

The Czech Republic's language policy on minorities' education rights

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Abstract

Linguistic and fundamental human rights of minorities are fixed in the documents of The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages and The European Charter of Local Self-Government. These documents are the pillars of the rights of minorities. The monitoring procedure of the The European Charter is fulfilled by the Committee of Experts (COMEX). Those countries which have ratified the Charter have to submit three-yearly reports on the implementation of the Charter. The Czech Republic signed the Charter in 2000 and ratified it in 2006. By accepting the Charter the Czech Republic is responsible for submitting reports on which of their commitments have been achieved and to what extent. Since ratification, the Czech Republic has submitted its forth report. The main aim of this article is to introduce what commitments has the Czech Republic made by ratifying the Charter. Furthermore, analysis of the latest report prepared by the Committee of Experts and to what extent the commitments made in the Charter have been met and put into practice. Using the critical discursive analysis the researcher examined this report. The findings show that the Czech Republic fulfilled its expectations based on the report but still minor changes are needed.

Keywords: language policy, language policy in education, minorities, minority rights, European Charter, The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages

INTRODUCTION

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) was prepared within the framework of the Council of Europe and opened for signature in Strasbourg on 5 November 1992. The main aim of the ECRML is to protect and promote historical regional and minority languages in Europe.

Upon accession to the Council of Europe, the Czech Republic signed the Charter on 9 November 2000 and ratified it on 15 November 2006. The Charter came into force in respect of the Czech Republic on 1 March 2007. The correct application of the Charter is monitored by a Committee of Experts (COMEX) (Article 17).

Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages prepares periodic reports on how states, including the Czech Republic, apply these international documents on their territory.

The investigation and evaluation of these reports is crucial since

they serve as “important guidelines, an objective standard, before the international and domestic fora about the state of minority rights: compliance with minority rights requirements is often not assessed in comparison to the treaties’ text, but to their interpretation adopted by the expert bodies” (Fiala-Butora, 2018: 8).

The article will examine the following:

- what commitments the Czech Republic entered into when ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- the content of the last report of the Committee of Experts of the Charter
- finally, in the light of this report we seek to establish whether, in relation to the protection of minorities’ language rights, the Czech Republic is complying with the obligations it accepted when ratifying the Charter.

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) was prepared within the framework of the Council of Europe and opened for signature in Strasbourg on 5 November 1992.¹

The Charter is not the only instrument of the Council of Europe which is relevant for the protection of regional and minority languages. The European Charter of Local Self-Government², which also covers the use of regional and minority languages in connection with local authorities, is of importance.

The Council of Europe's goal is to fortify the ties that unite its members, to safeguard and to preserve minority languages that are in danger of extinction in order to maintain and expand Europe's cultural diversity and traditions.

In accordance with Gerard-René de Groot (2018) *the preamble to the ECRML states that one of the objectives of this convention is the maintenance and development of regional and minority languages as a desirable manifestation of cultural wealth.* Additionally, *the ECRML stresses that the Charter is the basis of the fundamentals of democracy and cultural diversity.*

The Charter names two levels of protection: **basic** and **advanced**. Basic protection has to be granted to all regional and minority languages traditionally present on the territory of a state (Article 2(1)). The basic protection accorded to these languages is enshrined in Part II of the Charter (Article 7).

A state may then decide to grant advanced protection (Article 2(2)), which is regulated in Articles 8-13.

The Charter provides the following definitions in Article 1 (part a) on "**regional or minority languages**":³

a (i) - traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population;

a (ii) - different from the official language(s) of that State;

However, it is important to highlight on that the Charter does not include either dialects of the official language(s) of the State or the languages of migrants.

The first article also lists further categorise (b and a c part) of "**regional or minority languages**" and giving them specific definitions.

b - "territory in which the regional or minority language is used" means the geographical area in which the said language is the mode of expression of a number of people justifying the adoption of the various protective and promotional measures provided for in this Charter;

c - "non-territorial languages" means languages used by nationals of the State which differ from the language or languages used by the rest of the State's population but which, although traditionally used within the territory of the State, cannot be identified with a particular area thereof.

