

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN ZAPORIZHZHA REGION, UKRAINE.¹

Mission

Preservation of multicultural and ethnic diversity of Zaporizhia region, support of development of national self-consciousness and self-expression and protection of rights of national minorities, promotion of fuller satisfaction of rights and needs of national minorities;

Establishing a systematic dialogue between national minorities and the authorities, further improving the effectiveness of their interaction;

Raising awareness of employees of regional state administrations, regional state administrations, the general public, and directly national minorities, regarding state and regional policies in the field of protection of the rights of national minorities;

Involvement of young people belonging to national minorities in activities in the field of preserving the identity of ethnic communities in the region, preserving their cultural, linguistic and religious heritage.

Intensification of activities of national minorities in the field of protection of their interests, improvement of communication skills.

Policy

The common goal of the Zaporizhia Regional State Administration (hereinafter referred to as the Regional State Administration) and the national minorities of the Zaporizhia Region (hereinafter - minorities or national minorities) is a sustainable and just future for people belonging to national minorities, including preservation and development of their cultural, religious and linguistic identity. This Communication Strategy aims to develop measures to respond to the expressed needs of national minorities, through transparent and open communication between minorities and regional state administrations, as well as between different minorities and their organizations.

For regional state administrations (within its competence), the Strategy also envisages ensuring compliance with international human rights standards (UN, ECHR) and fulfilling the obligations assumed by the state of Ukraine by ratifying the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in particular compliance with the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe concerning these documents.

For this purpose, the Regional State Administration, with the support of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, has created new technical means in the form of a communication platform, which is a practical means of implementing the Strategy. Platform is designed for effective communication between regional state administration and NGOs as well as for representations of cultural, linguistic and religious wealth (identity) and heritage of national

¹ The Zaporizhia Regional State Administration developed this strategy with the assistance of the Council of Europe in the framework of the project 'Protecting national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine' and the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021.

minorities of the region. This will make it possible to respond quickly to pressing problems and potential threats and to improve interaction both with and between national minorities.

The administrator of the Communication Platform of National Communities of Zaporizhia Oblast "MULTI-NATIONAL FAMILY OF ZAPORIZHZYA REGION" is the Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration that is acting in accordance with Ukrainian legislation. The communication platform will make it possible to support the use of national minority languages, while maintaining transparency through translation into Ukrainian.

The implementation of the communication strategy is carried out taking into account the Principles of formation and implementation of the strategy to ensure effective communication between the authorities and ethnic communities, developed by experts of the CoE Office in Ukraine and set out in the annex to this Strategy.

Action Plan

The Action Plan to improve the communication strategy focuses on cooperation with all NGOs of national minorities, including Roma, Crimean Tatars, Karaites, Bulgarians, Germans, Jews, Poles, Armenians, Albanians and other members of national minorities.

At the first stage, an interactive platform is implemented, which provides easy dissemination of information and messages.

This platform was created to promote:

- knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of national minorities in accordance with Ukrainian and international law;
- advising and providing information on national minorities and current issues in this area;
- ongoing dialogue between all stakeholders, including the media on national minority issues;
- public coverage and general awareness raising on the mechanisms of support and initiatives of the regional state administration and other state bodies and local self-government bodies;
- public coverage and information on cultural, educational and various social events of national minorities and their organizations, in particular the creation of a calendar of events and announcements of events;
- up-to-date references to state authorities, non-governmental institutions and organizations concerned with cooperation with national minorities;
- a place to publish news.

General information on the platform will be available for viewing. Interactive content will be accessible to registered users.

The Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration undertakes to support the work of the following functions to ensure the usefulness of the platform.

- Adding and updating public content;
- Adding news;

- Establishing and maintaining links;
- Moderation of the interactive panel;
- Maintaining contacts with registered participants and providing feedback.

Measured results

The applying of the platform will be continuously monitored. The results of the monitoring will be published yearly. Each community shall add at least one news item per month during the first year of operation. (at least 15 national-cultural societies must publish at least one news item per month)

Traffic to the site will be monitored to encourage use among people belonging to all interested national minorities. (the number of visitors during the first three months of the site must be at least 100 people)

The Regional State Administration will publish at least 2-3 up-to-date information on the Platform every week, which will be duplicated on the Facebook page and the Regional State Administration's website.

To increase the social activity of national minorities, during the first year of work there will be one training with the participation of 25 public organizations of national minorities.

Stakeholders and their competencies:

All stakeholders, namely authorities and national minorities, participate in ensuring the activities of the Communication Platform and in the implementation of the Strategy with the assistance of international human rights organizations and the media. The activities of the platform and the implementation of the strategy are carried out taking into account the Principles of formation and implementation of the strategy to ensure effective communication between the authorities and ethnic communities, as well as other documents that are annexes to this Strategy.

Authorities

The strategy operates on the basis of the Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration:

- The Department of Religions and Nationalities of the Department of International Relations of the Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration will perform work related to the project;
- two employees of the Department will allocate 25% of their time to this project;
- the administrator of the Platform and of the other information channels is the Head of the Department for Religions and Nationalities of the Department of International Relations of the Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration together with a representative of civil society.

National minorities

NGOs representing national minorities cooperate with the authorities on the functioning of the platform and the implementation of the strategy, in particular:

- participate in managing of the Communication Platform. The Chairman of the Association of National Minorities of Zaporizhia Oblast together with the Platform Administrator - Head of the Department for Religions and Nationalities of the Department of International Relations of the Department of Culture, Tourism, Nationalities and Religions of the Regional State Administration provides administration of the Platform and other information channels related to the Strategy ;
- Participate in filling the relevant sections of the platform, at the request of employees of regional state administrations responsible for project support;
- provide, if possible, relevant information on life and everyday life, current issues of their communities to fill the relevant sections of the platform;
- Participate in joint activities organized by the regional state administration, related to the activities of the platform, filling its sections and the implementation of the strategy as a whole;
- actively initiate certain steps necessary for the successful implementation of the Strategy and, as a consequence, more complete and comprehensive provision of their rights and needs;
- communicate and cooperate with each other, in particular:
 - a) conduct a mutual (horizontal) dialogue on topical issues of today's national minorities, the state of ensuring their rights;
 - b) share experience in ensuring the rights, needs and identity of national minorities, preserving the ethnocultural diversity of the region;
 - c) jointly develop proposals for filling the relevant sections of the platform, discussing certain topical issues in the life of national minorities.

This strategy has four Annexes:

Appendix 1. Technical conditions.

Appendix 2. Principles of formation and implementation of the strategy of ensuring effective communication between the authorities and ethnic communities.

Appendix 3. [Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers \(12.12.2018\) to member States on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Ukraine.](#)

Appendix 4. [Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Fourth opinion on Ukraine -adopted 10.3.2017](#)