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Application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Biennial report by the Secretary General to the Parliamentary Assembly

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1. Introduction

Under the terms of Article 16, paragraph 5 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ETS No. 148, hereinafter referred to as "the Charter"), the Secretary General is required to present a two-yearly report to the Parliamentary Assembly on the application of the Charter. This sixth report covers the years 2010 and 2011 and addresses the main critical issues which arise from the functioning of the Charter system.[1]

2. Monitoring of the Application of the Charter

Since the entry-into-force of the Charter in 1998, the Committee of Experts of the Charter, despite the staff shortage in its Secretariat, has adopted 61 evaluation reports and began the fifth monitoring cycle in respect of some States Parties in 2011. The recommendations that the Committee of Ministers has addressed to the States Parties have in most cases corresponded to the proposals made by the Committee of Experts in its evaluation reports. The Committee of Ministers is encouraged to continue to follow, as in the early years of the application of the Charter, the proposals of the independent Committee of Experts in order to strengthen the monitoring mechanism.

2.1. General issues

The effectiveness of the Charter continues to be hampered by the fact that many States Parties lack a structured approach for the application of all the undertakings they have entered into under the Charter. However, the practice-oriented nature of the Charter provisions constitutes a good basis for the national authorities to define concrete steps, administrative responsibilities and a time-frame to implement each undertaking and recommendation made by the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers, in co-operation with the minority associations as well as the regional and/or local authorities concerned. The implementation of such action plans may be facilitated by the creation of specific budget lines for each undertaking, as they already exist in some States Parties.

Experience has shown that the lack of a structured implementation of the Charter and of the monitoring recommendations regularly results in delays in the submission of periodical State reports to the Council of Europe. It is of concern that delays in reporting have become the rule rather than the exception and have a negative effect on the effectiveness of the monitoring mechanism. In a growing number of cases States Parties formally inform the Charter Secretariat about quite often considerable delays. However, it must be emphasised that the deadlines for the submission of State reports cannot formally or informally be extended.

Considering that States Parties are required to focus their reports on the measures taken to tackle deficits in the application of the Charter, a simple but important truth emerges: a structured implementation of the Charter and of the monitoring recommendations could reduce the volume of each State report and make it easier for the authorities to comply with their reporting obligation on time.

2.2. Compliance of States Parties with the Charter

During the reporting period, twelve evaluation reports have been considered by the Committee of Ministers. The following paragraphs reflect the main issues raised in the recommendations of the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers in the context of these reports.[2]

2.2.1. Montenegro (first monitoring cycle[3])

The relevant legal framework in Montenegro lays a good basis for the protection of regional or minority languages, although some legal uncertainties remain, thus hampering the proper implementation of these provisions. In some areas, the legal guarantees are not always followed by a sufficient degree of practical

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1. The first report of the Secretary General of this nature was presented to the Parliamentary Assembly in 2000 (Doc. 8879 of 18 October 2000), the second report in 2002 (Doc. 9540 of 11 September 2002), the third in 2005 (Doc. 10659 of 3 September 2005), the fourth in 2007 (Doc. 11442 of 24 October 2007) and the fifth in 2009 (Doc. 12300). These reports are available at www.coe.int/minlang.
2. The presentation follows the chronological order of publication by the Committee of Ministers. The evaluation reports and the related recommendations by the Committee of Ministers are available at www.coe.int/minlang ("Documents" section).
3. First Report on the Application of the Charter in Montenegro, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 20 January 2010.

implementation. The Albanian language is in general well protected and supported, especially in the areas where the Albanian speakers constitute a majority. There is a need to strengthen teacher training in Albanian. As regards the Romani language, the real situation of the language in Montenegro does not match the ambitious level of protection under the Charter ratified by Montenegro. As a result, the application of Part III is currently difficult. Good initial steps have been taken towards the integration of Roma and inclusion of the teaching of Romani in the education system. Nonetheless, there is an urgent need to recruit and train Romani teachers and to develop adequate teaching materials in Romani. Furthermore, immediate steps need to be taken to develop and employ a written form of the language, in co-operation with the speakers.

2.2.2. Hungary (fourth monitoring cycle[4])

The Committee of Experts found that there was a need to develop long-term strategies and structured plans for the preservation and promotion of each of the minority languages. In addition, bilingual education needs to be increased at all stages with a view to moving from the model of only teaching the language as a subject to bilingual education in the minority languages concerned. This implies a need to increase the number of teachers able to teach subjects in the relevant minority languages and to improve the financial situation of education in minority languages. In the media, the time-slots, time-schedules and financial support available for television programmes in minority languages need to be improved. The Committee of Experts also strongly urged the Hungarian authorities to ensure that minority language users can submit requests in minority languages to public service providers in practice. Furthermore, Hungary should establish a stable financial framework for the running of the cultural institutions of the national minorities. Owing to financial constraints, some features of the system of minority self-governments were broadly inoperative in the evaluation period.

