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Addendum 2

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Initial Periodical Report
presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter**

SLOVAKIA

***Replies to the Comments/questions submitted to the
Government of Slovakia
regarding its Initial Periodical Report***

Reply of the Slovak Republic to the questions of the Committee of Experts for the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

PART I

1. Please state the main legal act(s) whereby the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages has been implemented in your State. If you so desire, please mention the general considerations which have guided your country in the ratification process.

Question no. 1. Please inform the Committee of Experts on the current status of the (draft) act on minorities.

According to the 2003 Plan of the Government's Legislative Tasks, the draft act on national minorities was to be submitted to the Government by the Minister of Culture in December 2003. Upon agreement with the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities, the Minister of Culture requested that the responsible body and deadline for the draft act be modified on the grounds that the issue goes beyond the area of culture and therefore requires a comprehensive solution. The Government agreed with this proposal through Resolution No. 1182 of 10 December 2003. Based on this resolution and the 2004 Plan of the Government's Legislative Tasks, the draft act on national minorities should be submitted to the Government by the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities in December 2004.

Question no. 2. Please explain the relationship between the list of municipalities/settlements contained in the Government Ordinance (GO) 221/1999 Coll. and the list of municipalities based on the census of 26 May 2001 (see Annexes 3 to 8 of the initial periodical report). In particular, are the two lists identical or did the situation change with the last census (for instance, new municipalities including minorities above 20 % threshold or minorities losing the 20% status)? If such changes have occurred, did the Government promulgate a new Government Ordinance based on the above-mentioned census? If yes, please provide additional information.

The list of municipalities, which forms an annex to Government Ordinance No. 221/1999 Coll., is based on the census of the population, houses and flats of 1991. The lists of municipalities contained in the annex to the initial periodical report are derived from the census of the population, houses and flats of May 2001. They were drawn up to find out whether any changes have occurred and whether the annex to the government ordinance corresponds with the requirement under Article 2 para. 1 of Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the Use of National Minority Languages. Under this article, if Slovak citizens belonging to a national minority form at least 20% of the population of a municipality/settlement according to the last census, they can use the minority language in official contact in this municipality. The list of the municipalities is to be specified through a government ordinance.

A comparison of the two lists shows that changes have indeed occurred. Specifically, in the case of the Hungarian minority, the number of municipalities meeting the above criteria decreased from 512 to 504, in the case of the Roma minority the number decreased from 57 to 54, and in the case of the Ukrainian minority the number fell from 18 to 6 municipalities. In case of Ruthenian minority the number increased from 68 to 92 municipalities. As regards the German minority, the number of municipalities remained unchanged (1 municipality), however, a different municipality meets the criteria defined under Article 2 para. 1 of the above act.

For the sake of clarity, we provide the table below:

National minorities meeting the 20% threshold in municipalities	Number of municipalities according to the census of the population, houses and flats	
	1991	2001
Hungarian	512	504
Roma	57	54
Ukrainian	18	6
Ruthenian	68	92
German	1	1

In addition to the above minorities, data on the Moravian, Polish, Croatian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Russian and Jewish minorities were processed within the 2001 census of the population, houses and flats.

The census of the population, houses and flats of May 2001 – just like the 1991 census – examined, besides other characteristics, the nationality and mother tongue of the population, where nationality was understood to be an individual's affiliation to a nation or ethnic group and was a matter of each person's own choice. Information on nationality for children below the age of 15 was entered by their parents. Mother tongue was defined for the purposes of the census as the language spoken in childhood by the person's parents to the person. The results of the census showed that the population structure with respect to their mother tongue is not identical with the population structure by nationality. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the precise number of persons using regional or minority languages, but it is possible to determine the population structure with respect to nationality and mother tongue. This is because persons, who have indicated a particular nationality, may have had a different mother tongue. In Annex No. 1, we attach (a) an overview of population numbers by nationality and by mother tongue and (b) population structure with respect to mother tongue in 2001 and 1991.

A new government ordinance reflecting the results of the 2001 census was submitted at the governmental session on 13 November 2003; however, the proposal was withdrawn from the session's agenda. The Government arrived at the conclusion that the update of the list of municipalities should be dealt with under the new act on national minorities.

2. Please indicate all regional or minority languages, as defined in paragraph a of Article 1 of the Charter, which exist on your State's territory. Indicate also the parts of the territory of your country where speakers of such language(s) reside.

3. Please indicate the number of speakers for each regional or minority language. Specify the criteria for the definition of "speaker of regional or minority language" that your country has retained for this purpose.

Question no. 3 Please specify the territories where, according to the initial periodical report (p. 35), the percentage of speakers of Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech and Polish does not reach the 20% threshold. Please specify the related percentages and degrees of concentration of the speakers of these languages.

Question no. 4. For the other languages, please specify whether their speakers are also present, in numbers which do not currently reach the 20% threshold, in municipalities other than those listed in the Appendix to the Slovak Government Ordinance No. 221/1999 Coll. In this case, please indicate their numbers and degree of concentration.

The census of May 2001 was held in 2883 municipalities. With a view to the large number of municipalities and the fact that in the majority of municipalities a certain portion of the population indicated to belong to a national minority, in Annex no. 2 we provide an overview of municipalities by districts, where Slovak citizens belonging to a national minority form more than 10% and less than 20% of the population according to the 2001 census of the population, houses and flats.

It would be possible to draw up a complete list of municipalities where at least one person indicated to belong to a national minority. This would be very extensive information that in our opinion would not be relevant. Nevertheless, if the Committee of Experts is interested, the Statistical Office publication – *2001 Census of the Population, Houses and Flats, Basic Data, Ethnic Composition of the Population*, which provides information on population numbers by nationality and by districts and municipalities can be provided during the on-the-spot visit to Slovakia.

4. Please indicate the non-territorial languages, as defined in paragraph c, Article 1 of the Charter, used on your State's territory and provide statistical data concerning speakers.

Question no. 5. *Please provide information on the situation of Yiddish or Hebrew.*

Members of the Jewish community in Slovakia, who are the potential users of Yiddish and Hebrew, report that they use these languages in particular in religious services and, to a limited extent, in family life. According to the latest population census of 2001, 218 persons (0.01%) officially reported to be of

the Jewish nationality; however, more than 2000 people are registered in the 13 Jewish religious communities. The umbrella body – the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia – registers 13 Jewish religious communities and a further 15 places with populations who at least maintain Jewish religious life. The Jewish minority has one representative in the Council of the Government for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups. Further information is included in the reply to question no. 16.

5. Please indicate if any body or organisation, legally established, exists in your State, which furthers the protection and development of regional or minority languages. If so, please list the names and addresses of such organisation.

