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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 NETHERLANDS**

## 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 the Kingdom of the Netherlands on 2 May 1996, entered into force on 1 March 1998, and applies to the following languages: Limburgish, Low Saxon, Romanes and Yiddish, which are covered by Part II only, Frisian, which receives protection in the province of Fryslân under both Parts II and III. The Netherlands recently accepted the application of the provisions of Part II of the Charter for the Caribbean Part of the Netherlands (the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba), and both Part II and Part III to Papiamentu on the Island of Bonaire.

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 action<sup>1</sup> 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. The Netherlands submitted **the information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** contained in the Committee of Experts’ seventh evaluation report<sup>2</sup> on 21 February 2024. This **evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** is based on the information received from the authorities of the Netherlands, as well as from representatives of the minority language speakers pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.<sup>3</sup> As far as the compliance of the Netherlands with all its undertakings under the Charter is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its seventh evaluation report.

5. The Committee of Experts will examine the implementation of all the undertakings, including the application of the provisions of the Charter to the Caribbean Part of the Netherlands (the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba) as announced by the authorities of the Netherlands on 22 January 2024, in the next evaluation report.

6. This evaluation was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 20 June 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Committee of Ministers Decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e](#), para. 1.a. See also CM(2018)165 “Strengthening the monitoring mechanism of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages” paras. 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> [Seventh evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on the Netherlands, adopted on 18 November 2022.](#); MIN-LANG (2023)53.

<sup>3</sup> 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 the Netherlands of the recommendations for immediate action**

### **I. General issues**

#### **Extension of the protection of the Charter to the Papiamentu language**

7. On 22 January 2024, the Netherlands notified the Council of Europe<sup>4</sup> that they have accepted the application of the provisions of the Charter to be extended to the Caribbean Part of the Netherlands (the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba), as well as the extension of the Charter's provisions under Part III (Articles 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) to the Papiamentu language on the Island of Bonaire. The Committee of Experts welcomes this extension and considers it as a clear commitment of the Netherlands to continue to protect its regional or minority languages.

#### **Reporting**

8. The authorities have informed the Secretariat of the Charter that they have consulted with local authorities and stakeholder organisations, such as DINGtiid (Frisian Language Advisory Board) when preparing the submitted report. They did not, however, consult directly with other representatives of minority language users when preparing the information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action. The Committee of Experts regrets this and reiterates that, in conformity with Articles 6 and 7.4 of the Charter, it is necessary to inform the organisations concerned of the recommendations made during the monitoring, and to take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by them in the implementation and related reporting.<sup>5</sup> The Committee of Experts equally regrets that there is not sufficient detail in the information document submitted by the authorities on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action to provide an adequate evaluation, in particular on Limburgish and Low Saxon. The Committee of Experts reminds the authorities of the Netherlands of their obligation to ensure the dissemination of the Committee of Experts' evaluation reports and related Committee of Ministers recommendations through their official websites.

#### **Role of governments in implementing the Charter**

9. The Committee of Experts recalls that as parties to the Charter, states have a legal obligation to oversee, co-ordinate and support the implementation of the provisions undertaken therein. It also points out the proactive approach state authorities are to take to enhance protection of minority languages. In view of the above, the Committee of Experts points out that the national authorities of the Netherlands have the primary responsibility in implementing the provisions of the Charter under international law, and therefore to protect and promote all its regional or minority languages. The Committee of Experts emphasises that a specific policy and/or strategy is needed to ensure that the obligations stemming from the provisions of the Charter are adequately implemented in practice.

#### **Education**

10. The Committee of Experts reminds the authorities about the importance of promoting and teaching regional or minority languages at all levels of education to effectively secure their protection and transmission to the next generations. The use of regional or minority languages in pre-school education forms the basis for a comprehensive knowledge of the language. The Committee of Experts therefore invites the authorities of the Netherlands to consider the possibility of supporting this aim, also financially,

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<sup>4</sup> See the [Notification of territorial application by the Netherlands](#).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example: the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendation for Immediate Action (RIA) contained in the Committee of Experts' seventh evaluation report on Hungary ([MIN-LANG\(2020\)14](#)) para. 6; the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the RIA contained in the Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report on the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man ([MIN-LANG \(2021\)3](#)), para. 7; or the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the RIA contained in the Committee of Experts' eight evaluation report on Sweden ([MIN-LANG \(2024\)6](#)) para. 6.

in particular for Limburgish and Low Saxon speakers, in close co-operation with relevant regional and local authorities, and in consultation with representatives of the speakers.