2.2.3. Norway (fourth monitoring cycle[5])

Norway fulfils most of the undertakings as far as North Sámi is concerned. Nevertheless, in the judicial and administrative fields, efforts are still needed to train or recruit staff who master the relevant terminology in North Sámi. A similar issue arises in the health sector and social services where there are still not enough employees who master North Sámi sufficiently to meet the needs of the speakers. The Sámi Administrative District has been enlarged and this will enhance the protection and promotion of Lule Sámi and of South Sámi. However, both languages remain in a difficult situation and further resolute action is needed, in particular in the field of education. It is noteworthy that the Norwegian authorities recognised Kven as a language in its own right in 2005. The Kven Language Council has been set up and has begun the work of standardising the language. However, immediate efforts are needed to improve the teaching in/of Kven at all appropriate stages and to improve the use of the Kven language in the public sphere, in particular in broadcasting. With regard to Romani and Romanes, serious difficulties persist in the field of education as neither of these languages is taught as a subject at school.

2.2.4. United Kingdom (third monitoring cycle[6])

As far as the situation of Scottish Gaelic in education is concerned, particular problems include a shortage of teachers and the lack of sufficient teaching materials and appropriate school buildings. In the field of administration, Scottish Gaelic language plans have been adopted, which appear to have resulted in an improvement in the use of Scottish Gaelic. Its situation in the printed media, however, seems to have deteriorated. Regarding the situation of Irish, deficiencies remain in the provision of Irish-medium education at all levels. In the field of administration, while certain local authorities have adopted language plans and appointed Irish language officers, the provision as a whole remains unsatisfactory. There is consequently a need to adopt a comprehensive statutory basis for the protection and promotion of Irish in Northern Ireland. The situation of the Welsh language continues to be strong and the authorities continue to provide examples of good practice. In the field of health and social care, however, much remains to be done regarding services in Welsh. Furthermore, the UK authorities were encouraged to establish a language planning and cultural body that involves the speakers of Ulster Scots more closely.

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4. Fifth Report on the Application of the Charter in Hungary, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 10 March 2010.
5. Fourth Report on the Application of the Charter in Norway, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 10 March 2010.
6. Third Report on the Application of the Charter in the United Kingdom, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 21 April 2010.

2.2.5. Slovenia (third monitoring cycle[7])

Slovenia has a very high legal standard of protection for the Hungarian and Italian languages. However, there are considerable difficulties concerning the use of Hungarian and Italian in relations with local branches of State administration and public service providers as well as in social and economic activities. There is a clear need for a pro-active approach by the authorities with a view to ensuring a more systematic enforcement of the applicable legislation. Moreover, the Committee of Experts reiterated that the Charter puts an obligation on the Slovenian authorities to recognise Croatian and German as regional or minority languages in their domestic legal order and to define the respective traditional language areas. Slovenia should also develop the teaching in and of Croatian and German and promote their use in the broadcasting media. There have been encouraging developments regarding the protection and promotion of Romani. Steps have been taken to introduce the subject of "Roma language and culture" at schools. Still, there is a need for continued efforts to increase the awareness and acceptance of Romani as an integral part of Slovenia's cultural wealth.

2.2.6. Ukraine (first monitoring cycle[8])

The Committee of Experts encouraged the Ukrainian authorities to develop a structured education policy for minority languages and secure the right of minority language speakers to receive education in their languages. This policy should ensure that a sufficient number of adequately trained teachers are available with a proficiency in the minority languages. Moreover, adequate teaching materials for minority-language education need to be provided and Ukraine should also ease the procedural requirements for importing literature in such languages. The Ukrainian authorities were also asked to review the high threshold (majority of the local population) at which minority languages can be used in relation with authorities and public services. For some minority languages, the amount of broadcasting is very low. Ukraine was encouraged to ensure that quotas imposed for broadcast programmes (television and radio) and the requirement to dub, subtitle and postsynchronise all foreign films into Ukrainian are not detrimental to broadcasting radio and television programmes in the minority languages. There is also a need to provide long-term subsidies to the minorities for setting up or running cultural centres.