Question no. 6. *Please provide information in this regard.*

As was reported in the initial report, no special public power authority dealing exclusively with the protection and development of regional or minority languages has been created in Slovakia. Therefore, in Annex No. 3 we provide a list and addresses of authorities and organisations dealing with this issue within the framework of their competences.

6. Please indicate if any body or organisation has been consulted on the preparation of this periodical report. In the case of an affirmative answer, specify which one(s).

Question no. 7. *Have any NGOs representing the various language groups been consulted on the preparation of the initial periodical report?*

Only the concerned state administration authorities participated in the preparation of the report – the Section of Human Rights and Minorities of the Office of the Government, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Environment, and the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development.

7. Please indicate the measures taken (in accordance with Article 6 of the Charter) to make better known the rights and the duties deriving from the application of the Charter.

Question no. 8. *Please indicate in what way the initial periodical report was made public, in conformity with Article 15 para. 1 of the Charter.*

At the time of approval by the Government, the initial report was available on the website of the Office of the Government and subsequently was and is accessible under the Human Rights section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website. In addition, the English version is available on the Council of Europe website.

PART II

Objectives and principles pursued in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1

1. Please indicate what measures your State has taken to apply Article 7 of the Charter to the regional or minority languages referred to in paragraph 2 and 4 of part I above, specifying the different levels of government responsible.

2. If appropriate, state any future measures which are envisaged in your country.

Article 7 – 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:

(...)

- 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;**

Question no. 9. Please provide information on the practical measures taken to implement this provision.

In the interest of, *inter alia*, maintaining and developing the links between the various cultures, the Government prepared and approved the third Action Plan for the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Expressions of Intolerance for 2004/2005. In the context of implementation of this Action Plan, the Government of the Slovak Republic participates in the realisation of a number of activities of non-governmental organisations and state authorities in order to ensure the development of a multicultural society and better knowledge and understanding of population groups using minority languages by the majority Slovak-speaking population. Events of this nature contribute to the development and knowledge of the diversity of cultures of individual national minorities and thus to increasing tolerance, creating a multicultural environment, as well as supporting the process of minorities' inclusion into the majority society.

Important activities were carried out by national minority galleries and museums and a number of national minority culture festivals was organised.

The specific events:

- The publishing plan of the Theatre Institute includes a collection under the working title "A Guide through the Roma Culture".
- The State Opera in Banská Bystrica presents the dance tragicomedy by Goran Bregovic: GYPSY ROOTS.
- Bibiana, the international house of children's art, organised the "COLOURFUL LANDSCAPE" dialogue on the topic of Ruthenians.
- Bibiana, the international house of children's art, organised an exhibition on the culture, history and way of life of Croatians living in Slovakia called "Exhibition on the Croatian Minority".
- Bibiana, the international house of children's art, organised a programme based on the Roma fairytale "KALO DANT" in co-operation with Roma children.
- The Centre for Slovaks living abroad organised a debate on Multiculturalism as Fate and Ideal in the Bratislava City Library on the occasion of the Human Rights Day. It pointed to the historical experience from the building of a multicultural society in Central and Southern Europe countries as a suitable model for the prevention of any forms of discrimination.
- The Bratislava Barok Film society, in co-operation with the Office of the Government, will be the organiser of the 2nd Film Festival on Minorities entitled "*Minorities in the European Union*". The event is primarily targeted at younger age groups with the aim of acquainting them with the history, development and contemporary life of minorities in the world and in Slovakia by means of cinematographic art.

Activities of civic associations focused on the development of national minority cultures:

- Ternipen Culture Union, Snina – National Roma Festival, Snina.
- Cultural Union of Croatians in Slovakia, Bratislava – Croatian Music Festival, Bratislava.
- Polish Club, Bratislava – Polish Culture Days, Bratislava.
- Carpathian German's Association in Slovakia, Košice – Culture and Community Festival of the Carpathian German's Association, Kežmarok.
- Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia, Prešov – Drama and Artistic Word Festival, Medzilaborce.
- Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia, Prešov – Culture Festival in Svidník.
- Csemadok, Galanta – Kodály Days in Galanta – National Festival of Choirs.
- Csemadok, Dunajská Streda – Danube Spring in Dunajská Streda – National Festival of Children's and Puppet Theatre Companies.
- Pódium Theatre Company, Komárno – Jókai Days in Komárno – National Festival of Youth and Adult Theatre Companies.
- National Minority Radio Broadcasting Association, Bratislava – The Wind of Spring Churns the Water, Bratislava – National Folk Song Festival of Soloists and Ensembles with international participation.
- Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia – Spiritual Song Festival, Snina.
- Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia – Makovice String Folk Song Festival, Bardejov.
- 1st Festival of National Minorities, Tornaľa.

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;

Question no. 10. Please provide information on the practical measures taken to implement this provision.

There were no specific measures targeted at providing 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. Such facilities are implicit in the system of education in minority language, at least for children and youth.

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

Question no. 11. Please provide information on the practical measures taken to implement this provision.

Regional or minority languages are studied at universities within the framework of accredited fields of study and study programmes:

- **Hungarian** can be studied at the Philosophical Faculty of the Comenius University in Bratislava, the Philosophical Faculty and Central European Studies Faculty of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, the Philological Faculty of the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, and the Pedagogical Faculty of the J. Selye University in Komárno,
- **Ukrainian** at the Prešov University in Prešov,
- **Ruthenian**, as a subject of the curriculum for 1st level primary school teachers (grades 1-4) trained for primary schools in a Ruthenian environment, at the Prešov University in Prešov,
- **German**, in particular as a foreign language at the Comenius University in Bratislava, the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, the Prešov University in Prešov, the Catholic University in Ružomberok, and at language departments of technical, economic and other universities.

The Prešov University in Prešov is preparing for accreditation a study programme called "**Ruthenian language and culture**". Its opening is expected in the 2005/2006 academic year providing that the accreditation is successful.

Funding is provided in compliance with the universities law in the form of subsidies provided to universities for accredited study programmes or for the development of universities in accordance with the methodology adopted.

The focus and scope of research projects depend on the interest, focus and capacity of the universities providing language education. Research is carried out in the form of institutional research within the university (universities listed above) or through grant agencies (the Scientific Grant Agency – VEGA, of the Ministry of Education and Slovak Academy of Sciences and the Culture and Education Grant Agency – KEGA, of the Ministry of Education). The quality of the submitted projects is reviewed in a selection procedure. Within KEGA, priorities may be taken into account in the selection process. Universities can also apply for a variety of foreign grants.

Funding is provided in compliance with the universities law in the form of subsidies determined for research, development and artistic activities or for the development of universities in accordance with the methodology adopted and from grant resources (grant agencies: VEGA, KEGA) or foreign grants.

