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FIFTH EVALUATION REPORT ON SERBIA

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Committee of Experts of
the European Charter
for Regional or
Minority Languages

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Adopted on 17 March 2023

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages provides for a control mechanism to evaluate how the Charter is applied in a state party with a view to, where necessary, making recommendations for improving its legislation, policy and practices. The central element of this procedure is the Committee of Experts, set up under Article 17 of the Charter. Its principal purpose is to report to the Committee of Ministers on its evaluation of compliance by a party with its undertakings, to examine the real situation of regional or minority languages in the state and, where appropriate, to encourage the party to gradually reach a higher level of commitment.

To facilitate this task, the Committee of Ministers adopted, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1, an outline for periodical reports that a party is required to submit to the Secretary General. This outline requires the state to give an account of the concrete application of the Charter, the general policy for the languages protected under Part II and, in more precise terms, all measures that have been taken in application of the provisions chosen for each language protected under Part III of the Charter. The Committee of Experts' first task is therefore to examine the information contained in the periodical report for all the relevant regional or minority languages on the territory of the state concerned. The periodical report shall be made public by the state in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 2.

The Committee of Experts' role is to evaluate the existing legal acts, regulations and real practice applied in each state for its regional or minority languages. It has established its working methods accordingly. The Committee of Experts gathers information from the respective authorities and from independent sources within the state, in order to obtain a fair and just overview of the real language situation. After a preliminary examination of a periodical report, the Committee of Experts submits, if necessary, a number of questions to each party to obtain supplementary information from the authorities on matters it considers insufficiently developed in the report itself. This written procedure is usually followed up by an on-the-spot visit by a delegation of the Committee of Experts to the state in question. During this visit the delegation meets bodies and associations whose work is closely related to the use of the relevant languages and consults the authorities on matters that have been brought to its attention. This information-gathering process is designed to enable the Committee of Experts to evaluate more effectively the application of the Charter in the state concerned.

Having concluded this process, the Committee of Experts adopts its own report. Once adopted by the Committee of Experts, this evaluation report is submitted to the authorities of the respective state party for possible comments within a given deadline. A confidential dialogue may, at this stage, be requested by this state party. The final evaluation report is made public, together with the comments, if any, which the authorities of the state party may have made. This document is then transmitted to the Committee of Ministers for the adoption of its recommendations to the state party, on the basis of the proposals for recommendations contained in the evaluation report.

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Executive Summary

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages entered into force in the Republic of Serbia in 2006. It applies to Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Bunjevac, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Romani, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vlach.

Serbia has made progress in the implementation of its undertakings under the Charter, which is illustrated by the fact that the assessment concerning many undertakings has improved.

Education in the minority language at different levels is organised in Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak. Several minority languages are taught in the framework of the elective subject/programme “mother tongue with elements of national culture” for only two hours per week, which does not meet the requirements of the Charter. Some minority languages are not used at certain levels of education at all. In certain cases, there is a lack of availability and continuity of minority-language education at pre-school, primary and secondary levels. In order to address these shortcomings, there is a need to extend and/or provide bilingual education. In addition, except for Hungarian, there is no certified adult education for any minority language organised by the authorities.

Most minority languages have been used in criminal and civil court proceedings, but not in proceedings concerning administrative matters. Such use should be encouraged.

Except Hungarian, minority languages are not used in contacts with and by local branches of the national authorities. At the level of municipalities, these languages are used to a certain extent by the population in communication with local authorities and by the latter.

The minority languages are used in public and private television and radio programmes. In some cases, it is necessary to extend the duration of such programmes and broadcast them on a more regular basis to make an impact on the promotion of the languages concerned and encourage their use. New media should be included in the offer.

A considerable number of cultural activities in all minority languages have been supported by the authorities.

The budgetary and staff capacity of national councils of national minorities should be considerably strengthened to effectively promote the minority languages in public life and to fully perform the role of advisory bodies on minority language policy in accordance with the Charter.

There is a need to include content about each minority language and its culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.

The process of introducing minority languages into official use in municipalities has accelerated during the period under review. Nevertheless, there are municipalities with a traditional presence of minority languages, including Romani and Ukrainian, in which the official use of such languages still needs to be introduced, so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.

This fifth evaluation report by the Committee of Experts is based on the political and legal situation prevailing at the time of the Committee of Experts' on-the-spot visit to Serbia in October 2022.

Chapter 1 The situation of the regional or minority languages in Serbia – Recent developments and trends

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. Serbia and Montenegro signed the Charter in 2005 and ratified it in 2006. The Charter entered into force in Serbia, as the successor to the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, on 1 June 2006 and applies to Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Bunjevac, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Romani, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vlach. While Bunjevac, Czech, German, Macedonian and Vlach are covered by Part II (Article 7) only, the other languages receive protection under both Part II and Part III (Articles 8-14).

2. States parties are required to submit reports every five years¹ on the implementation of the Charter. On 6 February 2020, the Serbian authorities submitted their fifth periodical report. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Committee of Experts could not carry out its on-the-spot visit to Serbia in 2020 or 2021 as initially planned. As the deadline for the submission of Serbia’s sixth periodical report was on 1 September 2022, the Committee of Experts and the Serbian authorities agreed that the on-the-spot visit, scheduled in October 2022, would cover the fifth and sixth monitoring cycles. This exceptional approach, justified by the delays caused by the pandemic, was meant to put Serbia on the track of the 2018 reform by covering a 5-year period. Regrettably, the sixth periodical report was submitted after the on-the-spot visit, on 5 January 2023. Nevertheless, the information contained in this report could be taken into account by the Committee of Experts before the adoption of its evaluation report. This fifth evaluation report of the Committee of Experts is therefore based on the information contained in Serbia’s fifth and sixth periodical reports, additional information received from the authorities and statements made by representatives of the speakers of the minority languages during the on-the-spot visit (24-28 October 2022) and/or submitted in written form pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.

3. Chapter 1 of this evaluation report focuses on the general developments and trends regarding the regional or minority languages in Serbia and the situation of these languages. It examines in particular the measures taken by the Serbian authorities to respond to the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers at the end of the fourth monitoring cycle and also highlights new issues. Chapter 2 provides a detailed overview of the state of implementation of each undertaking of Serbia in respect of the given language as well as the recommendations addressed to the Serbian authorities. On the basis of its evaluation, the Committee of Experts proposes, in Chapter 3, recommendations to the Committee of Ministers to be addressed to the Government of Serbia, as provided for in Article 16.4 of the Charter. The Committee of Experts encourages the Serbian authorities to translate this report into Serbian and the regional or minority languages with a view to supporting the authorities, organisations, advisory bodies and persons concerned in the process of fully implementing the Charter, in accordance with Articles 6 and 7.4.

4. As far as the detailed legal examination of each undertaking is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its fourth evaluation report on the application of the Charter in Serbia.²

5. This evaluation report is based on the political and legal situation prevailing at the time of the Committee of Experts’ on-the-spot visit to Serbia in October 2022. It was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 17 March 2023.

¹ Article 15.1 of the Charter provides that states parties submit periodical reports every three years. However, following the entry into force of the reform of the monitoring mechanism of the ECRML on 1 July 2019, states parties are now to submit their reports every five years instead of every three years. See 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\(2018\)144](#).

1.1 General developments in policies, legislation and practice concerning the regional or minority languages in Serbia

General issues

Ratification instrument

6. Serbia has ratified the same undertakings in respect of all Part III languages. Furthermore, it applies Part II to languages whose situation is comparable, and in some fields more favourable, than the situation of some languages also covered by Part III. In light of statements received from representatives of the users of minority languages, the Committee of Experts in the previous monitoring cycles noted that the undertakings which had been chosen by Serbia, in particular those in education and the media, did not adequately reflect the policies, legislation and practice with respect to all minority languages.

7. In 2021, the municipality of Kanjiža/Magyarkanizsa (Autonomous Province of Vojvodina) adopted a decision (*odluka*) to apply additional or stronger Part III undertakings falling into its competences to Hungarian, reflecting the actual local situation of this language.³ An event to mark the adoption of this first “local Charter” in Serbia was attended by representatives of the national, provincial and several local authorities as well as the Committee of Experts. The municipality of Kula (Vojvodina) adopted a similar decision concerning Hungarian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and German in 2022. Following applications by national councils of national minorities (see para. 67), other municipalities in Vojvodina are preparing the adoption of comparable decisions concerning additional minority languages. During the on-the-spot visit, representatives of the users of different minority languages stated again that the Charter provisions applying to their languages did not reflect the latter’s actual situation and underlined the importance of the aforementioned initiatives.

8. The Committee of Experts welcomes the dynamic approach at the level of municipalities to the application of the Charter and the good co-operation between the authorities and the users of minority languages, which also raises awareness of the Charter in general and builds capacity to implement it. As far as the national level is concerned, the Committee of Experts notes that the periodical reports contain information about the substance of Part III undertakings not yet ratified and the promotion of Part II languages in fields of public life covered by Part III. The developments at local and national levels are clear indications that the overall situation of the minority languages in Serbia has improved since the ratification of the Charter. In the first monitoring cycle, the Serbian authorities indicated that they will consider reviewing their ratification instrument once the situation of minority languages has improved. During the last years, several states parties have updated their instruments of ratification to reflect improvements in the situation of their minority languages and to set medium- and long-term improvement targets, which the Committee of Experts commended. The Committee of Experts also encourages the Serbian authorities to review the level of protection of the minority languages under the Charter, to bring the level of commitment in line with legislation, policy and practice, and to extend the ratification accordingly in conformity with the procedure set out in Article 3.2.⁴

Minority languages in official use in municipalities

9. At the deposit of its instrument of ratification in 2006, Serbia and Montenegro stated that it would apply the Charter in areas in which the regional or minority languages are in official use. The Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts (Art. 11.1) provides that on the territory of local self-government units where members of national minorities live traditionally, their language and script *can* be in equal official use. The (voluntary) introduction into official use may be decided irrespective of the number of persons belonging to a national minority or related percentage thresholds. However, a municipality *must* introduce a minority language into official use if persons belonging to the respective national minority reach 15% of the local population (Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts, Art. 11.2). The fact that the 15% threshold in general is too high for the purpose of the Charter has in practice been mitigated by decisions of municipalities to introduce minority languages into official use on a voluntary basis, even in cases where the number of persons belonging to a national minority was very low. Most languages covered by the Charter have so far been introduced into official use in the municipalities where they have been traditionally used.

10. The introduction of a minority language into official use in a municipality or a settlement (*naselje*) of a municipality has considerable importance for its promotion far beyond the matters covered by Articles 9 and

³ The Committee of Experts has taken the related implementation measures into consideration in its evaluation of the implementation of the undertakings specified in Serbia’s instrument of ratification.

⁴ See 7th evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Germany, MIN-LANG(2022)7, para. 6; 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 the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man, MIN-LANG(2021)3, paras. 34, 36.

10. In practice, municipalities having introduced a minority language into official use support it also in the fields of education, media, culture and cross-border co-operation. For the Part II languages, which are mentioned in Serbia's periodical reports but not in the ratification law and instrument, such a step also constitutes an explicit legal confirmation of their status as minority languages (Art. 7.1.a). In addition, the national council of a national minority whose language is in local official use receives higher funding from the state. National councils are *inter alia* in charge of official use of the given minority language and supposed to perform the function of advisory bodies in accordance with Article 7.4 for all languages covered by the Charter.

11. The Committee of Experts is pleased to note that the process of introducing minority languages into official use has continued and accelerated during the period under review. In 2019, the municipalities of Bač and Mionica decided that Romani shall be in official use in the settlements of Vajska (Bač) as well as Nanomir and Tolić (Mionica). The city of Belgrade took a similar decision regarding the settlement of Sokolovo. Vlach has been introduced into official use in twelve settlements of the municipality of Petrovac na Mlavi. In 2021, the city of Subotica introduced Bunjevac into official use. The aforementioned decision by the municipality of Kula to voluntarily apply additional or stronger Part III undertakings comprised Article 10.2.a which covers official use of a minority language within all aspects of a local authority.⁵ While these decisions constitute commendable progress, additional municipalities where minority languages, including Romani and Ukrainian, have been traditionally used still need to introduce them into official use. Therefore, in line with its recommendations made in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to continue encouraging municipalities to introduce minority languages into official use so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.

Census

12. In October 2022, Serbia organised a census of population, households and dwellings (results not yet published). In the census form, the respondents could indicate their "mother tongue" and their "ethnicity" in a blank box. In the past, the results concerning both questions have influenced the promotion of minority languages and the application of the Charter in many respects, including the funding of national councils of national minorities and the duration of broadcasts in minority languages. In previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts therefore underlined that, "in the sense of Article 1, the Charter concerns not only the mother-tongue speakers of the regional or minority languages or persons belonging to national minorities, but the users of these languages in general and irrespective of their ethnicity."⁶ In fact, for many users of minority languages, in particular young people, this language is not the "mother tongue". Considering only first language users in policies, legislation and practice relating to the application of the Charter would mean to significantly reduce the number of users of minority languages in statistics and hamper the effective application of the treaty.

13. Against this background, the Committee of Experts considers that the Serbian authorities should complement the census results concerning ethnicity and mother tongue with data from a variety of sources and use such comprehensive data for the application of the Charter. Sources of complementary data may be other official administrative and statistical data (e.g. the number of pupils enrolled in minority language education), estimates made by organisations of minority language users and independent sociolinguistic and other types of research conducted in co-operation with the representatives of the minority language users.

Use of the regional or minority languages in education

14. In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities **"make available adequate teaching of Romani and Ukrainian in pre-school, primary and secondary education and extend the existing teaching and study in/of German, Czech and other languages covered only by Part II of the Charter"**.

15. Serbia continues to apply three models of minority language education: teaching may be carried out in the minority language, bilingually, or in Serbian with the possibility of learning the "mother tongue with elements of national culture".

16. Education in the minority language at pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational levels⁷ is organised in Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian (except pre-school level), Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian,

⁵ See e.g. 1st evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on the Slovak Republic, ECRML(2007)1, para. 232; 5th evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Finland, CM(2018)114, para. 149; 2nd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Bosnia and Herzegovina, ECRML(2016)3, para. 174.

⁶ 3rd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Serbia, ECRML(2016)1, para. 19.

⁷ In Serbia, primary education covers grades 1-8, secondary education and vocational education grades 9-12 (1-4). Pre-school education includes a compulsory pre-school programme of one year and covers grades 1-6 starting at the age of 6 months.

Ruthenian (except vocational level) and Slovak. In this model, all subjects except Serbian are taught in the minority language. It works very well and leads to good results.

17. Bilingual pre-school education is organised with Albanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak.⁸ At primary level, bilingual education is available with Bulgarian and German,⁹ and bilingual secondary education with German.¹⁰ However, bilingual education with German is locally not continuous from pre-school to secondary school and is lacking in different parts of Vojvodina.

18. Several minority languages are taught in the framework of the elective subject/programme “mother tongue with elements of national culture” for two hours per week in primary education and, in the case of Bunjevac, also in secondary education. Only this educational model is being applied to Bunjevac, Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian and Vlach, which are neither used as the main medium of instruction nor taught bilingually. In this context, it must be borne in mind that one of the purposes of minority language education in accordance with the Charter is to lead to the degree of fluency and competence which enables the learner to use the language in public life, including in the fields covered by Serbia’s ratification of the Charter. It should also support and encourage language transmission within the family. Therefore, as the Committee of Experts observed in the previous monitoring cycles, teaching a minority language for only two hours per week does not meet the requirements of the respective Charter provisions (Art. 7.1.f, 8.1.biv, 8.1.civ, 8.1.div),¹¹ especially where the minority language is not a well-established language relying on a strong speaker community and transmission in families. In light of the information received from various sources, the Committee of Experts is aware that pupils attending the subject “mother tongue with elements of national culture” do not acquire proficiency in the minority language. Nevertheless, the Serbian authorities have reiterated that this subject is taught in addition to the regular teaching programme, which means that its pupils attend two lessons more than other pupils. For this reason, the authorities consider an extension of the number of weekly lessons unrealistic as it would create an additional burden for the pupils. The Committee of Experts invites the authorities to apply a model that ensures reaching proficiency in the minority language. In this context, the Committee of Experts notes that the problem of an additional burden for the pupils does not exist in the bilingual model in which the minority language is used during an appropriate number of weekly lessons without extending the pupils’ total number of lessons.

19. Some minority languages are not used at certain levels of education at all (pre-school education: Bunjevac, Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian, Vlach; secondary education: Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian, Vlach; vocational education: e.g. Ruthenian, Ukrainian). In certain cases, there is a lack of availability and continuity of minority-language education at pre-school, primary and secondary levels in a larger geographical area or in a particular municipality (e.g. concerning Czech in Bela Crkva, Ukrainian in Sremska Mitrovica and bilingual education with German).

20. In light of the observations made above, the structural shortcomings in minority language education identified in the previous monitoring cycles by and large persist. During the on-the-spot visit, representatives of the speakers of Czech, German and Ukrainian expressed interest in extended minority language education in order to promote a more active use of their languages. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts notes that most of the undertakings in the field of education concerning Romani are not implemented. As noted above, the situation of these languages in education cannot be adequately improved in the framework of the subject “mother tongue with elements of national culture”. However, the Serbian authorities have not extended the number of weekly lessons during the last years and do not intend to do so in the future to avoid an additional burden for the pupils. The Committee of Experts notes that this problem does not exist in the bilingual model in which the minority language is used during an appropriate number of weekly lessons without extending the pupils’ total number of lessons. In addition, this model offers schools some flexibility as to how to apply it to minority languages, taking their situation into account. At present, only the model of bilingual education meets the minimum requirements of the respective Charter provisions. The Committee of Experts therefore invites the Serbian authorities to extend and/or provide bilingual education in Czech, German, Romani and Ukrainian at pre-school, primary and secondary levels and to promote this educational model to the users of other languages covered only by Part II. It refers in this context also to the Committee of Ministers’ recommendation of 2021 to promote bilingual education, which the latter made concerning the application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in Serbia.¹²

⁸ Serbian, German or Hungarian is the second language, depending on the case.

