger cities (Budapest, Sopron), where administrators who speak the language in question are quite rare.

The employment of public administrators with language skills is common practice in **German** minority settlements. Larger settlements offer language courses for administrators, and in smaller settlements the presence of German speaking administrators is ensured in public administration.

There are **Romanian**-speaking administrators working in Gyula/Giula and in settlements of Békés County populated by Romanians, but there is data about Romanian-speaking administrators in Hajdú-Bihar County as well.

We are aware of the presence of **Serbian**-speaking administrators in Deszk/Деца, Battonya/Батања, certain districts of Budapest, Szentendre/Сентандреја, Pomáz and Lórév/Ловра.

Slovak-speaking administrators and public officials are employed in practically each settlement populated by Slovaks, ranging from the settlements of Békéscsaba/Békešská Čaba to Dunaegyháza.

Slovenian-speaking administrators and public officials are present in each Slovenian settlement in Vas County, and in certain settlements even the mother tongue of the Mayor is Slovenian.

5. The Parties undertake to allow the use or adoption of family names in the regional or minority languages, at the request of those concerned.

Under Article 12 of the Minorities Act, a person who is a member of a minority shall be entitled to freely choose his/her own and his/her child's first name, to have his/her family name and first name registered according to the grammatical rules of his/her mother tongue, and have these data so recorded in official documents. In the case of registering in non-Latin script, the concurrent phonetic transcription of names in Latin characters shall also be compulsory. On request, the registration of births and the issue of other personal documents may also be bilingual.

According to Government Decree No. 168/1999. (XI.24.) on the Interim Rules Regarding the Issue and Registration of Identity Cards, if a person belonging to a national or ethnic minority living in Hungary so requests, his/her name shall be entered into his/her identity card in two languages, based on a bilingual birth certificate and in compliance with the provisions of the Minorities Act, as quoted above.

Decree No. 6/2003 (III. 17.) of the Minister of the Interior on the marriage procedure and the use of names provides for the rules pertaining to the naming of persons. Article 45 (3) of said decree states that: *“when the birth of a child is first entered in the birth register and the parents request that child's family name be entered in accordance with the rules of a minority language, or request that the birth certificate containing the child's first name and family name be entered in the minority language as well, the procedure set out under Article 60 (2)–(4) of said decree shall be applicable, (...).”*

The Ministry of the Interior has arranged for the preparation of a computer software necessary for filling out personal documents in minority languages and has started training employees of local document offices to use the software. The necessary translations of register excerpts in the mother tongues in question have also been prepared and are available in the document offices of each settlement. The application of the Birth and Marriage Registration System introduced in March 2006 allows for the exercising of minority rights in register proceedings.

Over the last year only one case was reported: a representative of the local German minority self-government requested that his family name be displayed on his personal documents according to the rules of German grammar.

Article 11 – Media

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

a) to the extent that radio and television perform a public service function

(iii) to take satisfactory measures so that broadcasters can offer programmes in the regional or minority languages;

The Republic of Hungary recognises the right of minorities to freely express their opinions in their minority languages and ensures their access to the media.

The primary scenes of minorities' exercising their media-related rights are public service Hungarian Radio (MR) and Hungarian Television (MTV).

In the reporting period, the legislation governing the media of minorities was extended to include one new element. The 2005 Amendment to the Minorities Act of 1993 presented a new statutory provision to promote the media of minorities and their cultural autonomy.

According to Article 18 of the said Act "*Public service television and radio stations ensure – within an independent organisational unit and with resources allocated for this purpose alone, as provided for in a separate Act – that national and ethnic minority programmes are produced, broadcast and disseminated on a regular basis*". Thus, given the powers vested in them by law, MR and MTV must arrange for their own, separate organisational and financial structures with reference to the making of minority programmes.

The Parliament also made a decision on the media rights of minorities, when on 30th January 2006 it passed an Amendment to Article 145 of Act I of 1996 on radio and television broadcasting (hereinafter: Media Act). In line with this Act, MR was authorised to continue using the band frequency reserved for the broadcasting of programmes in the mother tongues of minorities for another year, i.e. minority programmes were still broadcast at the regular, familiar band up until January 2007.

