

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 19 March 2025

MIN-LANG (2025) 4

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Evaluation by the Committee of Experts
of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action
contained in the Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report on**

AUSTRIA

Introduction

1. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as “the Charter”) is a treaty of the Council of Europe putting obligations on its states parties to protect and promote the country’s traditional minority languages in all fields of public life: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges. The Charter was ratified by Austria on 28 June 2001, entered into force on 1 October 2001 and applies to the following languages: Burgenland-Croatian, Hungarian, Slovenian (each protected by Part II and Part III), Czech, Romani and Slovak (each protected by Part II only).

2. The Committee of Experts monitors the implementation of the Charter. Each state party shall present a periodical report on the implementation of the Charter every five years. On the basis of the periodical report, the Committee of Experts adopts an evaluation report in which it makes “**recommendations for immediate action**” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in the state concerned. Based on this evaluation report, the Committee of Ministers adopts its recommendations to the state party.

3. Two and a half years after the due date of its periodical report, the state party shall present information on the implementation of every recommendation for immediate action¹ that the Committee of Experts has made in its evaluation report. The Committee of Experts then adopts an evaluation of the implementation of these recommendations. The “further recommendations” by the Committee of Experts are examined after reception of the next periodical report and the on-the-spot visit to the state party. Five-yearly periodical reports shall contain comprehensive information about the implementation of all Charter undertakings and all recommendations by the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers.

4. Austria submitted the **information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** contained in the Committee of Experts’ fifth evaluation report² on 8 October 2024. This **evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** is based on the information received from the Austrian authorities, as well as from representatives of the minority language speakers pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.³ The Committee of Experts reiterates that, in conformity with Articles 6 and 7.4 of the Charter, it is necessary to inform the speakers concerned of the recommendations made during the monitoring and to take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by them in the implementation and related reporting. As far as the compliance of Austria with all its undertakings under the Charter is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its fifth evaluation report. The Committee of Experts will examine the implementation of all the undertakings concerning all of the minority languages in the next evaluation report.

5. This evaluation was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 19 March 2025.

¹ In accordance with Committee of Ministers Decisions “Strengthening the monitoring mechanism of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages” ([CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e](#)), para. 1.a.

² Fifth Evaluation Report of the Committee of Experts on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#).

³ In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Experts ([MIN-LANG\(2019\)7](#)), Rule 17, paras. 1-6.

Examination of the implementation by Austria of the recommendations for immediate action

I. General issues

Recent developments regarding the Carinthian Child Education and Care Act

6. In the fifth evaluation report, the Committee of Experts invited the authorities to provide an overview of the 2023 amendments on the Carinthian Child Education and Care Act and their impact on the Slovenian language, as well as of the effects of the Pedagogical Framework Concept – Guidelines for the Promotion of Bilingual and Multilingual Education and Care in Carinthian Elementary Educational Institutions on the quality of bilingual education.⁴

7. The authorities informed the Committee of Experts that the amendment on the Carinthian Child Education and Care Act focused on enhancing the professional profile of early childhood educators through improved working conditions, alongside strengthening the collaboration with various partners to boost bilingualism in education. Early childhood education institutions, including kindergartens and daycare centres, are encouraged to offer bilingual education programmes, and financial support from the state helps sustain these programmes. The state funds and supports these initiatives based on the implementation of the Pedagogical Framework Concept - Guidelines for the Promotion of Bilingual and Multilingual Education and Care in Carinthian Elementary Educational Institutions. In the 2023/2024 school year, 26 kindergartens, seven daycare centres, and six after-school care centres offered bilingual education. Moreover, from the summer semester of 2025, the University of Teacher Education Carinthia will offer a new course focusing on bilingual education, aiming to continuously improve the quality of bilingual education through advanced training for educators. The overall impact of these changes is expected to further promote the quality of bilingual education in Carinthian kindergartens, with a special emphasis on providing bilingual opportunities for children from the age of one. The Committee of Experts welcomes this information and looks forward to receiving information on further developments in this respect in the next periodical report.

⁴ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 70.

II. Recommendations for immediate action

1. Burgenland-Croatian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take steps to strengthen the use of Burgenland-Croatian in education, including by providing a sufficient number of teachers and the necessary teaching materials.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

8. According to the authorities, the curricula for Croatian in bilingual primary schools, lower secondary schools, and the bilingual federal secondary school in Oberwart have been updated and have been in force since the 2023/24 school year. The nationwide school entry assessment has been translated into Croatian. The authorities are also developing tools for formative assessments of competence (competence checks) in Croatian, intended for students in the third, fourth, seventh, and eighth grades.