Part II of the Charter obliges a member to grant protection to a regional or minority language which consists of³

- a) Recognition of the regional or minority language as an expression of cultural wealth
- b) Respect for the geographical area of each regional or minority language
- c) Resolute action to promote a regional or minority language
- d) Facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of such languages in speech and writing as well as in public and private life.
- e) Maintenance of ties with other groups speaking the same or similar regional or minority languages.
- f) The provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of such languages at all appropriate stages (preschool, primary school, secondary school, vocational training, university).
- g) Facilities enabling adult non-speakers living in the area where a certain regional or minority language is spoken to learn it.
- h) Study and research at universities or equivalent institutions.
- i) The promotion of relevant transnational exchanges with speakers of the same or similar languages abroad.
- j) The elimination of all forms of unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger its maintenance or development.
- k) The promotion by the state of mutual understanding between all the country's linguistic groups.
- l) Consideration of the needs and wishes of the speakers of regional or minority languages, i.e. by establishing bodies (including speakers) to advise authorities.

The main fields of protection in Part III are:

- Article 8: Education,
- Article 9: Judicial authorities,
- Article 10: Administrative authorities and public services,
- Article 11: Media,
- Article 12: Cultural activities and facilities,
- Article 13: Economic and social life,
- Article 14: Transfrontier exchanges

The states are required to select at least 35 of the undertakings in each Part III clause in addition to the basic protection offered by Part II (Article 7).

The specific undertakings may vary from language to language, but ideally, they should be in line with the preferences of each language's speaker, if a state chooses to safeguard several regional or minority languages in accordance with Part III.

The situation of the regional or minority languages in the Czech Republic

The population of the Czech Republic was 10,512,922 based on the 2013 census. The number of people representing national

minorities is a very small proportion of the population of the country: Slovakian (1.41%), Roma (0.05%), Polish (0.37%), German (0.18%), Ukrainian (0.51%), Hungarian (0.08%), Russian (0.17%), Vietnamese (0.28%), Belarusian (0.02%) and, in smaller proportions, Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian, Croatian, etc.

The Government of the Czech Republic has set up the **Council of National Minorities**. The Council is an advisory, initiative-taking, and co-ordinating body of the Czech Government for matters of policy towards national minorities and their members⁴. It is really this Council which has the final say in determining the real rights of minority languages within the country.

The Czech Republic has been continuing to promote awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis all regional or minority languages and the cultures they represent. At national level, there are comprehensive grant schemes to support languages and cultures of national minorities, including programs to support integration of the Roma minority.

The regional or minority languages are mainly supported by grant schemes (Government Regulation No 98/2002) of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports⁵.

An annual appeal for proposals is provided by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic to assist in the successful implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This program includes the following:

- Educational activities at all levels that focus on or take place in one of the minority languages;
- Research focused on the use of minority languages;
- Promoting the use of traditional forms of local names in minority languages (signs, street, and other public places);
- Support of regional or minority languages as part of the Czech cultural heritage

German Language

Although schools and parents choose English as the first foreign language (98.59%), the German language can be taught in elementary schools.

German minority is mostly present at the area close to the German border. Suggestions have been collected by the representatives of the German minorities. These suggestions have been discussed with the representatives of the Ministry. Furthermore, the wording of the framework of the education programme has been discussed as well. Still, English is preferred by the Ministry to be taught as a first foreign language at schools. However, if a pupil or his/her legal guardian chooses a different language, the school has to demonstrably notify the applicant that, if the pupil goes to another school or to a secondary school, the education system may not guarantee the continuity of language teaching. This discourages members of the German national minority to select German as a first foreign language for their children.

The representatives of the German minority are working to have German as a minority language treated equally to English and to

have the discriminatory clause in the Framework Education Programme replaced or removed.