In 2007, the State Secretariat for Minority and National Policy of the Prime Minister's Office set up a Working Group on Minority Media with the participation of the representatives of public administration bodies, minority self-governments, the public service media and the National Radio and Television Board (hereinafter: ORTT). As part of its activity, the Working Group discussed the realisation and effectiveness of the media rights of minorities and developed recommendations for the directors of public service media with a view to promoting the resolution of problems in the realisation of minority media rights. With the management of MTV, the Working Group initiated the review of the cooperation agreement concluded earlier with the heads of national minority self-governments in order to ensure that programmes in minority languages be broadcast at times suitable for such minorities.

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

In order for problems connected with minority public service radio broadcasting to be resolved, the chairpersons of national minority self-governments, the managers of MR, the representatives of the Hungarian Radio Public Foundation and ORTT have conducted numerous discussions over the past few years. During these discussions, an outstanding role was assumed by the mandated minority curator delegated to the Hungarian Radio Public Foundation. The solution of such problems was also facilitated by the then Minister of Equal Opportunities responsible for governmental tasks associated with minorities in Hungary.

As a result of these negotiations, as of 1st February 2007, the minority programmes of MR are broadcast by a new minority channel *MR4*, the broadcasting of which is transmitted by a separate medium wave system of transmitters with signs receivable in the entire territory of

Hungary. In order for the system to be operational, two high output radio transmitters were installed.

According to the information provided by the Hungarian Radio, concurrently with ensuring proper broadcast transmission conditions, a separate Minority Editorial Board was set up as of 1st January 2007 with a budget equalling the granted amounts of previous years. Programmes are prepared in the regional studios of MR (located in Pécs, Szeged, Szolnok), in the Budapest-based central office and in the studio of the Slovenian Community Radio based in Szentgotthárd/Monošter.

In Channel MR4, on all days of the week, there are 2-hour-long public service broadcasts for the Croatian, German, Romanian, Serb and Slovak minorities in their own mother tongues. The Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Ruthenian, Slovenian and Ukrainian communities have their weekly 30-minute-long programmes in their own mother tongues. The weekly 30-minute-long Armenian programme is broadcast in both Hungarian and Armenian languages. The Roma prepare their own 30-minute programmes to be broadcast 5 days a week (from Monday to Friday) in Hungarian. The new minority radio channel has a 60-minute-long Hungarian language programme on Saturdays about minorities entitled “*Egy hazában*” (*Sharing the Same Homeland*), which also features a series about the most valued pieces of minority literature.

A further development is that the programmes of Channel MR4 are also satellite broadcast 24 hours a day. Moreover, programmes are available at and downloadable from the webpage of public service radio MR at www.radio.hu.

In 2005 and 2006, the Public Foundation for Minorities provided support for minority programmes of local media, run mostly by local self-governments, as well as for the preparation and broadcasting of minority programmes in minority languages through targeted tender applications. In the reporting period, 29 percent of cable-based programme providers transmitting local radio programmes appearing in the databases maintained by ORTT, i.e. altogether 150 media organisations and public service organisations, undertook to broadcast minority programmes of an average length of 90 minutes per month. During these two years, the Public Foundation provided financial support for the minority programmes of regional and local electronic media in the form of 59 tender application programmes.

The regularly broadcast, Romanian and Serbian language minority radio programme prepared in Szeged is also available at www.triplexregio.net. Minority radio programmes are available at the news portal of the Danube-Körös-Maros-Tisza Euro Region, operated with the help of European Union funds. The above programme provides information about the minorities living in the three countries of the region in Hungarian, Romanian and Serbian languages.

The National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary set up the studio of **Radio Srb**, available on the Internet, with Serbia’s financial help. Currently experimental programmes are available at the webpage of the National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary (www.szerb.hu).

In order to promote the reception of **Radio Monošter**, broadcasting in Slovenian in the region of the Hungarian–Austrian–Slovenian borders, multilateral, interstate meetings were held in 2006. This was necessitated by the fact that the reception of the Szentgotthárd-based transmitter was not satisfactory in the settlements populated by Slovenians in Hungary.

As a result of the meetings, the competent Austrian authority consented to the use of the frequency requested by Radio Monošter noting that the transmission parameters of the station might eventually be necessary to alter should there be interference in the reception of Austrian stations. The frequency is suitable for proper transmission in Szentgotthárd/Monošter and its vicinity (within 30 km) even if there are a high number of URH FM stations in the Hungarian–Austrian–Slovenian border region. This radio station broadcasts programmes 8 hours a week, between 16 and 17 hrs from Monday to Saturday daily, with a programme between 12 and 14 hrs on Sunday giving a selection of the week’s earlier programmes.