9. The authorities refer to the University College of Teacher Education Burgenland (PPH Burgenland) which offers students the opportunity to acquire the qualifications for bilingual teaching in Burgenland Croatian, both in the area of training and further education.

10. There is no information on measures taken as regards the teaching materials.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

11. The Committee of Experts welcomes the information about the new curricula for Croatian as a subject in the field of minority schools. However, the recommendation refers also to measures aimed at strengthening bilingual teaching and not only teaching of Burgenland-Croatian, as well as the provision of teacher and teaching materials.⁵

12. As regards the provision of a sufficient number of teachers, the information provided by the authorities corresponds to those reported in 2021 for the purposes of Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report. Furthermore, it notes that no information was provided about the provision of necessary teaching materials. Therefore, further steps are needed to implement this recommendation.

13. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures seem to have been taken to ensure the provision of a sufficient number of teachers. The authorities should work with representatives of Burgenland-Croatian speakers to develop a strategy to tackle the lack of teachers as well as short-term remedies such as incentives for students (for example guaranteed employment or salary bonuses).⁶ Measures are also needed as regards teaching materials.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Take measures to strengthen the use of Burgenland-Croatian in administration in practice, including the publication of documents, in particular at local level.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

14. The authorities state that knowledge of Burgenland-Croatian is an advantage for recruitment within the Burgenland administration and is increasingly part of the job descriptions. Furthermore, they refer to

⁵ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), paras. 15, 56, 57.

⁶ See for example the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action contained in the Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report on the United Kingdom and Isle of Man, [MIN-LANG \(2021\) 3](#), para. 32.

the provision of online forms in Burgenland-Croatian by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Federal Ministry of Finance.

15. There is no information on which documents have been published in Burgenland-Croatian by authorities at local level.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

16. The Committee of Experts welcomes that knowledge of Burgenland-Croatian is increasingly part of the job description. It notes also that some measures are already mentioned in the evaluation report.⁷ However, this measure alone is not sufficient to strengthen the use of Burgenland-Croatian in practice.⁸ The Committee of Experts also notes that there is no information available on which documents are being published in Burgenland-Croatian at local level. The Committee of Experts reiterates that measures should be taken to ensure that all the relevant authorities are fully aware of their obligations related to the use of minority languages and to provide them with the necessary technical and financial support. Application forms should be made further available and easily accessible. The language competences of the staff should continue to be strengthened, including with respect to specific terminology.⁹ In light of the information available, the Committee of Experts concludes that further measures are needed to implement the recommendation.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Burgenland-Croatian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Austria, in mainstream education and in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

17. According to the authorities, the 2023/24 middle school curricula include references to national minorities and their cultures. *The Day of National Minorities* at the Austrian Parliament, the *Parliament's Dialogue Platform*, and the exhibition at the House of Austrian History are initiatives aimed at informing the majority population about national minorities and minority languages. The travelling exhibition *The Austrian Minority School System – Linguistic Diversity with a History* addresses linguistic diversity.

18. The authorities also refer to the nationwide broadcast magazine *WIR | Češi, Hrvati, Magyarok, Roma, Slováci, Slovenci* on ORF III which presents content in all national minority languages with German subtitles since September 2022.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

19. The Committee of Experts notes that the information provided by the authorities was already taken into account for the purposes of Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report. The authorities do not provide further information on the implementation of the new curricula with reference to raising awareness about the Burgenland-Croatian language, history, and culture.¹⁰ The Committee of Experts reiterates that awareness raising among the majority is of the utmost importance and requires constant efforts in both education and media. The fundamental goal is for the majority population to value the fact that regional or minority language speakers are part of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the state with their different languages and cultures.¹¹ The promotion of awareness of minority languages through education requires a comprehensive approach, such as involving teacher training and teaching materials. Media could be also encouraged while respecting their independence to pay more attention to minority languages and the

⁷ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 34.

⁸ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 35, 36, 59.

⁹ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 37.

¹⁰ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 19.

¹¹ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 22.

cultures they reflect as an integral part of Austria's cultural heritage. Therefore, the Committee of Experts invites the authorities to take further steps for the implementation of this recommendation.

2. Czech – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Ensure sustainable and sufficient funding for the Komenský School.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

20. There is no information on the steps taken to implement this recommendation.¹²

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

21. The Committee of Experts reiterates that the funding for the Komenský School needs to be structurally secured in the long term,¹³ and asks the authorities to report on steps taken to implement this recommendation.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Czech language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Austria in mainstream education in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

22. The information provided by the authorities concerning Burgenland-Croatian (see paras. 17 and 18) applies to Czech accordingly.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

23. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Burgenland-Croatian (see para. 19), which applies to Czech accordingly.

