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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' fifth evaluation report on
FINLAND**

Introduction

1. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as “the Charter”) is a treaty of the Council of Europe putting obligations on its States Parties to protect and promote the country’s traditional minority languages in all fields of public life: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges. The Charter was ratified by Finland on 9 November 1994, entered into force on 1 March 1998 and applies to the following languages: Karelian (covered by Part II), Romani (Part II), Russian (Part II), Inari Sámi, North Sámi and Skolt Sámi (Parts II and III), Swedish (Part II and III), Tatar (Part II) and Yiddish (Part II).

2. The Committee of Experts monitors the implementation of the Charter. On the basis of periodical reports presented by each State Party, the Committee of Experts adopts evaluation reports 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 the evaluation report, the Committee of Ministers addresses additional recommendations to the State Party.

3. The State Party must present information only on the implementation of the **recommendations for immediate action** two and a half years after the due date of its periodical report.¹ The Committee of Experts then adopts an evaluation of the implementation of these recommendations. Two and a half years after the due date of the information, the State Party must present its next periodical report which shall contain comprehensive information about the implementation of all Charter undertakings and all recommendations.

4. Finland was expected to present **information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** contained in the Committee of Experts’ fifth evaluation report² by 1 March 2020; this information was submitted on 4 March 2020. This **evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** is based on the information received from Finland as well as from associations representing the Sámi and Swedish speakers pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.³ As far as the compliance of Finland with all its undertakings under the Charter is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its fifth evaluation report. The Committee of Experts will examine the implementation of all of the recommendations concerning all of the minority languages in the next evaluation report.

5. In the information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action, the Finnish authorities have, on their own initiative, also reported on implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee of Ministers in the last monitoring cycle. The Committee of Experts considers this good practice and has used the additional information in its evaluation, where appropriate.

6. This evaluation was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 7 October 2020.

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 [CM\(2018\)114](#), adopted on 22 March 2018

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 Finland of the recommendations for immediate action

1. Inari Sámi

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Work toward extending the *Giellagáldu* project, in co-operation with Norway and Sweden

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

7. The *Sámi Giellagáldu* language centre is a co-operation project between the Sámi parliaments of Finland, Norway and Sweden. As a professional expert body, the centre's tasks are to create new terminologies and standardisations for the Sámi languages, advise on place names, and offer consultation services to users of the Sámi languages.

8. The funding of *Sámi Giellagáldu* through an EU Interreg project ended in December 2018. To compensate for the discontinued EU funding, the Finnish authorities increased the annual state aid for the Sámi Parliament by €290 000 in 2019. This increase was continued in 2020 and is considered permanent. Following a study conducted by the "Nordic Sámi Civil Service Collaboration" evaluating various organisation options for the centre, the three Sámi Parliaments are currently working towards establishing a permanent structure for the centre in 2021.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

9. The Committee of Experts welcomes that the centre's work can be continued through a permanently increased allocation to the Finnish Sámi Parliament despite the end of the EU Interreg project.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Make the funding for the promotion of Inari Sámi sustainable

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

10. In 2019, the Finnish authorities increased the annual appropriation for the implementation of the Sámi Language Act to €150 000 (from €120 000 in 2017). The appropriation is regularly included in the state budget and is intended to support municipalities, parishes, herding co-operatives and certain private entities in covering the specific additional costs of applying the Act.

11. In their statement submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of Sámi speakers underlined that the amount of the annual appropriation is still insufficient and that it should be doubled to €300 000. This would help to raise the incentives needed for Sámi speakers to work in the public sector and, in turn, improve the offer of services in Sámi languages.