2.2.7. Croatia (fourth monitoring cycle[9])

Croatia was encouraged to continue efforts to promote awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis the regional or minority languages, both in education and in the media. Furthermore, the use of minority languages in state administration bodies and in public services remains on the whole unsatisfactory. In municipalities where minority languages are in equal and official use, the situation varies to a large degree from equal use with Croatian to only emblematic use. Similarly, although some progress has been made with regard to further teacher training and textbooks, there are still problems with the timely translation of some textbooks and the introduction of minority language classes in some areas of Croatia. The situation with regard to Slovak, Ukrainian and Ruthenian in education has not improved; there is still no education in these languages. Finally, the Committee of Experts concluded that Romani has a traditional presence in definable areas of Croatia. On this basis, and considering that the Roma are a recognised minority in Croatia that is afforded a certain degree of protection, the Committee of Experts invited the Croatian authorities to consider applying the Charter to the Roma languages.[10]

2.2.8. Switzerland (fourth monitoring cycle[11])

The Committee of Experts welcomed the fact that the Swiss authorities had adopted the federal language law and the cantonal language law of Graubünden which significantly improved the legislative protection of Romansh and Italian. The provision of education in Romansh remains good, but projections show that there will be a lack of Romansh teachers in the future if the relevant university chairs are discontinued. The Swiss authorities were encouraged to ensure that the introduction of Rumantsch Grischun in schools is carried out in a way which is sensitive to the protection and promotion of Romansh as a living language. According to the

7. Third Report on the Application of the Charter in Slovenia, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 26 May 2010.
8. First Report on the Application of the Charter in Ukraine, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 7 July 2010.
9. Fourth Report on the Application of the Charter in Croatia, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 8 December 2010.
10. See in this respect the Report by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, CommDH(2010)20, paragraphs 106 and 150.
11. Fourth Report on the Application of the Charter in Switzerland, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 8 December 2010.

new cantonal language law, the cantonal authorities are obliged to use Romansh in communications with Romansh-speaking citizens and municipalities with Romansh as an official language. However, additional language training is needed for the administrative staff of municipalities with Romansh as an official language. The merger of municipalities presents particular challenges in maintaining the use of Romansh in local administrations. Finally, the Canton of Ticino was encouraged to support the local projects of language maintenance in Bosco-Gurin, especially in education.

2.2.9. Denmark (third monitoring cycle[12])

The Committee of Experts encouraged Denmark to take a more proactive and structured approach in applying the Charter to the German language. In the media, the broadcasting time in German is clearly insufficient to comply with the Charter. The Danish authorities were accordingly urged to substantially increase the level of radio broadcasting in German and provide television broadcasts in German. The Committee of Experts was informed that there is no structured approach regarding the use of German in administrative authorities and public services, including bilingual place-name signs. Also, a more systematic human resources policy is needed to ensure that German-speaking staff are available in social care facilities such as hospitals. In addition, the Committee of Experts invited the Danish authorities to investigate whether Denmark could accept additional obligations under the Charter to more adequately reflect the situation of the German language. Apart from German, the Danish authorities were asked to clarify whether Sinti are traditionally present in Denmark and if so, whether they still speak Romani.

2.2.10. Germany (fourth monitoring cycle[13])

Despite some positive developments, more determined steps are needed to tackle the problems identified by the Charter's monitoring mechanism. Overall, the promotion of regional or minority languages is hampered by the lack of long-term, structured policies in this area at federal and *Länder* levels and the absence of a pro-active approach to this promotion. Although teaching in or of Upper Sorbian is still relatively well developed, it has to be ensured that its provision is not jeopardised by the changes in the educational system with respect to this language. There is a pressing need to adopt and implement a structured policy for the promotion and preservation of North Frisian, Sater Frisian and Lower Sorbian, including urgent measures in the field of education. Although there have been some improvements with respect to Low German, further steps are needed, especially in education. The use of regional or minority languages before administrative authorities remains marginal and structured policies and organisational measures are often missing. As regards the media, measures are needed to make available adequate radio and television broadcasting in Danish, Low German, Lower Sorbian, North Frisian, Sater Frisian and Romani.

2.2.11. Sweden (fourth monitoring cycle[14])

The Committee of Experts noted that despite some positive developments serious shortcomings still prevail in the field of education. The education system relies too heavily on so-called "mother tongue" instruction which remains generally unsatisfactory, and in many cases is mere tokenism. The problem is exacerbated by the acute shortage of trained teachers which fails to meet the existing demand for all regional or minority languages. Besides, there is no proper planning in place to address this issue, let alone meet the likely increased demand resulting from the renewed interest in regional or minority languages as "cultural heritage" languages. Insufficient and inadequate teaching materials are also a problem for all regional or minority languages in Sweden. In this context, Sami and Finnish education is in a critical situation. There has been a decline in the amount of bilingual education, and there is a shortage of teachers, which has been exacerbated by the failure to invest in language teacher training. As for education in Meänkieli, no improvements have been made. The shortage of teachers and teaching materials impedes Meänkieli education.