⁹ Hungarian and/or Serbian is the second language, see 5th state report, para. 261.

¹⁰ Serbian is the second language, see 5th state report, para. 262.

¹¹ See e.g. 2nd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Switzerland, ECRML(2004)6, para. 44; Jean-Marie Woehrling: The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – a critical commentary, Council of Europe 2005, p. 150.

¹² See Resolution CM/ResCMN(2021)11 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Serbia, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 April 2021, recommendation for immediate action 4 (“...promote, in consultation with representatives of the national minorities concerned, possible models for bilingual or multilingual education”).

21. Serbia's legislation still foresees too high thresholds for the setting up of minority language classes at different levels of education. In accordance with the Law on Pre-school Education, pre-school education in a minority language or bilingually can be organised for members of a national minority if more than 50% of the parents request so. Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, a minimum of 15 pupils enrolled in the first grade is required to organise teaching in a minority language or exceptionally bilingually in Serbian for members of a national minority. The rules concerning secondary education apply also to technical and vocational education. The Law on Adult Education foresees the possibility of using a minority language along with Serbian if at least 50% of the learners/candidates wish so.

22. As the Committee of Experts noted in all previous monitoring cycles, these thresholds are too high for the purposes of the Charter because speakers of a number of minority languages in Serbia are unlikely to attain them. In the context of *minority* language education, it is obvious that a 50% threshold is not in conformity with the Charter. Nevertheless, the ministry responsible for education or the provincial secretariat of Vojvodina may, upon obtained opinion of the national council of the respective national minority, approve the establishment of such classes even for less than 15 pupils. According to the authorities, the setting-up of minority language classes has been approved in several cases even for a very low number of pupils, for example concerning teaching in Slovak (three pupils) and Ruthenian (one pupil) or bilingual education in Bulgarian and Serbian (three pupils). According to the authorities, applications for less than 15 pupils are usually approved. Taking this into account, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to amend the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education to align them with this practice. In addition, the Committee of Experts reiterates that the Serbian authorities should introduce a standard procedure for informing parents and/or pupils of the possibility to set up minority language classes with less than 15 pupils and carry out parallel awareness-raising about the advantages of and opportunities for minority language education. Furthermore, since no exceptional procedure seems to be applied in pre-school or in adult and continuing education, Serbia should amend the Law on Pre-school Education and the Law on Adult Education with a view to lowering the 50% threshold. Until the process of amending the laws has been completed, the threshold should be applied flexibly.

23. In addition to the regular school network, there are few facilities offering qualified courses for learning minority languages, including for adults (Art. 7.1.g, 8.1.fiii). As far as continuing education (Art. 8.1.fiii) is concerned, the Committee of Experts has received information mainly concerning teacher training, but not other fields. Only Hungarian enjoys some use in the aforementioned fields. It is obvious that there is a structural problem in the implementation of the respective Charter provisions which requires specific attention by the authorities. The high threshold of 50% of the learners/candidates foreseen by the Law on Adult Education (see above) may also play a role. The Committee of Experts stresses the importance of language courses organised in addition to the regular school network notably for adults in general as well as for families living in areas with a lower concentration of users of a minority language and with limited access to minority language education in school. In addition, such facilities provide the majority population with an opportunity to acquire basics of a minority language, which contributes to raising societal awareness of, and understanding for, minority languages. Therefore, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to adopt and implement a structured approach to the provision of facilities offering, in addition to the regular school network, certified courses for learning the minority languages covered by the Charter.

24. Most minority languages can be studied at Serbian universities or equivalent institutions (Art. 7.1.h, 8.1.eii). During the on-the-spot visit, representatives of minority language speakers informed the Committee of Experts of a shortage of teachers teaching in minority languages, including in bilingual education. In order to ensure that education in minority languages or bilingually develops further, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to take measures increasing the number of young people choosing a minority language teaching career. Measures to increase the attractiveness of such a career could comprise a bonus on the future salary of the teacher, a cost-of-living allowance for teacher candidates, scholarships for participants of teacher training and financial support to higher education institutions providing teacher training for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools using minority languages.¹³

25. The Serbian authorities have provided examples of research on minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions (Art. 7.1.h). The Committee of Experts underlines the importance of such activities for the promotion of the minority languages, including the application of the Charter. To this end, the authorities could initiate research projects supporting the design and implementation of measures concerning, for example, education, media, terminology, place names or other fields covered by the Charter. Given that most

¹³ See 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 Hungary, MIN-LANG(2020)14, para. 9.

minority languages are also used in other states, research should also deal with these languages as traditional languages of Serbia.

26. In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities **“promote awareness and tolerance in Serbian society at large with respect to the minority languages and cultures as an integral part of the heritage of Serbia”**.

27. As in the previous monitoring cycles, it is not clear how the authorities promote awareness of the individual regional or minority languages in mainstream education (Art. 7.3). The Committee of Experts is aware that schools deal with multilingualism and interculturalism in a general manner. However, the promotion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages requires that these languages are specifically mentioned. A language-specific approach is *inter alia* necessary to address stereotypes that may exist with regard to the users of some languages. The Committee of Experts has interpreted the repeated lack of specific information as an indication that this undertaking and the related recommendation by the Committee of Ministers are not yet fulfilled.

28. Against this background, the Committee of Experts calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure that curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education (schools primarily attended by pupils from the majority population) provide basic, but concrete information about each regional or minority language, in particular by mentioning them individually and indicating the territories where they have been traditionally used, the basics of their history and culture and examples of the contributions of their speakers to the cultural heritage of Serbia. In the specific case of German, such teaching content should also be included in the teaching of German as a foreign language.

29. The teaching of the history and culture reflected by the regional or minority language (Art. 8.1.g) is related to general awareness-raising in accordance with Article 7.3, but requires more detailed teaching content. In Serbia, the history of the national minorities is taught to pupils enrolled in minority language education, including in the subject "mother tongue with elements of national culture". National councils of national minorities have specific rights concerning the elaboration of relevant syllabi and curricula. However, the Committee of Experts lacks more precise information about how the teaching of the history and culture is organised regarding each minority language concerned. Moreover, the Committee of Experts reiterates that Article 8.1.g also requires that pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where the minority language is used learn about the minority's history and culture. Therefore, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to ensure that curricula, teacher training and educational materials for schools providing education in minority languages, teaching bilingually or teaching the minority language with elements of national culture contain detailed information about the history and culture in Serbia of the regional or minority language concerned.¹⁴ This detailed information should also be provided in mainstream education organised in the area where the given minority language is traditionally used.

30. The Serbian authorities organise tenders for co-financing multilingual projects. Associations from different linguistic groups regularly submit joint project proposals. The Committee of Experts welcomes this practice, which contributes to raising awareness of minority languages in general and supports the achievement of the Charter's objective to establish cultural relations between groups using minority languages with other groups in the state using different languages (Art. 7.1.e).

Use of the regional or minority languages by judicial authorities

31. In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities **“strengthen the use of all regional or minority languages in the judiciary ...”**.

32. Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian (Vojvodina), Ruthenian and Slovak are in official use in a sufficient number of municipalities for the purpose of the application of Article 9 to them. As far as Romani and Ukrainian are concerned, the Committee of Experts notes that both languages still need to be introduced into official use in additional municipalities with a view to fulfilling the undertakings under Article 9 at least formally in all judicial districts where users of these minority languages are present in relevant numbers. This applies also to Romanian, which is not yet in official use in relevant municipalities of Central Serbia.

33. During the period under review, the languages covered by Part III of the Charter were used in a limited number of criminal and/or civil proceedings (Art. 9.1.iii, aii, bii). The use of interpretation and translations did

¹⁴ See also Resolution CM/ResCMN(2021)11 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Serbia, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 April 2021, recommendation for immediate action 4.

not involve extra expense for the persons concerned (Art. 9.1.d). The Committee of Experts thanks the Serbian authorities for having made available statistics confirming the use of minority languages before court. Considering that the total number of cases was low for certain languages, the authorities could consider strengthening the use of minority languages further, for example by encouraging accused and litigants to avail themselves of the possibility to use such a language.

34. The use of minority languages in proceedings concerning administrative matters (Art. 9.1.cii) is formally allowed by the legislation. Nevertheless, according to the official information received, minority languages were not used in such proceedings during the period under review. Given that the practice in proceedings concerning administrative matters differs fundamentally from the practice in criminal and/or civil proceedings mentioned above, the Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to explore the reasons and take specific steps leading to the use of minority languages in proceedings concerning administrative matters.

35. The Serbian authorities have clarified that legal documents (e.g. contracts between private persons) can be validly drawn up in a minority language (Art. 9.2.a). In accordance with Article 18.1 of the Law on Public Notaries, the notary may, in the areas where a minority language is in official use, prepare notarial documents in the minority language or bilingually (with Serbian), in accordance with the party's request. However, no records are kept on the application of the aforementioned provision in practice. The Committee of Experts invites the Serbian authorities to take measures, in co-operation with the representatives of the minority language speakers, notaries and legal professionals, to inform users of minority languages of the legal possibility to draft legal documents such as private contracts in such languages.

36. The Serbian authorities have made available the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to national minorities in most minority languages that are in official use, including some translations in Romani (Art. 9.3). However, this undertaking is not yet implemented regarding Ukrainian.

Use of the regional or minority languages by administrative authorities

37. In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities **"strengthen the use of all regional or minority languages in ... administration"**.

38. With regard to the application of Article 10 to Romani and Ukrainian as well as Romanian in Central Serbia, the Committee of Experts refers to its related observations under Article 9 (see para. 32).

39. In 2022, the Serbian authorities made the census questionnaire available in *inter alia* all languages covered by the Charter. The Committee of Experts considers this measure as very relevant for the use of minority languages in the field of administration and welcomes the inclusion of languages covered only by Part II of the Charter. However, in order to fulfil Article 10.1.c, the national authorities need to provide more examples of documents available in relevant minority languages. Furthermore, with the partial exception of Hungarian, minority languages have not been used in oral or written submissions to local branches of the national authorities (Art. 10.1.aiv). With regard to Romani and Ukrainian, the aforementioned undertakings cannot even be considered formally fulfilled as they need to be introduced into official use in additional municipalities. The Committee of Experts notes that both undertakings fall into the competence of the national authorities themselves, which facilitates their implementation. It invites the national authorities to take the necessary practical steps such as the identification and/or recruitment of staff in such authorities able to work in minority languages, the creation of translation capacity and the encouragement of the local population to use minority languages in oral and written communication with the authorities concerned.

40. As far as the use of minority languages at the level of municipalities is concerned, relevant provisions of the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts were amended in 2018. The revised law provides that in settlements of a municipality where the local percentage of members of a certain national minority reaches 15% according to the results of the last census, the names of the authorities exercising public powers and the topographic names shall be written in the respective minority language even if the given language is not in official use in the entire territory of the municipality.

41. Users of most languages covered by Part III of the Charter submit to some extent oral or written applications to authorities of municipalities (Art. 10.2.b) where the respective language is in official use. This applies notably to users of Albanian and Hungarian in municipalities where these languages are spoken by a high proportion of the population and where the staff of the local authorities naturally comprises Albanian or Hungarian speakers. It also applies to Romanian and Slovak (both in Vojvodina) as well as to Croatian and Bosnian, which are mutually intelligible with Serbian.

42. Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak are official languages of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina which translates official documents into these languages (Art. 10.2.c). The Committee of Experts was informed during the on-the-spot visit that in order to introduce Romani and Ukrainian into official use at provincial level, the national council of the respective national minority and a municipality where Romani or Ukrainian are in official use should jointly apply for official status to the provincial authorities. It welcomes the constructive approach by the provincial authorities.

43. Several municipalities where minority languages are in official use have translated some documents into these languages (Art. 10.2.d), for example parts of their websites. In order to promote a more comprehensive implementation of this undertaking, the national and provincial authorities could compile existing translated standard forms and make them available to all municipalities. Furthermore, translated forms should be published on the municipal websites rather than being produced or handed out only upon individual request by minority language users.

44. During the period under review, several municipalities have decided to display place names *inter alia* in Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak in additional settlements. One municipality committed itself to using place names in Ukrainian, which still need to be determined by the National Council of the Ukrainian National Minority. The Committee of Experts welcomes that the implementation of Article 10.2.g has gained a new dynamic. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed of plans to introduce also street name signs in some minority languages (e.g. Romanian in Banat). This is a positive development as the use of place names in minority languages is in most cases still limited to the names of municipalities and settlements, but does not include other place names.

45. The Committee of Experts has not received sufficient information about the use of minority languages in requests submitted to public service providers (e.g. postal services, hospitals, energy suppliers, transport). It asks the Serbian authorities to include specific information about the implementation of Article 10.3.c into their next report on the application of the Charter.

46. With regard to the staff mobility procedure envisaged by Article 10.4.c, the Serbian authorities have clarified that the Law on Civil Servants and the Law on Employees in Autonomous Provinces and Local Self-Government Units enable the mobility of all civil servants, including those knowing minority languages, in accordance with the employer's need. It appears that, in conjunction with the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts, knowledge of a minority language can constitute a need to justify the transfer/takeover of a staff. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of a minority language have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. The Committee of Experts notes again that most municipalities with a multilingual population employ speakers of different minority languages, enabling the use of minority languages internally and in communication with the public. These local authorities could make systematic use of staff mobility so that officials speaking certain minority languages could apply their language skills permanently or on an ad-hoc basis. The recruitment and/or training of bilingual staff could also support the creation of a pool of multilingual officials.¹⁵

47. Family names in minority languages are adopted and used in practice (Art. 10.5).

48. No changes were made in the administrative division in Serbia which would represent an obstacle to the promotion of minority languages (Art. 7.1.b).

49. In conclusion, the Committee of Experts notes that the use of minority languages in the field of administration has improved in specific fields compared to the previous monitoring cycle. At the same time, the aforementioned recommendation of the Committee of Ministers maintains its relevance.

Use of the regional or minority languages in the media

50. In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities **"facilitate the broadcasting of public and private radio and television programmes in the minority languages in order to reach an appropriate total broadcast time for each language"**.

51. Most languages covered by the Charter are used in public television and/or radio programmes (Art. 11.1.iii, 7.1.d) broadcast by Radio Television of Vojvodina (RTV) or Radio Television of Serbia (RTS). In 2018, RTV started broadcasting a television programme in German and in 2021, a programme in Czech. While

¹⁵ See also Resolution CM/ResCMN(2021)11 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Serbia, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 April 2021, further recommendation 5.

RTS has a more limited offer in minority languages than RTV, the latter's broadcasts can also be received in Central Serbia via internet and cable. In spite of the positive overall picture, the Committee of Experts reiterates its observation made in previous monitoring cycles that the duration of some radio and television programmes in minority languages is too short to make an impact on the promotion of the languages concerned and to encourage their use. There remains a need to extend the duration of such programmes and to broadcast them on a more regular basis.

52. The RTV and RTS broadcasts in minority languages are complemented by private television and/or radio programmes produced by local broadcasters (Art. 11.1.bii, 11.1.cii, 7.1.d). Most languages covered by the Charter are used in such local programmes, but often as "secondary" languages. Whereas the Committee of Experts has not received precise information about the broadcast duration and intervals of these local programmes concerning each minority language, it understands the term "secondary" languages as meaning a rather limited duration. Moreover, it is necessary to apply annually for the launch or continuation of such programmes. As a result, the private/local media landscape is frequently changing, which creates uncertainty for the promotion of the minority languages. Privatisation of the media in 2015 and 2016 significantly reduced the level of information in minority languages. According to research, 43 privatised media outlets had programmes in minority languages. Almost one third of them (14) have been shut down, while some media outlets cancelled programmes in minority languages even if they still have the legal obligation to broadcast them.¹⁶

53. In general, radio and television broadcasts from abroad can be received in Serbia (Art. 11.2). Nevertheless, representatives of the Hungarian speakers have reported difficulties in receiving television from Hungary owing to geoblocking. The Committee of Experts underlines the importance of television and radio broadcasts in minority languages from abroad, which – in addition to the domestic public and private offer – constitute the third pillar in the provision of broadcasts in these languages.

54. The Committee of Experts underlines again that television and radio broadcasts in a minority language are of particular importance for the promotion of the language. They not only provide information in the minority language, but also increase the level of exposure to the language in addition to its use in the family and/or in school. This supports the learning or practice of the language and its development, which is particularly relevant for languages which are no longer or only to some extent used in families. Broadcasts in a minority language also raise the prestige and functionality of the language, which may encourage people to learn or transmit it. It is therefore essential to ensure an adequate broadcasting duration, regularity and accessibility of the programme, which can be facilitated by the internet. In order to reach out to the linguistic group as a whole, the broadcasts should cover content from various genres such as local and national news, entertainment and culture, and address different generations, including children and young people to support language transmission.¹⁷

55. Against this background, the Committee of Experts reiterates its recommendation made in the previous monitoring cycle that the Serbian authorities should develop, for each minority language, a comprehensive broadcast media plan. This plan should take stock of the existing public and private broadcasts on radio and television in the given language, including broadcasts which can be received from abroad, and identify which programmes need to be extended and/or complemented with new broadcasts. The plan's overall goal should be to reach a total combined broadcast duration which can make an effective contribution to the promotion of the language and which informs the audience of local news in different areas where the language is traditionally used.

56. Serbia has undertaken to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in minority languages (Art. 11.1.d) and to apply existing financial assistance also to such productions (Art. 11.1.fii). The Committee of Experts notes that Article 11.1.d does not concern radio and television programmes, as it would otherwise be redundant in relation to Article 11.1.iii, 11.1.bii and 11.1.cii. Rather, it concerns other audio and audiovisual works such as new media (e.g. podcasts, social media). In accordance with the Law on Public Information and Media, the authorities may co-finance media registered in the Media Registry; media not registered there cannot be supported. It is not clear to what extent new media are entitled to support. Besides, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information concerning all relevant minority languages enabling it to assess the existing offer.