Hungary’s first Internet-based radio station called **Croatia Internet Radio**, with programmes in a national minority language, started its operation in October 2005. The aim of the Croatian language Internet-based radio station, jointly operated by the National Croatian Self-Government and Croatia Publishers, is to promote and strengthen the use of the minority language. The Government supported the setting up of the Internet-based radio channel, which proved a novelty among national minorities in Hungary. The radio programmes are available at: www.radio.croatia.hu. This radio broadcasts programmes at the following times: 10–11 a.m. on Tuesdays, 10–11 a.m. on Thursdays and 6–8 p.m. on Saturdays. Programmes are re-aired at 5 p.m. on Wednesdays and at 6 p.m. on Fridays.

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

With respect to the reporting period, in line with the Amendment to the Minorities Act, the Hungarian Television newly set up a separate Minority Editorial Board in August 2006, which started its operation within the Regional and Minority General Editorial Board. An expert with several years of experience in minority programme making was appointed head of the Board, which, at the beginning of year 2007, was incorporated in the General Editorial Board of Public Affairs as an independent unit.

The Minority Editorial Board announced three new positions in the summer of 2006. It should be noted that the programme makers of minority programmes work not only as reporters, editors and presenters but also as programme directors. In addition, these experts translate minority language programmes into Hungarian and produce related subtitles. The Board currently employs a staff of 26.

From 2006 on, the minority programmes of MTV are also available on the Internet at www.mtv.hu. As a positive development, public service MTV has abandoned its earlier practice of not broadcasting minority programmes in minority languages on national holidays and religious festive days. Therefore, currently MTV broadcasts minority programmes even on these festive days.

In May 2005, ORTT checked whether MTV operated in line with its Agreement concluded with national minority self-governments in 2002. According to the results of the survey, the broadcaster did not entirely fulfil its obligations with reference to certain sections of the Agreement. Conclusively, ORTT called upon MTV “to put an end to its practice that interferes with the fulfilment of its obligations to minorities”. In 2005 and 2006, no consultations between the management of the Hungarian Television and chairpersons of national minority self-governments took place.

In the reporting period, as per the conditions of the two calls for applications announced by the Programme Provision Fund of ORTT, applicants with programmes in minority languages in their programme portfolios were prioritised. In a similar fashion, the call for bids to support the construction of cable television networks and the extension of the service area of cable television networks, announced in December 2005, featured broadcasting of minority language programmes as an assessment criterion. According to the bid, if in the settlements located in the service area there was a minority self-government and if the bidder undertook to provide programme distribution of programmes in the language of the given minority, the programme distribution of public service programmes produced in Hungary earned 0.5 points in the bid assessment scale, while the programme distribution of other types of programmes produced in Hungary or programmes in the given language gained 0.25 points.

The tender application for the construction and modernisation of cable programme distribution networks announced in March 2007 also encouraged bidders to distribute television programmes in minority languages.

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

All minorities in Hungary have their own minority language newspapers with national circulation. Budgetary funds for the publication of newspapers maintained by minority self-governments and by diverse minority organisations are allocated primarily by the Public Foundation for Minorities. Uninterrupted publication of minority newspapers was supported with HUF 234 million in 2005, with HUF 300 million in 2006 and HUF 250 million in 2007.

A new development realised in the reporting period is that from the second half of 2005 the Slovenian-language paper “Porabje” is published as a weekly as opposed to its earlier status of biweekly paper.

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

The Hungarian Radio and the Hungarian Television finance the production and broadcasting of programmes in minority languages from their own respective budgets. In the reporting period, ORTT did not announce a tender application for the support of extra costs associated with the media using minority languages.

To support programmes in minority languages, the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary (MNEKK) announced tender applications for regional and local media in all the three reporting years. The number of programmes (settlements or regions) having been awarded support is shown below.

Table 29: *Support for programmes in regional and local minority languages*

Minority	2005	2006	2007
Croatian	3	5	1
German	8	2	4
Romanian	2	3	2
Serbian	3	3	1
Slovak	6	1	1
Slovenian	0	0	0

Source: MNEKK

In 2005, in line with the proposal of the Minority Information Technology College, advisory body of the Ministry of Information Technology and Communications representing minorities, the Ministry provided budgetary support for the development of written media as well as for the development and extension of web pages published in the language of minorities in Hungary. Agreements concerning supports were concluded between the Minister of Information Technology, the publishers of minority media and the representatives of national minority self-governments in October 2005.

g) to support the training of journalists and other staff for media using regional or minority languages.

