

Collection of Council
of Europe and OSCE
**National Minority
Standards**

AN ONLINE RESOURCE OF KEY TEXTS

Foreword

In 2023, the Council of Europe will attain two important milestones: the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of its two key legal instruments pertaining to national minorities, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE HCNM) will mark the 30th anniversary of the opening of the High Commissioners' office in The Hague.

To mark these achievements, it is a great pleasure to present to you this compilation of texts on national minority standards from the Council of Europe and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. It presents key documents in several languages, thereby creating an invaluable resource for those working on issues related to national minorities. The joint webpage also illustrates the long-standing and strong co-operation between, and complementarity of, our two institutions.

The Council of Europe, established in 1949, is the first international organisation founded to foster co-operation between European democracies in order to promote and safeguard democracy, human rights and the rule of law. This aim is central to a vision of Europe based on peace, stability and justice. Promoting cultural diversity and ensuring equal and lasting protection to national minorities are an integral part of the realisation of this vision. The Council of Europe carries out its mission as regards national minorities through the standards enshrined in the Framework Convention and the Language Charter, monitoring of states parties' compliance with these standards, and co-operation activities supporting national authorities in applying them. It also continues intergovernmental co-operation to develop relevant policy instruments.

Originating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the OSCE promotes stability, peace and democracy through a comprehensive concept of security that covers the politico-military; the economic and environmental; and the human dimensions. To address national minority issues through these three dimensions, the position of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities was established to be an instrument of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage in regard to tensions involving national minority issues. The HCNM fulfils its mandate by providing analysis and policy guidance, including through its thematic Recommendations and Guidelines.

The Council of Europe and the OSCE HCNM fulfil their responsibilities towards national minorities using different tools that serve the same goal. In the current challenging geopolitical context, developing closer ties between our two institutions has become even more important than ever before.

As we have learnt over the last decades, setting standards and guidelines is only one important aspect in the protection of human rights; efficient implementation of these standards and monitoring adherence to them is imperative to ensure that they serve the purpose for which they were established and by doing so contribute to social cohesion, to build resilient societies and maintain peace. We hope that this joint online collection of resources will serve to remind and inform our readers, including members of the public and representatives of civil society and government authorities, about our unwavering commitment to serve and protect the interests of national minorities throughout Europe for the years to come.

Brief outline of resources available through the webpage

'Collection of Council of Europe and OSCE National Minority Standards'

PART I – The Council of Europe

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1994

- Treaty text and Explanatory Report, monitoring documents, HUDOC database, list of states parties, Committee of Ministers Resolution on revised monitoring arrangements (2022)
- Thematic Commentaries: Education, Effective Participation of Persons Belonging to National Minorities, Language Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Scope of Application of the Framework Convention

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992

- Treaty text and Explanatory Report, monitoring documents, HUDOC database, list of states parties, Committee of Ministers Decision on strengthening the monitoring mechanism (2018)

Statements of the Committee of Experts of the Charter on:

- Communication in minority languages during global medical crises (2020)
- Minority languages in online education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020)
- Promotion of minority languages through artificial intelligence (2022)

Other resources related to the protection of national minorities

- Texts from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Summits of Heads of State and Government (1993, 1997, 2005, 2023)

Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly on:

- Educational and cultural problems of minority languages and dialects in Europe (1981)
- The additional protocol on the rights of minorities to the ECHR (1993)
- The rights of national minorities (2003)
- Ratification of the FCNM by the member states (2006)
- Promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities (2019)

Recommendations of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on:

- Territorial autonomy and national minorities (1998)
- Minority languages (2017)

PART II – The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the High Commissioner on National Minorities

CSCE/OSCE General Principles and Minority Rights Commitments

- Summits of Heads of State or Government: Helsinki (1975), Paris (1990), Helsinki (1992), Budapest (1994), Lisbon (1996), Istanbul (1999) and Astana (2010)
- Meeting of Experts on National Minorities, Geneva (1991)
- Meetings of the Conferences on the Human Dimension, Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991)
- Ministerial Council, Maastricht (2003)

The Mandate of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

- Summit of Heads of State or Government, Helsinki (1992)
- Ministerial Councils: Stockholm (1992), Rome (1993), Bucharest (2001), Maastricht (2003), Sofia (2004) and Athens (2009)

HCNM Thematic Recommendations and Guidelines

- The Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities (1996)
- The Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities (1998)
- The Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities (1999)
- The Guidelines on the Use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media (2003)
- Recommendations on Policing in Multi-Ethnic Societies (2006)
- The Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations (2008)
- The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies (2012)
- The Graz Recommendations on Access to Justice and National Minorities (2017)
- The Tallinn Guidelines on National Minorities and the Media in the Digital Age (2019)
- Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Social and Economic Life (2023)

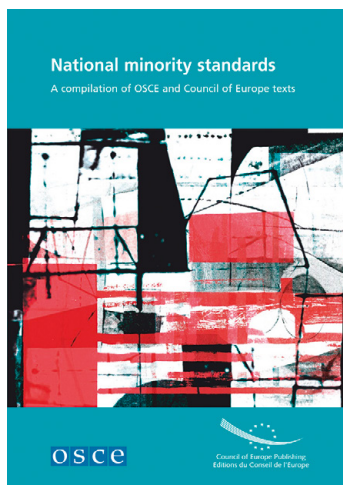


www.coe.int/coe-and-osce-national-minority-standards

The Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) have long been guided by the same values and similar goals in addressing national minority issues. In 2007 they jointly published a compilation of their relevant national minority related texts that underpin these shared goals and values.

The Council of Europe and the OSCE have continued to expand their range of instruments for addressing challenges related to national minorities. Therefore, the aim of this webpage is to collect in one place the key resources from the 2007 publication together with the documents and texts that the two organisations have since developed to further strengthen the promotion of national minority standards.

Additionally, the webpage allows for these standards to be more widely known and available, including in various languages, and serve as a resource for policymakers, civil societies and government authorities dealing with national minority issues.





The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) works for stability, prosperity and democracy in 57 States through a comprehensive approach to security. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is a conflict-prevention instrument with a mandate to identify and seek early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or friendly relations within or between OSCE participating States.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.