## **II. Recommendations for immediate action**

### **1. Frisian**

#### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**a. Continue to strengthen the teaching in and of Frisian at all levels of education and its use in preschool education, and ensure that there is a full-time professorship that carries out study and research in and of Frisian.**

#### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

11. The authorities of the Netherlands state that the law<sup>6</sup> allows Frisian to be offered in daycare centres and playgroups in Fryslân, thereby permitting the use of Frisian in addition to Dutch. In their response to the recommendations for immediate action, the authorities of the Netherlands state that children in childcare in Fryslân benefit from familiarising themselves with the Frisian language, as it allows them to participate in Frisian society and ensures a continuous learning pathway towards primary education. This helps children in Fryslân to take on an active role in the Frisian-Dutch community they are part of.

12. Furthermore, the authorities of the Netherlands refer to the steps taken to increase funding to strengthen Frisian in primary and secondary education, with a focus on recruiting, motivating, teaching, training and coaching teachers. According to the authorities of the Netherlands, these undertakings also contribute to the objectives of the Taalplan Frysk 2030 (Frisian Language Plan 2030) of the province of Fryslân. In addition, the authorities of the Netherlands refer to the new administrative agreement between the provincial authorities and the central government,<sup>7</sup> in which they expressed their intention to prepare students in upper secondary vocational education for the local labour market and a multilingual professional context. On 15 February 2024, the House of Representatives approved an amended budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for 2024, allowing an annual amount available to create an occupational skills development group that will address multilingualism and literacy during the term of the new administrative agreement.

13. In the response submitted to the Committee of Experts, the authorities of the Netherlands inform that under the Dutch legislation, universities decide themselves on their education and research, and that educational institutions receive a lump-sum from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for this purpose. In addition, the amended budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for 2024, permanently makes available a (yearly) grant of €340,000 for Frisian at university.

#### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

14. While the Committee of Experts takes note of the fact that the use of Frisian is guaranteed by law in addition to Dutch in pre-school education, it calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to increase their efforts to implement the law in line with their obligations under Part III of the Charter. It also emphasises the need for the involvement of representatives of the speakers in this process, and the importance of benefiting from their views and recommendations.

15. The Committee of Experts welcomes the financial support allocated to both teaching Frisian, as well as for adequate teacher training. It commends the continuous support given to secondary education and encourages the authorities of the Netherlands to extend a similar level of support to pre-school and primary school education. The Committee of Experts is of the view that such extended support would be essential

<sup>6</sup> Use of Frisian Act, entered into force on 1 January 2014.

<sup>7</sup> See: The new [Administrative Agreement on the Frisian Language and Culture \(BFTK\) 2024-2028](#).

not only for forming a good basis for education in Frisian, but also for eliminating the existing inequality between Frisian and Dutch. The Committee of Experts welcomes that the House of Representatives adopted the increased budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences allowing strengthening of multilingualism and literacy in vocational education, and the study in and of Frisian at university. However, the Committee of Experts points out that according to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), a minimum of €650 000 per year is needed to finance a bachelor program in Frisian.<sup>8</sup> Increasing the financial support would help to secure a full-time professor and teaching/research staff that carries out study and research in and of Frisian at university level. The views and recommendations of both the representatives of the speakers and academia<sup>9</sup> to further improve the academic education and research in Frisian language should also be taken into account. In the same way, the Committee of Experts invites the authorities of the Netherlands to continue improving the existing provisions for the teaching of Frisian, as an integral part of the curriculum, in vocational secondary education.

### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**b. Take measures to guarantee the accused the right to use Frisian in criminal proceedings and ensure the assistance of a qualified interpreter.**

### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

16. The authorities of the Netherlands refer to the measures undertaken to guarantee the accused the right to use Frisian in criminal proceedings. They refer in particular to the fact that the Northern Netherlands District Court and the Arnhem-Leeuwarden Court of Appeal<sup>10</sup> have created an overview of how they implement the statutory provisions concerning the Frisian language. The District Court and the Court of Appeal have supplemented this overview by setting out their current and future efforts aimed at facilitating the use of Frisian in judicial matters. These include offering Frisian language courses to employees of the District Court and the Court of Appeal, measures to emphasise the right to use Frisian in criminal proceedings and other legal proceedings, and periodic consultations with DINGtiid to examine how the use of Frisian during hearings can be further facilitated, or how awareness can be raised of this issue.