57. The authorities have adopted the "Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025". The Committee of Experts underlines that Article 11.1.d is

¹⁶ See Nedim Sejdinović: *Mediji na jezicima nacionalnih manjina – istraživanje i analiza*, Belgrade 2020, p. 5.

¹⁷ See 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 Armenia, MIN-LANG(2021)17, para. 16

of particular importance for the creation of a media offer in minority languages for young people who only to a very limited extent can still be reached through television or radio. It is advisable for the authorities to take this aspect into account in the design and implementation of measures for the promotion of each minority language, including steps putting into practice the aforementioned strategy.

58. As in the previous monitoring cycles and similar to the field of education (see para. 27), it is not clear how the Serbian authorities encourage the mass media to raise awareness of the individual minority languages among the majority population (Art. 7.3). This obligation does not as such concern broadcasts in minority languages, which are not specifically addressed to the majority population, but media primarily addressing the majority population. To this end, the Serbian authorities should encourage the relevant mass media to include in their reporting regular basic information about each regional or minority language, including news and current activities related to their users. Reporting about individual languages also contributes to addressing stereotypes that may exist with regard to the users of some languages.

59. Daily or weekly newspapers are published in Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak (Art. 11.1.ei). There are no newspapers in Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Romani and Ukrainian. As far as the periodicity is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its standing interpretation according to which a “newspaper” in the sense of the Charter is published daily or at least weekly in order to actually convey news.¹⁸ This interpretation appears all the more relevant at a time when online media update their news every few hours.

60. As far as Article 11.3 is concerned, the Law on Electronic Media (Art. 9) foresees that national councils of national minorities propose two candidates for the members of the Council of the Regulatory Body. In accordance with the Law on National Councils of National Minorities (Art. 20), the proposal of two candidates is obtained by a joint agreement of the national councils. The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia elected one of the proposed candidates as a member of the Council of the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media in 2019.

Use of the regional or minority languages in cultural activities

61. The Serbian authorities provide regular financial support to cultural activities of national minorities, including translations of publications into, or from, minority languages (Art. 12.1.a, 12.1.b, 12.1.c). The authorities are encouraged to set incentives in their funding schemes supporting a diversification of cultural activities in minority languages beyond events and publications.

62. Furthermore, the authorities have supported cultural activities in some minority languages also in areas where these languages are not traditionally used (Art. 12.2).

63. The direct participation by representatives of the speakers of the minority languages in cultural activities using these languages (Art. 12.1.f) is to some extent guaranteed by the national council of the respective national minority and associations of national minorities. In 2021, the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted a proposal for the appointment of eleven members of the National Council for Culture, among whom are also two members from a list of candidates proposed by national councils of national minorities.

Use of the regional or minority languages in economic and social life

64. The Serbian constitution prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on the ground of language. Special measures introduced to achieve full equality of individuals or groups in a substantially unequal situation compared to other citizens shall not be deemed discrimination. The Committee of Experts has not been informed of cases of discrimination relating to the use of a minority language (Art. 7.2).

65. As far as Article 13.1.c is concerned, the Committee of Experts has not received complaints about any discouragement of the use of minority languages in connection with economic activities (private sector) or social institutions (e.g. hospitals, elderly homes) either. It nonetheless wishes to underline that Article 13.1.c has a different scope than Article 7.2 as it requires the authorities to actively oppose practices designed to discourage the use of minority languages in connection with economic or social activities. This proactive approach presupposes that the authorities are informed of discouraging practices in a systematic manner and sufficiently early.

¹⁸ See 3rd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Poland, MIN-LANG(2021)15, para. 54; 2nd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on the Slovak Republic, ECRML(2009)8, para. 136; 2nd evaluation report of the Committee of Experts on Armenia, ECRML(2009)6, para. 186.

Use of the regional or minority languages in cross-border exchanges

66. Although national and local agreements on cross-border exchanges have been concluded, Serbia does not use them systematically as a framework for activities promoting minority languages. With regard to most languages, such co-operation should be intensified with a view to creating international synergies in language promotion (Art. 7.1.i, 14.a, 14.b).

Participation and consultation of minority language users in the implementation of the Charter

67. Persons belonging to a national minority in Serbia may elect a national council for the purpose of collectively exercising a certain level of autonomy in culture, education, media and official use of the language and script.¹⁹ In the fourth monitoring cycle, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Serbian authorities “**strengthen the capacity of the national councils of national minorities to effectively promote the regional or minority languages in public life**”.

68. In light of the information obtained during the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts notes that the capacity of national councils of national minorities to effectively promote the minority languages in public life remains limited. In particular, the national councils are underfunded and understaffed and hence not able to fully perform the role of advisory bodies on minority language policy in conformity with Article 7.4. Moreover, their politicisation and representativeness remain subject to debate.²⁰ The Committee of Experts therefore reiterates that the Serbian authorities should continue to empower the national councils of national minorities so as to make them an effective partner in implementing the Charter. This process needs to be accompanied by a considerable strengthening of their budgetary capacity as well as by regular guidance and encouragement concerning relevant action. The adoption of joint action plans based on the Charter may be an effective way of institutionalising the co-operation regarding the implementation of this treaty. Furthermore, some minority languages are also used by citizens not belonging to the national minority to which the minority language is related. Such users are not represented in the national councils, but may have formed associations of teachers or journalists that can make useful contributions to the promotion of the minority language. In determining their policy regarding each minority language (Art. 7.4), the authorities should therefore also take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by such users and develop links between them and the users belonging to the respective national minority (Art. 7.1.e).

Use of minority languages during the Covid-19 pandemic

69. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed by representatives of local authorities and national councils of national minorities that minority languages continued to be used during the Covid-19 pandemic, for example in education organised online or by television and translation of information relating to the pandemic. However, it could be noted that Roma pupils were particularly affected by school dropout.

1.2 The situation of the individual regional or minority languages in Serbia

70. Education in **Albanian** (covered by Parts II and III of the Charter) is provided at pre-school, primary, secondary as well as technical and vocational levels. Bilingual education (Albanian/Serbian) is organised in kindergarten. The language is not used in adult or continuing education. Albanian language, literature and culture can be studied at the University of Belgrade. Albanian has been used in criminal and civil proceedings. However, it has not been used in proceedings concerning administrative matters. Whereas there is hardly any practice of using Albanian at the level of local branches of the state authorities, local authorities use this language in their communication with the population and in official documents. Place names in Albanian have been adopted and are used. However, representatives of the Albanian speakers criticise the recurring misspelling of such names. The use of family names in Albanian is assured. There is public (*inter alia* RTS) and local radio and television broadcasting in Albanian. The magazine “Perspektiva” is published in Albanian. Cultural activities and facilities using Albanian are co-financed by the authorities through tender-based support programmes. Cross-border exchanges promoting Albanian exist to some extent in the field of culture.

71. The availability of education in **Bosnian** (covered by Parts II and III) has improved during the last years and now extends to pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational levels. Bosnian can be studied at university, but is still not taught in adult education. It has been used in criminal and civil proceedings, but not in

¹⁹ In accordance with the Law on National Councils of National Minorities.

²⁰ See also Resolution CM/ResCMN(2021)11 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Serbia, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 April 2021, further recommendation 7; Fourth Opinion on Serbia by the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ACFC/OP/IV(2019)001, paras. 108, 114.

proceedings concerning administrative matters. Bosnian is not used in practice by, or in contacts with, local branches of the national authorities. Local authorities do use Bosnian. Public media still do not offer television or radio in Bosnian. While there is no daily or weekly newspaper published in Bosnian, it is to some extent used in cultural activities. Cross-border co-operation promoting Bosnian focuses on culture (e.g. concerning theatre, films and libraries).

72. Education in **Bulgarian** (covered by Parts II and III) is organised at primary, secondary and vocational levels. In addition, bilingual education in Serbian and Bulgarian is available at pre-school level and at the primary school "Hristo Botev" in Dimitrovgrad/Tsaribrod. Bulgarian can be studied at the universities of Belgrade and Niš. In adult or continuing education, only continuing education for teachers teaching in Bulgarian has been organised. Bulgarian has been used in criminal and civil proceedings, but not in proceedings concerning administrative matters. There is no practice of using Bulgarian in relations with local branches of the national authorities or in documents of the latter. Bulgarian is used in communication with local authorities, which also publish some of their documents in this language. It is now technically and administratively possible to enter also the feminine form of surnames in Bulgarian (with the suffix -a) into registers. Regarding public media, a television programme in Bulgarian is broadcast on RTS, but the total duration of the broadcasts is too short to make an effective contribution to the promotion of this language. A radio programme in Bulgarian having a short overall duration is broadcast by RTV, but there is no radio programme in this language broadcast by RTS. Television programmes in Bulgarian are also broadcast on local television (e.g. TV Caribrod, Dimitrovgrad/Tsaribrod). The same applies to local radio programmes (Radio Caribrod, Dimitrovgrad/Tsaribrod; Radio Bosilegrad). The authorities support cultural activities in Bulgarian on the basis of tenders. In the reporting period, cultural projects in Bulgarian were also carried out in territories where Bulgarian is not traditionally used.

73. **Bunjevac** (covered by Part II) is only taught in the subject "Bunjevac language with elements of national culture" for two hours per week in primary and secondary schools. It is not used in kindergarten. At the Faculty of Education in Sombor, the course "Ethno-Cultural History of Bunjevac" is offered, which also addresses the specific features of this language. In 2021, the city of Subotica introduced Bunjevac into official use. Following this decision, the National Council of the Bunjevac National Minority adopted a decision on the Bunjevac names of the settlements in Subotica. RTV broadcasts a television and a radio programme in Bunjevac. Information in Bunjevac is also provided through local television and radio programmes. The Bunjevac Information Centre publishes one monthly and two youth/children's magazines (*Bunjevačke novine*, *Tandrčak*, *Bocko*). Bunjevačka Matica (cultural-educational organisation) has a library of publications in Bunjevac and also publishes itself.

74. Education in **Croatian** (covered by Parts II and III) is available at pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational education. In addition, bilingual education (Croatian/Serbian) is organised in kindergarten. The use of Croatian in pre-school education is limited to the city of Subotica and should be extended to other municipalities where this language is traditionally used. Croatian can be studied at the University of Novi Sad, but is not present in adult education. During the period under review, this language was used in criminal proceedings, but not in civil proceedings or in proceedings concerning administrative matters. Croatian is not used by local branches of the national authorities. Local authorities have published some official documents also in Croatian. RTV continues to broadcast radio and television programmes in Croatian. There are also local radio and television programmes broadcast in this language. A weekly newspaper is published in Croatian.

75. **Czech** (covered by Part II) is only taught in the elective subject "Czech language with elements of national culture" in primary education during two hours per week. It is neither used in pre-school, nor in secondary education in Bela Crkva or Kovin. Czech language, literature and culture can be studied at the University of Belgrade. The study of Czech was established at the University of Novi Sad as part of co-operation with the South Moravian Institute from the Czech Republic. A weekly radio programme in Czech is broadcast by RTV (30 minutes). In 2021, RTV started broadcasting a television programme in Czech (*Češke perlice*, monthly, 30 minutes). Czech is also used to some extent by local Radio Bela Crkva. In 2020, the National Council of the Czech National Minority adopted a decision on determining the traditional Czech names of the municipality of Bela Crkva, its settlements and two rivers. Czech is in official use in this municipality. In the field of culture, the authorities have supported publications in Czech. Serbia and the Czech Republic have promoted Czech *inter alia* in the fields of education and culture. The municipality of Bela Crkva also co-operates with the Czech Republic.

76. Bilingual education in **German** (covered by Part II) with Serbian or Hungarian is organised at pre-school (Subotica, Sombor), primary (Subotica, 6th-8th grades) and secondary levels (Novi Sad, Niš, Valjevo). There is a lack of continuity of education in each of these cities. According to the authorities, demand for German-language education is growing at different levels. Representatives of the German minority wish to

start bilingual education in additional areas of Vojvodina. German can be studied at the universities of Novi Sad, Belgrade, Kragujevac and Niš. Its use by RTV is limited to a monthly television programme (30 minutes) and a weekly radio programme (30 minutes, both called *Deutsche Minuten*). Local radio and television broadcasters in Apatin, Kula and Subotica use German to some extent. In the print media, news are not published in German at regular intervals. Two magazines (*Fenster*, *Guck mal*) are published in German a few times a year. In 2022, the municipality of Kula adopted a decision to apply Part III undertakings to German, concerning *inter alia* bilingual education, local official use, place names and private television and radio programmes.

77. Pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational education is available in **Hungarian** (covered by Parts II and III). Moreover, bilingual education (Hungarian/German) is organised in kindergarten. Hungarian is taught in adult education. This language can also be studied at university. Teacher training is ensured in Subotica/Szabadka and Novi Sad/Újvidék.²¹ Hungarian has been used in criminal and civil court proceedings, but not in proceedings concerning administrative matters. According to representatives of the Hungarian speakers, the use of their language before court would be more common if additional legal professionals mastering Hungarian were trained. While Hungarian speakers to some extent submit oral or written applications in Hungarian to local branches of the national authorities, the latter usually do not draft documents in Hungarian. Several, but not all municipalities where Hungarian is in official use publish their documents also in this language. RTV broadcasts television and radio programmes in Hungarian. There are also local television and radio broadcasts in Hungarian (e.g. Pannon TV). A daily and two weekly newspapers are published in Hungarian. The Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Hungarians has a library as well as a photo, audio, music and film archive. It digitises newspapers in Hungarian and the archives of the theatres of Vojvodina Hungarians and carries out cultural and publishing activities. Representatives of the Hungarian speakers have expressed the need for additional funding for cultural institutions using this language (e.g. libraries). Serbia and institutions in this country have concluded agreements with Hungary and Hungarian institutions concerning co-operation *inter alia* in the fields of education, science and culture (including archives, film and libraries).

78. **Macedonian** (covered by Part II) is only taught in the elective subject/programme "Macedonian language with elements of national culture" in primary education during two hours per week. The language is not used in pre-school or secondary education. Macedonian can *inter alia* be studied at the universities of Belgrade and Niš. There are both public and several local television and radio programmes broadcasting in Macedonian. The Macedonian Information and Publishing Centre publishes magazines in Macedonian. With support from the authorities, the Macedonian minority has organised a number of cultural activities using also Macedonian, for example the Days of Macedonian Culture or the Days of Macedonian Creativity in Serbia. Furthermore, the authorities have supported several translations of literary works into Macedonian.

79. **Romani** (covered by Parts II and III) is not used in pre-school, secondary and vocational education. In primary education, it is only taught in the framework of the subject "Romani language with elements of national culture" during two hours per week. The Preschool Teacher Training College "Mihailo Palov" in Vršac, which the Committee of Experts' delegation visited during its on-the-spot visit, trains teachers of pre-school children in Romani. While Romani has not been offered as a subject of adult education, several training programmes for teachers of Romani (continuing education) have been organised. During the period under review, Romani was used in criminal proceedings, but not in civil proceedings and proceedings concerning administrative matters. In 2019, the municipalities of Bač and Mionica decided that Romani shall be in official use in the settlements of Vajska (Bač) as well as Nanomir and Tolić (Mionica). This implies that *inter alia* the names of public bodies will also be indicated in Romani and that Romani speakers may use their language with the authorities. The city of Belgrade took a similar decision regarding the settlement of Sokolovo. This important progress notwithstanding, there remains a need to introduce official use of Romani also in other municipalities where this language is traditionally used. Apart from this and the use of personal names in Romani, administrative authorities do not use this language. RTS broadcasts a radio programme in Romani which is also broadcast on RTV. Furthermore, both RTS and RTV broadcast television programmes in Romani. Several local radio stations and television channels also use Romani to some extent. There are no daily or weekly newspapers in Romani, although some magazines exist. Serbia did not sign agreements with other states promoting Romani. Some cross-border activities involving Romani are organised at the level of municipalities.

80. Pre-school education mainly in **Romanian** (covered by Parts II and III) or provided bilingually remains available in certain pre-schools in Vojvodina. However, the number of pupils enrolled is relatively low compared to the primary level. Representatives of the Romanian speakers have pointed out that there is a need to encourage multilingual families to enrol their children in Romanian-language kindergartens. Primary and

²¹ Given that some municipalities and settlements have several co-official names in minority languages, the Committee of Experts indicates only the place name in the minority language referred to in the respective sentence.

secondary education in Romanian is also available in Vojvodina. Vocational education in Romanian is offered in the field of economics, law and administration in Vojvodina. In Central Serbia, there is currently no education in Romanian or bilingually. Romanian can be studied at university, but is not taught in adult education. Romanian has been used in criminal and civil proceedings, but not in proceedings concerning administrative matters. There is no practice of using Romanian at the level of local branches of the national authorities and its use in local administration, including topographic names, is limited. Romanian is not yet in official use in municipalities in Central Serbia. In the public media, RTV broadcasts radio and television programmes in Romanian that can also be received in Central Serbia. Romanian is also to some extent used in several local radio and television programmes in Vojvodina and one local television programme in Central Serbia (TV Bor). A weekly newspaper is published in Romanian. The Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Romanians carries out scientific, cultural and artistic events relating to Romanian as well as scientific co-operation with institutions in Romania. It also publishes a cultural magazine.

81. Pre-school, primary and secondary education is available in **Ruthenian** (covered by Parts II and III). In addition, bilingual education (Ruthenian/Serbian) is organised in kindergarten. However, this language is still not taught in technical and vocational education. Ruthenian language and literature are studied at the University of Novi Sad. In addition, research on Ruthenian has been carried out. Ruthenian is not taught as a subject of adult education, but several training programmes for teachers of Ruthenian (continuing education) have been organised. With the exception of requests or evidence in Ruthenian, there is hardly any practice of using this language before judicial authorities. Local branches of the national authorities do not use Ruthenian and local authorities use it only concerning place names and, to a marginal extent, official documents. RTV broadcasts radio and television programmes in Ruthenian, which is also to some extent used in several local radio programmes. A weekly newspaper is published in Ruthenian. Serbia has not concluded agreements with other states concerning the promotion of Ruthenian.