The foundation project of the new Komárno-based J. Selye University, which was established as of 1 January 2004 and provides education from 1 September 2004, directly declares that it will engage in the research of minority languages (Hungarian) from the standpoint of language and its modifications in a minority environment.

Besides individual university departments, the relevant institutes concerned with minority languages and culture (e.g. the Institute of Ethnic Studies and Foreign Languages at the Prešov University in Prešov, the National and Ethnic Cultures Institute at the Central European Studies Faculty of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra) play an important role at universities.

- 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.*

Question no. 12. *Please elaborate further on the practical measures taken to implement of this provision.*

In the interest of developing regional or minority languages, the Slovak Republic supports international exchanges with states where these languages are used. Among others, the following projects are operating to enable these exchanges:

- Exchanges of persons working on joint projects between the Slovak Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany for 2005 and 2006.
- Programme of co-operation between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Hungary in the field of education, science, sports and youth.
- Programme of co-operation between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia for the 2000/2001, 2001/2002, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 academic years.
- Protocol between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic on co-operation in the field of education, youth, physical culture and sports for 2002-2006.
- Agreement between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Bavarian State Ministry of Science, Research and Art on the conditions for the employment of a Slovak language and culture lecturer at the University of Regensburg.
- Programme of co-operation between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of National Education and Sports of the Republic of Poland for 2003-2006.
- Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies – CEEPUS. The programme was established by signing an intergovernmental agreement in December 1993. Its member countries are: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Slovakia and Slovenia. In Slovakia, the programme is implemented on the basis of Governmental Resolution No. 711 of 13 July 1994.

(...)

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.*

Question no. 13. *Please indicate what measures are taken in the context of the education system to promote a better knowledge and understanding by the majority Slovak-speaking population of the regional or minority languages spoken in Slovakia.*

Information on measures taken to promote a better knowledge and understanding by the majority Slovak-speaking population of the regional or minority languages is included in the reply to question no. 9.

Question no. 14. *Please also indicate how this objective is pursued in the context of the mass media.*

An example of how the objective of better understanding between minority and majority population is pursued in the context of the mass media is the Phare Minority Tolerance Programme, which is financed from Phare and the transition facility and oriented on national minorities and anti-discrimination. One of its sub-programmes was the Public Information Campaign on Minorities in the Media. It was focused on promoting tolerance towards minorities by means of a public information campaign presented in electronic media. The programme consisted of the preparation of a series of short documentaries on the European models of co-existence with minorities, as well as minorities living in Slovakia. The documentaries and discussions were broadcast in the public media.

The Slovak Republic also co-financed other accompanying activities aimed at increasing the campaign's efficiency, namely advertisements for the documentaries and discussions, TV adverts,

press conferences, radio adverts, posters, free cards, printed T-shirts, VHS – an educational material and its distribution to schools, photographs and a CD-ROM. These events took place in the second half of 2002. Members of the Committee of Experts will be provided a brochure and the VHS tape with English subtitles during their on-the-spot visit to Slovakia.

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.

Question no. 15. *Please elaborate further on the practical measures taken to implement this provision.*

Pursuant to Article 7 para. 4 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Government determined the Council of the Government for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups as its advisory body.

The Council was set up in 1999 and its members are representatives of national minorities nominated by national minority associations, unions and clubs. The right to vote is held only by the representatives of individual national civic associations, and the chairman and vice-chairman of the Council. This makes it impossible for the state administration representatives to outvote the representatives of individual minority organisations. Hence, the Council can be considered as a self-governing authority of national minorities, which independently and sovereignly decides on its own matters.

According to its statute, the Council is an advisory, initiative and co-ordination body of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the field of state policy on national minorities. The Section of Human Rights and Minorities of the Office of the Government serves as the Council's secretariat.

The Council has co-ordinated tasks related to national minorities and ethnic groups, which arise from the Constitution and binding international documents, and co-operated in the implementation of the tasks, mostly with ministries, local state administration and self-government authorities, civic associations of national minorities and ethnic groups, scientific organisations and citizens.

The Council has exercised its advisory functions primarily by actively participating in the preparation of the Government's measures aimed at safeguarding and exercise of the rights and equal living conditions for persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups. The Council prepared, discussed and submitted to the Government reports on the status of and conditions created for persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and on the preservation of their identity, in particular with respect to advancement of their own culture and education in mother tongue, as well as proposed and recommended solutions. The Council provided the Government with its positions on draft acts and government ordinances relating to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups prior to their submission to the Government. Being an advisory body to the Government, the Council participated in the fulfilment of the Government's Policy Statement in the area of national minority policy.

Since the Council was constituted in 1999, its agenda has included topical issues, on which the Council took positions. Specifically, this related to the adoption of the act on the use of national minority languages, the issue of the national cultural and schooling policy and the Roma minority issue (which concerned housing, education, discrimination, etc.). It also commented on the implementation of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities.

The Council's agenda gradually included further issues related to the implementation of the Government's Policy Statement, as well as topical issues arising from the social processes related to national minorities. This includes issues related to the census of the population, houses and flats, national minority and ethnic broadcasting in Ruthenian on the Slovak Radio, the adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, or the concept for the establishment of the Office of the Public Defender of Rights (ombudsman).

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.

Question no. 16. Please comment on the implementation of this provision in the case of Yiddish or Hebrew.

General information regarding users of Yiddish and Hebrew is included in the reply to question no. 5.

The provision of funding from the special-purpose transfer under the Ministry of Culture budget chapter is subject to a system of review of projects by a expert commission or sub-commissions (the grant system), whose members are exclusively persons belonging to national minorities living in Slovakia. The commission of experts has 12 members, including a representative of the Jewish community. Even though the minorities have a varying number of representatives in the commission of experts, each minority has only one vote. The minority culture projects are assessed by sub-commissions – there is a separate sub-commission for each minority. Approval is granted by the expert commission. The overall approval of funding from special-purpose transfers under the Ministry of Culture budget chapter is granted by the Minister of Culture.

Financing of certain activities of the Jewish minority from the special-purpose transfer under the Ministry of Culture budget chapter:

	Cultural activities	Periodical press (Acta Judaica Slovaca)	Non-periodical press (e.g. Jews in Slovakia, Anti-Semitism in the Political Development of Slovakia))	Total
1999	SKK 910 000	-	SKK 1 010 200	SKK 1 920 200
2000	SKK 210 000	SKK 70 000	SKK 1 500 000	SKK 1 780 000
2001	SKK 379 000	SKK 50 000	SKK 1 197 000	SKK 1 626 000
2002	SKK 264 500	SKK 100 000	SKK 1 701 900	SKK 2 066 400
2003	SKK 403 800	SKK 136 000	SKK 1 996 000	SKK 2 535 800

The Department for National Minority Programmes with national competence operates at the Košice television studio. This department prepares a national minority magazine for the Jewish community – 5 programmes, 2.2 hours monthly.

