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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' seventh evaluation report on the**

CROATIA

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 entered into force in respect of Croatia on 1 March 1998 and applies to the following languages: Boyash Romanian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Istro-Romanian, Italian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian and Ukrainian. The Boyash Romanian, German, Istro-Romanian and Slovenian languages are covered by Part II (Article 7) only, whereas the other languages receive protection under both Part II and Part III (Articles 8-14).

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. Croatia submitted the **information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** contained in the Committee of Experts’ seventh evaluation report² on 1 September 2025. This **evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** is based on the information received from the Croatian authorities, as well as from representatives of the regional or minority language speakers pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.³ As far as the compliance of Croatia with all its undertakings under the Charter is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its seventh evaluation report. The Committee of Experts will examine the implementation of all of the undertakings concerning all of the minority languages in the next evaluation report.

5. This evaluation was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 10 June 2026.

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 Seventh evaluation report on Croatia, [MIN-LANG \(2024\) 05](#).

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 Croatia of the recommendations for immediate action

I. General issues

Promotion of regional or minority language education

6. Several recommendations for immediate action contained in the Committee of Experts' seventh evaluation report addressed the establishing or strengthening of regional or minority language education, its extension to all stages of education or to additional municipalities, the training of teachers and development of teaching materials. While the Croatian authorities express their openness to develop regional or minority language education – which is welcomed by the Committee of Experts - they also refer to the initiative belonging to the regional or minority language speakers, local authorities or educational institutions, as well as to the capacity of such institutions. The generally supportive attitude of the national authorities to requests or initiatives of the regional or minority language speakers was noted by the Committee of Experts already in its seventh evaluation report. However, the need for a more pro-active approach to develop further regional or minority language education was also pointed out.⁴ The Committee of Experts underlines that the Charter undertakings constitute obligations for the national authorities and require them, according to Article 7.1.c of the Charter, to take, on their own initiative, “resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them”, which implies an obligation to take proactive measures.⁵ They should actively plan and promote regional or minority language education, approach and support the other relevant stakeholders, and identify appropriate solutions to existing challenges. Moreover, the authorities should raise awareness about the benefits of and opportunities for regional or minority language education, including among the majority population as part of the local cultural heritage of the area concerned.⁶

Use of regional or minority languages in administration

7. The need to revise the one-third threshold for regional or minority languages to be in equal and official use, and the limits of possibility of their voluntary introduction in equal and official use by local or regional self-government units have been addressed by the Committee of Experts throughout several monitoring cycles.⁷ The Croatian authorities continue to report on the existing situation based on the application of the national legislation, but not on any new measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Experts to introduce each regional or minority language protected by Part III in equal and official use in at least one municipality, to extend the use to additional municipalities and, in general, to strengthen the use of regional minority languages in practice in the relations with local branches of national authorities, as well as local and regional authorities. The Committee of Experts reiterates that the Croatian authorities should apply the undertakings ratified under Article 10 in areas where the speakers are traditionally present in sufficient (absolute or relative) numbers and not based exclusively on the results of the census and thresholds. They should approach local and regional authorities and encourage them, including by means of financial assistance, to introduce the equal and official use of the relevant minority language through their statutes.⁸ Moreover, practical measures at organisational level need to be taken in order to facilitate the use of minority languages within the administration (e.g. recruitment of officials who can work in the relevant regional or minority language, training of existing staff, translation), as well as steps to encourage the regional or minority language speakers to avail themselves of the possibility to use their

⁴ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 48.

⁵ Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by Czechia, MIN-LANG (2026) 4, para. 7.

⁶ Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by Czechia, MIN-LANG (2026) 4, para. 10.

⁷ See, for example, seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, paras. 20-21, Sixth evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2019)18, paras. 15-16, Fifth evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, ECRML (2015) 2, paras. 26-28, Fourth evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, ECRML (2010) 9, paras. 22-23.

⁸ For a complete overview of the Committee of Experts analysis and position on these issues, see Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, paras. 12-21.

language in contacts with the authorities, without the impression of being perceived as “trouble-makers” or disadvantaged in any way.⁹

Use of regional or minority languages in the broadcasting media

8. There have been no developments as regards the introduction or the extension of radio or television programmes in regional or minority languages, in order to reach a sufficient duration, frequency and regularity, as recommended. The Croatian authorities continue to refer to the existing offer of programmes about and for national minorities.¹⁰ The Committee of Experts notes that the situation of the programmes in minority languages and more generally, of the presence of national minorities in the media and the need to better reflect minority languages and cultures in the programmes dedicated to the wider public, has been raised by several regional or minority language speakers in their statements. The recent report of the Ombudswoman also recommends that the public broadcaster Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT) increase the share and frequency of programmes on national minorities, include them to a greater extent in the general programmes, and regularly use regional minority languages in programmes intended for national minorities. Moreover, this report notes that, due to dissatisfaction with the total broadcasting time allotted to national minorities-related topics and the quality of these programmes, the Council for National Minorities did not accept, but only took note of, the public broadcaster’s report on the programmes for national minorities produced in 2024.¹¹ The Committee of Experts emphasises the contribution of media to the promotion of regional or minority languages, *inter alia* by increasing language exposure and thus supporting their acquisition, by providing possibilities to use the regional or minority languages publicly, and by raising visibility and awareness of these languages in the country.¹² It reiterates that resolute steps are needed to ensure adequate programmes in regional or minority languages as regards their duration, regularity, frequency and content, as well as accessibility which can be facilitated by the internet.¹³ The Committee of Experts is aware that the Operational Programmes of National Minorities for 2024-2028 contain measures intended to strengthen the presence of national minorities and minority languages in the media. It looks forward to receiving information on the progress in this field. As already recommended in the seventh evaluation report and by the Ombudswoman in several reports, a campaign aimed at raising awareness among the general public about the value of minority languages and scripts, their use in the public sphere, as well as the contribution of national minorities to Croatian society should be organised, including in the media.¹⁴

Reservation to Article 7.5

9. When ratifying the Charter in 1997, Croatia made the reservation “that (...) the provisions of Article 7, paragraph 5, of the Charter shall not apply.” Article 7.5 covers the promotion of non-territorial languages, and the reservation excludes Romani from the protection of the Charter. Throughout the years, Croatia has been encouraged by the Committee of Experts and other representatives of the Council of Europe to withdraw the reservation and since 2013, it has several times indicated that it intended to do so.¹⁵ Recently, Croatia informed that interministerial discussions regarding the withdrawal of the reservation were

⁹ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 75.