82. Pre-school, primary, secondary, technical and vocational education is available in **Slovak** (covered by Parts II and III). In addition, bilingual education (Slovak/Serbian) is organised in kindergarten. Slovak language and literature are also studied at the universities of Novi Sad/Nový Sad and Belgrade. Slovak has not been taught in adult education, but programmes have been carried out to improve competencies of teachers teaching in this language. Representatives of the Slovak speakers have indicated that their language has been used in criminal and civil proceedings. It was not used in proceedings concerning administrative matters. Slovak is not used by, or in relations with, local branches of the national authorities. At the level of municipalities, Slovak is occasionally used in applications and documents. According to their representatives, Slovak speakers need to be further encouraged to use this language in contacts with authorities. They also indicated a need to introduce Slovak into official use in the settlement of Vojlovica (city of Pančevo/Pánčevo). RTV offers radio and television programmes in Slovak. Moreover, local television and radio programmes use Slovak to some extent. There is a weekly newspaper in this language. The Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Slovaks conducts activities *inter alia* in the fields of culture, research, documentation and communication and presents the Slovak culture of Serbia abroad. Slovak is promoted in the framework of cross-border co-operation.

83. **Ukrainian** (covered by Parts II and III) is not used in pre-school, secondary, technical or adult education. In primary education, it is only taught in the subject "Ukrainian language with elements of national culture" during two hours per week. Furthermore, Ukrainian language, literature and culture are studied at the University of Belgrade. During the period under review, Ukrainian has been used in a few criminal proceedings, but not in civil proceedings or proceedings concerning administrative matters. No legal texts have been translated into Ukrainian. Neither local branches of the national authorities, nor the provincial authorities of Vojvodina or local authorities have used this language so far. In 2022, the municipality of Kula adopted a decision to apply additional Part III undertakings *inter alia* concerning bilingual education and the official use of Ukrainian. This decision still has to be implemented. Furthermore, Ukrainian has to be introduced into official use in several municipalities where this language is used so as to facilitate the application of the Charter. RTV offers radio and television programmes in Ukrainian. In addition, Ukrainian is to some extent used in local radio programmes. There is still no newspaper in Ukrainian. The periodical report provides some examples of transnational exchanges with Ukraine, but in the field of culture only.

84. **Vlach** (covered by Part II) is only taught in the elective subject/programme "Vlach speech with elements of national culture" in primary education during two hours per week. It is neither used at pre-school, nor at secondary level. During the period under review, research on Vlach was conducted. The municipality of Petrovac na Mlavi has decided to signpost place names in Vlach in twelve of its settlements. Vlach is to some extent used in local television programmes (TV Bor (with standard Romanian), TV Mlava, TV I Majdanpek, TV F Zaječar) and radio programmes (MIG Radio, Svilajnac, Radio Bor, Radio Mlava, Radio F Zaječar). However, it is not used by public broadcasters.

Chapter 2 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and recommendations

2.1 Albanian

2.1.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Albanian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Albanian ²²	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Albanian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Albanian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Albanian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Albanian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Albanian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups 	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Albanian at all appropriate stages	↗			
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Albanian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Albanian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Albanian		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Albanian	=			
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Albanian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Albanian among their objectives 				↘
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Albanian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Albanian 	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Albanian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Albanian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Albanian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Albanian ²³				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Albanian, a substantial part of primary education in Albanian or teaching of Albanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Albanian, a substantial part of secondary education in Albanian or teaching of Albanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			

²² In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

²³ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Albanian ²²	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
8.1.div	make available technical and vocational education in Albanian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Albanian or teaching of Albanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.eii	provide facilities for the study of Albanian as a university and higher education subject	=			
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Albanian as a subject of adult and continuing education			=	
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Albanian				✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities					
9.1.a	guarantee the accused the right to use Albanian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗			
9.1.a	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Albanian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗			
9.1.bii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Albanian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations	↗			
9.1.cii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Albanian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=	
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Albanian and the related use of documents and evidence in Albanian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned	↗			
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Albanian			=	
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Albanian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Albanian ²⁴				
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Albanian ²⁵				
9.3	make available in Albanian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Albanian	↗			
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services					
10.1.aiv	ensure that users of Albanian may submit oral or written applications in Albanian to local branches of the national authorities			=	
10.1.av	ensure that users of Albanian may validly submit a document in Albanian to local branches of the national authorities ²⁶				
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Albanian			=	
10.2.b	possibility for users of Albanian to submit oral or written applications in Albanian to the regional or local authority	=			
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Albanian			=	
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Albanian	=			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Albanian	=			
10.3.c	allow users of Albanian to submit a request in Albanian to public service providers			✓	
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Albanian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗	
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Albanian	↗			
Art. 11 – Media					
11.1.a	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Albanian	↗			
11.1.bii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Albanian on a regular basis	=			
11.1.cii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Albanian on a regular basis	=			

²⁴ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

²⁵ See preceding footnote

²⁶ As Articles 10.1.aiv and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Albanian ²²	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Albanian	=			
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Albanian				✓
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Albanian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Albanian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Albanian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Albanian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Albanian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Albanian	↗			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Albanian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling	↗			
12.1.c	foster access in Albanian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		=		
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Albanian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Albanian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Albanian				=
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Albanian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Albanian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Albanian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education			=	
14.b	for the benefit of Albanian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Albanian is used in identical or similar form				=

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

85. In light of the fact that Art. 8.1.iii, 8.1.biv, 8.1.civ and 8.1.dv are fulfilled, Art. 7.1.f is equally considered fulfilled. Research on Albanian has been carried out at the Department of Albanian Language at the University of Belgrade. Therefore, Art. 7.1.h is fulfilled. Cultural institutions in Serbia have signed agreements on co-operation with corresponding institutions in Albania (e.g. concerning theatre and libraries). Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Albanian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Furthermore, in light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Albanian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and

living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. During the period under review, defendants used Albanian in criminal proceedings (Art. 9.1.a.ii), including in testimonies (Art. 9.1.a.iii), and in civil proceedings (Art. 9.1.b.ii). The use of interpreters and translations did not involve extra expense for the persons concerned (Art. 9.1.d). Therefore, the aforementioned provisions are fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature (e.g. Law on Elections of Members of Parliament) or pertaining to national minorities (e.g. Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts) have been updated or translated into Albanian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. The Committee of Experts has not received information about the extent to which users of Albanian have submitted requests in this language to public service providers. Therefore, Art. 10.3.c is only formally fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Albanian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Personal names in Albanian have been registered in registries of births and in other registries, which fulfils Art. 10.5. There is both public radio and television broadcasting in Albanian in different municipalities; therefore, Art. 11.1.a.iii is fulfilled. Since there is no daily or weekly newspaper in Albanian, Art. 11.1.e.i is not fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.f.ii. The authorities have supported cultural activities in Albanian and access in Serbian to cultural works produced in Albanian, which fulfils Art. 12.1.a and 12.1.b respectively.

2.1.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Albanian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.1.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia²⁷ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Encourage Albanian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Albanian by these authorities.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Albanian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Facilitate the offering of Albanian as a subject of adult and continuing education.

²⁷ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.2 Bosnian

2.2.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Bosnian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bosnian ²⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Bosnian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Bosnian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Bosnian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Bosnian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Bosnian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Bosnian at all appropriate stages	↗			
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Bosnian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Bosnian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Bosnian		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Bosnian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bosnian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bosnian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Bosnian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Bosnian	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Bosnian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Bosnian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	↗			
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Bosnian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Bosnian ²⁹				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Bosnian, a substantial part of primary education in Bosnian or teaching of Bosnian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Bosnian, a substantial part of secondary education in Bosnian or teaching of Bosnian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Bosnian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Bosnian or teaching of Bosnian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	↗			
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Bosnian as a university and higher education subject	=			
8.1.f.iii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Bosnian as a subject of adult and continuing education				=
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Bosnian				↗

²⁸ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

²⁹ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bosnian ²⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Bosnian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Bosnian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Bosnian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations	↗				
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Bosnian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Bosnian and the related use of documents and evidence in Bosnian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Bosnian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Bosnian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Bosnian ³⁰					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Bosnian ³¹					
9.3	make available in Bosnian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Bosnian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.a.i.v	ensure that users of Bosnian may submit oral or written applications in Bosnian to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.a.v	ensure that users of Bosnian may validly submit a document in Bosnian to local branches of the national authorities ³²					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Bosnian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Bosnian to submit oral or written applications in Bosnian to the regional or local authority	=				
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Bosnian				=	
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Bosnian		↗			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Bosnian		=			
10.3.c	allow users of Bosnian to submit a request in Bosnian to public service providers			✓		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Bosnian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Bosnian	=				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Bosnian				=	
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Bosnian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Bosnian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Bosnian	↗				
11.1.e.i	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Bosnian				✓	
11.1.f.ii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Bosnian					✓
11.2	• guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Bosnian	=				

³⁰ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

³¹ See preceding footnote

³² As Articles 10.1.a.iv and 10.1.a.v constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.a.v.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bosnian ²⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Bosnian ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Bosnian 				
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Bosnian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Bosnian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Bosnian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Bosnian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling				=
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Bosnian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Bosnian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Bosnian				=
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Bosnian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Bosnian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Bosnian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education			=	
14.b	for the benefit of Bosnian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Bosnian is used in identical or similar form			=	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

86. In light of the fact that Art. 8.1.a.iii, 8.1.b.iv, 8.1.c.iv and 8.1.d.iv are fulfilled, Art. 7.1.f is equally considered fulfilled. Bosnian can be studied at university and research on it has been carried out. Art. 7.1.h is therefore fulfilled. Cultural institutions in Serbia have signed agreements on co-operation with corresponding institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (e.g. concerning theatre, films and libraries). Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Bosnian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Pre-school education in Bosnian is organised in Novi Pazar, Sjenica and Tutin; Art. 8.1.a.iii is fulfilled. Vocational education in several fields is also organised in Bosnian; Art. 8.1.d.iv is fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Bosnian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. Bosnian has been used by defendants in criminal proceedings (Art. 9.1.a.ii) and in civil proceedings (Art. 9.1.b.ii). In addition, interpretation and translation have been provided (Art. 9.1.d). The aforementioned undertakings are therefore fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Bosnian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. Local authorities publish some

of their official documents (official gazette, website) also in Bosnian. However, the practice differs from municipality to municipality. Therefore, Art. 10.2.d is partly fulfilled. The Committee of Experts has not received information about the extent to which users of Bosnian have submitted requests in this language to public service providers. Therefore, Art. 10.3.c is only formally fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Bosnian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Private radio and television programmes are broadcast in Bosnian, which fulfils Art. 11.1.bii and Art. 11.1.cii. The authorities have supported different web portals in Bosnian. Therefore, Art. 11.1.d is fulfilled. There is no newspaper in the sense of the Charter in Bosnian, which in accordance with the Committee of Experts' interpretation must be published at least weekly. Therefore, Art. 11.1.ei is not fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, literary works in Bosnian were translated into other languages, but there were no dubbing, post-synchronisation or subtitling activities. Art. 12.1.b is therefore partly fulfilled.

2.2.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Bosnian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered "fulfilled" (see under 2.2.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia³³ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Include content about the Bosnian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Facilitate the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Bosnian.
- c. Provide for the broadcasting of public radio and television programmes in Bosnian.
- d. Support the creation of a newspaper in Bosnian published at least weekly.

³³ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.3 Bulgarian

2.3.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Bulgarian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bulgarian ³⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled no conclusion
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Bulgarian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Bulgarian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Bulgarian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Bulgarian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Bulgarian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Bulgarian at all appropriate stages	=			
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Bulgarian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Bulgarian at universities or equivalent institutions	=			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Bulgarian		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Bulgarian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bulgarian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bulgarian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Bulgarian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Bulgarian	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Bulgarian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Bulgarian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Bulgarian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Bulgarian ³⁵				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Bulgarian, a substantial part of primary education in Bulgarian or teaching of Bulgarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Bulgarian, a substantial part of secondary education in Bulgarian or teaching of Bulgarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Bulgarian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Bulgarian or teaching of Bulgarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	↗			
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Bulgarian as a university and higher education subject	=			

³⁴ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

³⁵ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bulgarian ³⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Bulgarian as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗			
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Bulgarian					✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.iii	guarantee the accused the right to use Bulgarian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Bulgarian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned			✓		
9.1.bii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Bulgarian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations	↗				
9.1.cii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Bulgarian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Bulgarian and the related use of documents and evidence in Bulgarian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Bulgarian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Bulgarian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Bulgarian ³⁶					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Bulgarian ³⁷					
9.3	make available in Bulgarian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Bulgarian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.aiv	ensure that users of Bulgarian may submit oral or written applications in Bulgarian to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.av	ensure that users of Bulgarian may validly submit a document in Bulgarian to local branches of the national authorities ³⁸					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Bulgarian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Bulgarian to submit oral or written applications in Bulgarian to the regional or local authority	=				
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Bulgarian				=	
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Bulgarian		↗			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Bulgarian	=				
10.3.c	allow users of Bulgarian to submit a request in Bulgarian to public service providers			=		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Bulgarian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Bulgarian	↗				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Bulgarian		=			
11.1.bii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Bulgarian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.cii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Bulgarian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Bulgarian	↗				
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Bulgarian				✓	

³⁶ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

³⁷ See preceding footnote

³⁸ As Articles 10.1.ai v and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bulgarian ³⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Bulgarian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Bulgarian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Bulgarian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Bulgarian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Bulgarian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Bulgarian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Bulgarian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Bulgarian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling	=			
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Bulgarian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Bulgarian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Bulgarian	↗			
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Bulgarian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Bulgarian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Bulgarian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education			=	
14.b	for the benefit of Bulgarian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Bulgarian is used in identical or similar form			=	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of States parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

87. There is cross-border co-operation with Bulgaria in the field of education. Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Bulgarian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Vocational education in Bulgarian is organised in the fields of trade, catering and tourism, which fulfils Art. 8.1.div. While continuing education for teachers teaching in Bulgarian has been organised, the Committee of Experts has not received other examples of implementation of Art. 8.1.fiii, which is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Bulgarian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. During the period under review, defendants used Bulgarian in criminal proceedings. Therefore, Art. 9.1.aii is fulfilled. However, no evidence in Bulgarian has been used in criminal proceedings. Consequently, Art. 9.1.iii is only formally fulfilled. Bulgarian was also used in civil proceedings, which fulfils

Art. 9.1.bii. Interpreters and translations were provided without extra expense for the persons concerned, which fulfils Art. 9.1.d. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Bulgarian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. Local authorities publish some of their official documents (official gazette, website) also in Bulgarian. However, not all official documents are also available in this language. Therefore, Art. 10.2.d is partly fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Bulgarian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Personal names in Bulgarian have been entered into registers. In addition, it is now technically and administratively possible to enter also the feminine form of surnames in Bulgarian (with the suffix -a) into registers.³⁹ Consequently, Art. 10.5 is fulfilled. Private broadcast media in Bulgarian exist; Art. 11.1.bii and 11.1.cii are fulfilled. Since the authorities have supported audio and audiovisual productions in Bulgarian, including different web portals, Art. 11.1.d is fulfilled. There is no daily or weekly newspaper in Bulgarian; Art. 11.1.ei is not fulfilled. Although web portals in Bulgarian have been supported by the authorities (see above), it is unclear which other new media in minority languages can benefit from existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, publications were translated from Bulgarian into Serbian, but there were no dubbing, post-synchronisation or subtitling activities relevant for Art. 12.1.b, which is partly fulfilled. Cultural activities in Bulgarian were organised in Novi Sad and Vranje (located outside the area where Bulgarian is traditionally used), which fulfils Art. 12.2.

2.3.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Bulgarian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.3.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁴⁰ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

a. Encourage Bulgarian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Bulgarian by these authorities.

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Bulgarian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Facilitate the offering of Bulgarian as a subject of adult education.
- d. Increase the number of official documents published by local authorities in Bulgarian.
- e. Encourage Bulgarian speakers to use this language in communication with public service providers.
- f. Provide for the broadcasting of public radio programmes in Bulgarian.
- g. Support the creation of a newspaper in Bulgarian published at least weekly.

³⁹ See Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on the Official Use of the Bulgarian Language and Script, Belgrade 2021.

⁴⁰ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.4 Bunjevac

2.4.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Bunjevac

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Bunjevac ⁴¹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Bunjevac as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Bunjevac	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Bunjevac		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Bunjevac, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Bunjevac • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Bunjevac at all appropriate stages				=
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Bunjevac to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Bunjevac at universities or equivalent institutions	=			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Bunjevac				=
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Bunjevac	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bunjevac among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Bunjevac among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Bunjevac • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Bunjevac	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

88. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Bunjevac in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled.

⁴¹ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

2.4.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Bunjevac in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.4.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁴² remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. Consider applying an educational model that ensures proficiency in Bunjevac, in co-operation with the speakers.**
- b. Include content about the Bunjevac language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.**

II. Further recommendation

- c. Provide facilities enabling non-speakers of Bunjevac, including adults, to learn it.