Jewish youth is organised in the Czechoslovak Jewish Youth Union (CSZUM), whose objective is to maintain contacts between Jewish youth in the former Czechoslovakia. It publishes its own magazine.

The **Judaism Institute** (IJ UK) was created at the Philosophical Faculty of the Comenius University (UK) in 1996 as a special scientific, pedagogical and information facility without a legal status, which is accessible to all students of the UK, as well as to the general public. The cost of operation of the IJ UK is covered partially from the UK rectorate's budget and from subsidies, sponsorships and grants from a variety of institutions (Open Society Foundation, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Ján Hus Educational Foundation, Milan Šimečka Foundation, Slovak International Tabak, a.s., National Bank of Slovakia).

An important manifestation of the Jewish community's cultural activities is the presentation of Jewish culture in museums. The state is creating optimal conditions for the development of these activities – establishment of the **Jewish Culture Museum** in Bratislava (1994), restoration of cultural monuments, etc. In 1998, SKK 4,173,000 was allocated for the Jewish Culture Museum, which is a separate unit of the Slovak National Museum.

There are a total of **four functioning synagogues** (Bratislava, Košice, Bardejov, and Nové Zámky) in Slovakia and a smaller number of prayer houses. The precise number of synagogues in Slovakia has not been identified. The figures vary between 115 and 170, but a majority of the buildings are in bad condition or have been rebuilt to such an extent that their original purpose is unrecognisable. Several former synagogues were repaired and are used for cultural purposes. The Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia registers 620 Jewish cemeteries.

On 18 September 2002, the Government approved the Program of Exchanges between Slovakia and the State of Israel in the fields of culture, education and science for 2001-2004, which envisaged the establishment and operation of a joint Slovak-Israeli commission for the assessment of the content of textbooks, mainly with respect to history.

The Agreement between the Government and the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia on the partial financial compensation of victims of the holocaust in Slovakia was signed on 9 October 2002. SKK 850 million was allocated for compensation. The funds will be used besides the partial compensation of victims of the holocaust also for the financing of cultural projects of the Jewish community in the Slovak Republic.

PART III

Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life in accordance with the undertakings entered into under Article 2, paragraph 2

For each regional or minority language chosen at the moment of ratification, as follows from paragraph 2, Article 2 of the Charter, please indicate in which was the paragraphs and/or sub-paragraphs have been implemented, see Appendix.

When indicating the measures taken in order to implement each paragraph or sub-paragraph chosen, please specify the relevant legal provision and the territory where they are applicable.

Preliminary question

Question no. 17. Please explain the approach of the Slovak authorities regarding the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Charter in the case of those languages which do not reach the 20% threshold but which are nevertheless covered by Part III of the Charter.

The 20% threshold applies exclusively to the use of national minority languages in official contact as stipulated by Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the Use of National Minority Languages and the denomination of names of municipalities in national minority languages as stipulated by Act No. 191/1994 Coll. on Denomination of Municipalities in language of national minorities.

This criterion is not decisive in other areas covered by the Charter. In the field of justice, for instance, everyone has the right to act in his/her mother tongue, while the cost of interpretation is borne by the state. This means that the use of regional or minority languages is not tied to court districts reaching the 20% threshold of population belonging to a national minority. In the field of the media, the public radio and public television broadcast minority programming in the whole territory of the Slovak Republic and in all languages chosen by the Slovak Republic under Article 3 para. 1 of the Charter, with the exception of Croatian in television broadcasting and Bulgarian and Croatian in radio broadcasting. Equally, the financing of cultural activities of individual national minorities is not tied to the 20% threshold. The Minority Cultures Section of the Ministry of Culture financially supports civic associations of the Hungarian, Roma, Jewish, German, Croatian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, and Moravian minorities.

Specific questions

Article 8 - Education

Question no. 18. Please specify the situation of pre-school education for Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Polish, Romany, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

Question no 28. (concerns all languages) – Please clarify how the obligation embodied in Article 8 para. 1. i is implemented in practice. What concrete measures are taken?

Based on the exercise of the right of national minorities to education guaranteed under Article 34 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, the education and training process is also carried out in national minority languages.

The number of pre-school establishments by the language of instruction in the 2003/2004 school year:

State nursery schools:

- Hungarian	274
- Slovak-Hungarian	96
- Ukrainian	27
- Slovak-Ukrainian	3

Church nursery schools:

- Hungarian	4
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As for other national minority languages, pre-school establishments are set up depending on parents' interest.

The network of nursery schools contains no nursery schools using Romany as the language of instruction. The parents have not requested that Romany be introduced as the language of instruction at nursery schools. Romany is used as an auxiliary language at those nursery schools, where the Phare 2000 and 2001 Mother and Child Project is being implemented. (More detailed information can be found in the Conception of Roma Children and Young People Integrated Education Including Secondary and University Education Development in Annex No. 4).

There is a significant consensus between Slovak and foreign education experts with respect to the importance and usefulness of engaging Roma children in pre-school education. Before 1989, pre-school education was compulsory for all children. Children attended pre-school establishment in the so-called preparatory classes, which were created for the preparation of children for the beginning of compulsory school attendance and smooth transition to primary school. These schools also allowed for psychological testing of children in pre-school age. Compulsory pre-school education was abolished in the early 90s, which resulted in a rapid decline in the number of children in pre-school establishments caused, among other things, by increased cost and decreasing capacity of the establishments.

Today, monthly nursery school fees vary between SKK 500 and 800. Parents receiving social benefits are entitled to reduced fees or to be exempted from the fees. Unlike in the past, many pre-school establishments will be motivated to encourage attendance of the establishments by Roma children since pre-school education is now financed by means of contributions on a per-child basis.

At the same time, it is important to mention that many non-governmental initiatives and projects oriented on alternative methods of pre-school education are in progress.

Question no. 19. *Please provide additional information concerning primary school education for Croatian and Ruthenian.*

The network of schools and school establishments contains no schools with Croatian and Ruthenian as the language of instruction. There are primary schools for the Ruthenian national minority with instruction in Ruthenian, where Ruthenian language and literature are taught in their mother tongue and all other subjects of the curricula are taught in Slovak.

List of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian in the 2003/2004 school year:

Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Radvaň nad Laborcom
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Medzilaborce
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Medzilaborce
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Stakčín
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Pčolinné
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Svidník
Church primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Svidník
Primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in Šarišský Štiavnik

Question no. 20. Please clarify the statement (on p. 23 of the initial periodical report) according to which the Slovak Government intends to offer the possibility of choice of teaching in the mother tongue to the Ruthenian and Roma minorities. What exactly is the present situation, and what, practically, is envisaged?