12. Third Report on the Application of the Charter in Denmark, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 2 March 2011.
13. Fourth Report on the Application of the Charter in Germany, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 25 May 2011.
14. Fourth Report on the Application of the Charter in Sweden, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 12 October 2011.

2.2.12. Poland (first monitoring cycle[15])

Poland has been encouraged to make available education in Belorussian, German, Kashub, Lemko and Ukrainian as a medium of instruction at pre-school, primary and secondary levels. For this purpose, the Polish authorities should provide the basic and further training of a sufficient number of teachers who are able to teach subjects in these languages. Poland has also been asked to strengthen the offer of broadcasting in all regional or minority languages. Concerning the use of regional or minority languages in relations with local and regional authorities as well as on place-name signs, the Polish authorities have been encouraged to reconsider the application of the 20%-threshold. There should also be the legal possibility to use such languages in relations with districts and voivodships. Bearing in mind the high-level undertakings chosen by Poland, a structured policy and flexible measures are needed in order to facilitate the application of the Charter to the Armenian, Czech, Karaim, Romani, Russian, Slovak, Tatar and Yiddish languages. Furthermore, Poland should promote awareness and tolerance in Polish society at large vis-à-vis the regional or minority languages and the cultures they represent.

The recommendations of the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers furnish a good basis for action by members of the Parliamentary Assembly to promote the situation of regional or minority languages in individual member States.

3. Preparations for Ratification of the Charter in Council of Europe member States

The Charter is the European convention for the protection and promotion of languages used by traditional minorities. Regrettably, the Charter's importance is not reflected by the number of ratifications. While the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities has 39 States Parties, the Charter has so far been ratified by only 25 member States of the Council of Europe and signed by a further eight member States.[16] During the period under review, the Charter was ratified by Bosnia and Herzegovina which was also, in 2005, the last State that signed the Charter.

As it has been stated in all previous biennial reports, it remains disappointing that a considerable number of member States of the Council of Europe have not yet become parties to the Charter.

The Charter lays down more detailed obligations than the Framework Convention and employs a "menu" approach. However, this strength – tailored action for each regional or minority language in the given country – contributes to the slow pace of ratification because the national authorities need to prepare specific instruments of ratification. At the same time, many non-States Parties to the Charter already have a long tradition of protecting and promoting their regional or minority languages on the basis of national legislation and the Framework Convention, and therefore are ready to ratify the Charter. Member States preparing for ratification may make use of the legal assistance that experts working with the Council of Europe provide to support this process. Such advice may notably assist States in developing tailored solutions for specific concerns they may have by taking full advantage of the Charter's flexibility.

3.1. States under a post-accession commitment to the Council of Europe to ratify the Charter

Bosnia and Herzegovina complied in 2010 with its post-accession commitment to the Council of Europe to ratify the Charter. When preparing ratification, the authorities have consulted the Council of Europe with regard to the instrument of ratification and organised a hearing for minority associations, in co-operation with our Organisation, to inform them about the Charter. This transparent and co-operative approach with respect to ratification is to be commended.

However, six States that committed themselves to signing and ratifying the Charter when acceding to the Council of Europe have not yet done so. Of these, two States (Albania and Georgia) have not even signed the Charter:

Member State	Assembly Opinion	Deadline for signing and ratifying the Charter	Date of signature
Albania	189(1995)		
Azerbaijan	222(2000)	25/01/**2002**	21/12/2001
Georgia[17]	209(1999)	27/04/**2000**	

15. First Report on the Application of the Charter in Poland, made public by the Committee of Ministers on 7 December 2011.
16. See Annexes 1 and 3.

Member State	Assembly Opinion	Deadline for signing and ratifying the Charter	Date of signature
Moldova[18]	188(1995)	13/07/**1996**	11/07/2002
Russian Federation	193(1996)	28/02/**1998**	10/05/2001
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	191(1995)	09/11/**1996**	25/07/1996

Even taking account of the complex nature of the issues that a State may have to deal with when approaching ratification, The countries concerned are strongly encouraged to make all the necessary efforts so that the ratification process can be completed without further delay.