12. The Finnish authorities reported about a number of projects and programmes to promote the Sámi languages, which complement the annual appropriation guaranteed by the Sámi Language Act. These include the funding under the 2012 Action Plan for the Revival of the Sámi Languages, the above-mentioned *Sámi Giellagáldu* language centre, pilot projects on distance teaching, and a pilot project on safeguarding the teaching of Sámi languages outside the Sámi Homeland. The authorities support, furthermore, the maintenance of Sámi cultural and language nests. The annual government grant allocated for that purpose has increased from €900 000 in 2017 to €1.2 million in 2019.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

13. The Committee of Experts welcomes the increase in the annual appropriation to implement the Sámi Language Act and the government grant for Sámi language nests. It regrets, however, that the great majority of funding granted by the state for the promotion of Sámi languages continues to be project-based. The periodical, often annual or biennial, applications for funds represent a burden for the applicants in terms of time and staff resources. The insecurity connected with this system hampers the continuity of the services provided. The Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendation that measures should be taken to make funding available for longer durations. It further invites the authorities to consider institutionalising those projects that have proven successful, such as the language nests.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Inari Sámi, both in education and in the media

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

14. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland, reduce confrontation between language groups and bring together different societal actors in the field. Awareness-raising efforts are directed, *inter alia*, towards municipal authorities and towards children and young people in the education sector, including early childhood education and care. Campaign material will also be disseminated through the media. The programme has a budget of €40 000 and targets the two national languages as well as other languages traditionally spoken in Finland.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

15. The Committee of Experts welcomes the project launched on improving the “language climate” and in particular the fact that its target groups include children and young people, as education is an important vehicle to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis minority languages. However, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts what measures are to be financed by the €40 000 budget and whether this amount is sufficient to make a meaningful contribution to the implementation of the recommendation. The Committee of Experts encourages the Finnish authorities to evaluate the project’s impact and include such information in the next periodical report. The Committee of Experts reiterates, however, that beyond such one-off projects, the promotion of awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis minority languages through education requires a comprehensive approach involving the design of curricula, teacher training, and teaching materials.

Recommendation for immediate action

d. Take measures to strengthen basic and further teacher training, especially for subject teachers in Inari Sámi

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

16. In light of the information received from the authorities, the availability of Inari Sámi teachers has generally improved through increased government transfers and separate project-based funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Disaggregated data on the number of students enrolled in Inari Sámi teacher training and Inari Sámi language teachers is not yet available, but a study containing such data is expected to be completed in late 2020. Generally, the authorities acknowledge that challenges remain as regards the availability of Sámi speaking teachers, in particular for subject teaching in Sámi.

17. In December 2019, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a working group tasked with developing proposals to strengthen the Sámi languages and Sámi language teaching throughout the

country. The group is tasked with developing proposals for Sámi early education and care and language nest activities, the availability of teachers and early childhood education and care personnel, Sámi language learning materials, and co-operation with other Nordic countries on Sámi language education.

18. The authorities report, furthermore, on a project for training Sámi-speaking subject teachers on a fast schedule. The project is run jointly by the Giellagas Institute for Sámi Studies and the Faculty of Education at the University of Oulu and the Sámi Education Institute. Within this project, intensive basic and intermediate studies in all three Sámi languages started in autumn 2019 in Inari/Aanaar/Aanar/Anár.

19. Sámi language education was organised for early education and care personnel already working in the field. Representatives of Sámi speakers reported that they consider the project successful but that a permanent solution for educating Sámi-speaking early childhood education and care personnel is needed.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

20. The Committee of Experts acknowledges the fact that the authorities are aware that Inari Sámi remains a seriously endangered language in Finland. The Committee of Experts is pleased to note that the availability of Inari Sámi teachers has improved. As Finland's undertakings include the availability of teaching in Inari Sámi at pre-school, primary and secondary levels, the Committee of Experts welcomes the new project for training subject teachers in all three Sámi languages. It will follow with interest the outcomes of this project and invites the authorities to include, in the next periodical report, information on the number, education levels and subjects of the teachers trained in Inari Sámi.

21. The Committee of Experts welcomes the fact that authorities set up a working group on Sámi language teaching which includes teacher training in its scope and looks forward to receiving the results of the upcoming study with disaggregated data. It invites the authorities to include information on the measures proposed by the working group and concrete measures taken in the next periodical report.