The statement concerns a commitment arising from the Government's Policy Statement of 2002, where the Government undertook to "create conditions for the provision of education in mother tongue to the Ruthenian and Roma minorities". The changes in the field of education will be carried out on the basis of the National Programme for the Development of Education and Training in Slovakia for the next 15 to 20 years.

There are primary schools for the Ruthenian national minority with instruction in Ruthenian, where Ruthenian language and literature are taught in their mother tongue and all other subjects of the curricula are taught in Slovak. The list of primary school with instruction in Ruthenian in the 2003/2004 school year is included in the reply to the preceding question.

The network of primary and secondary schools contains no schools with Romany as the language of instruction, because the children's parents and guardians have not requested the introduction of Romany mother tongue as prescribed by legal regulations in force.

Slovakia sees the introduction of instruction in Romany as a very important step towards overcoming the language barrier faced by Roma children, improving their success at school and preserving their cultural and linguistic identity. Therefore, a number of projects that should help the introduction of instruction in Romany are currently in progress. For instance:

- Starting from the 2003/2004 school year, the experimental testing of Romany language and literature curricula is taking place at selected primary and secondary schools.
- Starting from the 2004/2005 school year, the testing will be extended to include Roma life and culture (*realia*).
- Approval of the Temporary Affirmative Action with the aim of preparing a sufficient number of Romany teachers.

Starting from the 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 school years, the Experimental Verification of the Efficiency of Romany Language and Literature Curricula in Primary and Secondary Schools is taking place at four selected gymnasias and two primary schools. The purpose of the experimental verification is to propose, verify and submit for approval the content of Romany language and literature curricula as a standard subject for primary and secondary schools. The verification will take place between 2003 and 2011. Responsibility for the experiment is held by the State Pedagogical Institute in Bratislava. Romology will be taught at secondary schools, which will create conditions for opening Romology university courses at the latest in 2006. After the experiment is completed, the schools will become the methodical and didactic centres for assistance in implementing Romany language and literature and the subject of Roma life and culture into education.

Romany language and literature are taught at all of the above schools. The Romany textbook called ROMANI ČHIB (by H. Šebková and E. Žinayová) is used as the basic textbook. At the same time, the history, customs, traditions and arts of Roma and multicultural education are taught at all of these schools.

The teaching of certain subjects in Romany will be feasible after the experiment is completed. By then, university teachers for teaching Romany language and literature will be available. A group of specialists on Romany language and literature and the subject of Roma life and culture will be created from among the people implementing the experiment (teachers, multipliers, research staff, didacticians, authors of didactic material and aids).

Question no 21. (concerns Romany) – Please explain how the issue of the standardisation of the Romany language has been dealt with.

The Romany language was codified in the Slovak Republic in 1971, when the linguistic commission at the then Union of Gypsies/Roma in Slovakia (1969–1973) adopted a binding standard of the Slovak

dialect of Romany. It was based on the orthographic customs and principles of Slovak. Since, as yet, Romany is not taught theoretically, readers used to the language in its spoken form find the texts written in Romany awkward. Due to the language developments the revision of orthography is preparing. It is one of the priorities of the Office of the Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities.

A working group was set up for this purpose – the Linguistic Commission at the Office of the Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities. Members of the commission include experts from among Roma, the Slovak Academy of Sciences, universities and secondary schools. Expert oversight of the preparations for the revision of the Romany language is provided by the Roma Culture Department of the Social Sciences Faculty at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra.

The linguistic commission established a clear recommendation that the eastern Slovak dialect – eastern Slovak Romany – should be used as a basis for the revision of the Romany language. Approximately 85% of Roma in Slovakia use it as a spoken language.

The following needs to be done to carry out the formal revision of Romany:

- Publish the grammatical rules of Romany. "Romani čhib", the Slovak Romany textbook by H. Šebková and the Key (Kľúč) to the textbook, which contains a basic dictionary, will serve as the grammatical basis. The authors of these publications will rework certain chapters to adapt them to reality. Copyright will be arranged by the publisher.
- Publish a separate Romany-Slovak dictionary of the most frequent words in Romany.

Question no 22. (concerns Romany) – Please explain what the use of Romany as an auxiliary language of instruction means in practice.

The use of Romany as an auxiliary language in nursery schools and mainly in the zero and first grades of primary schools means the use of a language from the environment where the children live and which they speak at home. Not all of Roma children have command of the Romany language due to the variety of Romany dialects and Slovak, Hungarian or Ukrainian language environments. The core element of education and teaching is the teacher and the teacher's assistant. A variety of educational activities organised by the methodical and pedagogical centres for the preparation of pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff of non-governmental organisations accredited by the Ministry of Education are being implemented in the field of the provision of information on the Romany language, culture and history, multicultural education and education against prejudices.

In order to provide for these needs of schools, the Ministry of Education approved and published:

- Romanňi čhib – the Romany textbook (in Northern-Central dialect) and the Key (Kľúč) to the textbook.
- People from the Roma Family (Manuša Andar e familia Roma) – a supplementary textbook on the history and life of Roma for primary and secondary schools.

The methodical and pedagogical centre in Prešov, where the Roma Educational, Documentation and Advisory Information Centre was created, publishes regular methodical handbooks to assist teachers, such as:

- Development language programme for Roma children from disadvantaged social backgrounds (2002).
- Leisure and interest activities of Roma children (1999).
- All-day educational activities with a focus on games developing the child's personality and cognitive background (2003).
- Employment of the EUR strategy as a means of elimination of Roma pupils' functional illiteracy (2003).
- Auxiliary programme for Roma pupils with poor school results (2004).
- Personality development of children in pre-school age, 1st grade pupils and children from disadvantaged social backgrounds (2004).

Question no 23. (concerns Ruthenian) – Please explain how the issue of the standardisation of the Ruthenian language has been dealt with. Please indicate also what sort of teaching materials are used in the case of the Ruthenian language.

The impetus for the preparation of standardisation handbooks came from the Ruthenian Revival (Rusínska obroda) organisation. The first international seminar on the issue of the Ruthenian language held in 1992 recommended that the so-called Romansch model (Romansch in Switzerland) should be used for the codification of the Ruthenian language on the basis of the spoken form (colloquial variations) of the most widely used dialects for each territory (i.e. state), where Ruthenians live (specific variations of Ruthenian will be created in Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland, which will be used in the respective territories). At the same time, work should begin on a standard language for all Ruthenians.

In Slovakia, the two most widely used dialects – Western and Eastern Zemplín dialects – were taken as a basis for this and the basic minimum necessary for codification was prepared in two years. The official ceremony marking the standardisation of the Ruthenian language in Slovakia took place on 27 January 1995. Specialised publications (language handbooks), basic school textbooks, as well as publications on history, examples of literary and journalist works, etc., were prepared on this occasion.