⁴² [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.5 Croatian

2.5.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Croatian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Croatian ⁴³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter (Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Croatian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Croatian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Croatian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Croatian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Croatian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Croatian at all appropriate stages		=		
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Croatian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Croatian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Croatian			↘	
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Croatian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Croatian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Croatian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Croatian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Croatian	=			
Part III of the Charter (Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Croatian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Croatian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient		=		
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Croatian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Croatian ⁴⁴				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Croatian, a substantial part of primary education in Croatian or teaching of Croatian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Croatian, a substantial part of secondary education in Croatian or teaching of Croatian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Croatian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Croatian or teaching of Croatian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Croatian as a university and higher education subject	↗			
8.1.f.iii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Croatian as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗		

⁴³ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁴⁴ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Croatian ⁴³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Croatian					✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Croatian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Croatian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Croatian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Croatian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Croatian and the related use of documents and evidence in Croatian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Croatian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Croatian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Croatian ⁴⁵					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Croatian ⁴⁶					
9.3	make available in Croatian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Croatian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.a.i.v	ensure that users of Croatian may submit oral or written applications in Croatian to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.av	ensure that users of Croatian may validly submit a document in Croatian to local branches of the national authorities ⁴⁷					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Croatian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Croatian to submit oral or written applications in Croatian to the regional or local authority	=				
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Croatian	=				
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Croatian		↗			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Croatian		=			
10.3.c	allow users of Croatian to submit a request in Croatian to public service providers			✓		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Croatian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Croatian	=				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Croatian	=				
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Croatian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Croatian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Croatian		↗			
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Croatian	=				
11.1.f.ii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Croatian					✓

⁴⁵ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁴⁶ See preceding footnote

⁴⁷ As Articles 10.1.a.i.v and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Croatian ⁴³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Croatian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Croatian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Croatian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Croatian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Croatian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Croatian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Croatian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling				=
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Croatian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Croatian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Croatian				=
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Croatian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Croatian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Croatian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education			✓	
14.b	for the benefit of Croatian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Croatian is used in identical or similar form			=	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

89. Croatian can be studied at university (see below) and research on this language was carried out during the period under review. Art. 7.1.h is therefore fulfilled. In the absence of examples of implementation during the period under review, Art. 7.1.i is only formally fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Croatian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Croatian can be studied at the University of Novi Sad, which fulfils Art. 8.1.eii. While Croatian has not been taught in adult education, programmes have been carried out to improve competencies of teachers teaching in this language. Consequently, Art. 8.1.fiii is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Croatian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. During the period under review, Croatian has been used in criminal proceedings. Consequently, Art. 9.1.iii is fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Croatian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. Local authorities publish some

of their official documents (official gazette, website) also in Croatian, which partly fulfils Art. 10.2.d. The Committee of Experts has not received information about the extent to which users of Croatian have submitted requests in this language to public service providers. Therefore, Art. 10.3.c is only formally fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Croatian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. There are local private radio and television programmes in Croatian, which fulfils Art. 11.1.bii and Art. 11.1.cii respectively. Whereas the authorities have provided some support to the use of Croatian on the internet, there is no information about the production and distribution of other audio and audiovisual works in this language. Therefore, Art. 11.1.d is partly fulfilled. Although the use of Croatian on the internet has been supported by the authorities (see above), it is unclear which other new media in minority languages can benefit from existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works. The Committee of Experts is hence not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, publications were translated from Croatian into Serbian. As there were no activities relating to dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. In the absence of examples of implementation during the period under review, Art. 14.a is only formally fulfilled.

2.5.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Croatian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.5.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁴⁸ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. Promote respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Croatian by including content about this language in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to cover it in reporting and journalist training.**
- b. Encourage Croatian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Croatian by these authorities.**

II. Further recommendations

- c. Extend pre-school education in Croatian to municipalities other than Subotica.
- d. Facilitate the offering of Croatian as a subject of adult education.
- e. Facilitate the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Croatian.
- f. Encourage Croatian speakers to use this language in communication with public service providers.

⁴⁸ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.6 Czech

2.6.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Czech

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Czech ⁴⁹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Czech as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Czech	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Czech		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Czech, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Czech • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups 	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Czech at all appropriate stages				=
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Czech to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Czech at universities or equivalent institutions		=		
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Czech		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Czech	=			
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Czech among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Czech among their objectives 				↘
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Czech • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Czech 	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

90. Serbia and the Czech Republic have carried out activities promoting the learning of Czech and raising awareness of the Czech language and culture in Serbia. The study of Czech was established at the University of Novi Sad as part of co-operation with the South Moravian Institute from the Czech Republic. The municipality of Bela Crkva also co-operates with the Czech Republic in the field of education. Several activities have addressed and involved the Czech minority. It is, however, unclear what activities relating to the Czech

⁴⁹ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148)

language have been carried out in other fields of public life, e.g. culture and media. Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Czech in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled.

2.6.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Czech in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.6.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁵⁰ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Provide bilingual education with Czech in Bela Crkva and Kovin at pre-school, primary and secondary levels.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Czech language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Strengthen the official use of Czech in Bela Crkva so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.
- d. Broadcast public television programmes in Czech on a more regular basis and extend their duration.
- e. Provide facilities enabling non-speakers of Czech, including adults, to learn it.

⁵⁰ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.7 German

2.7.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of German

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning German ⁵¹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter⁵² (Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of German as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of German	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote German		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of German, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using German • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of German at all appropriate stages		=		
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of German to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on German at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of German		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of German	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to German among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to German among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses German • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to German	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

91. German can be studied at university and research on this language is being carried out, for example concerning bilingual education as well as the historical and present use of German in cities of Vojvodina. Therefore, Art. 7.1.h is fulfilled. A cross-border theatre festival in German has been carried out, which partly fulfils Art. 7.1.i. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently

⁵¹ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁵² In 2022, the municipality of Kula adopted a Charter for Regional or Minority Languages containing also Part III undertakings concerning German (Art. 8.1.bii, 8.1.cii, 8.1.dii, 8.1.fi, 8.1.g; 9.2.a; 10.2.a; 10.2.b; 10.2.g; 10.3.b, 10.4.b, 10.5; 11.1.iii, 11.1.bii, 11.1.cii, 11.1.d, 11.1.fii; 12.1.a, 12.1.c, 12.1.e, 12.1.f, 13.2.d). The Committee of Experts has taken the related implementation measures into consideration in its evaluation of the implementation of Part II.

precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of German in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled.

2.7.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of German in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.7.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁵³ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Provide bilingual education with German at pre-school, primary and secondary levels in Sombor, Subotica and Novi Sad as well as in additional municipalities where German is traditionally used.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the German language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education, including teaching German as a foreign language, and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Encourage the introduction of German into local official use so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.
- d. Broadcast the public television and radio programmes in German on a more regular basis and extend their duration.
- e. Facilitate the creation of a news publication issued in German at regular intervals.

⁵³ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.8 Hungarian

2.8.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Hungarian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Hungarian ⁵⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
Part II of the Charter (Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)						
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles						
7.1.a	recognition of Hungarian as an expression of cultural wealth	=				
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Hungarian	=				
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Hungarian		=			
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Hungarian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=			
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Hungarian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=				
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Hungarian at all appropriate stages	=				
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Hungarian to learn it	↗				
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Hungarian at universities or equivalent institutions	=				
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Hungarian	↗				
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Hungarian	=				
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Hungarian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Hungarian among their objectives				↙	
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Hungarian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Hungarian	=				
Part III of the Charter (Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages) ⁵⁵						
Art. 8 – Education						
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Hungarian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Hungarian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=				
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Hungarian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Hungarian ⁵⁶					
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Hungarian, a substantial part of primary education in Hungarian or teaching of Hungarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=				
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Hungarian, a substantial part of secondary education in Hungarian or teaching of Hungarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=				

⁵⁴ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁵⁵ In 2021 and 2022 respectively, the municipalities of Kanjiža/Magyarkanizsa and Kula adopted a Charter for Regional or Minority Languages containing also additional or stronger Part III undertakings concerning Hungarian (Art. 8.1.ai, 8.1.bi, 8.1.ci, 8.1.di, 8.1.fi, 8.1.h; 10.2.a, 10.2.f, 10.3.a, 10.4.a, 10.4.b; 11.1.fi, 11.1.g; 12.1.d, 12.1.e, 12.1.h, 12.3; 13.2.b, 13.2.c, 13.2.d, 13.2.e). The Committee of Experts has taken the related implementation measures into consideration in its evaluation of the implementation of the undertakings specified in Serbia's instrument of ratification.

⁵⁶ As Articles 8.1.iii and 8.1.aiv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.aiv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Hungarian ⁵⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
8.1.div	make available technical and vocational education in Hungarian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Hungarian or teaching of Hungarian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=				
8.1.eii	provide facilities for the study of Hungarian as a university and higher education subject	=				
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Hungarian as a subject of adult and continuing education	↗				
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Hungarian					✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Hungarian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Hungarian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Hungarian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations	↗				
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Hungarian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Hungarian and the related use of documents and evidence in Hungarian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Hungarian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Hungarian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Hungarian ⁵⁷					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Hungarian ⁵⁸					
9.3	make available in Hungarian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Hungarian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.a.i v	ensure that users of Hungarian may submit oral or written applications in Hungarian to local branches of the national authorities		↗			
10.1.av	ensure that users of Hungarian may validly submit a document in Hungarian to local branches of the national authorities ⁵⁹					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Hungarian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Hungarian to submit oral or written applications in Hungarian to the regional or local authority	↗				
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Hungarian	=				
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Hungarian		=			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Hungarian		=			
10.3.c	allow users of Hungarian to submit a request in Hungarian to public service providers			=		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Hungarian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Hungarian	=				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Hungarian	=				
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Hungarian on a regular basis	↗				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Hungarian on a regular basis	↗				

⁵⁷ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁵⁸ See preceding footnote

⁵⁹ As Articles 10.1.a.i.v and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Hungarian ⁵⁴	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Hungarian	=			
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Hungarian	=			
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Hungarian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Hungarian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Hungarian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Hungarian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Hungarian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Hungarian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Hungarian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Hungarian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		=		
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Hungarian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Hungarian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Hungarian	↗			
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Hungarian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Hungarian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Hungarian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education	↗			
14.b	for the benefit of Hungarian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Hungarian is used in identical or similar form	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

92. There is cross-border co-operation with Hungary in the field of research, education and culture; Art. 7.1.i is fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Hungarian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Education for adults in Hungarian is provided in Senta/Zenta and Subotica/Szabadka. In addition, programmes have been carried out to improve competencies of teachers of Hungarian (continuing education). Consequently, Art. 8.1.fiii and Art. 7.1.g are fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Hungarian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee

of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. Hungarian has been used by defendants in criminal proceedings (Art. 9.1.iii) and requests or evidence in this language were submitted in such proceedings (Art. 9.1.ii). Hungarian was also used in civil proceedings (Art. 9.1.i). In addition, interpretation and translation have been provided (Art. 9.1.d). The aforementioned undertakings are therefore fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Hungarian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. Hungarian has to a limited extent been used in contacts with local branches of the national authorities, for example in the South Bačka/Dél-Bácska administrative district. Against this background, Art. 10.1.aiv is partly fulfilled. It has been more regularly used in contacts with local authorities, fulfilling Art. 10.2.b. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Hungarian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Hungarian is used in a number of local private radio and television programmes, which fulfils Art. 11.1.bii and Art. 11.1.cii. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Therefore, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, publications in Hungarian were translated into Serbian. However, there is no information about dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling. Therefore, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. Cultural activities using Hungarian were also organised outside the areas where this language is traditionally used (e.g. theatre performances in Central Serbia); Art. 12.2 is fulfilled. Hungarian is to a significant extent promoted in the framework of co-operation and agreements with Hungary, for example concerning the Európa Kollégium in Novi Sad/Újvidék. Consequently, Art. 14.a is fulfilled.

2.8.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Hungarian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.8.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁶⁰ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Encourage Hungarian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Hungarian by these authorities.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Hungarian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Facilitate further publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Hungarian.
- d. Take measures to encourage the use of Hungarian in communication with public service providers.

⁶⁰ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.9 Macedonian

2.9.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Macedonian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Macedonian ⁶¹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Macedonian as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Macedonian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Macedonian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Macedonian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Macedonian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups 	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Macedonian at all appropriate stages				=
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Macedonian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Macedonian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Macedonian				=
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Macedonian	=			
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Macedonian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Macedonian among their objectives 				↘
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Macedonian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Macedonian 	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

⁶¹ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: [http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/\(treaty No. 148\)](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/(treaty%20No.%20148)).

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

93. Macedonian can *inter alia* be studied at the universities of Belgrade and Niš where research on it has been conducted; Art. 7.1.h is hence fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Macedonian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled.

2.9.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Macedonian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.9.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁶² remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. **Consider applying an educational model that ensures proficiency in Macedonian, in co-operation with the speakers.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Macedonian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Encourage the introduction of Macedonian into local official use in Central Serbia so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.
- d. Provide facilities enabling non-speakers of Macedonian, including adults, to learn it.
- e. Promote cross-border exchanges, in the fields covered by the Charter, for the benefit of Macedonian.

⁶² [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.10 Romani

2.10.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Romani

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romani ⁶³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled no conclusion
Part II of the Charter (Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Romani as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Romani	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Romani				=
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Romani, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		↗		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Romani • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Romani at all appropriate stages				=
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Romani to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Romani at universities or equivalent institutions		=		
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Romani		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Romani	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romani among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romani among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Romani • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Romani	=			
Part III of the Charter (Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Romani or a substantial part of pre-school education in Romani at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient				=
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Romani and a substantial part of pre-school education in Romani ⁶⁴				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Romani, a substantial part of primary education in Romani or teaching of Romani as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient				=
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Romani, a substantial part of secondary education in Romani or teaching of Romani as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient				=
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Romani, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Romani or teaching of Romani as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient				=
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Romani as a university and higher education subject		=		
8.1.f.iii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Romani as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗		
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Romani				✓

⁶³ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁶⁴ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romani ⁶³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Romani in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned		↗			
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Romani, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned		↗			
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Romani in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations				=	
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Romani in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations				=	
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Romani and the related use of documents and evidence in Romani, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned				=	
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Romani				=	
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Romani, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Romani ⁶⁵					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Romani ⁶⁶					
9.3	make available in Romani the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Romani		↗			
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.a.i v	ensure that users of Romani may submit oral or written applications in Romani to local branches of the national authorities				=	
10.1.av	ensure that users of Romani may validly submit a document in Romani to local branches of the national authorities ⁶⁷					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Romani				=	
10.2.b	possibility for users of Romani to submit oral or written applications in Romani to the regional or local authority				=	
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Romani				=	
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Romani				=	
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Romani				=	
10.3.c	allow users of Romani to submit a request in Romani to public service providers				=	
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Romani to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Romani	=				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Romani	=				
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Romani on a regular basis	=				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Romani on a regular basis	=				
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Romani	=				
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Romani				=	
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Romani					✓
11.2	• guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Romani	=				

⁶⁵ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁶⁶ See preceding footnote

⁶⁷ As Articles 10.1.a.i and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romani ⁶³	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Romani ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Romani 				
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Romani are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Romani	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Romani by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Romani to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling	=			
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Romani in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Romani is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Romani	↗			
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Romani in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Romani is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Romani in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education				=
14.b	for the benefit of Romani, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Romani is used in identical or similar form		↗		

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

94. Art. 7.1.d covers the use of Romani in different fields of public life, which has slightly improved during the period under review. In particular, there has been an increased use of Romani before court and this language was introduced into official use in three settlements. In addition, Romani continues to be used in the broadcast media. In spite of persisting significant shortcomings in other fields of public life, Art. 7.1.d can now be considered partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Romani in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. While Romani has not been offered as a subject of adult education, several training programmes for teachers of Romani (continuing education) have been organised. Therefore, Art. 8.1.fiii is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Romani is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. In the reporting period, defendants used Romani in criminal proceedings (Art. 9.1.iii) and requests or evidence in Romani were submitted in such proceedings (Art. 9.1.iii). Considering on the one hand the fact that Romani has not yet been introduced into official use in all municipal territories relevant for the application of Art. 9, but on the other hand a certain degree of practical

implementation, the aforementioned undertakings are partly fulfilled. During the period under review, the Law on the Protector of Citizens and the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination were translated into Romani, which partly fulfils Art. 9.3. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Romani have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. Several publications in Romani were translated into Serbian, but there is no information concerning dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling from Romani into other languages. Consequently, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. Cultural activities using Romani (e.g. theatres, music events) were organised also outside the areas where Romani is traditionally used; Art. 12.2 is fulfilled. In the framework of co-operation of municipalities in Serbia with municipalities abroad, cultural activities involving Romani were organised (e.g. exchange of cultural and artistic societies, joint events). Therefore, Art. 14.b and 7.1.i are partly fulfilled.

2.10.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Romani in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.10.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁶⁸ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. Provide bilingual education in Romani at pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational levels.**
- b. Encourage the introduction of Romani into official use in additional municipalities so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.**
- c. Draw up, in co-operation with the representatives of the Romani speakers, a comprehensive strategy on the implementation of the Charter undertakings concerning this language.**

II. Further recommendations

- d. Promote respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romani by including content about this language in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to cover it in reporting and journalist training.
- e. Provide facilities for the study of Romani as a university and higher education subject.
- f. Facilitate the offering of Romani as a subject of adult education.
- g. Take practical steps facilitating the use of Romani before court.
- h. Support the creation of a newspaper in Romani published at least weekly.
- i. Adopt, in the framework of inter-state agreements and international co-operation of municipalities, a structured policy for the promotion of cross-border exchanges for Romani in the fields covered by the Charter.

⁶⁸ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.11 Romanian

2.11.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Romanian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romanian ⁶⁹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Romanian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Romanian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Romanian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Romanian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Romanian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Romanian at all appropriate stages		=		
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Romanian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Romanian at universities or equivalent institutions	=			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Romanian		=		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Romanian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romanian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romanian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Romanian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Romanian	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Romanian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Romanian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient		=		
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Romanian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Romanian ⁷⁰				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Romanian, a substantial part of primary education in Romanian or teaching of Romanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient		↗		
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Romanian, a substantial part of secondary education in Romanian or teaching of Romanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient		=		
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Romanian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Romanian or teaching of Romanian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient		=		
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Romanian as a university and higher education subject	=			

⁶⁹ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁷⁰ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romanian ⁶⁹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Romanian as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗			
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Romanian					✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.iii	guarantee the accused the right to use Romanian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned		↗			
9.1.iiiii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Romanian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned		↗			
9.1.bii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Romanian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations		↗			
9.1.cii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Romanian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Romanian and the related use of documents and evidence in Romanian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned		↗			
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Romanian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Romanian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Romanian ⁷¹					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Romanian ⁷²					
9.3	make available in Romanian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Romanian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.aiv	ensure that users of Romanian may submit oral or written applications in Romanian to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.av	ensure that users of Romanian may validly submit a document in Romanian to local branches of the national authorities ⁷³					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Romanian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Romanian to submit oral or written applications in Romanian to the regional or local authority		=			
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Romanian	=				
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Romanian			=		
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Romanian		=			
10.3.c	allow users of Romanian to submit a request in Romanian to public service providers			=		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Romanian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Romanian		↗			
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.iiiii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Romanian	=				
11.1.bii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Romanian on a regular basis		=			
11.1.cii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Romanian on a regular basis		↗			
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Romanian				=	
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Romanian	=				

⁷¹ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁷² See preceding footnote

⁷³ As Articles 10.1.aii and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Romanian ⁶⁹	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Romanian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Romanian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Romanian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Romanian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Romanian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Romanian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Romanian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Romanian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		=		
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Romanian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Romanian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Romanian	↗			
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Romanian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Romanian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Romanian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education	=			
14.b	for the benefit of Romanian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Romanian is used in identical or similar form			=	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

95. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Romanian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Primary education in Romanian takes place in a number of schools in Vojvodina. However, there is no appropriate teaching in or of Romanian in Central Serbia. Therefore, Art. 8.1.biv is partly fulfilled. While Romanian has not been offered as a subject of adult education, several training programmes for teachers of this language (continuing education) have been organised. Therefore, Art. 8.1.fiii is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Romanian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. It is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. Romanian has been used by defendants in criminal proceedings (Art. 9.1.a.ii) and requests or evidence in this language were submitted in such proceedings (Art. 9.1.a.iii) before courts in Vojvodina. Romanian was also used in civil proceedings (9.1.b.ii) in this province. In addition, interpretation and translation have been provided (Art. 9.1.d).

