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The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1944 (2010)

Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has examined with close attention Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1944 \(2010\)](#) on “The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages”, which has been brought to the attention of member states’ governments, and has forwarded it to the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and to the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) for information and possible comments.
2. The Committee of Ministers underlines that the Charter is an important instrument for the promotion and protection of regional or minority languages. Having regard to the Assembly’s plea to encourage those states which have not yet done so to sign or to ratify the Charter, the Committee of Ministers agrees that it would be desirable that the principles contained in the Charter be applied throughout the continent.
3. The Committee of Ministers recognises the importance of developing co-operation with other international organisations in this field, particularly the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with a view to promoting the ratification and implementation of the Charter. It notes with satisfaction that ratification of the Charter is an issue playing an increasing role in their documents and practice. The Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to the joint programmes² between the Council of Europe and European Commission in this field which, *inter alia*, advise the authorities on preparing the ratification of the Charter.
4. The Council of Europe has also, since 2009, organised follow-up seminars for member states in order to assist with the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the year after the evaluation cycle.
5. In respect of the Assembly’s recommendation that a “panel of experts” be set up, the Committee of Ministers has taken due note of the Assembly’s request. However, bearing in mind the statutory role of the Committee of Experts and the current budgetary situation, the Committee of Ministers will not give priority to the setting-up of such a body.
6. Finally, the Committee of Ministers shares the Assembly’s view as to the importance of encouraging co-operation between the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ETS No. 157) and the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, a process started a year ago following the Secretary General’s initiative concerning monitoring activities.

1. adopted at the 1118th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (6 July 2011)

2. For example, the Joint Programme on “Minorities in Russia: Developing Languages, Culture, Media and Civil Society”, started in June 2009.