The Rules of Ruthenian Orthography and the Orthographic Dictionary are regarded as the basic standardisation handbooks. Besides the issue of orthography, the rules also provide interpretation of a selection of other linguistic phenomena, in particular those that are most frequently used in the process of communication. A section of the rules deals with the alphabet and orthography, while the other deals with morphology, basics of syntax and punctuation.

The education process at primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian started from the 1997/1998 school year. The curricula and textbooks were created progressively from the first grade of primary school.

In 2003 and 2004, the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic approved the following textbooks for schools with instruction in Ruthenian:

- Chrestomatia for the 5th to 9th grade of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Ruthenian for the 7th grade of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Literature for the 7th grade of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Ruthenian for the 8th grade of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Literature for the 8th grade of primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Cyrillic alphabet textbook for primary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Ruthenian for the 3rd grade of secondary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.
- Literature for the 3rd grade of secondary schools with instruction in Ruthenian.

Question no 24. *Please clarify the situation of secondary school instruction for the Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, German, Polish and Ruthenian language.*

Question no 25. *Please provide additional information on vocational school instruction for the Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, German, Polish, Romany, Ruthenian and Ukrainian languages*

In the case of secondary education, the situation is similar to that of pre-school education and primary schools – schools and school establishments are constituted if there is demand. The following secondary schools are included in the network of schools and school establishments:

- Secondary Medical School with instruction in Slovak and Ukrainian in Humenné.
- Taras Ševčenko Gymnasium with instruction in Ukrainian in Prešov.
- Private Bulgarian Primary School and Private Bulgarian Gymnasium in Bratislava.

Romany language and literature have been taught at the Secondary School of Art in Košice since the 1992/1993 school year. The Experimental Verification of Efficiency of Romany Language and Literature Curricula in Primary and Secondary Schools is taking place in 4 secondary schools:

Private Gymnasium in Košice
Secondary School of Art in Košice
8-year (Gandhi) Gymnasium in Zvolen
Juraj Hronec Gymnasium in Bratislava

Further activities in the field of secondary school education are part of the Phare 2000 programme – Improvement of the Conditions for the Self-Assertion of Roma in the Education System. One of the project's activities was the creation of a pilot project for vocational training of Roma youth at four

secondary vocational schools. Roma children, who completed 10-year compulsory school attendance but failed to complete primary education, had the opportunity to receive vocational training at these apprentice schools in one of three 3-year practical courses.

Question no 26. (concerns all languages) – Please provide additional information as to what sort of regional or minority language instruction is provided in practice at university level.

Question no 27. (concerns all languages) – Please provide further information on how basic and further teacher training for regional or minority languages works in practice.

The reply to question no. 11 also contains information on the study of regional or minority languages at universities.

The training of teachers and cultural and educational workers in Hungarian is provided at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra and begins to take place at the newly-established Komárno-based J. Selye University, where, besides the pedagogical faculty, a reformed theological faculty and an economical faculty were set up. Hence, conditions were created for the provision of university education in Hungarian in further study programmes (besides teachers, theologians and cultural workers), primarily to future economists.

Due to the exceptional proximity of the languages, the Czech language is not taught at universities in Slovakia. Other languages can be studied at Slovak universities within the framework of minority language teaching studies (or as foreign languages), e.g. Ukrainian (fairly long tradition at the Prešov University in Prešov) and German (at a number of universities – the Comenius University in Bratislava, the Prešov University in Prešov, the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, the Catholic University in Ružomberok); Bulgarian, Croatian and Polish can be studied as foreign languages (primarily at the Comenius University in Bratislava, or at the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica).

Preparations for a new study programme "Ruthenian language and literature" are in progress at the Prešov University in Prešov.

The training of teachers for the 1st level of primary schools (grades 1-4) for the Ukrainian and Ruthenian national minorities is provided at the Prešov University in Prešov, where the study of the respective languages and culture form part of the curriculum.

The training of teachers for the 1st level of primary schools for the German national minority, mainly with a view to the level of command of the language by the minority, is carried out primarily in the form of German language studies for the needs of the 1st level of primary schools at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra.

As regards the Romany language, the Roma Culture Department at the university in Nitra was created in April 1990 with the original objective of training teachers of Roma children for the 1st level of primary schools. Three years later, it started to prepare a 3-year bachelor programme for the training of educational workers oriented on work with the Roma community and, another year later, a bachelor study programme on social work.

At present, the Roma Culture Department is a guarantor and provider of:

- 5-year master programme in the field of social and educational work with a focus on the Roma community.
- 5-year master programme in the field of social work with a focus on the Roma community.
- 3-year bachelor programme in the field of social work with a focus on the Roma community.
- 5-year master programme for teachers at the 1st level of primary schools with specialisation on Roma culture.

The Roma Culture Department is attended by both full-time and distance learning students. The department is ethnically-oriented, yet multicultural, i.e. it is attended by students of various nationalities (Slovak, Czech, Hungarian, Roma). After completing their studies, the students are prepared to assist the Roma minority in eliminating the social, cultural and language barriers. For this reason, Romany language and literature and Romology basics (history, culture, traditions and customs) are a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Due to keen interest on the part of students, the Roma Culture Department has set up its branches in Spišská Nová Ves, Lučenec and Dunajská Streda.

The Government has approved funding for two educational schemes (pre-school education and primary schools) for Romany language lecturers.

The pilot training course for Romany language and literature teachers for secondary schools is being prepared in co-operation with the Charles University in Prague, the Roma Culture Department and the State Pedagogical Institute. The duration of the programme will be 6 to 7 semesters. 30 students should complete the 2005-2007 course. These students should initially work as Romany language lecturers for further Romany language teachers.

Other pedagogical faculties have also presented plans for improving Roma education. The pedagogical faculty of the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Prešov, the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and the Comenius University in Bratislava have prepared a number of projects in this area.

The Central European Studies Faculty of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, whose programmes meet the needs of minorities and civic principles of the Central European and European region as a whole, plays a crucial role with respect to national minority and minority language training and its importance and status will continue to grow. This faculty was established in the autumn of 2003.

Article 9 – Judicial authorities

Question no 29. (concerns all the languages) – *The understanding of the Committee of Experts is that interpretation into or from a regional or minority language in criminal proceedings is provided only if the accused person, or the witness for example, does not have a sufficient command of Slovak, whereas it is not provided if the accused person, or the witness, does have a command of Slovak. Please confirm that this understanding is correct. In other words, does an accused person have the right to address the court in his or her language, even if he or she understands Slovak?*

Yes, this understanding of the Committee of Experts is correct. Interpretation into or from a regional or minority language is provided only if the participant of the proceedings does not have a sufficient command of Slovak. For example, according to Article 2 para. 14 of the Code of Criminal Procedure “if the accused declares that he/she does not have a command the language of the proceedings, an interpreter shall be engaged”.