In the aforementioned States, the following relevant developments have or have not occurred, as the case may be, during the reporting period:

3.1.1. Albania

The Council of Europe has not been made aware of any steps taken towards signing and ratifying the Charter. The Albanian authorities are encouraged to start the process of ratification of the Charter during which the Council of Europe is ready to provide assistance.

3.1.2. Azerbaijan

At the beginning of 2011, a proposal for an EU/Council of Europe Joint Programme on facilitation of ratification of the Charter was submitted to the Azerbaijan authorities, but no decision has been taken by them. Azerbaijan is invited to take advantage of the legal assistance provided by Council of Europe experts with a view to drawing up an instrument of ratification that takes full account of specific concerns that may exist in the country.

3.1.3. Georgia

Although the Georgian authorities participated in seminars on the Charter organised in Tbilisi in 2009, in 2011 they did not accept the offer of an EU/Council of Europe Joint Programme conceived to facilitate ratification. Georgia is encouraged to accept the legal assistance offered by the Council of Europe.

3.1.4. Moldova

The Moldovan authorities announced in October 2011 that they would set up a working group whose purpose it will be to prepare, in the first half of 2012, a draft instrument of ratification concerning the Charter. The working group will comprise representatives of the authorities, national minorities and experts who will work in co-operation with Council of Europe experts. This constructive step is welcomed as a preparation towards the ratification law.

3.1.5. Russian Federation

From 2009 to 2012, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Russian Federation implemented a Joint Programme "Minorities in Russia: Developing Languages, Culture, Media and Civil Society" which aimed, inter alia, at providing assistance to different public authorities that would be involved in the future ratification and implementation of the Charter. For that purpose, a Joint Working Group was established which discussed at experts' level the legal, political and inter-ethnic aspects related to this issue. A proposal for a draft instrument of ratification prepared by independent experts was discussed at meetings of the Joint Working Group in 2011. Against this background, and considering that the Russian Federation is the first State that has involved the Council of Europe in an institutionalised way in its preparations for ratification of the Charter. The Russian authorities are strongly encouraged to continue the work of the Joint Working Group in an appropriate form after the end of the Joint Programme to facilitate ratification.

17. Ratification of the Charter was also specified as a commitment of Georgia in the Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO (2004).
18. Ratification of the Charter was also specified as a commitment of Moldova in the Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO (2006).

3.1.6. "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

As mentioned in my previous report, the authorities of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" informed representatives of the country's national minorities in 2009 that they would ratify the Charter soon. However, the Council of Europe has not been made aware of any additional steps taken towards ratification of the Charter during the reporting period. The Council of Europe stands ready to assist the authorities of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" in their final preparations for accession to the treaty.

3.2. Other non-States Parties

In France, two draft laws on the promotion of the regional languages were discussed in the French parliament in 2011 which has opened a new round of discussion about the possibility of ratification of the Charter. In general, awareness of the Charter in France remains higher than in any other non-State Party.

The Council of Europe has not been made aware of any steps taken towards ratification of the Charter by the other member States concerned, namely Andorra, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Monaco, Portugal, San Marino and Turkey.

Over the years, the Charter has considerably benefited from the constant support by the Parliamentary Assembly. In particular, from the mid-1990s onwards, the Parliamentary Assembly has insisted on the need for signature and ratification as a condition for new member States at the time of their admission to the Organisation. The Parliamentary Assembly's continued interest will certainly promote new ratifications of the Charter, among both more recent and old member States alike.

4. Complementarity and Congruence: Synergies with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

As a result of the restructuring of the Council of Europe Secretariat, which took effect on 1 October 2011, the secretariats of the Charter, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) form one department within the new DGII. This step should further bring to bear the existing synergies between the two minority conventions and ECRI as well as the respective monitoring bodies.

As far as the Charter and the Framework Convention are concerned, it is commonly known that both treaties are *complementary*. The Framework Convention sets out individual rights for persons belonging to national minorities. These rights complement the legal obligations of States Parties contained in the Charter, but obviously go beyond linguistic matters. It is less known, though, that there exists also broad *congruence* between the Charter and certain provisions of the Framework Convention. The latter contains language-related provisions that are congruent with a greater number of Charter provisions than the number which must be accepted by a State when ratifying Part III of the Charter. This aspect should politically and legally facilitate further ratifications of the Charter by the States Parties to the Framework Convention concerned[19].

