



Recommendation 1775 (2006)¹

Situation of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its [Resolution 1171 \(1998\)](#) on endangered Uralic minority cultures, in which it expressed concern at the situation of many Finno-Ugric peoples living mainly in the Russian Federation.
2. It regrets that the countries where the Uralic linguistic minorities live, and in particular the Russian Federation, have generally not implemented the measures it had encouraged them to take. In some areas the appropriate legislation exists but very often it is not implemented, mainly for financial reasons.
3. Education and media reforms in the Russian Federation and the redrawing of regional administration boundaries do not take into account the needs of minorities, including the Finno-Ugric peoples, and are, thereby, making it increasingly difficult for them to participate in the political process and to develop their languages and culture.
4. The situation of Finno-Ugric peoples in the Russian Federation, which was already worrying in 1998, has since significantly worsened and concrete measures must be urgently taken in order to reverse the decline of Finno-Ugric peoples and of their languages and cultures. As this decline also depends on the people concerned, their awareness of this situation must be raised.
5. The Assembly welcomes the increasing co-operation between Estonia, Finland and Hungary and the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples (in the Russian Federation), in particular at parliamentary level. It also welcomes the establishment of the World Congress of Finno-Ugric Peoples, in Syktyvkar in 1992, and the continued series of Finno-Ugric conferences.
6. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 6.1. establish a European centre for Finno-Ugric languages based on the model of the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages (EBLUL);
 - 6.2. support training in minority peoples' issues and rights for the federal and local civil servants of the Russian Federation;
 - 6.3. support the Russian Federation in developing plans to implement the following recommendations, and explore ways in which the Committee of Ministers could further support their implementation.
7. The Assembly also decides to:
 - 7.1. examine more closely, in its ongoing monitoring of the Russian Federation, the situation of all minorities, including Finno-Ugric peoples, and the measures taken to implement its related resolutions;
 - 7.2. establish an ad hoc committee to encourage increased dialogue with the Duma of the Russian Federation on the issue of minority rights, including those of the Finno-Ugric peoples.
8. The Assembly further calls on UNESCO to assist the authorities of the Russian Federation in protecting Finno-Ugric cultural heritage, and in particular the old town of Tsygma (Kozmodemyansk).

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 17 November 2006 (see [Doc. 11087](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mrs Saks).*



9. It encourages Estonia, Finland and Hungary, Council of Europe member states which have a Finno-Ugric population, to support the development of a virtual Finno-Ugric university in co-operation with the Russian Federation.
10. Finally it encourages the competent authorities of the Russian Federation to:
 - 10.1. co-operate with the Council of Europe in the implementation of these recommendations;
 - 10.2. review current and planned legislative and administrative reforms with a view to ensuring that the special needs of minorities, including those of the Finno-Ugric peoples, are taken into account;
 - 10.3. sign and ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ETS No. 148);
 - 10.4. develop a plan and programme (including education and culture, as well as administrative and legislative reform) for raising the status of the Finno-Ugric languages, providing improved opportunities for the development of such languages and cultures, and for encouraging the increased participation of Finno-Ugric peoples in the political process and in public administration;
 - 10.5. substantially increase federal and regional funding to support print and electronic media development (including via the Internet) in the Finno-Ugric languages;
 - 10.6. substantially increase federal and regional funding for the publication of books, newspapers and magazines in the Finno-Ugric languages including the compilation, and publication of a series of encyclopaedias (general, and specialised in literature, science, arts and history) as well as funding for translations of world literature classics;
 - 10.7. aim, whenever possible, to put in place “strong” bilingual education models;
 - 10.8. ensure access to elementary education, and wider access to secondary and post-secondary education in the mother tongue of the Finno-Ugric peoples, increase and improve teacher training, and augment the availability, quality and quantity of learning materials produced in native languages;
 - 10.9. support the establishment of a virtual Finno-Ugric university in co-operation with the Finno-Ugric member states of the Council of Europe;
 - 10.10. explore and implement the use of content and language integrated learning (CLIL), and language immersion strategies in order to help children of Finno-Ugric peoples to recover fluency in their ancestral languages;
 - 10.11. promote threatened languages with parents and communities so that their commitment to a threatened language receives support and reinforcement;
 - 10.12. develop a long-term media campaign to raise awareness among Russian speakers of the history of Finno-Ugric peoples, as well as of native cultures, of their rights and their concerns;
 - 10.13. provide training for federal and local civil servants in the issues and rights of native peoples;
 - 10.14. increase federal funding and support to help the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation to implement fully local legislation regarding official languages;
 - 10.15. apply to UNESCO to have the old town of Tsygma (Kozmodemyansk) placed on the World Heritage List.