Question no 30. (concerns all the languages) – *Please indicate what is the number of magistrates in criminal, civil or administrative courts having a command of the regional or minority languages concerned.*

Question no 31. (concerns all the languages) – *Please indicate what is the share of administrative staff in courts having a command of the regional or minority languages concerned.*

Question no 33. (concerns all languages) – *Please provide figures and concrete examples of cases where regional or minority languages have been used in court proceedings. In particular, the most recent references to case-law in the initial periodical report (see pp. 80-81) go back to 1994. Are there more recent cases (or an established practice of courts concerning the use of minority languages), for the last 10 years?*

All district courts in Slovakia were asked to submit their answers. However, not all courts replied in the requested time. For this reason answers will be provided during the on-the-spot visit of the Committee of Experts to Slovakia.

Question no 32. (concerns all the languages) – *What practical measures are taken to ensure that the speakers of regional or minority languages are informed of their right to use such languages?*

The courts act in accordance with the general principles of criminal and civil procedure. In criminal proceedings, the person against whom criminal proceedings are held must be informed at every stage of the proceedings of the rights allowing full invocation of defence. All criminal justice bodies must allow the exercise of his/her rights. This includes also the right to use the mother tongue. In civil proceedings, parties to civil court proceedings have an equal status. They have the right to act in their mother tongue before the court. The court has the obligation to ensure them equal opportunities for the exercise of their rights.

Article 10 – Administrative authorities and public services

Question no. 34 *For those languages covered by Part III of the Charter, whose speakers do not attain the 20% threshold, how are the undertakings entered into by Slovakia under Article 10 implemented in practice?*

The use of national minority languages in official contact is based on Act No. 184/1999 Coll., which specifies that if Slovak citizens belonging to a national minority form at least 20% of the population of a municipality/settlement according to the last census, they can use the minority language in official contact.

In day-to-day contact with citizens, minority languages are also used in municipalities, which do not meet this 20% threshold, providing that the staff have command of the given regional or minority language.

Question no 35. *(concerns all the languages) – Please explain what is the degree of practical implementation of the undertakings chosen under paras. 1 and 2 of Article 10, by providing also concrete examples.*

Question no 36. *(concerns all the languages) – What practical measures are taken to ensure that the speakers of regional or minority languages are informed of their right to use such languages?*

Question no 37. *(concerns Hungarian) – Please provide concrete examples concerning the practical implementation of the undertaking entered into by Slovakia under Article 10 para. 3.b.*

Question no 38. *(concerns all languages) – Please elaborate further on how the undertaking entered into by Slovakia under Article 10 para. 3.c. is implemented in practice.*

In this stage of implementation of the Charter, information as requested by the Committee of Experts is not being collected.

Article 11 – Media

Question no 39 *What is the situation of the Croatian language concerning public television?*

Question no 40. *(concerns all languages) – Please comment on the practical implementation of Article 11 paras. 1.b.ii. and c. ii., which are concerned with the encouragement and/or facilitation of the broadcasting of radio and television programmes in the regional or minority languages by the private sector on a regular basis.*

Question no 41. *(concerns all languages) – Please elaborate further on the practical implementation of the undertakings entered into by Slovakia under Article 11 para.1.d, e.i and f.ii, as well as under Article 11 para. 3.*

The public television (Slovak Television) and public radio (Slovak Radio) are introducing a new programming structure in September 2004 and the relevant data will be available in the second half of September 2004. The Committee of Experts will be informed about the activities of the radio and television with respect to national minorities and the production of non-periodical programming during the on-the-spot visit to Slovakia.

At the end of 2003 and in early 2004, new laws were adopted on Slovak Television (No. 16/2004 Coll.) and Slovak Radio (No. 619/2003 Coll.), which, *inter alia*, regulate broadcasting for national minorities in the public media. We attach the relevant provisions of these laws in Annex no. 5.

Article 12 – Cultural activities and facilities

Question no 42. (concerns all languages) – Please elaborate further on the practical implementation in particular of Article 12 para. 1.d,e.,f. and g.

d.) The Ministry of Culture supports cultural events of a multiethnic or multicultural nature organised either by state cultural institutions for national minorities or civic associations of national minorities. Within the framework of the Ministry of Culture's grant programme – culture of national minorities – the expert commissions, which propose the amount of funding for civic associations of national minorities, take cultural undertakings that create opportunities for improving the mutual knowledge and use of regional or minority languages and cultures as a priority. In this respect, the Ministry has developed co-operation with culture departments at all regional self-governments in Slovakia. By means of a methodical letter, it invited them to co-operate and exchange information on the development of national minority cultures and create a joint information package on the internet.

State cultural institutions for national minorities:

Jewish Culture Museum at the Slovak National Museum (SNM) in Bratislava

Carpathian Germans' Museum at the SNM in Bratislava

Documentation Centre of Croatian Culture at the SNM – Historical Museum in Bratislava

Museum of the Culture of Hungarians in Slovakia at the SNM in Bratislava

Museum of Czech Culture at the SNM – Ethnographic Museum in Martin

Museum of Roma Culture at the SNM – Ethnographic Museum in Martin

Museum of Ukrainian and Ruthenian Culture in Svidník – Prešov higher territorial unit

Hungarian Culture and Danube Area Museum in Komárno – department for research of the culture of the Hungarian national minority in Slovakia – Danube Area Museum in Komárno – Nitra higher territorial unit

Roma Culture Department of the Gemer and Malohont Museum in Rimavská Sobota – Banská Bystrica higher territorial unit

Roma Culture Department of the Vihorlat Museum in Humenné – Prešov higher territorial unit

Museum of Žitný Ostrov in Dunajská Streda – Trnava higher territorial unit

Jókai Theatre, Komárno (Hungarian minority theatre)

Thália Theatre, Košice (Hungarian minority theatre)

Romathan Theatre, Košice (Roma minority theatre)

Alexander Duchnovič Theatre, Prešov (Ruthenian and Ukrainian minority theatre)

e.) The undertaking that organisations responsible for organising and supporting cultural activities will have at their disposal staff who have a full command of the regional or minority language concerned should be fulfilled by the National Education Centre, an organisation operating under the administration of the Ministry of Culture. An organisational unit – the Cabinet of National Minority Cultures – should be created within the centre, which will, besides methodical and technical assistance, also ensure the selection of staff meeting the criteria declared in the undertaking. We are unable to provide more comprehensive information, since this institution is currently undergoing transformation.

f.) Direct participation by representatives of the users of a given regional or minority language in the creation of cultural facilities and planning cultural activities requires co-operation and information exchange between the Ministry of Culture and the culture departments of individual regions of Slovakia. The Ministry has therefore addressed higher territorial units with a methodical letter with the aim of preparing an analysis of the capacity of regional culture departments with respect to creating cultural facilities and planning cultural activities and the possibilities for direct participation by representatives of the users of the relevant regional or minority language. The National Education Centre should be involved in the fulfilment of this task after the process of its transformation is completed.

g.) By means of a grant system, the Ministry of Culture encourages cultural activities of non-governmental organisations, whose key role is to collect, archive and publish works produced in regional or minority languages. One of the most important institutions fulfilling this role is the Fórum institute for research of national minorities in Šamorín. It received assistance amounting to SKK 880,000 from the Ministry in 2003.