22. Given the continued lack of Sámi teachers, which is also acknowledged by the authorities, the Committee of Experts notes with regret that much of the government funding in the areas of teacher training continues to be granted on the basis of projects which are limited in time. It considers that more long-term funding in all these areas would be required to ensure the sustainability of the efforts being made.

Recommendation for immediate action

e. Ensure the effective implementation of the legislation pertaining to Inari Sámi in State and local administration as well as in social and health care services

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

23. The new government programme adopted in December 2019 states that the linguistic rights of Sámi speakers in social and health care provision will be secured in practice. Social and health care provision in Sámi languages was also subject to a study on cross-border co-operation with Norway. In summer and autumn 2019, the Ministry of Justice, together with the Ministry of Social Affairs of Health and the Sámi Parliament, visited municipalities in the Sámi Homeland to discuss these matters. Representatives of Sámi speakers reported in a statement submitted to the Committee of Experts that the annual appropriation for such services in Sámi languages was insufficient and that the shortage of Sámi-speaking professionals persists.

24. In 2019, the Parliamentary Ombudsman assessed the availability of services in Sámi languages in the Finnish Social Insurance Institution *Kela*. The Ombudsman concluded that the requirements of the Sámi Language Act and the Non-Discrimination Act were not met in all respects. For example, services in Sámi by telephone or remote connection are only available for a very limited amount of time (4 hours a week).

Moreover, these services are only available in North Sámi and not in all three Sámi languages as required by the Sámi Language Act.

25. In March 2020, the Ministry of Justice published a report assessing the benefits of entering several languages in the population information system, which provides the basis for public service provision in either of the official languages - Finnish or Swedish. An online public consultation on the two alternatives set out in the report is currently being held. In their statement submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of Sámi speakers said they would welcome the possibility to enter several native languages in the population information system.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

26. The Committee of Experts notes that the authorities recognise the importance of social and health care provision in Sámi languages and maintain regular dialogue with Sámi representatives about these issues. While acknowledging the difficulties involved, the Committee regrets, however, that no concrete new measures have been reported which aim at remedying problems such as the shortage of Sámi-speaking professionals both in the local administration and in social and health care services. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to undertake, in consultation with the speakers, pragmatic and innovative measures to train and recruit Sámi-speaking personnel and to encourage Sámi speakers to make active use of their rights. Further action would notably be required in order to ensure the availability of widely-used national administrative texts and forms, and the use of the Sámi languages within the framework of regional and local authorities, including investigating digital resources to facilitate communication.

27. The Committee of Experts will follow with interest the results of the above-mentioned consultation on the benefits of entering several languages in the population information system and reiterates its position that the introduction of this possibility would be welcomed.

2. Karelian

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Karelian, both in the general curriculum at all stages of education and in the media

28. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland. For further information and the evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

3. North Sámi⁴

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Work toward extending the *Giellagaldu* project, in co-operation with Norway and Sweden

29. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 7-9.

⁴ Please note that cross-references are made wherever recommendations for the three Sámi languages were identical and no disaggregated information on their implementation is available.

Recommendation for immediate action**b. Make the funding for the promotion of North Sámi sustainable**

30. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 10-13.

Recommendation for immediate action**c. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis North Sámi, both in education and in the media**

31. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

Recommendation for immediate action**d. Take measures to strengthen basic and further teacher training, especially for subject teachers in North Sámi****Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities**

32. Disaggregated data on the number of students enrolled in North Sámi teacher training and on North Sámi language teachers is not available, but a study containing such data is expected to be completed in late 2020. Generally, the authorities acknowledge that challenges remain as regards the availability of Sámi-speaking teachers, in particular for subject teaching in Sámi.

33. For further information on implementation measures, please see paras. 17-19.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

34. The Committee of Experts acknowledges the fact that the authorities are aware that North Sami remains an endangered language in Finland. As Finland's undertakings include the availability of teaching in North Sámi at pre-school, primary and secondary levels, the Committee of Experts welcomes the new project for training Sámi subject teachers in all three Sámi languages. It will follow with interest the outcomes of this project and invites the authorities to include, in the next periodical report, information on the number, education levels and subjects of the teachers trained in North Sámi.