17. Furthermore, the authorities of the Netherlands state that the main aim is to use judges, court clerks and public prosecutors with a passive command of the Frisian language to comply with the statutory provisions on the Frisian language in criminal proceedings and other proceedings. Moreover, an interpreter is needed if anyone participating in the proceedings is unable to properly understand Frisian during the hearing.

18. In their response to the Committee of Experts, the authorities of the Netherlands also refer to a public procurement contract for the use of interpreters by the Public Prosecution Service and the judiciary, currently being implemented.<sup>11</sup> The aim is to guarantee higher pay for interpreters who provide interpretation services in legal proceedings.

### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

19. The Committee of Experts considers that the response of the authorities of the Netherlands is insufficient to conclude if the actions taken so far are contributing to guarantee *in practice* the right to use Frisian in criminal proceedings.

20. The Committee of Experts welcomes the intention of the authorities of the Netherlands to address the financial implications of the use of interpretation services. It takes due note of the ongoing implementation of a public procurement contract for the use of interpreters by the Public Prosecution Service and the judiciary. However, as the need for qualified interpretation in Frisian in criminal court proceedings has been

<sup>8</sup> See: [De toekomst van de frisistiek - KNAW](#)

<sup>9</sup> *Idem*

<sup>10</sup> The Arnhem-Leeuwarden Court of Appeal is partly located in the province of Fryslân.

<sup>11</sup> According to the information received from the authorities, the contract is expected to be fully implemented by February 2024.

a recurrent problem, the Committee of Experts calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to intensify their efforts to secure that qualified interpreters are available in court proceedings, in line with the obligations undertaken by the Netherlands under Part III (Art. 9) of the Charter. The Committee of Experts calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to address this issue in a long-term and sustainable manner, and regrets that there is limited concrete action envisaged in the context of the new BTFK.<sup>12</sup> The authorities could benefit from adopting following recommendations of representatives of the speakers, including those of DINGtiid<sup>13</sup> in this respect.

### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**c. Include representatives of Frisian speakers in the negotiation process on the administrative agreement on the Frisian language and culture 2024-2028.**

### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

21. The authorities of the Netherlands state that the province of Fryslân regularly liaises with the Frisian-speaking community about wishes and concerns people have in respect of the Frisian language and culture. In preparation for the new BFTK 2024-2028, the Fryslân regional and local authorities have had a number of meetings with representatives of Frisian speakers and organisations. Their needs and their vision of the Frisian language and culture in the short and long terms were discussed during these meetings. In addition, a number of parties were involved in writing the draft texts of the BFTK in their respective areas of expertise.

### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

22. The Committee of Experts considers that in order to effectively implement the provisions of the Charter, states shall take due account of the views, positions and recommendations of the representatives of the speakers. It therefore welcomes the authorities' engagement during the development of the new BTFK. The Committee of Experts considers that this recommendation has been implemented and encourages the authorities to continue to engage with all the different Frisian institutions and organisations, including those that may not have direct tasks and responsibilities, in order to efficiently implement its provisions.

## **2. Limburgish**

### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**a. Prepare a strategy to ensure the teaching and study of Limburgish as a subject at all levels of education and to promote its use in pre-school education.**

### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

23. The authorities of the Netherlands state that the educational laws regarding primary and secondary education<sup>14</sup> do not preclude schools from the teaching of regional and minority languages, including Limburgish. They also state that schools have the freedom to make their own choices, and they cannot be required by law to teach regional and minority languages. However, the provinces are making efforts to emphasise the importance of teaching in this language. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science supports them in this and advises them of existing grants.

<sup>12</sup> The new [Administrative Agreement on the Frisian Language and Culture \(BFTK\) 2024-2028 signed between the provincial authorities and the central government](#).

<sup>13</sup> See: Advies Bestuursafpraak Friese Taal en Cultuur (BFTK) 2024-2028.