¹⁰ The public broadcaster HRT offers two television programmes: *Prizma* and *Manjinski mozaik*. *Prizma* is a 45-minute weekly programme broadcast all year, about various topics related to national minorities, in which minority languages are also used by their speakers. *Manjinski mozaik* is a 15-minute weekly programme (except during summer), consisting in documentary stories, dedicated each time to another national minority and broadcast in the given minority language. The presence of national minorities in the programmes is linked to the share in the population. On radio, the first channel HRT-HR 1 (Hrvatska radiotelevizija – Hrvatski radio) broadcasts *Multikultura*, a magazine about national minorities, in Croatian. Some programmes in minority languages are broadcast by the HRT-HR regional stations, or by local radio and television stations. See seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, paras. 78-83.

¹¹ [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2025](#), p. 183-184.

¹² Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by Czechia, MIN-LANG (2026) 4, para. 20.

¹³ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 80.

¹⁴ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, para. 35, [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2025](#), p. 173, p. 181 [also 2024, 2021].

¹⁵ For a more detailed overview, see Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 9.

planned.¹⁶ The Committee of Experts welcomes this information and looks forward to receiving information about the finalisation of the procedure and the withdrawal of the reservation.

II. Recommendations for immediate action

1. Boyash Romanian – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Extend Boyash Romanian education in pre-school and primary education (Model C) in the counties of Međimurje and Osijek-Baranja, also by ensuring a sufficient number of teachers and teaching materials.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

10. The Croatian authorities report that Boyash Romanian continues to be taught under Model C at the primary schools in Kuršanec, Orehovica and Podturen (Međimurje county) to a total of 70 pupils and that teaching under Model C has been approved since 2020/2021 at the primary school Jagodnjak (Osijek-Baranja county). The authorities acknowledge the provision of adequately trained teachers and the development of teaching materials as challenges, and state their commitment to support projects, teacher training, as well as the involvement of speakers in developing teaching materials. Funding opportunities are available, according to the authorities, under different national action plans and programmes, which can cover *inter alia* the development of teaching materials, training and additional support for Roma pupils. The authorities indicate that ensuring the necessary conditions for extending the teaching of Boyash Romanian to additional institutions will be a priority. They also refer to the establishment of structures dealing with national minorities and minority languages, including one dedicated to the Roma national minority, after a 2024 reorganisation of the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, as a way to strengthen the institutional framework in this field.

11. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Boyash Romanian speakers express concern, particularly as regards the situation in the Osijek-Baranja county, about the lack of adequately trained teachers and teaching materials, as well as the limited engagement of institutions in long-term planning of human resources. They emphasise the need to support the Boyash Romanian speakers in becoming language teachers through scholarships and further education, as well as to develop training and certification programmes.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

12. The Committee of Experts regrets that teaching of Boyash Romanian has not been extended to the pre-school level or to primary school institutions other than those already mentioned in the seventh evaluation report,¹⁷ and that no concrete developments are reported about teachers and teaching materials. It also notes that the Croatian authorities do not report on initiatives dedicated specifically to Boyash Romanian, but rather on support programmes focused on the Roma national minority. The Committee of Experts nevertheless welcomes that the number of pupils learning Boyash Romanian in the three schools in Međimurje county has increased compared to the data in the seventh evaluation report,¹⁸ which clearly demonstrates the interest among parents and pupils. As regards the school in Jagodnjak (Osijek-Baranja county), it regrets that, despite the interest of the parents and pupils, and the approvals issued by the authorities, the lack of teachers prevented further developments for several years¹⁹ and no changes were

¹⁶ [Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States](#), p. 43.

¹⁷ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 46.

¹⁸ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 92.

¹⁹ Seventh periodical report presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter, MIN-LANG (2023)5, p. 37, Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 92.

reported in this respect. The Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendation for the authorities to consider additional transitional exceptions to overcome the obstacles linked to the lack of staff, such as allowing graduates of three-year secondary education to teach Boyash Romanian.²⁰ This could be done in parallel with developing teacher training programmes and supporting Boyash Romanian speakers in becoming teachers, for example through dedicated scholarships. As regards the development of teaching materials, more involvement is needed from the authorities, beyond financial support, as this cannot be left exclusively to the minority language speakers and their organisations.²¹ The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 6 and encourages a more proactive and targeted approach from the authorities aimed at developing the offer of Boyash Romanian in education. The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. **Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in Boyash Romanian of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency in the areas where Boyash Romanian is traditionally used.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

13. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged. The authorities further refer to the period of 2022-2024, when HRT broadcast annually 150 minutes in Boyash Romanian, including 30 episodes of programmes for children. As regards 2025, no separate data on the use of Boyash Romanian is provided.

14. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Boyash Romanian speakers express interest in regular programmes in Boyash Romanian in regional and local media, produced in co-operation with the speakers. They also emphasise the importance of funding for the creation of content for children and young people, to support language transmission to younger generations.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

15. The Committee of Experts regrets that no television and radio programmes specifically in Boyash Romanian of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency have been introduced and that in general no developments as regards broadcasting media have taken place since the evaluation report. It notes that the programmes for children had been already referred to in the seventh evaluation report.²² The Committee of Experts reiterates that the current system of minority language broadcasting of the HRT does not provide for sufficient duration, regularity and frequency in the use of the various minority languages, to an extent which has a positive impact on the situation of the minority languages.²³ The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 8 and the Ombudswoman's recent reports. It considers that the authorities should take resolute steps, in co-operation with public or private national, regional or local broadcasters and in wide consultation with the Boyash Romanian speakers, to introduce a radio and a television programme in Boyash Romanian as described in the recommendation. Such programmes should cover content from various genres, address different generations to support language transmission, and be widely accessible including via the internet. The Committee of Experts also refers, in this context, to the recent Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) "*Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States*",²⁴ and the

²⁰ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 92.