Attendees of the meeting of the Working Group on Minority Media raised the issue of trying to provide facilities and funds for launching in-service training for journalists working in minority languages. Bilateral agreements concluded with the mother countries of the minorities may facilitate the training of journalists working in minority languages. In the scope of such agreements, the experts of all six minorities can be trained.

Apart from interstate scholarship programmes, the management of the Hungarian Radio directly concluded an agreement with the Slovak Radio: in the scope of this agreement there is an opportunity for the exchange of programme makers. The management of the Hungarian Radio is planning to conclude similar agreements with the public service radio stations of other neighbouring countries.

Minority programme makers of the Hungarian Television work predominantly in the regional studios located at different areas of Hungary. In 2008, MTV was planning to launch in-service training courses in Szeged and Pécs, in the scope of which employees of minority studios will have to opportunity of professional development.

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

According to the stipulations of the Media Act, national minority self-governments can jointly delegate one member to the Hungarian Television Public Foundation, to the Hungarian Radio Public Foundation and to the Hungária Television Public Foundation. In line with the above, in 2005 it was the delegate of the National Self-Government of Slovaks, in 2006 the delegate of the Croatian Self-Government and in 2007 the delegate of the National Roma Self-Government representing minorities in the Hungarian Television Public Foundation. In the Hungarian Radio Public Foundation, in 2005 it was the delegate of the National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary, in 2006 the delegate of the National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary and in 2007 the delegate of the National Ukrainian Self-Government representing minorities. In the Hungária Television Public Foundation, in 2005 it was the delegate of the National Self-Government of Slovaks, in 2006 the National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary and in 2007 the delegate of the National Roma Self-Government representing minorities.

Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities

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

a) to encourage the types of expression and initiative that are specific to regional or minority languages and foster the different means of access to works produced in these languages;

According to Article 55 (6) of the Minorities Act, in order to promote the preservation of the culture of minorities living in Hungary, the nurturing and passing on of their customs and traditions, the nurturing and development of their mother tongue, the survival of their cultural memories and their material realisations (ethnographic objects) as well as to support the activities related to the mitigation of disadvantages resulting from a minority state, the government has set up a public foundation. The public foundation announces a tender application every year to support the native language culture of minorities including minorities' cultural events, the issuing of publications in minority languages, research in minority languages and theatrical activities conducted in minority languages.

The Croatian, German, Serb and Slovak minorities in Hungary boast of professional theatrical companies. Apart from Deutsche Bühne in Szekszárd, the German minority in Hungary has another theatrical company, the Budapest-based German Theatre, with no theatre building of its own. The National Self-Government of Slovaks maintains the professional and amateur theatrical workshops of the Slovenské divadlo Vertigo (Vertigo Slovak Theatre). In Szarvas/Sarvaš, the local town government maintains Sarvašské slovenské divadlo (Slovak Theatre of Szarvas). The professional theatrical company of Croats in Hungary is located in Pécs/Pečuh, that of the Serbian minority in Hungary is found in Lórév/Лорва. The Romanian and Slovenian communities in Hungary maintain only amateur theatrical groups. All other minorities – the German, Slovak, Serb and Croatian minorities – have their own amateur theatrical companies.

Table 30: Support for professional minority theatrical companies (million HUF)

Company supported	2005	2006	2007
Deutsche Bühne (German)	72.054	69.8	69.8
Pécs-based Croatian Theatre	44.5	44.0	44.0
Hungarian Serb Theatre Non-profit Company, Lórév	30.5	30.0	30.0
Slovak Theatre of Szarvas	18.0	17.5	17.5

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture

In all three years of the reporting period, with the support of the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary, a Theatre Festival for Minority Theatrical Companies was organised, at which event professional and amateur companies staged plays in repertoire in their own mother tongues.

In 2004 and 2006, MTV organised its Minority Film Festival. The international film event provided an opportunity for screening public service media productions with a minority theme. At the Budapest-based Film Festival, minority television workshops from Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania and Slovakia presented their works. The programme of the Festival included discussion of EU and OSCE documents on the use of minority languages in

the media and an assessment of cross-border regional media relations. The event was also attended by the representatives of the Multicultural Programme Group of the European Organisation of Public Service Televisions.