<sup>14</sup> [The Primary Education Act](#) and [the Secondary Education Act](#).

### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

24. While the Committee of Experts takes note of the Dutch legal system in place, it emphasises that the existing national legislation must be in line with the obligations stemming from the provisions of the Charter, as an international treaty. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts emphasises the responsibility of the authorities of the Netherlands to guarantee that the laws on education are implemented in practice. In its seventh evaluation report on the Netherlands, the Committee of Experts stated that the signing of the Covenant on Limburgish on 6 November 2019 symbolises a strong commitment of the central and provincial authorities in favour of the preservation of Limburgish as a regional language in the Netherlands, the promotion of its use and the strengthening of its status.<sup>15</sup> The Committee of Experts acknowledges that there are grants, however it reminds the authorities of the Netherlands that structural support, including financial, is necessary. The Committee of Experts regrets that no real progress has been made to implement this recommendation. It therefore calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to address this issue in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, involving provincial authorities and representatives of the speakers. In doing so, the authorities of the Netherlands could benefit from the already existing model and gained experience in the context of the Frisian language.

### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**b. Set up a body responsible for representing the interests of Limburgish speakers at national level.**

### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

25. The authorities of the Netherlands refer to the Covenant on Limburgish, which forms the basis for the collaboration between the central government and the local authorities involved. Furthermore, the authorities state that language policy in the Netherlands is designed in such a way that the primary responsibility lies with subnational authorities, such as provincial and municipal authorities. Local authorities have a better picture of the needs and wishes of speakers of the relevant regional or minority language.

26. The authorities of the Netherlands inform the Committee of Experts of the evaluation of the implementation of the Covenant on Limburgish of November 2023.<sup>16</sup>

### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

27. The Committee of Experts refers to paragraph 9 of this report, where the primary responsibility of the state authorities for the implementation of the obligations under the Charter is stressed. It also recalls the evaluation of the implementation of the Covenant on Limburgish, referred to also in the authorities' response, in which it is confirmed that the Government recognises Limburgish as an independent regional language and sees it as an enrichment of the Dutch cultural heritage. The evaluation recalls that the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Province of Limburg agrees to make every effort to preserve and promote Limburgish.<sup>17</sup> While taking note of the response of the authorities of the Netherlands that language policy in the Netherlands is the primary responsibility of the provincial authorities and the municipalities, the Committee of Experts still emphasises the important role national governments have to play in guaranteeing the effective implementation of such policies, in line with the statutory obligations undertaken in the framework of the Charter.

28. The Committee of Experts is of the view that a body, set up at national level, representing the interests of the Limburgish speakers, is not inconsistent with either the Dutch legislation in place, or with the existing language policy, or the Covenant currently in force. Setting up such a body is in line with Article 7.4 of the Charter, as it would reinforce the voice of speakers regarding competences that continue to be within the remit of the state authorities. The Committee of Experts therefore reiterates its call to implement this

<sup>15</sup> See: <https://rm.coe.int/netherlandsecrm17-en/1680aa8930>; para. 98.

<sup>16</sup> See: [Evaluatie over uitvoering van Convenant over Nederlandse erkenning van de Limburgse taal | Convenant | Rijksoverheid.nl](#)

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*.

recommendation, as a matter of urgency, with the aim of effectively protecting Limburgish as a recognised regional language in and by the Netherlands.

### 3. Low Saxon

#### Recommendation for immediate action

**a. Prepare a strategy to ensure the teaching and study of Low Saxon as a subject at all levels of education and to promote its use in pre-school education.**

#### Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands

29. The authorities of the Netherlands state that the educational laws regarding primary and secondary education<sup>18</sup> do not preclude schools from the teaching of regional and minority languages, including Low Saxon. They also state that schools have the freedom to make their own choices, and they cannot be required by law to teach regional and minority languages. However, the provinces are making efforts to emphasise the importance of teaching in this language. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science supports them in this and advises them of existing grants.

#### Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

30. While the Committee of Experts takes note of the Dutch legal system in place, it emphasises that the existing national legislation must be in line with the obligations stemming from the provisions of the Charter. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts emphasises the responsibility of the authorities of the Netherlands to guarantee that the laws on education are implemented in practice. In its seventh evaluation report on the Netherlands<sup>19</sup>, the Committee of Experts stated that the number of speakers of Low Saxon is decreasing sharply, with a risk of an undesirable weakening of the language in the long term.<sup>20</sup> The Committee of Experts acknowledges that there are grants, however it reminds that structural support, including financial, is necessary. While according to the Committee of Experts, the signing of the Covenant on Low Saxon on 18 October 2018 symbolised a strong commitment in favour of the preservation of Low Saxon as a regional language in the Netherlands, the promotion of its use and the consolidation of its status,<sup>21</sup> it regrets that no progress has been made to implement this recommendation. The Committee of Experts is particularly concerned that the authorities' response does not include information on all levels of education, including pre-school education.<sup>22</sup> It therefore calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to address this issue in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, involving provincial authorities and representatives of the speakers. In doing so, the authorities of the Netherlands could benefit from the already existing model and gained experience in the context of the Frisian language.

#### Recommendation for immediate action

**b. Set up a body responsible for representing the interests of Low Saxon speakers at national level.**

#### Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands

31. The authorities of the Netherlands refer to the Covenant on Low Saxon, which forms the basis for the collaboration between the central government and the local authorities involved. Furthermore, the authorities state that language policy in the Netherlands is designed in such a way that primary

<sup>18</sup> The [Primary Education Act](#) and The [Secondary Education Act](#).

<sup>19</sup> See: <https://rm.coe.int/netherlandsecrml7-en/1680aa8930>

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, para 120.

<sup>21</sup> *Idem*, para 121.

<sup>22</sup> Information collected during the on-the-spot visit of 2022 suggested that Low Saxon is not part of the curriculum in pre-schools and the Committee of Experts have no information on progress in this respect since the signature of the Covenant.



responsibility lies with subnational authorities, such as provincial and municipal authorities. Local authorities have a better picture of the wishes and needs of speakers of the relevant regional or minority language.

32. The authorities of the Netherlands inform the Committee of Experts that an evaluation of the implementation of the Covenant on Low Saxon is expected for 2024.

#### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

33. The Committee of Experts refers to paragraph 9 of this report, where the primary responsibility of the state authorities for the implementation of the obligations under the Charter is stressed. While taking note of the response of the authorities of the Netherlands that language policy in the Netherlands is the primary responsibility of the provincial authorities and the municipalities, it still emphasises the important role national governments have to play in guaranteeing the effective implementation of such policies, in line with the statutory obligations undertaken within the framework of the Charter.

34. The Committee of Experts is of the view that a body, set up at national level, representing interests of the Low Saxon speakers, is not inconsistent with either the Dutch legislation in place, or with the existing language policy, or the Covenant currently in force. Setting up such a body is in line with article 7.4 of the Charter, as it would reinforce the voice of speakers regarding competences that continue to be within the remit of the state authorities. The Committee of Experts therefore reiterates its call to implement this recommendation, as a matter of urgency, with the aim of effectively protecting Low Saxon as a recognised regional language in and by the Netherlands.

## **4. Romanes**

### **Recommendation for immediate action**

**a. Set up a body responsible for representing the interests of Romanes speakers at national level.**

#### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

35. The authorities of the Netherlands state that although Romanes is recognised in Part II of the Charter and, as such, is recognised as a non-territorial language in the Netherlands, so far, no Romanes representation at national level has been set up.

36. In their response submitted to the Committee of Experts, the authorities of the Netherlands refer to the National Roma and Sinti Contact Point, as a place where Roma and Sinti communities and local authorities meet directly. The Contact Point organises dialogue with Roma and Sinti communities and the ministries involved about themes that are important to the communities.

#### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

37. The Committee of Experts welcomes that, as part of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, a National Roma and Sinti Contact Point is set up to organise dialogue with the Roma and Sinti communities and the local authorities. It regrets, however, that no further information was shared on the concrete actions taken in this framework, and on how its functioning is in line with the Committee of Experts' recommendation for immediate action. It therefore reiterates its general call on the authorities of the Netherlands to take a proactive approach in setting up a body responsible for representing the interests of Romanes speakers at national level.