²¹ The existing teaching materials have been developed by the school in Orehovica, with support from the University of Zagreb, see Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 46.

²² Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 92.

²³ See seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, paras. 78-83.

²⁴ [Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States](#), pp. 6-14.

role of new, social and digital media. The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- c. **Develop and implement, in co-operation with representatives of the speakers, a strategy on the promotion of the use of Boyash Romanian.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

16. The Croatian authorities did not report any actions taken to develop and implement a strategy on the promotion of the use of Boyash Romanian in co-operation with representatives of the speakers.

17. Representatives of the Boyash Romanian speakers highlight that such a strategy is necessary, should be developed in wide co-operation with the speakers, and should be financially sustainable. In their view, it should encourage language learning also through workshops, cultural events, summer schools, for which financial assistance should be made available; support projects connecting language and cultural heritage; establish an advisory body at county level based on a wide representation of associations and individuals. They are also concerned that some associations in the Osijek-Baranja county have seen their funding from the county or ministries reduced or completely cut, which endangers the activities related to language maintenance. Therefore, they find it important to strengthen support for associations working on language preservation, increase and secure funding for projects on cultural heritage and set up a partnership between authorities and civil society organisations.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

18. The Committee of Experts regrets that no steps have been taken to develop, in co-operation with the speakers, a strategy on the promotion of the use of Boyash Romanian. It emphasises the importance of such strategies for a structured promotion of regional or minority languages in general, and in particular for languages in a precarious situation like Boyash Romanian, which lack an infrastructure supporting their use in most domains covered by the Charter. Such strategies should define quantitative and qualitative targets concerning an increase in the number of speakers of the language, be accompanied by an action plan detailing the fields covered, measures, responsibilities and timelines and be based on the Charter provisions and the monitoring recommendations.²⁵ The Committee of Experts regrets that the opportunity to use Boyash Romanian in public signage, which meets the requirements of the national legislation, has not yet been taken up by the authorities. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

2. Czech – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Strengthen the use of Czech at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

19. The Croatian authorities inform that in 2024 the statute of the municipality of Dežanovac (22.80% inhabitants belonging to the Czech national minority) was amended to provide for a wider use of Czech,

²⁵ See also [Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States](#), p. 38.

after previous amendments to the statute had limited it in 2021.²⁶ It is therefore now possible to use Czech on place name signs, on signs with the names of public institutions, community centres, schools and other institutions, as well as for names of natural persons carrying out public tasks and of legal persons, in the settlements of Donji Sredani and Golubinjak.²⁷ The Croatian authorities also state that, in accordance with the 2020 statute of the town of Grubišno Polje, Czech may be used on place names signs and names of public authorities and community centres in the settlements of Ivanovo Selo, Mali Zdenci, Veliki Zdenci, Donja Rašenica, Orlovac Zdenački, Rastovac and Treglava. In the town of Grubišno Polje itself, Czech is used for the names of the public authorities and community centres and entities owned by the town.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

20. The Committee of Experts takes note of the 2024 amendments to the statute of the municipality of Dežanovac. Nevertheless, it notes that, according to the information provided by the authorities, the 2018 statute provided for a wider use of Czech, which included also the settlement of Dežanovac and the names of authorities.

21. Moreover, the Committee of Experts notes that the use of Czech is foreseen for a limited domain, that of place names signs and names of institutions. The Croatian authorities also confirm that for all regional or minority languages the most frequent domain regulated by statutes is that of bilingual/multilingual names of authorities and other institutions, as well as texts of seals and stamps. There is no information provided on other measures taken to extend the equal and official use to additional municipalities, nor to strengthen the use of Czech at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities in accordance with the undertakings ratified. The Committee of Experts underlines that these undertakings cover also the submission of oral or written applications to local branches of the national authorities and replies in Czech (Article 10.1.iii), the provision of widely used national administrative texts and forms in Czech or bilingually (Article 10.1.b), the drafting of documents by national authorities in Czech (Article 10.1.c), the use of Czech by local or regional authorities within the framework of their work (Article 10.2.a), the submission of oral or written applications in Czech to the regional or local authority (Article 10.2.b), the publication of the official documents in Czech by local and regional authorities (Article 10.2.c and d), as well as the use of Czech in the provision of public services. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 8 and reiterates that the implementation of the undertakings under Article 10 also requires practical measures to facilitate the use of minority languages within the administration, as well as steps to encourage the minority language speakers to avail themselves of the possibility to use their language in contacts with the authorities. It encourages the authorities to take further steps to strengthen the use of Czech at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities, and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

²⁶ In the Croatian legal system, the “equal and official use” of minority languages is in general prerequisite for their use in administration; a minority language is in equal and official use as a result of one of the following situations: persons belonging to a national minority make up at least one third of the population of a local self-government unit, which creates the obligation to introduce the minority language concerned in equal and official use; when the equal and official use is foreseen by international agreements; when the equal and official use is prescribed in the statute of a local self-government unit, even if the share of the national minority is below one third (voluntary introduction of a minority language in equal and official use); when a regional authority on whose territory local self-government units have introduced minority languages in equal and official use prescribes it in its statute. See Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 12 – 21 for a detailed description of the situation, including the position of the Committee of Experts in this respect.