Romani Language

As a part of the national cultural heritage, the Romani language is being supported by the Czech Republic. The Ministry of Culture provides the grant scheme and supports NGO projects which organize events for the Roma community. Furthermore, the Roma language and culture are supported via magazines and other publications in Romani.

The teaching of the Romani language has continued, as in past years, in three universities, two secondary schools, and one elementary school. Romany Studies or related subjects are often where Romani is taught at universities. The Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague continues to be the only organization where Roma studies are offered as a particular program.

The reason why Romani is not taught in more elementary schools is mainly the low interest of parents of Roma children and also a lack of teachers of Romani. In this perspective, it should also be noted that schools with a significant percentage of Roma students are typically situated in less prosperous or socially inclusive areas, which has an effect on the demand for education in Roma because many parents of Roma children struggle to provide for their basic needs. Despite the fact that the support of systematic teaching of Romani is still insufficient, in traditional Romani communities the Roma language remains partly the main communication tool.

Pre-school education is an important vehicle for the successful integration of Roma children, for their subsequent academic success, and in their future life. In the Czech Republic, pre-school education is provided for by nursery schools or by preparatory classes in primary schools. Unlike primary education, pre-school education has not been mandatory until now.

Primary education is compulsory under Section 36 of the Education Act (82/2015 Sb) because it is the most important stage of the education process in the Czech Republic⁶. To continue with secondary school and increase future job seekers' chances, success in primary education is required. Roma students, however, frequently experience prejudice and isolation during the educational process. In many cases, they are taught outside of mainstream education according to an education programme that sets the bar lower.

There are no reliable data available on the quantity and percentage of Roma students and children enrolled in secondary and higher education. The numbers are even lower in secondary education and in tertiary education. Several factors contribute to this which is highlighted above.

To encourage Roma pupils from families facing financial difficulty because of the costs of secondary education and post-secondary education, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports implements a grant scheme of support for the socially disadvantaged Roma students of secondary schools and conservatories and students of post-secondary vocational schools. The purpose of this grant scheme is to increase the number of

Roma students enrolled in education and to stop them from entering the workforce too soon without the necessary qualifications.

Further support for the Roma community is given by government with the help of the Roma Integration Strategy⁷. The main aim of the Roma Integration Strategy is to give targeted support and change for the Roma people. This strategy include the support of teaching Romani on different levels of education and also to provide methodological and didactic materials and aids for its teaching.

Study fields at universities focused on Romany Studies Faculty of Arts, Charles University Central European Studies: Roma Studies Faculty of Education, Masaryk University Romani as an optional subject open to students of any field Faculty of Education, Charles University Integration of Roma in Special Education Faculty of Arts, Pardubice University Roma studies and Romani at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology Faculty of Arts, Ostrava University Fundamentals of Romological Studies (Lifelong Learning)

Moravian Croatian Language

The Croatian minority is one of the smallest in the Czech Republic. According to the last census held in 2013, 1,125 persons registered for Croatian nationality (ethnicity). Most people belonging to the Croatian minority live in the region of South Moravia.

The Ministry of Culture supports the activities of the Croatian minority. Every year, the Croatian Cultural Day in Jevišovka called Kiritof is supported from the state budget. This unique event provides the members of the Croatian minority with an opportunity to meet in the place where many of them come from, to learn more about their origin, and to inform the public about the existence of their tiny minority.

In order to evaluate the possibility of expanding the ratification of the Charter to include Croatian and/or the literary language of Gradistan Croatia, the Council established an ad hoc working committee in 2015. "*Colors of Croatian Moravia*," a book on the Croatian minority, was released in 2018 by the organization. The history and culture of the Croatian minority in the Czech lands are the focus of this book. The project "Documentation of the Oldest Speakers of Moravian Croatian" was carried out in 2018 by a group of Croatian speakers. The project's goal was to maintain the traditional lexicon of Moravian Croatian. In this book, speaker interviews were recorded, revised, edited, and then posted online in text, audio, and video format. The Czech authorities funded this project through the grant scheme "*Support for the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*".