35. For further conclusions by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 21-22.

Recommendation for immediate action**e. Ensure the effective implementation of the legislation pertaining to North Sámi in State and local administration as well as in social and health care services****Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities**

36. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 23-27.

4. Romani

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Adopt a revitalisation programme for the Romani language

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

37. Finland adopted a new National Policy on Roma for the period 2018-2022. One of the actions included is the development of a national action programme for the revitalisation of Romani. An expert group has been set up and will begin its work this autumn. It is scheduled to prepare a revitalisation programme by 2021.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

38. The Committee of Experts welcomes that the new National Policy on Roma foresees the development of a national action programme for the revitalisation of Romani and encourages the authorities to include information on progress in this area in the next periodical report.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Develop, in co-operation with the speakers, an adequate and sustainable model of teaching in and/or of Romani

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

39. The 2018-2022 National Policy on Roma foresees the production of a variety of learning materials for Romani language teaching, including digital materials, learning games, and audiovisual resources. The National Policy further includes the creation of remote Romani language teaching in order to also extend Romani language teaching to schools which do not have a Romani language teacher.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

40. The Committee of Experts welcomes the measures related to Romani language teaching included in the National Policy. It considers that the creation of learning materials and remote teaching modules are important measures to address existing shortcomings. However, the Finnish authorities are encouraged to ensure that the different measures are not implemented in isolation, but contribute to a comprehensive and sustainable model of teaching in and/or of Romani, which requires the establishment of curricula, teacher training and pilot schools as well as awareness-raising efforts towards parents.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Take measures to strengthen teacher training for Romani

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

41. The National Policy on Roma includes the expansion of the Romani language and culture study programme at Helsinki/Helsingfors University. In addition to the existing basic and intermediate studies, which already provide the competence to teach Romani language and culture at schools, the creation of an advanced study course is planned. This has not been implemented so far.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

42. While welcoming the planned expansion of the study programme to advanced study level, the Committee of Experts is not convinced that this measure alone is likely to increase availability of Romani teachers in Finland as the basic and intermediate studies are already sufficient as a qualification. The Finnish authorities are encouraged to continue investing in attracting students to the Romani language and culture study programme and to Romani language teaching as a professional choice.

Recommendation for immediate action

d. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Romani, both in education and in the media

43. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland. For further information and the evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

5. Russian

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Russian, both in the general curriculum at all stages of education and in the media

44. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland. For further information and the evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Develop, in co-operation with the speakers, adequate models of teaching in and/or of Russian as a regional or minority language

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

45. No measures have been taken to address this recommendation.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

46. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures have been taken to develop adequate models of teaching in and/or of Russian. It reiterates its recommendation to consult the representatives of the Russian speakers about how teaching in and/or of Russian as a minority language could be organised in Finland.

6. Skolt Sámi⁵

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Work toward extending the *Giellagaldu* project, in co-operation with Norway and Sweden

47. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 7-9.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Make the funding for the promotion of Skolt Sámi sustainable

48. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 10-13.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Skolt Sámi, both in education and in the media

49. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

Recommendation for immediate action

d. Take measures to strengthen basic and further teacher training, especially for subject teachers in Skolt Sámi

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

50. Disaggregated data on the number of students enrolled in Skolt Sámi teacher training and on Skolt Sámi language teachers is not available, but a study containing such data is expected to be completed in late 2020. The authorities report that, so far, no Skolt Sámi-speaking teachers holding an education qualification have been recruited for teaching.

51. In 2019, Skolt Sámi was made available as a major subject at the Giellagas Institute for Sámi Studies at the University of Oulu.

52. For further information on implementation measures, please see paras. 17-19.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

53. The Committee of Experts acknowledges the fact that the authorities are aware that Skolt Sami remains a seriously endangered language in Finland. As Finland's undertakings include the availability of teaching in Skolt Sámi at pre-school, primary and secondary levels, the Committee of Experts welcomes the new project for training Sámi subject teachers in all three Sámi languages. It will follow with interest the

⁵ Please note that cross-references are made wherever recommendations for the three Sámi languages were identical and no disaggregated information in their implementation is available.

outcomes of this project and invites the authorities to include, in the next periodical report, information on the number, education levels and subjects of the teachers trained in Skolt Sámi.