The National Council of Cultural Experts (NKSZT) of the Hungarian Institute for Culture and Art, operated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, has been in operation since 2004 as an advisory and counselling body. The Council is composed of one representative of the 12 national minorities each and experts delegated by the Prime Minister's Office and the Institute. Each year the Council organised a cultural minority event with great success, and it has also established the "Pro Cultura Minoritatum Hungariae" Award. In 2006 and in 2007, the Council announced a minority photo contest, the entrants of which were exhibited and also appeared in several publications.

In line with the relevant legal stipulations, it is the public libraries of local governments which are responsible for supplying minority libraries with publications. All minorities in Hungary including the Croatian, German, Romanian, Serb, Slovak and Slovenian minorities, have access to the network of public libraries available at diverse locations and in hundreds of settlements in Hungary. Within the library system, supplying minority libraries with publications is co-ordinated by the National Foreign Language Library and is facilitated by 19 county-region libraries. These libraries also collect and offer minority language documents for lending. Other libraries hosting valuable collections of fine literature and works of popular science written in minority languages operate in schools that offer education in minority languages.

Publications in minority languages are mostly published by minority organisations and national minority self-governments. The Cultural Association of Romanians in Hungary runs a publishing house called "Noi", while the Serbian Democratic Community maintains a publishing house called "Izdan". The National Croatian Self-Government jointly with the Association of Croats in Hungary founded Croatica Cultural, Information and Publishing Non-profit Company. Other publishers have also taken on publishing in minority languages.

Due to the allocation of budgetary funds in the previous two years, the institutional network of separate minority cultural centres has improved considerably. The Slovak Cultural Centre is a nationwide self-government-owned institution, which has 7 centres in regions of Hungary populated by Slovaks. The system of cultural centres for Germans in Hungary is provided professional support and is coordinated by the Budapest-based Ungarndisches Kulturzentrum. The National Self-Government of Serbs in Hungary maintains its Cultural and Documentation Centre with 6 affiliated non-Budapest based institutions.

The Museum of Ethnography and several other museums maintained financially by county regions and municipalities have been entrusted with the collection of objects related to minority culture. Museums maintained by county self-governments and located in areas populated by minorities are also engaged performing in minority-related regional and nationwide collection tasks. Ethnographic houses and local museum collections are mostly maintained by local minority self-governments.

The German minority in Hungary maintains approximately 60 ethnographic houses and has recently organised two nationwide events. The National Self-Government published a comprehensive volume entitled "Német tájházak és emlékszobák Magyarországon (German

reproduction peasant houses and memorial rooms in Hungary)”. The Tata-based German Minority Museum also collects ethnographic objects.

The Slovak minority in Hungary has reported 50 reproduction peasant houses, the half of which is maintained, and in some cases owned, by the local Slovak self-government. Legetum Non-profit Company, founded by the National Self-Government, provides professional advice and modest financial support to mostly these ethnographic sites. A rich collection of Slovak cultural objects is housed in the Hungarian Orthodox Church Museum in Miskolc and the Serb Collection of Orthodox Church Art in Szentendre.

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

The majority of the publications financially supported by the Public Foundation for Minorities comes out in a bilingual format (in Hungarian and in the given minority language).

Table 31: *The number of supported publications written in minority languages*

Minority/year	2005	2006	2007
Croatian	12	15	12
German	20	14	10
Romanian	10	9	6
Serb	10	12	12
Slovak	13	14	8
Slovenian	2	2	1

Source: MNEKK

The Hungarian Television produces programmes about minority culture in the language of the given minority. When these programmes are broadcast, however, they are shown with Hungarian subtitles, enabling the general public that does not speak the language of the given community to keep up with the lives of these minorities.

From among the professional minority theatres, the Slovak Theatre of Szarvas and the Serb Theatre regularly stage plays in both the minority language and Hungarian. As a result, plays originally staged in Serbian or Slovak are accessible to the Hungarian general public and also to members of other minorities.

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

During the past three years, the works of the most well-known contemporary Hungarian literary figures (Péter Esterházy, László Darvasi, László Garaczi) were translated into all the six minority languages. These translations were not, however, prepared for the minority language communities in Hungary but were translated, with Hungarian support, into the languages of Hungary’s neighbouring countries, which are in fact minority languages in Hungary. These works, therefore, are accessible to minority communities living in the Republic of Hungary through Hungarian support. During the past three years, three volumes of poetry and two volumes of short prose were translated from Hungarian into Croatian with Hungarian support.