However, in Central Serbia, Romanian has not yet been introduced into official use and this language has not been used before court. Therefore, the aforementioned undertakings are partly fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Romanian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Romanian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Personal names in Romanian were entered into official registers in municipalities of Vojvodina, but not in Central Serbia. Art. 10.5 is therefore partly fulfilled. Romanian is to some extent used in several local television programmes in Vojvodina and one local television programme in Central Serbia. Therefore, Art. 11.1.cii is partly fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, a considerable number of publications, including from the Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Romanians, were translated from Romanian into Serbian. As there were no activities relating to dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. Cultural activities using Romanian were also organised outside the areas where Romanian is traditionally used (e.g. theatre performances, Festival of Serbian reciters "Poets of my people" in Valjevo); Art. 12.2 is fulfilled.

2.11.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Romanian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered "fulfilled" (see under 2.11.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁷⁴ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. Provide education in Romanian or bilingually at pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational levels in Central Serbia, in consultation with representatives of the speakers.**
- b. Facilitate the broadcasting of private radio and television programmes in Romanian.**

II. Further recommendations

- c. Include content about the Romanian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- d. Encourage the introduction of Romanian into local official use in Central Serbia so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.
- e. Facilitate the offering of Romanian as a subject of adult education.
- f. Encourage Romanian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Romanian by these authorities.
- g. Facilitate the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Romanian.
- h. Facilitate the adoption and use of place names in Romanian.

⁷⁴ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.12 Ruthenian

2.12.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Ruthenian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ruthenian ⁷⁵	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Ruthenian as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Ruthenian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Ruthenian		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Ruthenian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Ruthenian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Ruthenian at all appropriate stages		=		
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Ruthenian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Ruthenian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Ruthenian		=		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Ruthenian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Ruthenian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Ruthenian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Ruthenian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Ruthenian	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)⁷⁶</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Ruthenian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Ruthenian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Ruthenian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Ruthenian ⁷⁷				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Ruthenian, a substantial part of primary education in Ruthenian or teaching of Ruthenian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Ruthenian, a substantial part of secondary education in Ruthenian or teaching of Ruthenian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			

⁷⁵ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁷⁶ In 2022, the municipality of Kula adopted a Charter for Regional or Minority Languages containing also additional or stronger Part III undertakings concerning Ruthenian (Art. 8.1.ai, 8.1.bi, 8.1.ci, 8.1.di, 8.1.fi; 10.2.a, 10.2.f, 10.4.a, 10.4.b; 11.1.bi, 11.1.fi, 11.1.g; 12.3; 13.2.b, 13.2.d, 13.2.e). The Committee of Experts has taken the related implementation measures into consideration in its evaluation of the implementation of the undertakings specified in Serbia's instrument of ratification.

⁷⁷ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ruthenian ⁷⁵	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
8.1.div	make available technical and vocational education in Ruthenian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Ruthenian or teaching of Ruthenian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient				=	
8.1.eii	provide facilities for the study of Ruthenian as a university and higher education subject	=				
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Ruthenian as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗			
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Ruthenian					✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Ruthenian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Ruthenian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Ruthenian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Ruthenian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Ruthenian and the related use of documents and evidence in Ruthenian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Ruthenian			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Ruthenian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Ruthenian ⁷⁸					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Ruthenian ⁷⁹					
9.3	make available in Ruthenian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Ruthenian	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.ai v	ensure that users of Ruthenian may submit oral or written applications in Ruthenian to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.av	ensure that users of Ruthenian may validly submit a document in Ruthenian to local branches of the national authorities ⁸⁰					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Ruthenian			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Ruthenian to submit oral or written applications in Ruthenian to the regional or local authority			✓		
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Ruthenian	=				
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Ruthenian		↗			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Ruthenian		=			
10.3.c	allow users of Ruthenian to submit a request in Ruthenian to public service providers			=		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Ruthenian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Ruthenian	↗				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Ruthenian	=				
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Ruthenian on a regular basis	=				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Ruthenian on a regular basis				✓	

⁷⁸ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁷⁹ See preceding footnote

⁸⁰ As Articles 10.1.a.i.v and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ruthenian ⁷⁵	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Ruthenian				=
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Ruthenian	=			
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Ruthenian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Ruthenian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Ruthenian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Ruthenian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Ruthenian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Ruthenian	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Ruthenian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Ruthenian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling				=
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Ruthenian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Ruthenian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Ruthenian	↗			
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Ruthenian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Ruthenian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Ruthenian in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education				=
14.b	for the benefit of Ruthenian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Ruthenian is used in identical or similar form			=	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

96. Ruthenian can be studied at university and research on this language has been carried out during the period under review, for example concerning orthography. Consequently, Art. 7.1.h is fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Ruthenian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. While Ruthenian has not been offered as a subject of adult education, several training programmes for teachers of this language (continuing education) have been organised. Therefore, Art. 8.1.fiii is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Ruthenian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this

language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. Requests or evidence in Ruthenian were submitted in criminal proceedings, which fulfils Art. 9.1.iii. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Ruthenian, which fulfils Art. 9.3. No oral or written applications in Ruthenian have been submitted to local authorities; Art. 10.2.b is only formally fulfilled. Some local authorities have made available a limited number of official documents (including online) in Ruthenian; Art. 10.2.d is partly fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Ruthenian have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. Personal names in Ruthenian were entered into official registers. Art. 10.5 is therefore fulfilled. There do not seem to exist private television programmes in Ruthenian; Art. 11.1.cii is not fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, publications were translated from Ruthenian into Serbian. As there were no activities relating to dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. Cultural activities using Ruthenian were also organised outside the areas where this language is traditionally used (e.g. Festival of Serbian reciters "Poets of my people" in Valjevo); Art. 12.2 is fulfilled.

2.12.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Ruthenian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered "fulfilled" (see under 2.12.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁸¹ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. **Facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Ruthenian.**
- b. **Encourage Ruthenian speakers to use this language in their contacts with local authorities.**

II. Further recommendations

- c. Include content about the Ruthenian language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- d. Make available teaching in Ruthenian in technical and vocational education.
- e. Facilitate the offering of Ruthenian as a subject of adult education.
- f. Encourage the use of Ruthenian in court.
- g. Encourage the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Ruthenian.

⁸¹ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.13 Slovak

2.13.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Slovak

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Slovak ⁸²	Fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter (Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Slovak as an expression of cultural wealth	=			
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Slovak	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Slovak		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Slovak, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Slovak • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Slovak at all appropriate stages	=			
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Slovak to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Slovak at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Slovak		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Slovak	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Slovak among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Slovak among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Slovak • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Slovak	=			
Part III of the Charter (Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Slovak or a substantial part of pre-school education in Slovak at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Slovak and a substantial part of pre-school education in Slovak ⁸³				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Slovak, a substantial part of primary education in Slovak or teaching of Slovak as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient	=			
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Slovak, a substantial part of secondary education in Slovak or teaching of Slovak as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.d.iv	make available technical and vocational education in Slovak, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Slovak or teaching of Slovak as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient	=			
8.1.e.ii	provide facilities for the study of Slovak as a university and higher education subject	=			
8.1.f.iii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Slovak as a subject of adult and continuing education		↗		
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Slovak				↗

⁸² In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁸³ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:						
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Slovak ⁸²	Fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled	no conclusion
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities						
9.1.a.ii	guarantee the accused the right to use Slovak in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned			=		
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Slovak, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.1.b.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Slovak in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations	↗				
9.1.c.ii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Slovak in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations			=		
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Slovak and the related use of documents and evidence in Slovak, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned	↗				
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Slovak			=		
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Slovak, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Slovak ⁸⁴					
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Slovak ⁸⁵					
9.3	make available in Slovak the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Slovak	↗				
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services						
10.1.a.i.v	ensure that users of Slovak may submit oral or written applications in Slovak to local branches of the national authorities			=		
10.1.av	ensure that users of Slovak may validly submit a document in Slovak to local branches of the national authorities ⁸⁶					
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Slovak			=		
10.2.b	possibility for users of Slovak to submit oral or written applications in Slovak to the regional or local authority		=			
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Slovak	=				
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Slovak		↗			
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Slovak	=				
10.3.c	allow users of Slovak to submit a request in Slovak to public service providers			=		
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Slovak to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used			↗		
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Slovak	=				
Art. 11 – Media						
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Slovak	=				
11.1.b.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Slovak on a regular basis	=				
11.1.c.ii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Slovak on a regular basis	=				
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Slovak				=	
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Slovak	=				
11.1.f.ii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Slovak					✓
11.2	• guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Slovak	=				

⁸⁴ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁸⁵ See preceding footnote

⁸⁶ As Articles 10.1.a.i.v and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Slovak ⁸²	Fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Slovak ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Slovak 				
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Slovak are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Slovak	=			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Slovak by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		✓		
12.1.c	foster access in Slovak to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		=		
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Slovak in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Slovak is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Slovak				=
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Slovak in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Slovak is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Slovak in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education	↗			
14.b	for the benefit of Slovak, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Slovak is used in identical or similar form			✓	

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

97. Slovak can be studied at university and research on this language was carried out during the period under review, including by the Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Slovaks. Art. 7.1.h is therefore fulfilled. Slovak has been promoted in the framework of scientific cross-border co-operation. Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Slovak in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. While Slovak has not been taught in adult education, programmes have been carried out to improve competencies of teachers teaching in this language. Consequently, Art. 8.1.iii is partly fulfilled. In light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Slovak is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. Requests and evidence in Slovak were submitted in criminal proceedings; Art. 9.1.iii is fulfilled. In addition, Slovak has been used in civil proceedings, which fulfils Art. 9.1.bii. The use of interpreters and translations did not involve extra expense for the persons concerned; Art. 9.1.d is therefore fulfilled. Several laws and bylaws of a general nature or pertaining to national minorities have been updated or translated into Slovak, which fulfils Art. 9.3. Local authorities publish only some of their official documents (official gazette,

website) also in Slovak. Therefore, Art. 10.2.d is partly fulfilled. The relevant legislation enables the mobility of civil servants knowing minority languages. However, there is no information about the extent to which public service employees having knowledge of Slovak have requested transfers and whether the respective authorities have complied with such requests. Art. 10.4.c is therefore only formally fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d (not fulfilled), the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. During the period under review, publications were translated from Slovak into Serbian. As there were no activities relating to dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling, Art. 12.1.b is partly fulfilled. Based on the Agreement on co-operation in the fields of education, culture and sport concluded between Serbia and the Slovak Republic, numerous activities promoting Slovak have been carried out. Therefore, Art. 14.a is fulfilled. Regional and local authorities in Serbia have concluded agreements with equivalent territories in the Slovak Republic. However, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about activities promoting Slovak in their framework and carried out during the reporting period. Therefore, Art. 14.b is only formally fulfilled.

2.13.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Slovak in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.13.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁸⁷ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendation for immediate action

- a. Encourage Slovak speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Slovak by these authorities.**

II. Further recommendations

- b. Include content about the Slovak language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- c. Extend the local official use of Slovak so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.
- d. Facilitate the offering of Slovak as a subject of adult education.

⁸⁷ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.14 Ukrainian

2.14.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Ukrainian

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ukrainian ⁸⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled no conclusion
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Ukrainian as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Ukrainian	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Ukrainian				=
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Ukrainian, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	• maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Ukrainian • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Ukrainian at all appropriate stages				↘
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Ukrainian to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Ukrainian at universities or equivalent institutions	↗			
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Ukrainian		↗		
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Ukrainian	=			
7.3	• promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Ukrainian among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Ukrainian among their objectives				↘
7.4	• take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Ukrainian • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Ukrainian	=			
Part III of the Charter <i>(Additional undertakings chosen by the state for specific languages)⁸⁹</i>					
Art. 8 – Education					
8.1.a.iii	make available pre-school education in Ukrainian or a substantial part of pre-school education in Ukrainian at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient				=
8.1.a.iv	favour and/or encourage the provision of pre-school education in Ukrainian and a substantial part of pre-school education in Ukrainian ⁹⁰				
8.1.b.iv	make available primary education in Ukrainian, a substantial part of primary education in Ukrainian or teaching of Ukrainian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient				=
8.1.c.iv	make available secondary education in Ukrainian, a substantial part of secondary education in Ukrainian or teaching of Ukrainian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient				=

⁸⁸ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

⁸⁹ In 2022, the municipality of Kula adopted a Charter for Regional or Minority Languages containing also additional or stronger Part III undertakings concerning Ukrainian (Art. 8.1.b.ii, 8.1.f.i, 8.2; 10.2.a, 10.3.a, 10.4.b; 11.1.bi, 11.1.g; 12.1.d, 12.1.e, 12.1.g, 12.1.h; 13.2.b, 13.2.d, 13.2.e). The Committee of Experts has taken the related implementation measures into consideration in its evaluation of the implementation of the undertakings specified in Serbia's instrument of ratification.

⁹⁰ As Articles 8.1.a.iii and 8.1.a.iv constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 8.1.a.iv.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ukrainian ⁸⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
8.1.div	make available technical and vocational education in Ukrainian, a substantial part of technical and vocational education in Ukrainian or teaching of Ukrainian as an integral part of the curriculum at least to those pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient				=
8.1.eii	provide facilities for the study of Ukrainian as a university and higher education subject	=			
8.1.fiii	favour and/or encourage the offering of Ukrainian as a subject of adult and continuing education				=
8.1.g	ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by Ukrainian				✓
Art. 9 – Judicial authorities					
9.1.a	guarantee the accused the right to use Ukrainian in criminal proceedings, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned		↗		
9.1.a.iii	provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible in criminal proceedings solely because they are formulated in Ukrainian, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned				=
9.1.bii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Ukrainian in civil proceedings without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations				=
9.1.cii	allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use Ukrainian in proceedings concerning administrative matters without thereby incurring additional expense, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations				=
9.1.d	with regard to the conduct of civil and/or administrative proceedings in Ukrainian and the related use of documents and evidence in Ukrainian, ensure that the use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned				=
9.2.a	not to deny the validity of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Ukrainian				=
9.2.b	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents solely because they are drafted in Ukrainian, and provide that they can be invoked against third parties who are not users of Ukrainian ⁹¹				
9.2.c	not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in Ukrainian ⁹²				
9.3	make available in Ukrainian the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of Ukrainian				=
Art. 10 – Administrative authorities and public services					
10.1.aiv	ensure that users of Ukrainian may submit oral or written applications in Ukrainian to local branches of the national authorities				=
10.1.av	ensure that users of Ukrainian may validly submit a document in Ukrainian to local branches of the national authorities ⁹³				
10.1.c	allow the national authorities to draft documents in Ukrainian				=
10.2.b	possibility for users of Ukrainian to submit oral or written applications in Ukrainian to the regional or local authority				=
10.2.c	publication by regional authorities of their official documents also in Ukrainian				=
10.2.d	publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Ukrainian				=
10.2.g	use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language, of place names in Ukrainian				=
10.3.c	allow users of Ukrainian to submit a request in Ukrainian to public service providers				=
10.4.c	compliance with requests from public service employees having a knowledge of Ukrainian to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used				=
10.5	allow the use or adoption of family names in Ukrainian				=
Art. 11 – Media					
11.1.a.iii	make provision so that public broadcasters offer radio and television programmes in Ukrainian	=			
11.1.bii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private radio programmes in Ukrainian on a regular basis	=			
11.1.cii	encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Ukrainian on a regular basis				=

⁹¹ As Articles 9.2.a, 9.2.b and 9.2.c constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Articles 9.2.b and 9.2.c.

⁹² See preceding footnote

⁹³ As Articles 10.1.aiv and 10.1.av constitute alternative options, the Committee of Experts will not evaluate the implementation of Article 10.1.av.