²⁷ The 2021 amendments had reduced the use of Czech compared to the provisions of the 2018 statute to name signs on the buildings of the local Czech associations and for names of natural persons carrying out public tasks and of legal persons in the settlements of Dežanovac, Donji Sredani and Golubinjak.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme in Czech of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

22. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

23. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15 above, and underlines that measures should be taken to introduce the broadcasting of a television programme in Czech of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

3. German – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Extend the provision of German language education at pre-school and primary levels (Model C), including to additional municipalities, e.g. Đakovo, Sirač, Vukovar and Zagreb, as well as to the secondary level.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

24. The Croatian authorities express their willingness to extend the provision of German language education at pre-school and primary levels to additional municipalities, as well as to secondary level. However, they underline the primary role of the German speakers, parents and pupils, local self-governments, as well as of schools, including in terms of capacity, organisation and staff availability. In addition, the authorities inform that, at the time of the submission of the information, the curriculum for teaching the German language and culture under Model C was under development and expected to be finalised.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

25. The Committee of Experts welcomes the openness of the authorities towards extending the provision of German language education. Nevertheless, it regrets that the concrete measures are made dependent on other stakeholders and different conditions. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 6 above, and reiterates that the national authorities should actively aim at extending minority language education and establishing continuity between the different levels, rather than only react to initiatives of minority language speakers or other stakeholders.²⁸ To this end they should approach the regional or minority language speakers, the relevant local authorities and the educational institutions, discuss the opportunities and challenges and identify appropriate solutions. This is particularly important in the case of German, since the Committee of Experts noted in its seventh evaluation report that some requests for German language education under Model C had been refused at local level.²⁹ In addition, continued awareness raising about the benefits of and opportunities for minority language education would support its further development. It should be noted that in Croatia, minority language education is open to all pupils, whether they belong to a national minority or not, which is an approach to be encouraged, since

²⁸ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 48.

²⁹ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 94.

it contributes to language maintenance and revitalisation, as well as understanding and social cohesion of the local community.³⁰ Measures are further needed to extend the provision of German language education at pre-school and primary levels (Model C), including to additional municipalities, as well as to the secondary level. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in German of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

26. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

27. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15, and reiterates that measures should be taken to introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in German of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

4. Hungarian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Strengthen the use of Hungarian at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

28. The Croatian authorities indicate that the self-government units where Hungarian speakers have the right to equal and official use of Hungarian, on the basis of the results of the 2021 census and on the basis of statutes: Kneževi Vinogradi/Hercegszöllös (38.70 %), Ernestinovo/Ernőháza (15.61%), Tordinci/Valkótard (18.65 %), Bilje/Bellye and Grubišno Polje (2. 35%). They also explain that the 2020 statute of Grubišno Polje entitles the Hungarian minority in the settlement of Grbavac/Gerbavác to bilingual signs for the community centre and place names.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

29. The Committee of Experts notes that no new information is provided on measures to strengthen the use of Hungarian at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities, or to extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities, following the adoption of the seventh evaluation report.³¹ The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 7 and 21 above, and notes that further measures are needed to strengthen the use of Hungarian at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities, and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities. It considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

³⁰ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 43.

³¹ The local self-government units are those already listed in the seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 95 or predate the recommendation; as regards the Bjelovar-Bilogora county, it is referred already in the seventh periodical report of Croatia, but already at the time of the evaluation report, the Committee of Experts established that minority languages were not in equal and official use at county level; its statutes do not foresee it.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. **Extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Hungarian with a view to reach a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

30. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities, and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged. They also refer to the support provided for projects of minority associations, including in the media.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

31. The Committee of Experts notes that no new measures were reported to extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Hungarian beyond what has already been taken into account in the seventh evaluation report.³² It refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15 above, and underlines that measures are needed to extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Hungarian with a view to reach a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

5. Istro-Romanian – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Introduce Istro-Romanian in pre-school and primary education (Model C) in the municipalities of Kršan and Matulji and provide for a sufficient number of teachers and teaching materials.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

32. The Croatian authorities state that Istro-Romanian has not yet been introduced in pre-school and primary education under Model C. They are, however, open to a pilot programme in Kršan and Matulji, which would depend on the initiative of the Istro-Romanian representatives or the local community, and would need the support of national and international experts. As part of the initiative, the collection of data on the number of interested pupils, the availability of speakers “*competent*” to work with children, and the development of teaching materials would be necessary; while the educational authorities would be in charge of the identification of language basis (written standard, lexis, grammar), development of syllabus, preparation of curriculum and establishment of training modules for teachers.

33. The Istro-Romanian speakers indicate that, as part of projects, they continue to organise, among others, a language playgroup attended by 20 children (age 3-14) and an extracurricular activity at the Šušnjevića branch school and the Ivan Goran Kovačić Primary School in Čepić (classes 1-8), where fifteen children participate and learn Istro-Romanian and local traditions, through conversation, songs, stories, etc. They also provide information about plans to develop, in 2026, a curriculum for teaching Istro-Romanian and to introduce it as extracurricular activity or optional subject, in co-operation with the above-mentioned school and the University of Zagreb. They also emphasise that educational materials are lacking; however, digital content in Istro-Romanian, which could be used by pupils and teachers, continues to be developed as part of local and association initiatives.

³² Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, paras. 95, 106.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

34. The Committee of Experts notes that the promotion of Istro-Romanian in education continues to depend on the commendable work of an association and of local institutions. It refers to its observations in paragraphs 6 and 25 above, and reiterates that a more proactive approach of the authorities is needed in promoting minority languages and raising awareness about the value and opportunities of learning them. The participation in the playgroup and the extra-curricular activity clearly show the interest in Istro-Romanian. As already indicated in the evaluation report, these activities need to be complemented as soon as possible by pre-school education in Istro-Romanian and by the teaching of Istro-Romanian in primary school in accordance with Model C. Flexible solutions for existing obstacles, for example, the lack of teachers, are needed.³³ The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Provide long-term sustainable funding to the activities and facilities promoting Istro-Romanian.

35. The Croatian authorities state that, in 2024, €9 490 have been allocated to three projects promoting Istro-Romanian through a public call in the field of culture (programme for the protection and maintenance of intangible cultural heritage). The authorities did not report on steps taken to ensure provision of long-term sustainable funding for these activities.