Several volumes of Hungarian literature are translated into German annually: at least one work by each contemporary Hungarian literary figure and by earlier authors is accessible in German translation.

The latest pieces of Hungarian literature usually get translated into Romanian. Unfortunately, there is no precise information as to the number of works published.

During the past three years, Hungarian state support was granted to the translation of two volumes of poetry written in Hungarian.

Several Hungarian novels written during the past few years have been translated into Slovak; altogether approximately 10 volumes have been translated.

Over the past three years, two volumes by the above-mentioned author Péter Esterházy have been translated into Slovenian.

The minority language subtitling and dubbing of Hungarian films are performed in the respective mother countries. As a rule, the Hungarian public screening of such films happens as part of film events organised by cultural centres of the respective mother countries. During the last year, such events were organised by Hungary-based cultural centres of Germany, Slovakia and Romania.

In November each year, the National Self-Government of Slovaks jointly with the Budapest-based Slovak Institute organises a three-day seminar mostly for students, during which event the latest Slovak feature films, documentaries and demo films are shown.

f) to encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of a given regional or minority language in providing facilities and planning cultural activities;

Each national and ethnic minority delegates members to the Public Foundation for Minorities. These ethnic and minority delegates take part and have considerable influence on decision-making.

Minority specialists also work at the Hungarian Institute for Culture and Art, referred to above. The majority of professionals in the Council of Minority Experts, which operates side by side the Institute, also represent minority delegates.

As a rule, organisers belonging to minorities take part in the organisation of the cultural life of places traditionally populated by minorities. Furthermore, experts speaking minority languages are also found in the staff of county public collections and cultural centres providing services to minorities.

g) to encourage and/or facilitate the creation of a body or bodies responsible for collecting, keeping a copy of and presenting or publishing works produced in the regional or minority languages;

During the past few years, all minorities set up their own network of cultural institutions. Certain institutions of these networks specifically target the collection and presentation of cultural heritage produced in minority languages. All institutions are funded from the state budget.

The Scientific Institute of **Croatians** in Hungary collects and processes written documents about the Croatian minority in Hungary. The Christian Museum of Croatians in Hungary collects church relics associated with the Croatian minority.

The House of **Germans** in Hungary collects and presents the cultural heritage of the German minority in Hungary. The House, apart from its numerous activities, collects and makes available literature and written documents produced by the German minority community in Hungary. At a national level, the Public Education and Cultural Centre of the German Minority in Hungary, founded in 2003, coordinates the activities of German cultural centres.

Another important member in the institutional network of the German minority in Hungary is the German Minority Museum in Tata with a nationwide scope of collection. With its 20 thousand-piece collection, the Museum collects artefacts and objects from all regions populated by German minorities, to be displayed at temporary exhibitions and thematic shows.

The Documentation and Information Centre for **Romanians** in Hungary collects and makes available the cultural values of the Romanian community in Hungary. In 2006, the Centre was extended by a new site: the Institute bought the Romanian Ethnographic House in Kétegyháza/Chitighaz, which presents a collection of the settlement's traditions and objects of ethnographic interest.

The cultural and ethnographic institution of the National Self-Government of **Serbs** in Hungary is the Serb Documentation and Cultural Centre in Hungary with its six regional sites. This Institution coordinates the cultural initiatives and programmes of the Serbian minority in Hungary and makes such ethnographic objects and artefacts accessible to the public.

The historical, ethnographic and cultural traditions, objects and artefacts are collected, arranged, labelled and processed by two institutions maintained by the National Self-Government of Slovaks: the Research Institute of Slovaks in Hungary and the Slovak Documentation Centre. Ethnographic houses and museums of local history, supported by Legatum Non-profit Company referred to above, present ethnographic traditions, objects and artefacts of the places populated by Slovaks.

The Slovenian Cultural and Information Centre in Szentgotthárd/Monošter has a pivotal role to play in Slovenian language popular education related and artistic activities. Objects and artefacts of the Slovenian cultural heritage in Hungary are deposited in the Szentgotthárd-based Pável Ágoston Museum.

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

The operation of the institutions referred to above guarantees the realisation of this objective.