54. The Committee of Experts regrets that the serious lack of Skolt Sámi teachers persists. The creation of a Skolt Sámi major at the University of Oulu is welcomed.

55. For further conclusions by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 21-22.

Recommendation for immediate action

e. Ensure the effective implementation of the legislation pertaining to Skolt Sámi in State and local administration as well as in social and health care services

56. For information on implementation measures and evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 23-27.

7. Swedish

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Ensure that the linguistic rights of the Swedish speakers are preserved, in practice, in the context of administrative reform

57. In June 2020, the Finnish government released its proposal for the new administrative structure to be established in the framework of the health and social services reform (*Sote*) for consultation. According to the proposal, 21 newly created counties are to take over the responsibility for health and social services from the almost 300 municipalities. The proposed “Act on organising healthcare and social welfare” contains provisions on the duty of bilingual counties to agree on co-operation and the division of labour in the provision of health and social services in Swedish and introduces so-called “National Languages Boards” in every bilingual county.⁶

58. Representatives of the Swedish speakers informed the Committee of Experts that they generally consider the proposal satisfactory as far as their linguistic rights are concerned, but also expect some challenges. While acknowledging that larger service providers will generally allow for more possibilities to organise services in Swedish, they are worried that the reduced proportion of Swedish-speaking population in the newly created counties may reduce their influence on public decision-making. Swedish speakers also emphasised the need to explicitly provide for services in Swedish for a number of vulnerable groups, such as disability services and mental health services.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

59. The Committee of Experts notes that the proposed “Act on organising healthcare and social welfare” appears to generally meet the expectations of Swedish speakers. It considers that the duty of co-operation between counties mentioned in the proposed act is crucial for the provision of services in Swedish. The Committee of Experts notes with interest the proposed creation of “National Languages Boards” in the bilingual counties. These new institutions should be equipped with sufficient budgetary resources and decision-making powers so they can compensate for the loss of demographic weight of Swedish speakers in the newly created counties, in conformity with Article 7.1.b of the Charter.

⁶ Finnish Government (15 June 2020), “[Act on organising healthcare and social welfare provides a more solid foundation for creating seamless service chains](#)” (press release).

Recommendation for immediate action**b. Take measures to increase tolerance vis-à-vis Swedish in the general public**

60. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland. For further information and the evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

Recommendation for immediate action**c. Ensure the use of Swedish within regional and local authorities****Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities**

61. The project to improve the “language climate” to be launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Justice includes a component on the awareness raising of local authorities on linguistic rights. It is envisaged to produce a set of training materials on linguistic rights for local authorities. In addition, the Ministry of Justice intends to engage with the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities in promoting linguistic rights at local level.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

62. The Committee of Experts notes that the project to improve the “language climate” also targets municipal authorities and looks forward to the development of training materials on language rights. It regrets, however, that no concrete new practical measures have been reported which aim at remedying problems such as the shortage of Swedish-speaking professionals in the regional and local administration, in particular in areas with a low share of Swedish-speaking population. It therefore reiterates its recommendation to ensure that Swedish speakers can use their language within regional and local authorities.

Recommendation for immediate action**d. Ensure the effective use of Swedish in social and health care facilities****Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities**

63. The securing of social and health care in Swedish is reflected in the new government programme adopted in December 2019. The programme also mentions that disability services for Swedish speakers will be secured. Social and health care provision was also subject to a customer survey in 2018 in Uusimaa/Nyland, which revealed that the situation of health and social services in Swedish is particularly poor in the bilingual municipalities in the Helsinki/Helsingfors metropolitan area.

64. The representatives of the Swedish speakers expressed satisfaction with the new government programme in general and praised the guarantee on disability services in Swedish. However, they regret that no such announcement is made for other categories of vulnerable groups, such as for mental health services.