The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:					
Article	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Ukrainian ⁸⁸	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
11.1.d	encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audiovisual works in Ukrainian				=
11.1.ei	encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one weekly or daily newspaper in Ukrainian				=
11.1.fii	apply existing measures for financial assistance also to audiovisual productions in Ukrainian				✓
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Ukrainian • do not oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in Ukrainian • ensure the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in Ukrainian 	=			
11.3	ensure that the interests of the users of Ukrainian are represented or taken into account within bodies guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of the media	=			
Art. 12 – Cultural activities and facilities					
12.1.a	encourage production, reproduction and dissemination of cultural works in Ukrainian	↗			
12.1.b	foster access in other languages to works produced in Ukrainian by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.c	foster access in Ukrainian to works produced in other languages by aiding and developing translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling		↗		
12.1.f	encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of Ukrainian in providing facilities and planning cultural activities	=			
12.2	In territories other than those in which Ukrainian is traditionally used, allow, encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities using Ukrainian				=
Art. 13 – Economic and social life					
13.1.c	oppose practices designed to discourage the use of Ukrainian in connection with economic or social activities	=			
Art. 14 – Transfrontier exchanges					
14.a	apply bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states in which Ukrainian is used in identical or similar form, or conclude such agreements, to foster contacts between the users of Ukrainian in the states concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education			=	
14.b	for the benefit of Ukrainian, facilitate and/or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory Ukrainian is used in identical or similar form				=

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

98. In light of the assessment concerning Art. 8.1.a.iii, 8.1.b.iv, 8.1.c.iv and 8.1.d.iv (not fulfilled), Art. 7.1.f is also considered not fulfilled. Ukrainian can be studied at the universities of Belgrade and Novi Sad, and research on this language has been carried out. Therefore, Art. 7.1.h is fulfilled. The periodical reports provide some examples of transnational exchanges with Ukraine, but in the field of culture only. Therefore, Art. 7.1.i is partly fulfilled. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Ukrainian in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled. Furthermore, in light of the information received, it is not clear to the Committee of Experts how the teaching of the history and culture specifically related to Ukrainian is organised and if pupils belonging to the majority population and living

in the area where this language is used also learn about it. The Committee of Experts is therefore not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 8.1.g. During the period under review, defendants used Ukrainian in some criminal proceedings. Considering that so far only the municipality of Kula has decided to use Ukrainian officially and that several municipalities need to introduce this language into official use, Art. 9.1.ii is partly fulfilled. It is unclear whether existing financial assistance to audio and audiovisual works can be applied also to new media in minority languages. Considering also its assessment regarding Art. 11.1.d, the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of Art. 11.1.fii. The authorities have supported cultural activities in Ukrainian (e.g. literary meetings, music events); Art. 12.1.a is fulfilled. During the period under review, publications were translated from Ukrainian into Serbian (Art. 12.1.b). In addition, publications were translated into Ukrainian (Art. 12.1.c). However, there were no activities relating to dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling; both undertakings are therefore partly fulfilled.

2.14.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Ukrainian in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.14.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁹⁴ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. Provide bilingual education with Ukrainian at pre-school, primary, secondary and vocational levels.**
- b. Encourage the introduction of Ukrainian into official use in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and additional municipalities so as to facilitate the application of the Charter.**
- c. Draw up, in co-operation with the representatives of the Ukrainian speakers, a comprehensive strategy on the implementation of the Charter undertakings concerning this language.**

II. Further recommendations

- d. Promote respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Ukrainian by including content about this language in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to cover it in reporting and journalist training.
- e. Facilitate the offering of Ukrainian as a subject of adult and continuing education.
- f. Take practical steps facilitating the use of Ukrainian before court.
- g. Encourage Ukrainian speakers to use their language in contacts with local branches of the national authorities and facilitate the drafting of documents in Ukrainian by these authorities.
- h. Facilitate the publication by local authorities of their official documents also in Ukrainian.
- i. Facilitate the broadcasting of private television programmes in Ukrainian.
- j. Support the creation of a newspaper in Ukrainian published at least weekly.

⁹⁴ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

2.15 Vlach

2.15.1 Compliance of Serbia with its undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages concerning the protection and promotion of Vlach

Symbols used to mark changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle: ↗ improvement ↘ deterioration = no change

Article	The Committee of Experts considers the undertaking*:				
	Undertakings of Serbia concerning Vlach ⁹⁵	fulfilled	partly fulfilled	formally fulfilled	not fulfilled
Part II of the Charter <i>(Undertakings which the state must apply to all regional or minority languages within its territory)</i>					
Art. 7 – Objectives and principles					
7.1.a	recognition of Vlach as an expression of cultural wealth		=		
7.1.b	ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Vlach	=			
7.1.c	resolute action to promote Vlach		=		
7.1.d	facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Vlach, in speech and writing, in public life (education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, transfrontier exchanges) and private life		=		
7.1.e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups in the state using Vlach • establishment of cultural relations with other linguistic groups 	=			
7.1.f	provision of forms and means for the teaching and study of Vlach at all appropriate stages				=
7.1.g	provision of facilities enabling (also adult) non-speakers of Vlach to learn it				=
7.1.h	promotion of study and research on Vlach at universities or equivalent institutions		=		
7.1.i	promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for the benefit of Vlach				=
7.2	eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of Vlach	=			
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country • promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Vlach among the objectives of education and training • encourage the mass media to include respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Vlach among their objectives 				↘
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the group which uses Vlach • establish a body for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to Vlach 	=			

* The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages evaluates the compliance of states parties with their undertakings under the Charter as follows:

Fulfilled: Policies, legislation and practice are in conformity with the Charter.

Partly fulfilled: Policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

Formally fulfilled: Policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.

Not fulfilled: No action in policies, legislation and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking.

No conclusion: The Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfilment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

Changes in the evaluation compared to the previous monitoring cycle

99. As in the previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts has not received sufficiently precise information about how the authorities promote awareness of Vlach in mainstream education and in the mass media. It interprets the lack of such information as an indication that Art. 7.3 is not fulfilled.

⁹⁵ In order to facilitate readability, the provisions of the Charter appear here in a shortened and simplified form. The complete version of each provision can be consulted on the website of the Treaty Office: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/> (treaty No. 148).

2.15.2 Recommendations by the Committee of Experts on how to improve the protection and promotion of Vlach in Serbia

The Committee of Experts recommends that the Serbian authorities comply with all undertakings under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which are not considered “fulfilled” (see under 2.15.1 above), as well as continue to comply with those that are fulfilled. In doing so, the authorities should take particular account of the recommendations set out below. The recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter in Serbia⁹⁶ remain valid in their own right. Recommendations made in the monitoring procedure of the Charter aim to support the authorities in the implementation process.

I. Recommendations for immediate action

- a. **Consider applying an educational model that ensures proficiency in Vlach, in co-operation with the speakers.**
- b. **Promote the use of Vlach in the public broadcast media.**

II. Further recommendations

- c. Include content about the Vlach language and culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.
- d. Provide facilities enabling non-speakers of Vlach, including adults, to learn it.

⁹⁶ [CM/RecChL\(2009\)2](#); [CM/RecChL\(2013\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2016\)3](#); [CM/RecChL\(2019\)2](#).

Chapter 3 [Proposals for] Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

The Committee of Experts, while acknowledging the efforts the Serbian authorities have undertaken to protect the regional or minority languages spoken in the country, has in its evaluation chosen to concentrate on some of the most important deficiencies in the implementation of the Charter. The recommendations forwarded by the Committee of Experts to the Committee of Ministers should not, however, be interpreted as diminishing the relevance of the other, more detailed observations contained in the report, which remain valid in their own right. The recommendations proposed by the Committee of Experts are drafted accordingly.

The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in accordance with Article 16 (4) of the Charter, proposes on the basis of the information contained in this report, that the Committee of Ministers makes the following recommendations to Serbia.

The Committee of Ministers,

In accordance with Article 16 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;

Bearing in mind the instrument of ratification deposited by Serbia on 15 February 2006;

Having taken note of the evaluation made by the Committee of Experts of the Charter with respect to the application of the Charter by Serbia;

Bearing in mind that this evaluation is based on information submitted by Serbia in its fifth and sixth periodical reports, supplementary information given by the Serbian authorities, information submitted by bodies and associations legally established in Serbia and on the information obtained by the Committee of Experts during its on-the-spot visit;

Having taken note of the comments submitted by the Serbian authorities on the content of the report of the Committee of Experts;

Recommends that the Serbian authorities take account of all the observations and recommendations of the Committee of Experts and, as a matter of priority:

1. promote, in consultation with representatives of the minority language users concerned, the extension and/or provision of bilingual education in Czech, German, Romani and Ukrainian;
2. support the extension of the use of minority languages in broadcasting and new media, in order to achieve a diverse and sustainable offer that encourages learning and using the language;
3. strengthen the use of the minority languages in the judiciary and administration;
4. strengthen the capacity of the national councils of national minorities to effectively promote the minority languages in public life;
5. include content about each minority language and its culture in curricula, teacher training and educational materials in mainstream education and encourage the mass media to raise awareness about it in reporting and journalist training.

The Committee of Ministers invites the Serbian authorities to submit the information on the recommendations for immediate action by 1 March 2025 and the next periodical report by 1 September 2027.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ See Committee of Ministers' Decisions [CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e - CM-Public](#), and "Outlines for the periodical reports on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to be presented by the States Parties", [CM\(2019\)69 final](#).

Appendix I: Instrument of Ratification



Serbia:

Declaration contained in the instrument of ratification deposited on 15 February 2006 - Or. Engl. - and updated by a letter from the Permanent Representative of Serbia, dated 20 July 2006, registered at the Secretariat General on 20 July 2006 - Or. angl.

In accordance with Article 2, paragraph 2, of the Charter, Serbia and Montenegro has accepted that the following provisions be applied:

- in the Republic of Serbia, for the Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romany, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Croatian languages:

Article 8, paragraph 1 a (iii), a (iv), b (iv), c (iv), d (iv), e (ii), f (iii), g;
 Article 9, paragraph 1 a (ii), a (iii), b (ii), c (ii), d, paragraph 2 a, b, c, paragraph 3;
 Article 10, paragraph 1 a (iv), a (v), c, paragraph 2 b, c, d, g, paragraph 3 c, paragraph 4 c, paragraph 5;
 Article 11, paragraph 1 a (iii), b (ii), c (ii), d, e (i), f (ii), paragraph 2, paragraph 3;
 Article 12, paragraph 1 a, b, c, f, paragraph 2;
 Article 13, paragraph 1 c;
 Article 14 a, b.

Period covered: 1/6/2006 -

The preceding statement concerns Article(s): 1

Reservation contained in the instrument of ratification deposited on 15 February 2006 - Or. Engl.

As to Article 1.b of the Charter, Serbia and Montenegro declares that the term "territory in which the regional or minority languages is used" will refer to areas in which regional and minority languages are in official use in line with the national legislation.

Period covered: 1/6/2006 -

The preceding statement concerns Article(s): 2

Appendix II: Comments from the Serbian authorities

COMMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA ON THE FIFTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES IN SERBIA

I. Introduction

The Committee of Experts, established in compliance with Article 17 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter: the Charter), adopted the Fifth Report on Implementation of the Charter in Serbia (hereinafter: the Fifth Report) at its session on 17 March 2023. The report also contains proposals for the recommendations, which the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe shall send to the Republic of Serbia. Pursuant to Article 16, paragraph 3 of the Charter, the Government of the Republic of Serbia was given an opportunity to comment on the content of this report.

The Republic of Serbia considers the fulfilment of obligations assumed by joining the Charter very important, since the preservation of the linguistic diversity is one of the most precious elements of its cultural heritage, which contributes to the conservation and development of the European cultural wealth and tradition. Having regard to the aforementioned, the Republic of Serbia is sincerely committed to the fulfilment of the obligations arising from the Charter.

The Republic of Serbia highly appreciates the Committee of Experts' activities in the monitoring process of the implementation of the Charter and welcomes the cooperation it achieved with the Committee of Experts during the preparation of its Fifth Report, primarily during the visit of the Committee of Experts' delegation to Serbia from 24-28 October 2022 and during the preparation of the responses to the additional questions on the alignment with the obligations defined by the Charter and the recommendations adopted in the fourth monitoring cycle, which the Committee of Experts sent in December 2021 and which the Republic of Serbia sent responses to in January 2022 as well as the responses to the additional questions that the Committee of Experts sent in January 2023 and which the Republic of Serbia sent responses to in February 2023.

The Fifth and Sixth Periodical Reports of the Republic of Serbia on Implementation of the Charter, which is the basis of the monitoring, were drafted with the participation of a large number of stakeholders and are fully based on the principles of transparency. They are published on the website of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue and are available at: <https://www.minlmpdd.gov.rs/multilateralni-ugovori.php>, thus fulfilling the obligation arising from Article 2 of the Charter. Upon the completion of this monitoring cycle, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue shall publish also the Fifth Report of the Committee of Experts, along with the Comments of the Republic of Serbia on the Report and the Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Comments of the Republic of Serbia on the Fifth Report of the Committee of Experts were prepared in the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. Competent state authorities were consulted in the process of drafting the comments.

The Republic of Serbia believes that, with respect to implementation of the Charter, it is of exceptional importance to maintain an open and constructive dialogue with the bodies competent for monitoring the implementation of the Charter. In this respect, the Republic of Serbia finds that the Fifth Report of the Committee of Experts is based on the expert analysis of regulations, policies and practice applied on minority languages in Serbia. Having in mind the positive nature of the Fifth Report, the Government of the Republic of Serbia gives the following comments for the purpose of additional clarification of the Committee of Experts' findings:

II. General remarks

As in the previous monitoring cycle, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia point out that it appears that the Committee of Experts assessed Article 7 of the Charter, i.e. obligations regarding certain languages

referred to in Part II of the Charter, in the context of obligations assumed by the state for the languages referred to in Part III of the Charter. This primarily concerns Article 7, para. 1.d. and 1.f. In fact, creating conditions for the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of minority language, in speech and writing, in public and private life, does not imply that the state has the obligation to, for instance, begin with the introduction of one of the languages from Part II of the Charter into the official use at the local level in order to provide the implementation of the Charter, which the Committee of Experts recommends.

Similarly, the legislative framework of the Republic of Serbia in the field of education already includes provisions which enable the study of regional and minority languages in an appropriate manner and with appropriate resources, at all suitable levels in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 1.d. In practice, the study of languages from Part II of the Charter is organised at those levels and to the extent where the situation of each of these languages enables it, which concerns German and Czech but also the other languages from Part II of the Charter for which the obligations were not assumed to the extent determined in Article 8 of the Charter.

It is also necessary to note that the scope of the territorial implementation of the selected paragraphs and sub-paragraphs, when it comes to the languages from Part II of the Charter, which have already been introduced into official use or which comprehensive courses are already taught in at all levels of education, is subject to the fact that in those local self-government units there is a sufficient number of speakers of a language, which justifies the adoption of various protective and promotional measures. Simultaneously, this means that the absence of the official use of some language or education in that language in a certain part of the territory of the Republic of Serbia is exclusively subject to the fact that due to the small number of speakers it was not justifiable nor possible to implement such measures.

The authorities of the Republic of Serbia point out that by joining the Charter, the Republic of Serbia expressed readiness to, in good faith, protect and promote all minority languages, pursuant to the provisions of the Charter and that, in accordance with its capabilities and the situation of each of the languages, it strives to improve and promote their use in all areas covered by the Charter. Based on all the above, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia invite the Committee of Ministers to bear in mind all the stated remarks as well as the comments below when formulating its recommendations.

III. Comments on the Chapter 1

Use of the regional or minority languages in education

Paragraphs 18 - 21

Within the elective subject/course "mother tongue with elements of national culture", several minority languages are taught for two hours per week in primary education, and in the case of Bunjevac also in secondary education. This educational model is applied only for Bunjevac, Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian and Vlach, which are not used as the main medium of instruction, nor are teachers teaching them bilingually. In such context, it must also be taken into account that one of the purposes of minority language education, pursuant to the Charter, is to lead a pupil to the fluency and competence which enables them to use the language in public life, including in the fields covered by Serbia's ratification of the Charter. Minority language education should also support and encourage language transmission within the family. Therefore, as the Committee of Experts noted in the previous monitoring cycles, attending minority language lessons for only two hours per week does not meet the requirements of the appropriate provisions of the Charter (Articles 7.1.f, 8.1.biv, 8.1.civ, 8.1.div), especially where the minority language is not a well-established language which relies on a strong speaker community and transmission within families. In light of information received from different sources, the Committee of Experts is aware that pupils who take the subject "mother tongue with elements of national culture" do not acquire knowledge of minority language at a high level. Nevertheless, competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia reiterated that this subject is taught in addition to regular curriculum, which means that pupils who attend it have two class hours more than other pupils. Due to the aforementioned reason, competent authorities believe that the increase in the number of class hours weekly is unrealistic since pupils would be thus additionally burdened. The Committee of Experts invites competent authorities to apply a model which would ensure that the knowledge of minority language is acquired at a high

level. In this context, the Committee of Experts points out that the issue of additional burdening of pupils does not exist in a bilingual model, where the minority language is used during the appropriate number of weekly class hours, without the increase in the total number of class hours.

Some minority languages are not used at all at certain levels within the educational process (preschool education: Bunjevac, Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian and Vlach; secondary education: Czech, Macedonian, Romani, Ukrainian and Vlach; vocational education: e.g. Ruthenian, Ukrainian). In certain cases, the lack of availability and continuity of minority language education at preschool, primary and secondary levels of education was noticed in wider geographical area or in a certain municipality (e.g. in regard to the Czech language in Bela Crkva, Ukrainian in Sremska Mitrovica and bilingual education in German).

In light of the above mentioned, structural deficiencies in minority language education, identified in previous monitoring cycles, are generally still present. During the on-the-spot visit, representatives of the users of the Czech, German and Ukrainian languages expressed interest in extended education in minority languages in order to promote a more active use of a language. In addition, the Committee of Experts notes that the majority of obligations from the area of education concerning the Roma has not been fulfilled. As mentioned above, the situation of these languages in education cannot be adequately improved within the subject "mother tongue with elements of national culture". However, in recent years, competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia have not increased the number of weekly class hours, nor do they intend to do so, in order to avoid the additional burdening of pupils. The Committee of Experts notes that the issue does not exist in a bilingual model, where the minority language is used during the appropriate number of weekly class hours, without the increase in the total number of class hours. In addition, this model offers schools certain flexibility in terms of how to apply it to minority languages, taking into consideration their situation. At the moment, only the bilingual education model fulfils minimal requirements of the appropriate Charter provisions. Therefore, the Committee of Experts calls on the competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia to increase the class hours and/or provide bilingual education in Czech, German, Romani and Ukrainian at preschool, primary and secondary levels and to promote this educational model to users of other languages mentioned in Part II of the Charter. In this context, the Committee of Experts also refers to the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers from 2021 to promote bilingual education adopted by the Committee of Ministers regarding the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in Serbia.