The Czech authorities are currently providing financial support to establish a Museum of Moravian Croats in the municipality of Jevišovka (South Moravia) by the end of 2020. The museum will be a cultural centre, present the history of the minority, and may be used to teach Moravian Croatian.

Moravian Croatian is used only in private life and in a cultural context. This language is not present in education. An inter-

ministerial working group has been established which is in charge of preparing the modification of the ratification instrument in order to explicitly mention Moravian Croatian.

Polish language

Polish national education is an area managed by the Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Schools which is an organisation directly controlled by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. The Pedagogical Center for Polish National Schools' founding charter and long-term Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports programs are the sources of the Polish Center's primary activities. Activities of the Polish Centre are in accordance with the approved plan of the main tasks of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, namely in the following areas:

- Support of minority education
- Support of pupils with special educational needs,
- Financial support of publications and methodological aids
- Focus on the use and support of the mother tongue.
- New teaching materials for schools with Polish as the language of instruction

In nursery schools education has taken place in total of 33 schools with the classes and language instructions in Polish. In the past years, the number of primary schools where Polish is used and taught has increased. All Polish school facilities are included in the Ministry's Schools and School Facilities Register. Their task is still to educate Czech citizens of Polish nationality in accordance with the Framework Education Programme for Primary Schools but in their mother tongue. Within education, it was a key moment that a cross-border cooperation workshop cycle has been established by the Czech Republic and Poland. The workshop will allow the two countries to co-operate and develop the the educational sphere in Polish in the Czech Republic. Apart from developing the educational sphere teacher trainings are offered as well for the Polish minority.

Slovak

The Slovak and Czech the languages are mutually comprehensible. In public life, Slovak is treated just as equal as Czech. However, the interest of the Slovak language in education within the parents of Slovak speakers is rather low and as a result no Slovak-medium pre-school, primary, and secondary education therefore exists. According to the Charter, parents' of Slovak medium should be aware of the fact that their children can/should receive education in minority language education. In the previous evaluation of the Committee of Experts, it has been stated that the Czech Republic and the initial authorities should increase awareness and the availability of parents that their children can receive education in Slovak.

Projects facilitating the mediation of teaching in Slovak receive funding under a grant scheme of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports⁴. The second highest support for minorities within the project is given to the Slovak minority. As a result, one media project and publication of magazines in Slovak are being highly supported. Apart from media projects different festivals and

programmes are supported by the government too. One is the Strážnice International Folklore Festival. This International Festival is not just only for the Slovak minority. Citizens of other minorities, German, Croatian, and Romani can also participate in

this festival. The main aim of this festival is to highlight on the richness and importance of minority cultures and introducing the culture to one and other.

	Pre-school	Secondary-school	Higher Education/ University	Teaching material	Professional education for teachers	Cultural Activities
German	-	-	+	+	+	+
Romani	-	Romani is taught in few schools	+	development in progress	development in progress	+
Moravian Croatian	-	-	Can be learnt individually	-	-	+
Polish	+	+	+	+	+	+
Slovak	formally taught	formally taught	+	+	+	+

Table1. The availability of Educational Institutions for minorities in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, minority language education is provided using a variety of educational systems. The Education Act (82/2015 Sb) permits the implementation of minority language instruction either by the committees of minorities or based on the school director's judgment in response to a request from students or their parents⁶.

German is not taught in pre-school and secondary school. However, it is present as a language of instruction in schools close to the German border. Furthermore, it is taught as an optional subject for learners. In Higher Educational Institutions in the Czech Republic, several German Faculties work at the University of South Bohemia, Masaryk University, and the University of Ostrava, etc. Apart from having German Faculties, German can be learnt individually. Research in German is offered by a wide range of Universities. Teaching materials and professional education for teachers are provided and founded by the Czech Government as well as the German Government.

