



## Resolution 2262 (2019)<sup>1</sup>

# Promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The rights of persons belonging to national minorities form an integral part of the international human rights framework, as recognised by the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ETS No. 157, “the Framework Convention”). The Parliamentary Assembly emphasises that full ratification of the Framework Convention by all member States of the Council of Europe is an important means of promoting the full and equal participation of all members of society, fostering and protecting the diversity of cultures and languages in Europe and guaranteeing stability, democratic security and peace throughout the continent.
2. The Assembly pays tribute to the fundamental role played by the Framework Convention in strengthening the protection of persons belonging to national minorities and promoting their rights over the twenty years since its entry into force. Moreover, it welcomes the fact that the multilateral system set up under the Framework Convention provides States with a regular source of expert analysis and early warnings when the structures and channels set up domestically to protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and to facilitate their full participation in society, fall short of the aims sought to be achieved.
3. The Assembly recalls its [Recommendation 1766 \(2006\)](#) on the ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the member states of the Council of Europe, in which it called on the four States that have signed the Framework Convention but not ratified it – Belgium, Greece, Iceland and Luxembourg – and the four others that have neither signed nor ratified it – Andorra, France, Monaco and Turkey – to sign and/or ratify the Framework Convention as soon as possible, without reservations or declarations. It deplores the fact that little or no progress appears to have been made towards ratification by these States since then.
4. The Assembly once again reiterates its appeal to all member States to respond positively and pay close attention to the needs of persons belonging to national minorities, and to safeguard their rights, in particular as set forth in the Framework Convention.
5. It recalls in this context that the principle of equality and non-discrimination constitutes a fundamental human right. While 20 Council of Europe member States have ratified Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 177), including Andorra and Luxembourg, 27 have not. Eighteen States have signed but not ratified Protocol No. 12, including Belgium, Greece, Iceland and Turkey, which are also not parties to the Framework Convention. Another nine States, including two that have neither signed nor ratified the Framework Convention – France and Monaco – have neither signed nor ratified Protocol No. 12.
6. The Assembly underlines that the ratification of Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights and full implementation of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities would strengthen the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, whether or not the minorities are recognised as such.

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1. *Assembly debate* on 24 January 2019 (8th Sitting) (see [Doc. 14779](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Mr Viorel Riceard Badea). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 24 January 2019 (8th Sitting).



7. It regrets that, since the Committee of Experts on Issues Relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) ceased functioning at the end of 2011, no forum for addressing these issues has been provided by the Committee of Ministers beyond its periodical exchanges of views with the president-in-office of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
8. Considering the concerns raised by the Advisory Committee as regards current trends and challenges in terms of the protection of minority rights, echoed at the conference held on 18 and 19 June 2018 to mark the 20th anniversary of the Framework Convention and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ETS No. 148), the Assembly underlines the importance of dealing with the rights of persons belonging to national minorities through a multilateral approach, providing collective mechanisms and guarantees.
9. In the light of the above, the Assembly calls on:
  - 9.1. those member States which have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Framework Convention, without reservations or declarations amounting to reservations;
  - 9.2. those member States which have signed but not yet ratified the Framework Convention to ratify this instrument, without reservations or declarations amounting to reservations;
  - 9.3. those States which have ratified the Framework Convention, but entered restrictive declarations or reservations, to withdraw them;
  - 9.4. those States which have ratified the Framework Convention to implement it fully.
10. The Assembly also calls on:
  - 10.1. those member States which have not yet done so to sign and ratify Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights;
  - 10.2. those member States which have signed but not yet ratified Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights to ratify this instrument.
11. The Assembly recognises the key role that can be played by civil society organisations representing persons belonging to national minorities in making fundamental rights and values a reality for everyone, and stresses that they should be able to carry out their work to promote the social, economic, political and cultural participation of persons belonging to national minorities in a safe and well-supported environment.