36. The Istro-Romanian speakers are concerned about the lack of long-term sustainable funding for the two main entities promoting Istro-Romanian (the “Spod Učke” association and the Interpretation Centre and Ecomuseum Vlački Puti), which have to manage with project-based, irregular and insufficient funding. Unlike the association, the Interpretation Centre and Ecomuseum Vlački Puti, which is founded by the municipality of Kršan, receives some regular funding from the local authority allowing it to have two part-time employees; nevertheless, its activities are dependent of funding from the county of Istria and the Ministry of Culture. In addition, the current difficult financial situation of the municipality of Kršan may have a negative impact on its ability to provide regular funding to the Interpretation Centre and Ecomuseum Vlački Puti.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

37. The Committee of Experts commends the work of the association and local institutions, which are very active and dedicated to the promotion of Istro-Romanian. It regrets that no long-term, sustainable funding for the activities and facilities promoting Istro-Romanian has been established. Istro-Romanian is in a very precarious situation, and there are less funding opportunities for its promotion than for languages used by national minorities. The Committee of Experts, therefore, reiterates its call for structural support for the activities promoting Istro-Romanian and a strategy for safeguarding Istro-Romanian as a living language. Such a strategy should define qualitative and quantitative targets concerning the number of speakers, comprise the promotional measures foreseen by Part II of the Charter, clarify the responsibilities of the authorities and foresee sufficient funding.³⁴ The Committee of Experts emphasises the need for resolute action to safeguard Istro-Romanian. It considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

³³ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 47.

³⁴ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG(2024)5, para. 96; [Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States](#), p. 38.

6. Italian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. **Extend Italian language education to additional municipalities where Italian is used.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

38. The Croatian authorities state that they remain open to extending Italian language education to additional municipalities where Italian is used, in accordance with the wishes of parents and pupils, and depending on the capacities of schools and initiative of local authorities. They also indicate that, based on the provisions of the 2000 Act on Education in the Languages and Scripts of National Minorities, in the county of Istria some schools where Croatian is the medium of instruction, Italian is taught as a subject.³⁵ The authorities also indicate that teaching of Italian also takes place outside Istria, for example in Pakrac.

39. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, the Italian speakers acknowledge the efforts dedicated to supporting Italian language education but emphasize that further measures are needed. They point out the need to maintain the current school network, irrespective of the number of pupils, to extend the school network in areas other than those where Model A is applied, and to secure the teaching of Italian as a language of the region (i.e. not as a foreign language) as second language (L2) in all schools in municipalities where Italian is in equal and official use. They further refer to measures to support Italian in education, linked, *inter alia*, to the recognition of the grades obtained in the Italian language for university admission, translation of textbooks, teacher training, recognition of foreign diplomas and academic titles for future teachers.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

40. The Committee of Experts welcomes the openness of the authorities to the further extension of the Italian language education. Nevertheless, it notes that no information has been provided about places where Italian language education has been extended after the adoption of the seventh evaluation report.³⁶ While acknowledging the existing offer of education in Italian (Model A) and of teaching of Italian (Model C), the Committee of Experts encourages the Croatian authorities to identify ways to extend the offer to additional municipalities where Italian is used, irrespective of the language being in official use or not, in co-operation with the speakers. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 25 above, as regards the proactive role of the authorities and the awareness raising activities. In particular, minority language education cannot be made dependent on the will of local authorities or the infrastructure available at schools. Rather, schools and local authorities should be supported in overcoming existing challenges in relation to minority language education. Moreover, some of the measures proposed by the Italian speakers could reinforce the Italian language in education. The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

³⁵ Article 9 of this law foresees that if a minority language is in equal and official use in a local self-government unit, pupils in Croatian language schools will have the possibility to learn the minority language.

³⁶ See, for example, Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action contained in the Committee of Experts' sixth evaluation report on Croatia, para. 29, 7th periodical report of Croatia, p. 123 for reference to teaching Italian at the secondary school in Pakrac.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. **Extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Italian with a view to reaching a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

41. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities, and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

42. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Italian speakers emphasise the need to strengthen and extend the television programmes in Italian. They also call for support in order to improve access to the programmes in Italian of RTV Koper/Capodistria (Slovenia), by covering the costs for satellite transmission and by including them in the programmes exchanged between the Croatian and Slovenian public broadcasters based on their co-operation agreement.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

43. The Committee of Experts notes that no measures were reported to extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Italian. It refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15 above, and underlines that measures are needed to extend the broadcasting of television programmes in Italian with a view to reach a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

7. Ruthenian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Introduce Ruthenian in equal and official use in at least one municipality and use it in practice at the level of local and regional authorities.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

44. According to the information provided by the Croatian authorities, there has been no relevant development and Ruthenian has not been introduced in equal and official use in any municipality. The Croatian authorities also indicate that, according to the 2021 census, persons belonging to the Ruthenian national minority reach the highest shares in Bogdanovci (19.48%) and Tompojevci (16.40%). The authorities further report that they monitor the equal and official use of minority languages in all local and regional self-government units, draw attention to the importance of minority languages and encourage their introduction in equal and official use through statutes; the civil servants are informed about the equal and official use of minority languages in an annual workshop about the implementation of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities organised by the National School of Public Administration. The Croatian authorities also inform that activities related to the equal and official use of minority languages are included in the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

45. The Committee of Experts regrets that Ruthenian has not yet been introduced in equal and official use in any municipality and is not used in practice by local and regional authorities. It notes that the steps mentioned above have not led to additional municipalities introducing minority languages in equal and

official use; therefore, the measures taken need to be further developed and intensified.³⁷ As regards the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028, the Committee of Experts would welcome if the authorities would make more use of them for practical activities specifically aimed at implementing the monitoring recommendations for each language, including the introduction of minority languages in equal and official use in at least one municipality.³⁸

46. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 7 and reiterates that each minority language protected by Part III of the Charter should be introduced into equal and official use in at least one municipality. To this end, the Croatian authorities should address the local self-government units concerned and encourage them, including by means of financial assistance, to introduce the equal and official use of the relevant minority language through their statutes.³⁹ The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Make pre-school education available in Ruthenian and teach this language in secondary education.