In 2003, financial resources amounting to SKK 38,047,000 were used for the support of national minority publishing companies and civic associations, which publish works produced in regional or minority languages. Of this amount, SKK 16,565,000 was used for non-periodical and SKK 21,482,000 for periodical press.

Using the Audiovision 2004 programme, the Ministry of Culture supported the **Jeden svet (One World)** film festival, part of which are film projects focused on national minorities and ethnic groups.

The Ministry of Culture registers 46 periodical publications published in national minority languages.

In 2003, the Ministry provided support to the following organisations developing national minority cultures:

Hungarian National Minority – Of the total amount of SKK 38,047,000, the Hungarian minority's publishing companies received SKK 25,411,000 in 2003. The most important of them include Kalligram s.r.o., which was supported by the sum of SKK 6,088,000, Liliium Aurum s.r.o. (SKK 1,636,000), NAP Kiadó s.r.o. (SKK 2,000,000), LOAR s.r.o (SKK 1,353,000), Madách–Posonium s.r.o. (SKK 2,508,000), Petit Press a.s. (SKK 1,200,000), Gabriel Méry-RATIO (SKK 1,000,000), Francis Attila–AB Art (SKK 995,000), and KT s.r.o. (SKK 858,000). In 2003, the Ministry supported 77 non-periodical publications in Hungarian with a sum of SKK 13,856,000. SKK 11,555,000 was allocated for Hungarian minority periodical press from the special-purpose minority culture transfer. The most important periodicals which received support include: the cultural supplement of the Új Szó daily, Vasárnap weekly, magazines and newspapers such as Katedra, Kalligram, Žitný ostrov – Csallóköz, Komárňanské listy, Új Nő, Irodalmi Szemle, Jó Gazda, Gömörország, Tábortűz, Szabad Újság etc.

Roma national minority – Using the national minority culture grant system, in 2003 the Ministry provided financial resources to 4 periodicals developing the culture and language of the Roma national minority – Romano Nevo Lil – published by JEKHEANE (Together) civic association of Prešov – SKK 1,100,000; Ternipen monthly – published by the Cultural and Educational Organisation ROMA Gemer of Rožňava – SKK 400,000; the Štvorlístok children's magazine – published by the Dobrá rómska víla Kesaj foundation of Košice – SKK 400,000; and the Rómsky list bimonthly – published by the Roma Press Agency as a supplement to the Domino Fórum weekly – SKK 200,000. The assistance provided by the Ministry for Roma periodicals in 2003 totalled SKK 2,100,000. From the special-purpose minority culture transfer, the Ministry supported the publication Customs and Traditions of Olach Roma. The funding provided amounted to SKK 300,000.

Bulgarian national minority – the Roden Glas magazine received the sum of SKK 315,000.

Czech national minority – the Česká beseda magazine received the sum of SKK 1,087,000 and the Info-Zpravodaj magazine the sum of SKK 19,000.

Croatian national minority – the Hrvatska Rosa magazine received the sum of SKK 480,000.

Moravian national minority – the Moravský hlas magazine received the sum of SKK 432,000.

German national minority – the Karpatenblatt magazine received the sum of SKK 820,000 and the IkeJA News magazine the sum of SKK 82,000.

Polish national minority – the Monitor Polonijny magazine received the sum of SKK 315,000.

Ruthenian national minority – the Rusyn magazine received the sum of SKK 500,000 and Národné novinky newspaper the sum of SKK 1,100,000.

Ukrainian national minority – the Dukľa magazine received the sum of SKK 380,000 and the Nove Žytt'a magazine the sum of SKK 590,000.

Jewish national minority – the Acta Judaica magazine received the sum of SKK 90,000.

Russian national minority – the Vmeste-Spolu magazine received the sum of SKK 420,000.

Question no 43. (concerns all languages) – Please provide information on the implementation of the undertakings entered into by Slovakia under Article 12 para. 2.

The fulfilment of this undertaking is also associated with the tasks of the National Education Centre and the establishment of its organisational unit – the Cabinet of National Minority Cultures, which will be responsible for the fulfilment of these objectives. We are unable to provide more comprehensive information, since this institution is currently undergoing transformation.

Question no 44. (concerns all languages) – Please comment on the practical implementation of the undertakings entered into by Slovakia under Article 12 para. 3. Please provide in particular examples of how the Slovak authorities present the diverse linguistic and cultural heritage of Slovakia in contexts such as cultural exchanges, European or international exhibitions or events, documentation on the country aiming at an international public, official maps, brochures and guides used to promote the image of the country abroad, inter alia for touristic purposes etc.

The Ministry supports cultural activities of national minority institutions, which represent regional and minority languages and culture abroad, by means of a grant system. In recent years, it supported the presentation of a number of national minority ensembles – the Taras Ševčenko Choir, a Ukrainian artistic ensemble, was presented in Ukraine; the TERNIPEN vocal and dance group, a Roma artistic ensemble, presented Roma art in the Czech Republic and Germany. The Hungarian ensemble Ifjú Szívek (Young Hearts) is directly administered by the Ministry. It presents Hungarian language and culture not only in the neighbouring Hungary, but also in many other countries of the world. In recent years, it performed in the USA and Australia. The Ministry contributed with the sum of SKK 1,200,000 for the performances in the USA in 2003.

Several tourist brochures and maps to promote the natural values in the Slovak-Hungarian border region were published in Slovak, Hungarian and/or English under the sponsorship of the Joint Commission for environment and nature protection issues set up to ensure and monitor the implementation of the intergovernmental agreement between Slovakia and Hungary on co-operation in the field of the environment. Two brochures will be provided to the delegation of the Committee of Experts for illustration during its visit to Slovakia.

List of Annexes

1. Overview of population by nationality and by mother tongue
Population structure with respect to mother tongue in 2001 and 1991 in %
2. List of municipalities where citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to national minority constitute more than 10% and less than 20 % of the population according to the census of 26 May 2001
3. List and addresses of authorities and organisations whose competences include the protection and development of regional or minority languages
4. Conception of Roma Children and Young People Integrated Education Including Secondary and University Education Development
5. Act on Slovak Television, Act on Slovak Radio (extract)