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

The cultural traditions, values, objects and artefacts of minorities in Hungary are primarily presented at locations in the mother countries of the minorities concerned. Hungarian cultural

centres in these countries often present cultural values associated with the Croatian, German, Romanian, Serb, Slovak and Slovenian minorities in Hungary and organise programmes the topics of which are in connection with these minorities. According to Article 3 (1) h) of Government Decree 309/2006 (XII. 23.) on the setting up Balassi Institute, “As part of its basic cultural diplomatic activities, with a view to the promotion of the scientific research of universal Hungarian cultural heritage and making such heritage publicly accessible, Balassi Institute, through the cultural institutes situated abroad, performs the following activities: [...] takes part in the presentation of the achievements of Hungarian national and ethnic minority education and cultures as well as promotes the nurturing of institutional links facilitating this activity.” Such a cultural institute currently operates in Berlin, Stuttgart, Bratislava and Bucharest. On a regular basis, these institutes organise programmes introducing the culture and recent artefacts of the given minorities (German, Slovak, Romanian).

In a similar fashion, on several occasions every year minority theatres in Hungary stage plays at festivals organised in their respective mother countries, or have shows of their current plays in certain towns in the mother countries.

The Public Foundation for Minorities regularly supports programmes that facilitate the staging or the presentation of the cultural products of the minorities in Hungary in their respective mother countries. State-funded minority institutes also organise programmes presenting the cultures of minorities in Hungary on a regular basis in their respective mother countries.

Article 13 – Economic and Social Life

1. With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the whole country

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

Today in Hungary there are three acts in force that, to some extent, affect the use of minority languages in both economic and social life. One of them is Act XXII of 1992 on the Labour Code, which under Article 5 states that “*the requirement of equal treatment shall be observed in employment relations*”.

A more detailed provision is contained in Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities, which, as part of the definition of negative discrimination, mentions that among other things the following shall also be considered negative discrimination: if a person or group “*(...) is treated more unfavourably as other persons or groups on the grounds of nationality or affiliation to a national or ethnic minority.*” The law prohibits all such practices and provides for the possibility of legal remedy for those concerned.

Article 22 of the same Act, however, states that “*The following shall not be considered infringement of equal treatment: (...) distinction based on national or ethnic affiliation, arising directly from the spirit fundamentally determining the nature of the organisation, justified by the activities or nature of the occupation concerned, and based on a proportionate and real occupational need.*”

Act XCVI of 2001 on the Publication of Business Advertisements, Shop Signs and Certain Announcements of Public Interest in the Hungarian Language contains specific provisions on the language use of the players of the economy. Besides stipulating the use of the Hungarian language in cases listed, the Act also mentions, as exceptions to this rule, settlements where local minority self-governments operate.

There are no laws regulating the use of language in social life. It is up to those participating in economic or social life to decide on what language(s) to use in their relations and contacts with each other.

Article 14 – Transfrontier Exchanges

The Parties undertake

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

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

The Republic of Hungary has concluded a number of bilateral agreements with the mother countries of minorities living within its territory. Minority joint committees were established on the basis of these agreements. These joint committees meet on an annual basis to draft various recommendations addressed to the governments in the interest of the fulfilment of the requirements of the minorities concerned. Such joint committees are cooperating with the mother countries of five – Croatian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian – minorities, the exception being the German minority.

A new development in this field is Act IV of 2005, which through the promulgation of the Agreement signed on 21 October 2003 between the Republic of Hungary and Serbia–Montenegro on the protection of the rights of the Serbian minority living in Hungary and the Hungarian minority living in Serbia–Montenegro, facilitated the operation of the Hungarian–Serbian Joint Committee.

In each joint committees, the minorities concerned are represented in the Hungarian delegation.

* * *

The government of the Republic of Hungary pays special attention to ensuring the minority and linguistic rights of all minorities living on its territory. As part of the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Hungary – surfacing in the legislative procedure – provisions appear in the texts of the new laws and legal regulations that ensure minorities the right to use their native languages in different fields of life to greater extents. The monitoring system of the implementation of linguistic rights is also gradually being developed and strengthened. Besides state institutions, the monitoring,

initiating roles of minority self-governments are increasingly highlighted. Consensus regarding minority policies is gradually developing between the political parties on various levels of public life. However, extending the conditions for the enforcement of linguistic rights is insufficient in itself to bring about a change in the practice of the use of minority languages. In order for living minority languages to appear in public affairs, the individual and collective activities and initiatives of the persons belonging to the minorities are indispensable.