Romani is taught in only two institutions and is not a language of instruction in any school. Romani language has been continuing at three universities, two secondary schools, and one primary school. At primary-school level, the Primary School of Florián Bayer in Kopřivnice remains the only primary school where the Romani language is taught. The Romani language is taught only as a part of the Multicultural Education course and therefore the scope of Romani language taught is limited.

Study fields at universities focused on Romany Studies Faculty of Arts, Charles University Central European Studies: Roma Studies Faculty of Education, Masaryk University Romani as an optional subject open to students of any field Faculty of Education, Charles University Integration of Roma in Special Education Faculty of Arts, Pardubice University Roma studies and Romani at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology Faculty of Arts,

Ostrava University Fundamentals of Romological Studies (Lifelong Learning)

Moravian Croatian is not taught in any form, or at any level. However, it can be learnt as individual lessons or subjects at the Masaryk University and the Charles University. There are several festivals and activities which show the traditions of the Moravian Culture.

Polish is used in pre-school, primary, and secondary education. Furthermore, it is a language of instruction in several schools. The Polish language can be learnt individually at Universities and several lessons are about the history, literature, culture of the Polish nation. Study and research on Polish regional and minority languages can be conducted at the Charles University and the Masaryk University.

Polish national education is an area managed by the Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Schools in Český Těšín. Support of minority education – this primarily means meeting the needs of schools and school facilities with instruction in Polish, including the support of pupils with special educational needs, the publication (with financial support from the Ministry), and distribution of methodological aids. In all schools and school facilities with Polish as the language of instruction, the Polish Centre also focuses on the use and support of the mother tongue. The Polish Centre prepares and issues new teaching materials for schools with Polish as the language of instruction.

The initiatives to launch primary education in Slovak remain unsuccessful due to the lack of parental interest. Slovak has long been strongly represented, both in terms of acquisitions, and in terms of a number of common co-production projects. Slovak studies can be learnt at the Masaryk University, the Charles University, and the University of Ostrava. Slovak language is

widely represented in TV, publications, and cultural activities like the Slovak Days, folklore festivals, and literary events.

Monitoring the application of the Charter

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is a treaty of the Council of Europe putting obligations on its states parties to protect and promote the country’s traditional minority languages in all fields of public life: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities, and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges. The Czech Republic signed the Charter on 9 November

2000 and ratified it on 15 November 2006. The Charter entered into force in the Czech Republic on 1 March 2007 and applies to the following languages: German, Moravian Croatian, Polish, Romani, and Slovak. Polish and Slovak receive protection under both Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14). Article 15 (1) of the Charter requires states parties to submit three-yearly reports on the implementation of the Charter. The Czech authorities submitted their fourth periodical report on 6 March 2018.

	State Report	Committee of Experts Evaluation and Recommendations	Committee of Ministers Recommendation
Report 1	01.03.2008	23.04.2009	09.12.2009
Report 2	19.07.2011	23.03.2012	30.01.2013
Report 3	22.09.2014	17.06.2015	01.12.2015
Report 4	06.03.2018	23.11.2018	19.06.2019
Report 5	due 01.03.2023		

Table 2: Monitoring of the application of the Charter in the Czech Republic

The correct application of the Charter is monitored by a Committee of Experts (COMEX) (Article 17). This committee consists of 25 members (one for each contracting state) and has its own secretariat. The monitoring procedure is regulated by Article 15 of the Charter: every three years, member states have to submit a periodical report to the Council of Europe

The COMEX issued relatively lengthy evaluation reports until 2017 that contained a significant amount of information that had already been included in preceding reports. Sometimes it was difficult to find the remarks relevant for a particular regional or minority language. Since 2017, brief reports have been created, containing tables for every regional or minority language and an assessment of the essential initiatives. For part III languages, an evaluation is provided of all 35+ undertakings chosen by a state from the menu card for a given regional or minority language.