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

47. According to the information provided by the Croatian authorities, Ruthenian is not used at pre-school or secondary level. The authorities express their openness towards extending the presence of Ruthenian beyond primary school level and providing technical support via the Ministry of Science Education and Youth, while underlining that the main initiative belongs to the Ruthenian speakers, parents, local self-governments, founders of kindergartens and schools. The Croatian authorities further state that meetings have been held with representatives of the Ruthenian speakers and of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb about the initiative to establish a Ruthenian Language and Culture Department. This would support teacher training and the development of teaching materials, and thus the extension of Ruthenian language education.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

48. The Committee of Experts welcomes the openness of the authorities towards making available Ruthenian at pre-school and secondary levels. It looks forward to further developments in establishing the new Department of Ruthenian Language and Culture.⁴⁰ The Committee of Experts refers to paragraphs 6 and 25 above, and encourages the authorities to take an active role in establishing minority language education, approach the minority language speakers, the relevant local authorities and the educational institutions, discuss the opportunities and challenges and identify appropriate solutions. They should also raise awareness among parents and pupils about the benefits and opportunities of minority language education. The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

³⁷ See Evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action contained in the sixth evaluation report, MINLANG (2022)3RIA, para. 14, Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, para. 20.

³⁸ See [Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina - Operativni programi nacionalnih manjina za razdoblje 2024. - 2028.](#)

³⁹ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, paras. 20-21.

⁴⁰ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, para. 98.

Recommendation for immediate action

- c. **Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in Ruthenian of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

49. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

50. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15, and underlines that measures are needed to introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in Ruthenian of a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

8. Serbian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Promote awareness of the Serbian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Croatia including in mainstream education and in the media.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

51. The Croatian authorities do not report on specific measures taken to promote awareness of the Serbian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Croatia. They refer to the general legal provisions concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, as well as to the co-financing of projects of national minority organisations, which, according to the authorities, also contribute to promoting awareness of minority languages and cultures as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Croatia.

52. According to the representatives of the Serbian speakers, as regards education, most pupils in Croatia, i.e. those not enrolled in one of the educational models which teach (in) Serbian, do not have systematic access to content presenting the Serbian language and culture as an integral part of Croatia's cultural heritage; moreover, according to the speakers, in textbooks and curricula the Serbian language and culture are primarily approached within historical and political narratives, which limits the space for their appreciation as cultural and society values. Reference to Serbs and their history are mostly made in a negative context. Serbian authors are underrepresented in teaching materials, and the history of Serbs in Croatia is generally not addressed. As regards media, the Serbian language and culture are only presented in the broadcasts dedicated to national minorities and are not systematically integrated in the mainstream programmes.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

53. The Committee of Experts regrets that no information is provided on specific steps taken to promote awareness of the Serbian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Croatia, including in mainstream education and in the media. It underlines that the responsibility for such measures lies with the national authorities and cannot be fulfilled by national minority associations only. The Committee of Experts refers to the analysis of the representation of national minorities in education commissioned by the Croatian authorities in 2022, as well as its recommendations, and reiterates its call

on the authorities to take further steps on their basis.⁴¹ As regards media and its role in raising awareness about minority languages and cultures, the Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraph 8. The Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendations to the Croatian authorities to promote awareness of the Serbian language and culture as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Croatia including in mainstream education and in the media. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. Take resolute steps to promote in the society as a whole respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Serbian in Croatia.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

54. The Croatian authorities do not report on specific resolute steps taken to promote in the society as a whole respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Serbian in Croatia. They refer to the co-financing of projects of national minority organisations.

55. Representatives of the Serbian speakers underline an ambivalence in the public discourse towards the use of Serbian language, and in particular the Cyrillic script. According to them, these trigger periodically negative reactions in the public space, for example in debates or media comments; sometimes such reactions come from representatives of authorities or politicians, on other occasions they result in incidents, like vandalising bilingual signs or public announcements.⁴² They also report that even in schools teaching in Serbian (Model A), inscriptions in Cyrillic script exist at a minimum level in common spaces. While the Serbian speakers acknowledge that the authorities respond by restoring the damaged infrastructure, they note that educational or preventive measures which would promote tolerance and understanding, such as public campaigns at national or regional levels emphasising the legitimacy and societal value of minority languages, are missing. As a result, Serbian speakers indicated that they sometimes refrain from using the language and the Cyrillic script in public.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

56. The Committee of Experts regrets that no information is provided on specific resolute steps taken to promote in the society as a whole respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Serbian in Croatia. It notes that the reports for 2024 and 2025 of the Ombudswoman, while citing also positive steps, refer to Serbian cultural centres being considered by some as hostile and as a security threat, although they receive support from the Croatian authorities, to cultural events organised by the Serbian speakers which had to be cancelled or postponed, to the reduction in funding of the weekly *Novosti* and to the cultural autonomy of the Serbian national minority being publicly challenged.⁴³ Moreover, the report for 2025 quotes a survey conducted in November 2025 which shows that 48.6% of the respondents believe that Serbian Cultural Days should be held in Croatian cities and 38.6% oppose this; the latter high share is a worrying sign for the Ombudswoman as regards the awareness and acceptance of the maintenance and expression of one's culture by national minorities. Moreover, reference is made to a complaint concerning the non-implementation of the rules on the equal and official use of minority languages and where the local authority expressed concern that displaying the Cyrillic script in public spaces would cause "unrest" among the population.⁴⁴ The Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendation to the Croatian authorities to take resolute steps to promote in the society as a whole respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Serbian in Croatia. It considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

⁴¹ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, paras. 26-27.

⁴² See also [SNV Bulletin 6](#).

⁴³ [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2025](#), p. 173-176, p. 181-182, [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2024](#), p. 155.

⁴⁴ [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2025](#), p. 173-176, p. 181-182.