Already at present, both conventions mutually reinforce each other during monitoring. One example is that, during the reporting period, six opinions by the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention were published concerning States Parties to the Charter which have not been monitored by the Committee of Experts of the Charter during that period.[20] While this precise constellation is of course coincidental, the congruence of both treaties will always ensure that some aspects of minority language protection are monitored in certain States Parties even in-between two Charter monitoring cycles. Similarly, the implementation of the Framework Convention benefits from the Charter mechanism, including its shorter monitoring intervals (three years compared to five years under the Framework Convention).

Co-operation on the basis of common case law has also continued in the field. In 2011, for example, representatives of the two monitoring committees chaired a follow-up meeting in Slovenia. The meeting had been proposed after the Committee of Experts and the Advisory Committee had, in their respective monitoring reports, expressed concern that there is practically no dialogue between the authorities and the associations representing the regional or minority language speakers about the application of both treaties.

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19. The member States that have ratified the Framework Convention, but not yet the Charter are: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Portugal, Russian Federation, San Marino and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". See also Ewa Chylinski/Mahulena Hofmannová (eds.): Ready for Ratification. Early Compliance of non-States Parties with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, European Centre for Minority Issues 2011.

20. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Hungary, Netherlands, Serbia and Slovak Republic.

In so far as ECRI is concerned, it pays special attention to minority language rights in its monitoring of all 47 member States, emphasising the need for ratification of the Charter. In its fourth monitoring cycle, ECRI has so far made recommendations in this sense to the authorities of seven countries and will continue to do so in respect of all other countries which are not yet parties to the Charter until the end of its monitoring cycle in 2013. In addition, ECRI recommended to the authorities of a party to the Charter to amend the law on the use of national minority languages by taking into consideration the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts on the Charter.

More generally, ECRI in its monitoring reports strongly encourages State authorities to pursue their efforts to promote education in minority languages, including teaching of and in minority languages and appropriate training of teachers. Concerning one country in particular, ECRI made a specific recommendation, for which it requested priority implementation from the authorities within two years, to ensure that the teachers who are trained in teaching the national language as a second language know the language of the ethnic minority pupils whom they will teach.

ECRI has paid due attention to minority languages in combating racism and intolerance also in its work on general themes. For example in its last General Policy Recommendation N.13 on combating anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma, ECRI hasrequested member States to offer Roma pupils instruction in their mother tongue, upon the parents' request, as well as to ensure that school textbooks contain information on the Roma language.

Thirty years ago, on 7 October 1981, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted Recommendation 928, thereby calling upon States to support the use of minority languages in public life. As it turned out later, Recommendation 928 had initiated the drafting process of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

The relationship between the Charter and the Parliamentary Assembly has remained exceptional, of which this report is proof. No other Council of Europe convention requires the Secretary General to present his own report on its application. Each biennial report therefore gives a regular opportunity to Europe's parliamentarians to review the state of implementation of the Charter as well as to some extent of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and of ECRI recommendations. In this way, they play an important role in improving the implementation of the European standards in this field.

Appendix 1 – Signatures and ratifications of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages CETS No.: 148

Treaty open for signature by the member States and for accession by non-member States

Opening for signature	Entry into force
Place: Strasbourg Date : 5/11/1992	Conditions: 5 Ratifications. Date : 1/3/1998

Status as of: 16/01/2012

Member States of the Council of Europe

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.
Albania										
Andorra										
Armenia	11/5/2001	25/1/2002	1/5/2002			X				
Austria	5/11/1992	28/6/2001	1/10/2001			X				
Azerbaijan	21/12/2001					X				
Belgium										
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7/9/2005	21/9/2010	1/1/2011			X				
Bulgaria										
Croatia	5/11/1997	5/11/1997	1/3/1998		X	X				
Cyprus	12/11/1992	26/8/2002	1/12/2002			X				
Czech Republic	9/11/2000	15/11/2006	1/3/2007			X				
Denmark	5/11/1992	8/9/2000	1/1/2001			X			X	
Estonia										
Finland	5/11/1992	9/11/1994	1/3/1998			X				
France	7/5/1999					X				
Georgia										
Germany	5/11/1992	16/9/1998	1/1/1999			X				
Greece										
Hungary	5/11/1992	26/4/1995	1/3/1998			X				
Iceland	7/5/1999									
Ireland										
Italy	27/6/2000									
Latvia										
Liechtenstein	5/11/1992	18/11/1997	1/3/1998			X				
Lithuania										
Luxembourg	5/11/1992	22/6/2005	1/10/2005							
Malta	5/11/1992									
Moldova	11/7/2002									
Monaco										
Montenegro	22/3/2005	15/2/2006	6/6/2006	56						
Netherlands	5/11/1992	2/5/1996	1/3/1998			X		X		
Norway	5/11/1992	10/11/1993	1/3/1998			X				
Poland	12/5/2003	12/2/2009	1/6/2009			X				
Portugal										
Romania	17/7/1995	29/1/2008	1/5/2008			X				
Russia	10/5/2001									
San Marino										