3. Hungarian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take steps to strengthen the use of Hungarian in education, including by providing a sufficient number of teachers and the necessary material.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

24. According to the authorities, the curricula for Hungarian in bilingual primary schools, lower secondary schools, and the bilingual federal secondary school in Oberwart, have been updated and have been in effect since the 2023/24 school year. The nationwide school entry assessment has been translated into Hungarian. The authorities are developing tools for formative assessments of competence (competence checks) in Hungarian, intended for students at the third, fourth, seventh, and eighth school levels.

¹² See also [Annex to the 6th Report of the Republic of Austria pursuant to Article 25 \(2\) of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#), p. 4.

¹³ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 80.

25. The authorities refer to the University College of Teacher Education Burgenland (PPH Burgenland) which offers students the opportunity to acquire the qualification for bilingual teaching in Hungarian both in the area of training and further education.

26. There is no information on measures taken as regards the teaching materials.

27. Representatives of Hungarian speakers have informed the Committee of Experts that the authorities have not taken steps to strengthen the use of Hungarian in education, including by providing a sufficient number of teachers and the necessary materials.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

28. The Committee of Experts welcomes the information about the new curricula for Hungarian as a subject in the field of minority schools. However, the recommendation refers also to measures aimed at strengthening bilingual teaching and not only teaching of Hungarian, as well as the provision of teacher and teaching materials.¹⁴

29. As regards the provision of a sufficient number of teachers, the information provided by the authorities corresponds to those reported in 2021 for the purposes of Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report. Furthermore, it notes that no information was provided about providing the necessary teaching materials. Therefore, further steps are needed to implement this recommendation.

30. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures seem to have been taken to ensure the provision of a sufficient number of teachers. The authorities should work with representatives of Hungarian speakers to develop a strategy to tackle the lack of teachers, as well as short-term remedies such as incentives for students (such as guaranteed employment or salary bonuses).¹⁵ Measures are also needed as regards teaching materials.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Increase the frequency and duration of Hungarian language television programmes and ensure sufficient financial support to the main newspaper published in Hungarian.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

31. The authorities refer to the legal obligations of the ORF with respect to the provision of programmes in Hungarian. There is no information about the increase of frequency and duration of Hungarian language television programmes.

32. The authorities state that the main Hungarian newspaper receives a total amount of €195 000, for the years 2024-2025. This amount includes financial support for the social media presence, project-related personnel and fee costs.

33. Representatives of Hungarian speakers have informed the Committee of Experts that the frequency and duration of Hungarian language television programmes have not been increased, and that the financial support for the main newspaper published in Hungarian is not sufficient.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

34. Based on the information provided by the representatives of the Hungarian speakers the frequency and duration of Hungarian language television programmes have not been increased. Therefore, it is

¹⁴ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), paras. 15, 63.

¹⁵ See for example the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action contained in the Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report on the United Kingdom and Isle of Man, [MIN-LANG \(2021\) 3](#), para. 32.

important that the Austrian authorities take measures to increase the duration and frequency of Hungarian language television programmes and report on it in the next periodical report.

35. The funding for the main newspaper in 2021 was €86 600 for one year (as noted in the periodical report) and the allocation for 2024/25 is €195 000 for two years. Although the funding has slightly increased it remains unclear whether this amount is adequate. The Committee of Experts invites the authorities to report on it in the next periodical report.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Hungarian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Austria, in mainstream education and in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

36. The information provided by the authorities concerning Burgenland-Croatian (see paras. 17 and 18) applies to Hungarian accordingly.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

37. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Burgenland-Croatian (see para. 19), which applies to Hungarian accordingly.

4. Romani – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Strengthen the teaching of Romani at all levels of education.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

38. According to the information provided by the authorities, Romani lessons remain available at the elementary school in Oberwart as a free lesson [optional subject without grades], supported by the online platform Skooly. The Educational Institution for Elementary Education (BAfEP) Oberwart and PPH Burgenland integrate knowledge of the Romani language into teacher training to support the recognition and inclusion of children's linguistic abilities in education. The Vienna Education Directorate's Language Support Center offers Romani lessons, with registration available via a Romani-language form.