Serbia's legislation continues to foresee high thresholds for the setting up of minority language classes at different education levels. Pursuant to Law on Preschool Education, it is possible to organise preschool education in minority language or bilingually for persons belonging to national minorities if at least 50% of the parents opt for it. In conformity with the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, a minimum of 15 pupils enrolled in the first grade is required in order to organise the teaching in minority language or exceptionally bilingually in Serbian for persons belonging to national minorities. Rules which apply to secondary education also apply to technical and vocational education. The Law on Adult Education foresees the possibility to use a minority language (along with Serbian) if at least 50% of the enrolled persons/candidates request so.

With respect to the certain findings of the Committee of Experts presented in paragraphs 18-21 of the Report, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia point out that all pupils, i.e. their parents or legal representatives, when enrolling in preschool institution or school, fill out a survey on the choice of language in which a child will be educated, which implies the possibility of having the entire education in a language of national minority. Simultaneously, bilingual education, in Serbian and a national minority language, as one of the possible educational models, is also available to everyone. In addition, every school year, pupils also fill out surveys in regard to the attendance of the elective course Mother tongue/speech with elements of national culture. The results of these surveys determine further activities of preschool institutions, i.e. schools. In the school year 2021/2022, more than 65,000 pupils were included in one of these three models at preschool, primary and secondary levels of education who attended classes or studied one of the 16 languages of national minorities.

In this context it is further important to note that all relevant information on education in languages of national minorities are available on official websites of the competent ministry⁹⁸ and the provincial secretariat,⁹⁹ but also on other websites whose topics are issues from the field of education, such as the websites¹⁰⁰ and Škole Vojvodine.¹⁰¹ During the period of enrolment in educational institutions, relevant information can also be found on websites of local self-government units and national councils of national minorities. Moreover, the Ministry of Education holds regular work meetings with national councils of national minorities in relation to all issues of education in languages of national minorities, including issues of further improvement of all aspects and models of education. Within these meetings, representatives of national councils are continually reminded of all models and possibilities of education in languages of national minorities, as well as the legal powers available to national councils in connection to the education in languages of national minorities and its promotion among persons belonging to a national minority represented by a national council.

On the issue of education in the Romani language, the entire education is established according to the same principle as the education in other languages of national minorities, by parents' declaration, i.e. other legal representatives of children of the Romani nationality, through a survey on the choice of a language to be used to conduct the entire teaching. Additionally, as the previous state reports underlined, the Ministry of Education has an affirmative approach when approving classes and groups in languages of national minorities with smaller number of pupils than prescribed, and it is significant to note that there was no cancellation of classes in languages of national minorities due to the insufficient number of pupils. Although at the moment the entire education in Romani is not organised, and bearing in mind the especially sensitive position of persons belonging to the Romani national minority, a range of measures have been implemented in the field of education which primarily aim at ensuring full inclusion of children of persons belonging to the Romani national minority in preschool, primary, secondary and higher education and preventing early drop-out from schooling. One of the most important measures is the introduction of the institution of pedagogical assistants, who provide assistance and additional support to the group of children in preschool institution and primary and secondary school. This support and assistance refer also to overcoming barriers related to the specific ethnic, cultural, linguistic and other specific identities and understanding and affirming cultural tradition of communities, which the children and pupils come from. Regarding the implementation of the elective course Romani language with elements of national culture, the state reports present data on regular surveys of parents/other legal representatives, continuous professional development of the Romani language teachers as well as data on the increase in the number of textbooks for this elective course, for which textbooks for the first six primary school grades have been published, while textbooks for the seventh and eighth grades are in the process of being publishing.

Bearing in mind all the above mentioned, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia emphasise once again that interest in studying a national minority language can be declared by completing the mentioned survey on the choice of a language in which the teaching is organised when enrolling in an educational institution, i.e. survey on the choice of the elective course Mother tongue/speech with elements of national culture which is conducted every school year. Preschool institutions, schools, as well as all competent state authorities are obliged to act in accordance with the survey results and organise teaching in the languages that pupils have expressed desire to receive education in or to study through the elective course.

Paragraph 23

In addition to the regular school network, there are several types of stimulative action/incentives which offer accredited courses for learning minority languages, including courses for adults (Articles 7.1.g, 8.1.fiii). When it comes to the continuing education (Article 8.1.fiii), the Committee of Experts was provided with information which concern teacher training, but not information from other fields. In the above-mentioned fields, only the use of Hungarian is noticeable. It is obvious that there is a structural problem in the implementation of certain provisions of the Charter, which requires special attention of the competent authorities. The high threshold of 50% enrolled persons/candidates prescribed by the Law on Adult Education (see text above) may also have an important role. The Committee of Experts emphasises the importance of language courses which are

⁹⁸ <https://prosveta.gov.rs/prosveta/obrazovanje-i-ljudska-i-manjinska-prava/>

⁹⁹ http://www.puma.vojvodina.gov.rs/etext.php?ID_mat=1125

¹⁰⁰ <https://srednjeskole.edukacija.rs/nastava-na-jeziku-manjina>

¹⁰¹ <https://skolevojvodine.vojvodina.gov.rs/>

organised in addition to the regular school network, especially for adults in general, as well as for families which live in areas with lower density of minority language users and with limited access to minority language education in the school network. In addition, such contents provide the majority of the population with the opportunity to acquire basic knowledge of a minority language, which contributes to raising social awareness and understanding of minority languages. Therefore, the Committee of Experts calls on the competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia to adopt and implement a structured approach to the provision of incentives which, in addition to the regular school network, offer certified courses for learning minority languages from the Charter.

In connection with the findings of the Committee of Experts that, *in addition to the regular school network, it is necessary to also provide certified courses for learning minority languages from the Charter*, it is necessary to point out that the Republic of Serbia, i.e. the responsible Ministry of Education is competent only for the educational system, which includes pre-university education, adult education and higher education, but does not include attending certified courses. We emphasise that, when it comes to the organisation of certified courses, any legal person (e.g. a company, entrepreneur, civil society organisation, etc.) can file a request to the Qualifications Agency for the issuance of the approval in order to acquire status of the publicly recognised organiser of educational activities. Additionally, in order to issue a certificate, a legal person must submit a course verification request, also to the Qualifications Agency. Such certified courses can also include foreign languages which are the languages of national minorities in the Republic of Serbia. However, apart from the fact that quality standards must exist for courses for which legal persons submit verification requests, there is no possibility for a state authority to suggest to legal persons or oblige them to include certified language courses in their offers. The decision on the choice of curriculum of language courses is made exclusively by legal persons based on the assessment of needs and interests of persons attending them, while being guided by the economic principles of doing business.

Use of the regional or minority languages in media

Paragraph 56

Serbia undertook to encourage and/or facilitate the production and distribution of audio and audio-visual works in minority languages (Article 11.1.d) and to apply the existing measures of financial support to such productions as well (Article 11.1.fii). The Committee of Experts notes that Article 11.1.d does not refer to radio and television programmes, because it would otherwise be redundant in relation to Article 11.1.iii, 11.1.bii and 11.1.cii. Instead, it concerns other audio and audio-visual works such as the new media (e.g. podcasts, social media). Pursuant to the Law on Public Information and Media, competent authorities can co-finance media registered in the Media Registry; media which are not registered in the said Registry are not entitled to support. It is not clear to what extent new media are entitled to the support. In addition, the Committee of Experts did not receive sufficiently precise information on all relevant minority languages, which would enable it to assess the existing offer.

In relation to the aforementioned findings from paragraph 56, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia point out that, pursuant to the Law on Public Information and Media, traditional media (radio, television and press) and electronic editions of these media, can be registered in the Media Registry as well as the independent electronic editions, i.e. the internet portals that are ran by editors and that meet the criteria defined by the Law, and which in practice often have a subcategory in a podcast format. Those electronic editions of traditional media, i.e. video platforms and podcasts which are an additional channel of distribution of traditional media and not autonomous i.e. new edition of the aforementioned media cannot be registered in the Media Registry. Therefore, pursuant to the Law on Public Information and Media, social networks, podcasts, platforms for sharing videos and aggregation of media contents (news) do not have a media status, which is why they cannot participate in calls for proposals in which only media, which are registered in the Media Registry pursuant to the Law, are entitled to participate. On the other hand, after reviewing reports of applicants applying to calls for proposals of the competent ministry responsible for the field of information, including calls for proposals for co-financing projects which produce media content intended for national minorities, one can establish that a large number of media content which is produced for television, radio or press is also promoted

through “social media” i.e. platforms for sharing videos such as YouTube. Furthermore, some media offer the possibility of looking or listening back to content through podcast media.

Participation and consultations with users of minority languages in the implementation of the Charter

Paragraph 68

In light of information received during the on-the-spot-visit, the Committee of Experts underlines that the capacity of national councils of national minorities for the efficient promotion of minority languages in public life is still limited. Specifically, national councils do not receive enough financial resources nor do they have enough staff and thus are unable to fully fulfil the role of advisory bodies on the policy in terms of minority languages pursuant to Article 7.4. In addition, their politicisation and representativeness remain a subject for discussion. The Committee of Experts therefore reiterates that the competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia should continue to strengthen national councils of national minorities in order to make them an efficient partner in the implementation of the Charter. This process should be followed by the significant strengthening of their budget capacities as well as regular instructions and encouragement in connection with the relevant action. The adoption of joint action plans based on the Charter can be an efficient way to institutionalise cooperation regarding the implementation of this agreement. Furthermore, some of the minority languages are used by citizens who do not belong to a national minority to which the minority language is related. Such users are not represented in national councils, but they may have established associations of teachers or journalists which can give significant contribution concerning the promotion of a minority language. When determining their policy in relation to minority languages (Article 7.4), competent authorities should take into consideration the needs and wishes of those groups of population who use these languages and develop relations between them and users who belong to the corresponding national minority (Article 7.1.e).

Regarding the issue of financing the work of national councils of national minorities, we remind that, in conformity with provisions of the Law on National Councils of National Minorities, funds for the work of national councils are provided in the budgets of all government levels (republic, provincial and local). These funds, which national councils autonomously dispose of, can be used for financing costs of regular activities of national councils, which include among others, financing or co-financing projects and programmes of education, culture, information and official use of languages and scripts and financing the work of institutions, foundations and companies whose founder or co-founder is a national council as well as for fixed costs of national councils, which include among others, salaries, taxes and contributions of employees in national councils and fees and contributions for the work done for the needs of national councils. National councils distribute subsidised funds according to their priorities, provided that funds for financing fixed costs cannot exceed 50% of the funds allocated by the budget of the Republic of Serbia, autonomous province, i.e. local self-government unit. Of course, depending on the priorities, national councils can earmark a part of the subsidised funds from public revenues for the promotion of minority languages.

With regard to the amount of the allocated funds, we point out that despite the fact that the last year was marked by the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to a slowdown and halt in the implementation of many planned activities in all aspects, as well as the reduced funds for the implementation of activities of the largest number of state authorities, the funds, which are provided in the budget for financing the work of national councils, were not reduced. In addition, after the implementation of fiscal consolidation measures in Serbia during 2022, the funds for financing the work of national councils were increased by 17% by the Law on Budget of the Republic of Serbia for 2023 and amount to 295,000,000.00 RSD.

Also, it is important to note that the Republic of Serbia endeavours to continually provide other aspects of support to national councils, which include the organisation of trainings, and work meetings, or the preparation of manuals which aim at enhancing the knowledge for effective exercise of powers conferred on them. Thus, after the elections for members of national councils in November 2022, and later on the constitution of new convocations of national councils, within the project “Support to Strengthening Rule of Law in Serbia” jointly financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, trainings for the representatives of national councils were organised during April 2023 in

order to strengthen capacities for effective exercise of powers conferred by law, including the issues of the use of languages in areas covered by the Charter.

Regarding the statements *on politicisation and representativeness of national councils*, we remind that the previous reporting cycles described the provisions of the Law on National Councils of National Minorities which refer to the manner of elections of these bodies. In fact, national councils of national minorities are elected in direct democratic elections that are held at the level of the entire Republic of Serbia. According to the authorities of the Republic of Serbia, there is no more effective model which enables inclusivity and presentation of diversity of opinions among the persons belonging to a certain population than the model of direct, secret and democratic election. In addition, with the aim of exercising the right to self-government, the Law on National Councils of National Minorities also prescribes an alternative model of electing national councils through an electoral assembly, provided that the requirements for holding direct elections are not fulfilled. If and to what extent these democratic election models will reflect diversity of opinions, to what extent such diverse opinions are really widespread and legitimate within a minority population and whether their holders are ready to disclose them and fight for them within a democratic contest, are not the issues which should be resolved by state authorities, because these issues somewhat reflect the readiness of persons belonging to a national minority to participate in elections for a national council and express their opinion and identity and, at least in the context of the election of their national council, maintain this identity together.

With respect to the internal organisation of national councils, the Law on National Councils of National Minorities determined that a national council has a president, executive board and committees for education, culture, information and official use of language and script as well as other working bodies. Furthermore, it is important to note that, in conformity with the Law, a national council can also choose experts as members of the committees for education, culture, information and official use of language and script, who have appropriate knowledge and experience in fields the committees are established for and who do not have to be the members of national councils. The committees give expert opinions, proposals and prepare analyses for the needs of national councils. This legal solution enables the most professional representatives of a national minority, even if they are not members of national councils, to participate in the creation of the national council's policy in a certain field.

1.2 Situation of regional and minority languages in Serbia

Paragraph 80

The preschool education mostly in Romanian (included in Parts II and III of the Charter) or bilingually is still available in certain preschool institutions in Vojvodina. However, the number of enrolled pupils is relatively low in comparison to the elementary level. Representatives of the users of Romanian noted that there is a need to encourage multilingual families to enrol their children in kindergartens which use Romanian. In Vojvodina, there is also primary and secondary education in Romanian. There is vocational education in Romanian in the fields of economics, law and administration in Vojvodina. In Central Serbia, currently there is no possibility to receive education in the Romanian language or bilingually. It is possible to study the Romanian language at the university, but it is not studied within adult education. The Romanian language is used in criminal and civil proceedings but not in the proceedings concerning the administrative matters. There is no practice of the use of the Romanian language at the level of local branches of national authorities and its use in the local administration, including topographic names, is limited. The Romanian language is still not in the official use in the municipalities in Central Serbia. As far as public media are concerned, RTV broadcasts radio and television programmes in Romanian which are possible to view in Central Serbia. To some extent, Romanian is used in several local radio and television programmes in Vojvodina and one programme of the local television in Central Serbia (TV Bor). Weekly newspapers are published in Romanian. The Institute for Romanian Culture in Vojvodina organises scientific, cultural and art events in relation to the Romanian language as well as the scientific cooperation with institutions in Romania. The institute also publishes a magazine in the field of culture.

As the previous state reports described and later the findings of the Committee of Experts confirmed, the Romanian language is present at all educational levels as well as in media and culture and is used in criminal and civil proceedings. It is in the official use in 9 local self-government units in the Republic of Serbia.

The Republic of Serbia endeavours to act affirmatively in regard to the exercise of rights of persons belonging to national minorities and the use of their languages whenever it is possible and justifiable, which was acknowledged by the Committee of Experts, that stated, in paragraph 9 of the Report, that minority languages were introduced into official use even in cases where the density of the minority population was very low, i.e. in paragraph 22 of the Report which stated that the formation of classes with instruction in a minority language was approved in several cases even for a very small number of pupils. The authorities of the Republic of Serbia once more underline that the absence of the official use of a certain language or education in that language in a certain part of the territory is the result exclusively due to the fact that a small number of users made it unjustifiable or impossible to implement such measures.

Paragraph 84

The Vlach language (included in Part II of the Charter) is studied only within the elective subject/course "Vlach speech with elements of national culture" for two hours per week in primary education. The Vlach language is not used in preschool or secondary education. During the monitoring period, research was conducted on the Vlach language. A decision was made in the municipality Petrovac na Mlavi to write the names of settlements in Vlach in twelve of its settlements. Vlach is to a certain extent used in programmes of local television channels (TV Bor, along with Romanian), TV Mlava, TV Majdanpek, TV F Zaječar) and in radio programmes (MIG Radio, Svilajnac, Radio Bor, Radio Mlava, Radio F Zaječar). However, public broadcasters do not use it.

In connection with the finding of the Committee of Experts that public broadcasters do not use the Vlach language, we point out that, according to the available data obtained from the Public Broadcasting Service "Radio-Television of Serbia", the Vlach language is represented in the television show "Građanin" and other news programmes. Furthermore, RTS has a long-term cooperation with the production group "Mreža", which talks about successful individuals of all national minorities through shows from the series "Da nam nije". The RTS programme dedicated to national minorities is also streamed on the internet website rtsplaneta.rs. In fact, through the internet streaming, 12 television channels and 8 radio stations of RTS are broadcast live in the territory of the whole world, and therefore all content dedicated to national minorities i.e. programmes and projects in connection with national minorities which RTS produces alone or in cooperation with various institutions and production companies in the country and abroad. A special offer of RTS Planeta is the feature VIDEOTEKA (VOD - video on demand), within which, since its launching in 2018, a specific category *National minorities* was created, which is continually renewed and currently has about 100 hours of programme dedicated, among others, to the Vlach national minority. Furthermore, a special category of the internet platform RTS Planeta is *Moj grad* which contains short media contents that address various aspects of people's lives in almost all cities throughout Serbia, including those where persons belonging to the Vlach national minority live.

The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is an independent body that evaluates the compliance of the States Parties with their undertakings and, where appropriate, encourages them to gradually reach a higher level of commitment.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 25 June 1992 and entered into force on 1 March 1998, is the European convention for the protection and promotion of regional and minority languages. It is designed to enable speakers to use them both in private and public life and obliges the States Parties to actively promote the use of these languages in education, courts, administration, media, culture, economic and social life, and cross- border co-operation.

Regional or minority languages are part of Europe's cultural heritage and their protection and promotion contribute to the building of a Europe based on democracy and cultural diversity.

The text of the Charter is available in over 50 languages.

www.coe.int/minlang

www.coe.int

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.