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.
Serbia	22/3/2005	15/2/2006	1/6/2006	56		X				
Slovakia	20/2/2001	5/9/2001	1/1/2002			X				
Slovenia	3/7/1997	4/10/2000	1/1/2001			X				
Spain	5/11/1992	9/4/2001	1/8/2001			X				
Sweden	9/2/2000	9/2/2000	1/6/2000			X				
Switzerland	8/10/1993	23/12/1997	1/4/1998			X				
“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”	25/7/1996									
Turkey										
Ukraine	2/5/1996	19/9/2005	1/1/2006			X				
United Kingdom	2/3/2000	27/3/2001	1/7/2001			X		X		

Non-member States of the Council of Europe

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.

Total number of signatures not followed by ratifications: 8

Total number of ratifications/accessions: 25

Notes: (56) Dates of signature and ratification by the state union of Serbia and Montenegro. a: Accession - s: Signature without reservation as to ratification - su: Succession - r: Signature "ad referendum". R.: Reservations - D.: Declarations - A.: Authorities - T.: Territorial Application - C.: Communication - O.: Objection.

Source: Treaty Office on http://conventions.coe.int

Appendix 2 – Languages covered by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Status as of: 1 December 2011

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Albanian	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Montenegro	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Arabic	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Aragonese	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Aranese	Spain	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Armenian	Cyprus	Part II (Article 7)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
Assyrian	Armenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Asturian	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Basque	Spain	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Beás	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Belarusian	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Berber	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Bosnian	Montenegro	Part II (Article 7)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Bulgarian	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Bunjevac	Serbia	Part II (Article 7)
Burgenlandcroatian	Austria	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Caló	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Catalan	Spain	[21]Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*[1]
Cornish	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7)
Crimean Tatar	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Croatian	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Montenegro	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7)
Cypriot Maronite Arabic	Cyprus	Part II (Article 7)

21. In some parts of the State, the given language is covered only by Part II while in other parts also by Part III. In the present table, such cases are marked by an asterisk (*).

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Czech	Austria	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Danish	Germany	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Finnish	Sweden	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
French	Switzerland	Part II (Article 7)
Frisian	Netherlands	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Gagauz	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Galician	Spain	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
Georgian	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
German	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Czech Republic	Part II (Article 7)
	Denmark	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Switzerland	Part II (Article 7)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Greek	Armenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Hungarian	Austria	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
		Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	
Inari Sámi	Finland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Irish	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Italian	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Switzerland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Karaim	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7)

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Karelian	Finland	Part II (Article 7)
Kashub	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Krimchak	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7)
Kurdish	Armenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Kven	Norway	Part II (Article 7)
Ladino	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Lemko	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Limburgish	Netherlands	Part II (Article 7)
Lithuanian	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Low German	Germany	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
Lower Saxon	Netherlands	Part II (Article 7)
Lower Sorbian	Germany	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Lule Sámi	Norway	Part II (Article 7)
	Sweden	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Macedonian	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7)
Manx Gaelic	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7)
Meänkieli	Sweden	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Moldovan	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Montenegrin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
North Frisian	Germany	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
North Sámi	Finland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Norway	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
	Sweden	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Polish	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Czech Republic	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Portuguese	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
Romanes	Netherlands	Part II (Article 7)
	Norway	Part II (Article 7)

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Romani	Austria	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Czech Republic	Part II (Article 7)
	Finland	Part II (Article 7)
	Germany	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
		Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Montenegro	Part II (Article 7)
	Norway	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Spain	Part II (Article 7)
	Sweden	Part II (Article 7)
	Ukraine	
Romanian	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Romansh	Switzerland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Russian	Armenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Finland	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Ruthenian	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Sater Frisian	Germany	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Scots	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7)
Scottish-Gaelic	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Serbian	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovenia	Part II (Article 7)
Skolt Sámi	Finland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Norway	Part II (Article 7)

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Slovakian	Austria	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Czech Republic	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Slovenian	Austria	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
		Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	
South Sámi	Norway	Part II (Article 7)
	Sweden	Part II (Article 7)
Swedish	Finland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Tatar	Finland	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
Turkish	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Ukrainian	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Croatia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Hungary	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Serbia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Slovakia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Ulster Scots	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7)
Upper Sorbian	Germany	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Valencian	Spain	Part II (Article 7) or Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)*
Vlach	Serbia	Part II (Article 7)
Welsh	United Kingdom	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Yenish	Switzerland	Part II (Article 7)
Yezidi	Armenia	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
Yiddish	Armenia	Part II (Article 7)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Finland	Part II (Article 7)
	Netherlands	Part II (Article 7)
	Poland	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)
	Romania	Part II (Article 7)
	Sweden	Part II (Article 7)
	Ukraine	Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14)