Recommendation for immediate action

- | | |
|----|---|
| c. | Strengthen the use of Serbian and its script at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities. |
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Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

57. The Croatian authorities do not report any specific steps taken to strengthen the use of Serbian and its script at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities. They indicate the self-government units where Serbian speakers have the right to the equal and official use of Serbian, on the basis of the results of the 2021 census and on the basis of the statutes.⁴⁵ The authorities further report that they monitor the equal and official use of minority languages and encourage their introduction in equal and official use through statutes; the civil servants are informed about the equal and official use on minority languages in an annual workshop about the implementation of the relevant national legislation. The Croatian authorities also inform that activities related to the equal and official use of minority languages are included in the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028.

58. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Serbian speakers indicate that no progress has been achieved as regards the equal and official use of Serbian. In respect of those local self-government units where the one third threshold is met, they indicate that not all have provided for the use of Serbian, or, even if this is regulated, it is not implemented in practice. They further report that, even in places where the persons belonging to the Serbian national minority represent a clear majority, place names signs at the entry and exit points use only Croatian and the Latin script. No additional self-government units where the threshold is not met introduced Serbian in equal and official use.

59. The reports of the Ombudswoman point to persistent problems in displaying road signs with place names in Cyrillic script and list several municipalities where this is not done, despite Serbian being in equal and official use; the Ombudswoman also recommends to the national authorities to install bilingual road signs with the names of the settlements in all local self-government units where this is foreseen in the statutes.⁴⁶

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

60. The Committee of Experts regrets that no developments have taken place as regards the strengthening and extension of the use of Serbian and its script in administration.⁴⁷ The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 7, 21 and 45, and reiterates its recommendation to strengthen the use of Serbian and its script at the level of local branches of state authorities, regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

⁴⁵ Biskupija/Бискупија, Borovo/Борово, Civljane/Цивљане, Donji Lapac/Доњи Лапац, Dvor/Двор, Erdut/Ердут, Ervenik/Ервеник, Gračac/ГраЧАЦ, Gvozd/ГВОЗД, Jagodnjak/Јагодњак, Kneževi Vinogradi-Нерцегсзöllös/Кнежеви Виногради, Kistanje/Кистање, Krnjak/Крњак, Markušica/Маркушица, Negoslavci/Негославци, Plaški/Плашки, Šodolovci/Шодоловци, Trpinja/Трпиња, Udbina/Удбина, Vojnić/Војнић, Vrbovsko/Врбовско, Vrhovine/Врховине.

⁴⁶ [Annual Report of the Ombudswoman for 2025](#), p. 181-182.

⁴⁷ The list of local self-government units provided in the information document is identical with that in the seventh evaluation report (see footnote 66 on p. 27). As regards the Bjelovar-Bilogora county, it is referred already in the seventh periodical report of Croatia, but already at the time of the evaluation report, the Committee of Experts established that minority languages were not in equal and official use at county level; its statutes do not foresee it.

9. Slovak – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Use Slovak at the level of regional and local authorities and extend its equal and official use to additional municipalities.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

61. The Croatian authorities refer to four places where persons belonging to the Slovak national minority reach the highest share pursuant to the 2021 census: the municipality of Punitovci (33.16%), the towns of Ilok (13.36%) and Našice (5.30%) as well as the municipality of Lipovljani (2.32%). They also indicate that Slovak is in equal and official use in Punitovci and Našice, based on the statutes. In Punitovci, the statute provides for the use of Slovak in issuing documents, in addition to the use for place names and other signage; nevertheless, the use of Slovak is linked to “a legitimate interest” or “a demonstrated need and interest”. In Našice, according to the statute, Slovak is used on place name signs; for the names of public institutions, community centres, schools and other institutions; as well as for the names of natural persons carrying out public tasks and of legal persons, in the settlement of Jelisavac/Jelisavec.

62. According to the Slovak speakers, Slovak toponymy has been used in Jelisavac/Jelisavec for a very long time.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

63. The Committee of Experts welcomes the information about the 2023 statute of Našice and the use of Slovak.⁴⁸ It notes, however, that it only concerns the use of names and place names. There is also no information provided on other measures taken to extend the equal and official use to additional municipalities, nor to use Slovak in practice at the level of regional and local authorities in accordance with the ratified undertakings. The Committee of Experts notes the reference to a “demonstrated need” or “legitimate interest” in relation to the use of Slovak. It underlines that such an approach goes against the Charter’s objective to promote the use of minority language in public life; such use cannot be made dependent on a local authority assessing whether there is a “demonstrated need” or a “legitimate interest” to use a minority language which Croatia undertook to protect; rather the use should be facilitated and encouraged. The Committee of Experts refers to its comments in paragraphs 7 and 21, and encourages the authorities to take further measures to implement this recommendation. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. **Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme in Slovak with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

64. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities, and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

65. The Committee of Experts refers to its comments in paragraphs 8 and 15, and underlines that measures are needed to introduce the broadcasting of a television programme in Slovak with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

⁴⁸ See also comments of Croatia to the seventh periodical report.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Strengthen the use of Slovak in pre-school education.

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

66. According to the Croatian authorities, Slovak continues to be used at pre-school level only in Jelisavac (settlement belonging to the town of Našice). No information is provided on the teaching time.⁴⁹ The authorities also express their readiness to support initiatives strengthening the use of Slovak at pre-school level, while underlining that the main responsibility and initiative belong to the Slovak-speakers, parents, local self-government and the founders of kindergartens. They also state that the development of minority language education, including at pre-school level, is foreseen in the National Education System Development up to 2027 and the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028.

67. The representatives of the Slovak speakers inform that a programme for early learning of Slovak began in Punitovci. The construction of a kindergarten is planned in Markovac Našički (settlement belonging to the town of Našice), where Slovak would also be used. They also refer to the need to train pre-school teachers and to raise awareness of parents and pupils about the offer of Slovak at pre-school level.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

68. The Committee of Experts welcomes the information about a new possibility to learn Slovak at pre-school level. In the absence of any information about the time dedicated to Slovak, it underlines that at pre-school level the minority language should be used for at least half of the time that the children spend at kindergarten and goes beyond only teaching the language.⁵⁰ The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take further measures to strengthen the use of Slovak in pre-school education and refers to its observations in paragraphs 6 and 25 about the active role of the authorities in planning and promoting minority language education, including in raising awareness of the parents and pupils. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has not been fully implemented.