65. In line with the government programme, €600 000 were dedicated to the long-awaited translation of the Current Care Guidelines into Swedish. The translation work, which is expected to take several years, started in 2020. Furthermore, in 2018, the Emergency Services Academy launched an 18-month course to train Swedish-speaking (bilingual) emergency response centre operators on a regional basis. In a statement

submitted to the Committee of Experts, representatives of the Swedish speakers describe this training course as a success, but reiterate that a similar training course should also be provided in Southern Finland.

66. The authorities report that, in 2019, the Parliamentary Ombudsman received approximately 20 complaints about language issues in health and social services, out of which he intervened in four cases that concerned Swedish. The cases related to the use of Swedish in a response to an objection made under the Act on the Status and Rights of Patients, access to services in Swedish over the phone in an emergency duty service, services in Swedish by a social services office, and the bilingual naming of a medical centre at a bilingual hospital.

67. In March 2020, the Ministry of Justice published a report assessing the benefits of entering several languages in the population information system, which provides the basis for public service provision in either of the official languages - Finnish or Swedish. An online public consultation on the two alternatives set out in the report was held up until 31 May 2020 and the results are currently being processed by the Ministry of Justice.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

68. The Committee of Experts welcomes the fact that the authorities recognise the importance of social and health care provision in Swedish and that studies are commissioned to allow evidence-based policy-making. The Committee of Experts further welcomes the concrete measures undertaken for Swedish such as the translation of the Current Care Guidelines and the training of emergency response centre operators.

69. The Finnish authorities should continue undertaking concrete measures such as targeted recruitment and language courses to ensure the effective use of Swedish in social and health care facilities, in particular in regions known to be problematic, such as the Helsinki/Helsingfors metropolitan area.

70. The Committee of Experts will follow with interest the results of the above-mentioned consultation on the reform of the population information system and reiterates its position that the introduction of this possibility would be welcomed.

8. Tatar

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take measures to increase awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis Tatar, both in the general curriculum at all stages of education and in the media

71. The Finnish Ministry of Justice is planning to launch a project in 2020 aimed at improving the “language climate” in Finland. For further information and the evaluation by the Committee of Experts, please see paras. 14-15.

9. Yiddish

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Take resolute action to promote Yiddish

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

72. No measures have been taken to address this recommendation.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

73. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures have been taken to promote Yiddish. As Yiddish is in a very fragile situation and risks disappearing in Finland, it reiterates its recommendation to take resolute action to promote Yiddish. As a first measure, the authorities should identify, in co-operation with the speakers, domains where Yiddish can be promoted and take active steps to encourage its use in these domains.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Develop means to foster the teaching of the Yiddish language, which is on the brink of disappearing in Finland

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

74. No measures have been taken to address this recommendation.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

75. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures have been taken to foster the teaching of the Yiddish language. It observes that Yiddish is severely endangered in Finland and will become extinct if resolute action is not taken to safeguard it. The Committee of Experts therefore reiterates its recommendation and suggests that the authorities proactively reach out to the speakers to identify measures to implement it.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Take measures to increase awareness of Yiddish as a minority language of Finland

Implementation measures taken by the Finnish authorities

76. No measures have been taken to address this recommendation.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

77. The Committee of Experts regrets that no measures have been taken to increase awareness of Yiddish as a minority language in Finland. The Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendation and recalls that the Finnish authorities should promote knowledge about the existence of Yiddish as a traditional minority language in the general population, in particular through education and media.

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 Finnish authorities to comply with their undertakings under the Charter, has in its fifth evaluation report (CM(2018)114) made “recommendations for immediate action” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in Finland.

In accordance with the Committee of Ministers Decisions of 28 November 2018 (CM/Del/Dec(2018)1330/10.4e), Finland 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. Finland presented this information on 4 March 2020. 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 Finland and invite the Finnish authorities to disseminate it to the competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders;
2. reiterate its Recommendation CM/RecChL(2018)5 and invite the Finnish authorities to present their next periodical report by 1 March 2023 in the required format.