



Doc. 11595
24 April 2008

Difficult cultural situation of the Istro-Romanian minority particularly threatened

Motion for a resolution¹

tabled by Mr Vlad CUBREACOV and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Having ascertained that the Istro-Romanian minority inhabits eight villages (Žejane/Jeiăni, Brdo/Bârda, Jesenovik/Sucodru, Nova Vas/Nosela, Kostracani/Costerceani, Šušnjevisa/Šušneviță/Susgnevizza, Letaj and Zankovci) in the Peninsula of Istria (Croatia), in the northern part of the Adriatic Sea in the historical region of Ciceria, and that this minority is not officially recognised by Croatia;

Also having ascertained that after the Second World War an Istro-Romanian diaspora was established in Italy, in the Trieste region, and that small communities of Istro-Romanian origin inhabit the Golac and Polijane localities in Slovenia, in the northern part of the historical region of Ciceria;

Recalling the inland nature of the Istro-Romanian minority on the territory it has inhabited historically for centuries;

Noting that Istro-Romanian, quoted in UNESCO's *Red Book of Endangered Languages* as "seriously endangered", is a historical Romanian dialect spoken by a population of between 500 and 1 500 persons that call themselves by the endonym Rumâni/Rumâri/Rumeri (Romanians) and are called by the exonym Ćiribiri or Ćiçi by Croats, Slovenians and Italians, and;

Taking into account that, between 1921 and 1925, the "Traian Emperor" school operated in Šušnjevisa/Šušneviță/Susgnevizza village where the school subjects were taught in the Istro-Romanian dialect and in the literary Romanian language, and this school was established by Mr Andrei Glavina, an Istro-Romanian professor;

Taking note of the fact that during recent years the Istro-Romanian Association "Andrei Glavina" has published in Trieste (Italy), with its own resources, a journal called *Scrisore către fraț rumeri* (Letter for Romanian brothers);

Noting with satisfaction that it was possible to organise the first Istro-Romanian Congress at Pula University in spring 2000;

Regretting that the Istro-Romanians, as an officially unrecognised minority, do not benefit from any public education or any religious assistance and do not have any written press or broadcast media in their own language;

1. Referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, for taking into account in the preparation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: Reference No. 3456 (19th Sitting, 23 June 2008).



Being concerned about the continuous decrease in the number of Istro-Romanians, due to their assimilation by neighbouring nationalities, as a minority seriously threatened by disappearance;

Assessing that this worrying, and even critical, situation does not comply with Council of Europe norms and standards;

Taking into account the commitments taken by the Council of Europe member states towards minorities, as well as the rights and commitments of kin-states towards their minorities abroad,

The Assembly,

Invites the Croatian authorities to officially recognise the Istro-Romanian minority and ensure respect for its fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, namely the linguistic, cultural and religious rights, especially in the following fields:

- education in the mother tongue;
- religious services in the mother tongue;
- newspapers, journals, radio and television broadcasts in the mother tongue; and
- support for Istro-Romanian cultural associations;

Invites the authorities of Romania, as a kin-state, to co-operate with the Croatian authorities in order to take urgently all necessary measures to preserve the identity of the Istro-Romanian minority, which is especially threatened, and to support the least spoken Istro-Romanian dialect;

Invites the Croatian authorities to consider the possibility of implementing, through the most appropriate means, the following measures:

- gradual implementation of the mother tongue in children's education (to use verbally the Istro-Romanian dialect in preschool education and the normalised Romanian forms of the mother tongue in primary education);
- respect and public aid for the local use of the Istro-Romanian dialect and the normalised Romanian language, and their current use in the second level of education and by the media in the localities concerned, to the extent that the communities that speak them need;
- permit the holding of religious services in the Istro-Romanian dialect and in the normalised Romanian language in churches situated in the Istro-Romanian villages, in order to give the Istro-Romanians the possibility of singing canticles in their mother tongue;
- organisation of international discussion forums and expert seminars to study and properly identify the features of the Istro-Romanian dialect and culture;

Empowers its competent committee to put on the agenda of its forthcoming meetings the issue of the endangered Istro-Romanian minority, to watch closely the development of its situation and to submit a report concerning this issue.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed²:

CUBREACOV Vlad, Republic of Moldova
ADONTS Avet, Armenia
BERÉNYI József, Slovak Republic
BOCCHINO Italo, Italy
CILEVIČS Boriss, Latvia, SOC
CLIVETI Minodora, Romania
COSARCIUC Valeriu, Republic of Moldova
FENECHIU Relu, Romania, ALDE
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD
IWIŃSKI Tadeusz, Poland, SOC
JAKAVONIS Gediminas, Lithuania
KONEČNÝ Albrecht, Austria, SOC
L OVOCHKINA Yuliya, Ukraine
LEAHU Angela, Republic of Moldova
LINDBLAD Göran, Sweden, EPP/CD
MAISSEN Theo, Switzerland
MARMAZOV Yevhen, Ukraine, UEL
MEREUȚĂ Mircea, Romania
MOTA AMARAL João Bosco, Portugal, EPP/CD
NAGHDALYAN Hermine, Armenia, ALDE
NAKASHIDZÉ Nino, Georgia
NÉMETH Zsolt, Hungary
PAPADOPOULOS Antigoni, Cyprus
PASHAYEVA Ganira, Azerbaijan, EDG
POPESCU Ivan, Ukraine, SOC
RIGONI Andrea, Italy, ALDE
ROSSI Alessandro, San Marino
RUSTAMYAN Armen, Armenia, SOC
SASI Kimmo, Finland, EPP/CD
TEVDORADZE Elene, Georgia
ȚULEA Oleg, Republic of Moldova
UNGUREANU Vasile Ioan Dănuț, Romania
VALENTINO Giuseppe, Italy, EDG
VAREIKIS Egidijus, Lithuania, EPP/CD

2. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left