10. Slovenian – Part II language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Make pre-school education available in Slovenian.

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

69. The Croatian authorities refer to the teaching of Slovenian at primary and secondary levels, and acknowledge both the existing basis and the potential to extend the use of Slovenian to the pre-school level and ensure continuity. They also express their openness to continue dialogue with relevant stakeholders and to provide support, while underlining that the initiative belongs to the Slovenian speakers, parents, local self-governments and the founders of kindergartens. Furthermore, they indicate that the opportunities for the development of pre-school education in minority languages are envisaged in the framework of the National Education System Development up to 2027 and the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028.

70. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Slovenian speakers note that there is a basis for ensuring continuity in education in Rijeka, but indicate that no progress has been made towards introducing Slovenian in pre-school education in Rijeka. The Slovenian association continues to organise activities where Slovenian is used for pre-school children in Rijeka; in addition, some teaching of Slovenian takes place in several pre-schools in Međimurje county, provided by a teacher

⁴⁹ 30 minutes twice per week, see Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, para. 100, which is insufficient.

⁵⁰ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, para. 41.

commuting daily across the border and financed by Slovenia. The Slovenian speakers emphasise the need for a systematic and long-term approach, if pre-school education in Slovenian and continuity across school levels in Rijeka is to succeed. They also report that no further (in-service) training for Slovenian language teachers is organised by the Agency for Education and Training.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

71. The Committee of Experts welcomes the openness of the authorities but notes that there has been no development as regards the use of Slovenian at kindergarten level. It recalls its observations in paragraphs 6 and 25 about the active role the authorities should play in establishing minority language education, approaching the relevant stakeholders and identifying appropriate solutions. The existing activities in Rijeka and other areas show that there is interest in Slovenian at pre-school level. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take further measures to make available education in Slovenian at pre-school level and considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. **Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in Slovenian with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

72. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

73. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Slovenian speakers underline that the presence of the Slovenian language in the media remains insufficient and is not proactively encouraged thus reducing the visibility and presence of minority languages.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

74. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 8 and 15, and underlines that measures are needed to introduce the broadcasting of a television programme in Slovenian with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

11. Ukrainian – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Introduce Ukrainian in equal and official use in at least one municipality and use it in practice at the level of local branches of national authorities, local and regional authorities.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

75. According to the information provided by the Croatian authorities, there has been no development in this respect and Ukrainian has not been introduced in equal and official use in any municipality. The Croatian authorities also indicate that, according to the 2021 census, persons belonging to the Ukrainian minority reach the highest share in Bogdanovci (7.77%) and Lipovljani (3.42%). The Croatian authorities also inform that activities related to the equal and official use of minority languages are included in the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

76. The Committee of Experts regrets that Ukrainian has not yet been introduced in equal and official use in any municipality, and is not used in practice by local branches of national authorities, local and regional authorities.

77. The Committee of Experts refers to its observations in paragraphs 7, 21 and 45 above, and reiterates that each minority language protected by Part III of the Charter should be introduced into equal and official use in at least one municipality where the speakers have their highest (relative or absolute) concentration. To this end, the Croatian authorities should address the local self-government units concerned and encourage them, including by means of financial assistance, to introduce the equal and official use of the relevant minority language through their statutes.⁵¹ The Committee of Experts considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- b. Make pre-school education available in Ukrainian and teach this language in secondary education.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

78. According to the information provided by the Croatian authorities, Ukrainian is not used at pre-school or secondary level. The authorities express their openness towards extending the presence of Ukrainian beyond primary school level and to provide the technical support via the Ministry of Science Education and Youth, while underlining that the main responsibility and initiative belong to the Ukrainian speakers, parents, local self-government, founders of kindergartens and schools. Furthermore, they indicate that opportunities for the development of pre-school education in minority languages are envisaged in the framework of the National Education System Development up to 2027 and the Operational Programmes of National Minorities 2024-2028. Moreover, the authorities are looking into strengthening co-operation with Ukraine in the field of education.

79. In statements submitted to the Committee of Experts, the representatives of the Ukrainian-speakers do not report any progress in this respect.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

80. The Committee of Experts welcomes the openness of the authorities but notes that there has been no development as regards the use of Ukrainian at pre-school and secondary level. It recalls its observations in paragraphs 6 and 25 above about the active role the authorities should play in establishing minority language education and the awareness raising measures about the opportunities for minority language education. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to take further measures to make available education in Ukrainian at pre-school level and teach it at secondary level, and considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

Recommendation for immediate action

- c. Introduce the broadcasting of a television programme and a radio programme in Ukrainian with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency.**

Implementation measures taken by the Croatian authorities

81. The Croatian authorities refer to the programmes of HRT about and for national minorities, and indicate that, during these programmes, the use of regional or minority language by their speakers is encouraged.

⁵¹ Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Croatia, MIN-LANG (2024)5, paras. 20-21.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

82. The Committee of Experts refers to its comments in paragraphs 8 and 15 above, and underlines that measures are needed to introduce the broadcasting of a radio and a television programme in Ukrainian with a sufficient duration, regularity and frequency. It considers that this recommendation has not been implemented.

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 authorities of Croatia to comply with their undertakings under the Charter, has in its seventh evaluation report ([CM\(2024\)90](#)) made “recommendations for immediate action” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in Croatia.

In accordance with the Committee of Ministers Decisions of 28 November 2018 ([CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e](#)), Croatia 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. Croatia presented this information on 1 September 2025. 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 Croatia and invite the authorities of Croatia to disseminate it to the competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders;
2. reiterate its Recommendation CM/RecChL(2024)2 and invite the authorities of Croatia to present their next periodical report by 1 March 2028 in the required format.