## Recommendation for immediate action

### **b. Raise awareness about culture and history of Romanes speakers in the general curriculum.**

#### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

38. The authorities of the Netherlands state that setting up good civic and history education involves making difficult choices about cultural and historical topics to be addressed. Nationally established learning standards dictate what each school in primary education and secondary education (specifically the lower years of secondary education) is required to include in its curriculum. Discretion is left to schools to shape their education as they see fit, with teachers and experts on the subject considering the strict minimum requirements set for each pupil's knowledge and skills.

39. Roma and Sinti are not expressly addressed in the curriculum of primary and secondary education, except for being covered in history lessons and history teaching methods about World War II and the Holocaust. The curriculum gives teachers a lot of discretion to tailor their education to their specific pupil population. This means that raising awareness about the culture and history of Romanes speakers currently mostly has a place in a school's own curriculum.

40. In their response submitted to the Committee of Experts, the authorities of the Netherlands report that the learning standards are currently being updated and are also being adapted for the 'civic education' subject, which includes learning about diversity and inclusion. These standards will give schools more tools to incorporate the discussion of diverse communities into their education.

#### **Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

41. The Committee of Experts calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to seize the opportunity of the ongoing update of learning standards and address them in line with the recommendation for immediate action. In addition, it invites the authorities of the Netherlands to draw guidance from the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and training materials.<sup>23</sup>

## 5. Yiddish

### Recommendation for immediate action

#### **a. Ensure the continuity of support for the teaching of Yiddish at primary and secondary level.**

#### **Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

42. The authorities of the Netherlands state that the government allows Jewish schools to teach pupils Yiddish in the unallocated teaching time of the curriculum. Two Jewish secondary education schools in Amsterdam – the Cheider Institute and Maimonides Jewish School – are recognised "exceptional schools",<sup>24</sup> as their education serves Dutch interest of a cultural/historical nature. As a result, they are exempt from closure and receive special additional funding. In addition, hours spent on teaching Yiddish in the Cheider Institute are regarded as teaching time, from pre-school to secondary school education, and conclude Yiddish with a school examination. The mark obtained is shown on the list of marks. The authorities therefore consider that the Netherlands are complying with their obligations under the Charter.

<sup>23</sup> [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2020\)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials.](#)

<sup>24</sup> A school is recognised as an exceptional school if it serves a special interest with the education it offers, even if due to a low number of pupils closure would be imminent. A school can be an exception school on either of two grounds: its geographic location, or the provision of education serves a Dutch interest of an economic or cultural/historical nature (see: [Staatscourant 2012, 26626 | Overheid.nl > Officiële bekendmakingen \(officielebekendmakingen.nl\)](#)).

**Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

43. The Committee of Experts welcomes the steps taken by the authorities of the Netherlands and considers that the recommendation for immediate action is implemented. It calls on the authorities of the Netherlands to continue ensuring their support for the teaching of Yiddish at primary and secondary level.

**Recommendation for immediate action**

<b>b. Set up a body responsible for representing the interests of Yiddish speakers at national level.</b>
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**Implementation measures taken by the authorities of the Netherlands**

44. The authorities of the Netherlands state that no arrangements are at present in place to promote Yiddish. They also inform that according to their knowledge no such desire has been expressed by groups or communities committed to promoting and encouraging the Yiddish language in the Netherlands.

**Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed**

45. The Committee of Experts reiterates its general call on the authorities of the Netherlands to take a proactive approach in this respect, in line with Article 7.4 of the Charter. Bearing in mind that different organisations and institutions are representing Yiddish speakers in the Netherlands, the Committee of Experts is of the view that a body as referred to in the recommendation for immediate action would contribute to strengthening the status, the representation and the visibility of Yiddish in the Netherlands.

## **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 the Netherlands to comply with their undertakings under the Charter, has in its seventh evaluation report (MIN-LANG(2022)19) made “recommendations for immediate action” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in the Netherlands.

In accordance with the Committee of Ministers Decisions of 28 November 2018 (CM/Del/Dec(2018)1330/10.4e), the Netherlands 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. The Netherlands presented this information on 21 February 2024. In the present evaluation, the Committee of Experts has examined the implementation of these recommendations.

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

1. take note of the evaluation made by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by the Netherlands and invite the authorities of the Netherlands to disseminate it to the competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders;
2. reiterate its Recommendation CM/RecChL(2023)1 and invite the Dutch authorities to present their next periodical report by 1 June 2026 in the required format.