Language	State Party	Level of protection under the Charter (Articles applying to the language concerned)
Total: The Charter covers 84 languages …	… used by 206 national minorities or linguistic groups of which …	… 76 are concerned by Part II only and 122 by Parts II and III. The languages of 8 linguistic groups belong to both aforementioned categories, depending on the region.

Appendix 3 – Signatures and ratifications of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities CETS No.: 157

Treaty open for signature by the member States and up until the date of entry into force by any other State so invited by the Committee of Ministers

Opening for signature	Entry into force
Place: Strasbourg	Conditions: 12 Ratifications
Date: 1/2/1995	Date: 1/2/1998

Status as of: 16/01/2012

Member States of the Council of Europe

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.
Albania	29/6/1995	28/9/1999	1/1/2000							
Andorra										
Armenia	25/7/1997	20/7/1998	1/11/1998							
Austria	1/2/1995	31/3/1998	1/7/1998			X				
Azerbaijan		26/6/2000 a	1/10/2000			X				
Belgium	31/7/2001				X					
Bosnia and Herzegovina		24/2/2000 a	1/6/2000							
Bulgaria	9/10/1997	7/5/1999	1/9/1999			X				
Croatia	6/11/1996	11/10/1997	1/2/1998							
Cyprus	1/2/1995	4/6/1996	1/2/1998							
Czech Republic	28/4/1995	18/12/1997	1/4/1998							
Denmark	1/2/1995	22/9/1997	1/2/1998			X				
Estonia	2/2/1995	6/1/1997	1/2/1998			X				
Finland	1/2/1995	3/10/1997	1/2/1998							
France										
Georgia	21/1/2000	22/12/2005	1/4/2006							
Germany	11/5/1995	10/9/1997	1/2/1998			X				
Greece	22/9/1997									
Hungary	1/2/1995	25/9/1995	1/2/1998							
Iceland	1/2/1995									
Ireland	1/2/1995	7/5/1999	1/9/1999							
Italy	1/2/1995	3/11/1997	1/3/1998							
Latvia	11/5/1995	6/6/2005	1/10/2005			X				
Liechtenstein	1/2/1995	18/11/1997	1/3/1998			X				
Lithuania	1/2/1995	23/3/2000	1/7/2000							
Luxembourg	20/7/1995					X				
Malta	11/5/1995	10/2/1998	1/6/1998		X	X				
Moldova	13/7/1995	20/11/1996	1/2/1998							
Monaco										
Montenegro		11/5/2001 a	6/6/2006	54						
Netherlands	1/2/1995	16/2/2005	1/6/2005			X		X		
Norway	1/2/1995	17/3/1999	1/7/1999							
Poland	1/2/1995	20/12/2000	1/4/2001			X				
Portugal	1/2/1995	7/5/2002	1/9/2002							
Romania	1/2/1995	11/5/1995	1/2/1998							
Russia	28/2/1996	21/8/1998	1/12/1998			X				

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.
San Marino	11/5/1995	5/12/1996	1/2/1998							
Serbia		11/5/2001 a	1/9/2001	54						
Slovakia	1/2/1995	14/9/1995	1/2/1998							
Slovenia	1/2/1995	25/3/1998	1/7/1998			X				
Spain	1/2/1995	1/9/1995	1/2/1998							
Sweden	1/2/1995	9/2/2000	1/6/2000			X				
Switzerland	1/2/1995	21/10/1998	1/2/1999			X				
“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”	25/7/1996	10/4/1997	1/2/1998			X				
Turkey										
Ukraine	15/9/1995	26/1/1998	1/5/1998							
United Kingdom	1/2/1995	15/1/1998	1/5/1998							

Non-member States of the Council of Europe

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.

Total number of signatures not followed by ratifications: 4

Total number of ratifications/accessions: 39

Notes:

(54) Date of accession by the state union of Serbia and Montenegro.

a: Accession - s: Signature without reservation as to ratification - su: Succession - r: Signature "ad referendum". R.: Reservations - D.: Declarations - A.: Authorities - T.: Territorial Application - C.: Communication - O.: Objection.

Source: Treaty Office on http://conventions.coe.int