39. The authorities refer to the Council of Europe's QualiRom project, through which teaching materials covering six Romani dialects were developed for primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Building on this initiative, the University of Graz has been offering Romani language courses since the 2022/23 academic year. In Burgenland, the Forum4Burgenland was established to strengthen the teaching of minority languages, including Romani, through structured co-operation between educational institutions and minority communities.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

40. The Committee of Experts notes that some of the initiatives are already mentioned in the evaluation report. They do not ensure the structural integration of Romani across all levels of education. There is no indication that Romani is systematically included at all educational levels. The Committee of Experts considers that strengthening the teaching of Romani can be achieved by increasing the number of teaching hours, granting Romani lessons a more solid status, rather than offering them as optional classes and extending it to other levels of education. It also draws the attention of the authorities to the Romani language textbooks for levels A1, A2, and B1, developed by the European Romani Language Initiative and based on

the Council of Europe's Curriculum Framework for Romani. Therefore, the Committee of Experts considers that further measures are needed from the authorities to fully implement this recommendation.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Romani language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage in Austria in mainstream education and in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

41. The information provided by the authorities concerning Burgenland-Croatian (see paras. 17 and 18) applies to Romani accordingly.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

42. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Burgenland-Croatian (see para. 19), which applies to Romani accordingly.

5. Slovak – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Ensure sustainable and sufficient funding for the Komenský School.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

43. There is no information on the steps taken to implement this recommendation.¹⁶

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

44. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Czech (see para. 21), which applies accordingly.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Slovak language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage in Austria in mainstream education and in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

45. The information provided by the authorities concerning Burgenland-Croatian (see paras. 17 and 18) applies to Slovak accordingly.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

46. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Burgenland-Croatian (see para. 19), which applies to Slovak accordingly.

¹⁶ See also [Annex to the 6th Report of the Republic of Austria pursuant to Article 25 \(2\) of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#), p. 4.

6. Slovenian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take measures to strengthen the use of Slovenian in administration in practice, including the publication of documents, in particular at local level.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

47. According to the information provided by the authorities, over 80 bilingual online forms are available in Carinthia, and can be accessed through district administrative authorities' websites and via the central website.¹⁷ The forms encompass all areas of municipal administration and are available to every Carinthian municipality.¹⁸ Furthermore, they refer to the provision of online forms in Slovenian by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Federal Ministry of Finance.

48. The Carinthian Academy of Administration offers a workshop on using Slovenian in official administration. The National Minority Office of Carinthia continuously translates official forms into Slovenian and publishes them online, along with a glossary of administrative terminology. The Carinthian Chamber of Agriculture has established a Slovenian-language service point for counselling, led by a Slovenian-speaking staff member and supported by the Carinthian National Minority Office in translation work.

49. Representatives of Slovenian speakers have informed the Committee of Experts that the authorities have not taken steps to strengthen the use of Slovenian in administration.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

50. The Committee of Experts notes authorities' efforts to strengthen the use of Slovenian in practice, although some initiatives have also been mentioned in the evaluation report. The Committee of Experts also notes that the authorities have not provided information about measures to address other practical issues,¹⁹ including the publication of documents in Slovenian, in particular at local level.

51. The Committee of Experts considers that further measures are needed to implement these recommendations. It reiterates that measures should be taken to ensure that all the relevant authorities are fully aware of their obligations related to the use of minority languages and to provide them with the necessary technical and financial support. Application forms should be made further available and easily accessible. The language competences of the staff should continue to be strengthened, including with respect to specific terminology.²⁰ Authorities should also be encouraged to use Slovenian in those municipalities which are not legally obliged by the national legislation, but where the Slovenian speakers are traditionally present in sufficient numbers for the purposes of the undertakings entered into by Austria.²¹

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Promote awareness throughout the country of the Slovenian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage in Austria in mainstream education and in the media.

Implementation measures taken by the Austrian authorities

52. The information provided by the authorities concerning Burgenland-Croatian (see paras. 17 and 19) applies to Slovenian accordingly.

¹⁷ See [IT-Kommunal](#).

¹⁸ See [Zweisprachige Online-Formulare für Kärntner Gemeinden](#).

¹⁹ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), paras. 35, 36, 75, 76.

²⁰ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 37.

²¹ See Fifth Evaluation Report on Austria, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)2](#), para. 75.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

53. With regard to the implementation of the recommendation, the Committee of Experts refers to its conclusion regarding Burgenland-Croatian (see para. 19), which applies to Slovenian accordingly.

Communication to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, while acknowledging the efforts of the Austrian authorities to comply with their undertakings under the Charter, has in its fifth evaluation report (Min-LANG(2023)2) made “recommendations for immediate action” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in Austria.

In accordance with the Committee of Ministers Decisions of 28 November 2018 (CM/Del/Dec(2018)1330/10.4e), Austria had to present information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action, which contain the priority measures that should be taken by the state party. Austria presented this information on 8 October 2024. In the present evaluation, the Committee of Experts has examined the implementation of these recommendations.

In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Committee of Experts invites the Committee of Ministers to:

1. take note of the evaluation made by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by Austria and invite the Austrian authorities to disseminate it to the competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders;
2. reiterate its Recommendation CM/RecChL(2023)3 and invite the Austrian authorities to present their next periodical report by 1 October 2025 in the required format.