For each undertaking the tables indicate whether the obligations are *fulfilled/ partly fulfilled/formally fulfilled/not fulfilled* or whether *no conclusion* can be drawn (e.g. if no or insufficient information is provided).⁸

Chapter 2 of the report of the Committee of Experts on the implementation of the Charter in the Czech Republic, adopted on 06 March 2018 (Comex, 2018), evaluates the compliance of the Czech Republic with its undertakings under the Charter for the languages covered. The Committee of Experts used the following categories for the evaluation of compliance (Csernicskó, Márku, (2020)):

- (4) Fulfilled: policies, legislation, and practice are in conformity with the Charter.
- (3) Partly fulfilled: policies and legislation are wholly or partly in conformity with the Charter, but the undertaking is only partly implemented in practice.

- (2) Formally fulfilled: policies and legislation are in conformity with the Charter, but there is no implementation in practice.
- (1) Not fulfilled: no action in policies, legislation, and practice has been taken to implement the undertaking or the Committee of Experts has over several monitoring cycles not received any information on the implementation.
- () No conclusion: the Committee of Experts is not in a position to conclude on the fulfillment of the undertaking as no or insufficient information has been provided by the authorities.

	Polish	Slovak
8.1. a i	4	4 (formally)
8.1. b i	4	4 (formally)
8.1. c i	4	not evaluated
8.1. d ii	3	not evaluated
8.1. e iii	4	4
8.1. f iii	1	4

Table 3: Compliance of the Czech Republic with its undertakings under the Charter, according to the evaluation of COMEX 2018 (Article 8: Education)

The investigation and evaluation of these reports is crucial since they serve as “important guidelines, an objective standard, before the international and domestic fora about the state of minority rights: compliance with minority rights requirements is often not assessed in comparison to the treaties’ text, but to their interpretation adopted by the expert bodies” (Fiala-Butora, 2018: 8). As a result, these reports act as a form of impartial mirror in local and international forums on the condition of minority rights.

As it can be seen in Table 3 the Czech Republic fulfilled its obligations for each language concerning education rights. The country has fulfilled or formally fulfilled its obligations both to Polish and Slovak languages.

Conclusions

First of all, it is important to define and name those languages which belong under the category of Part II and Part III of the evaluation. German, Moravian Croatian, Romani receive protection under Part II (Article 7). In this case, German, Moravian Croatian, Romani languages don't fall into the evaluation category of Part III. Polish and Slovak receive protection under both Part II (Article 7) and Part III (Articles 8-14).

The fourth periodic report on the Czech Republic provides the Committee of Experts with enough specific material to draw conclusions on the accomplishment of any Charter commitment.

The Czech Republic had completely **fulfilled** all its obligations under the Charter, with only a few minor expectations. The numbers (4) in Table 3 indicate that most of the requirements are completely fulfilled or formally fulfilled. If we analyse the numbers of the evaluation given by the Committee in Article 8, it can be seen that the average value is high, meaning that the obligations have been completed. The Czech Republic has complied with its obligations under Article 8, as the average value is closest to the evaluation of **fulfilled**, which means that "*policies, legislation, and practice are in conformity with the Charter*" (table 2).

German is not taught in pre-schools and secondary schools, however children have the possibility to choose between English and German as an optional subject to learn. German is taught and learnt at different universities. German language and literature faculties are working at the University of Ostrava, Masaryk University in Brno, and several other universities. Teaching materials and professional education trainings for teachers are provided and financed by both the Czech Ministry of Education and the German Ministry of Education.

The support and use of Romani is part of the The Government's Roma Integration Strategy. Eventhough, Romani in education still only has a symbolic (low) presence. In order to help the Romani community, the newly adopted Education Act (82/2015 Sb) supports children with special educational needs based on their inclusion in mainstream education. As part of the Roma Integration Strategy preschool courses are now required by law. The development of teaching materials and the establishment of professional education are in plan from the Ministry of Education.

Moravian Croatian is not taught in any form, or at any level. The Masaryk University and the Charles University do offer individual lessons or subjects for students. Numerous festivals and events are held which display the customs of the Moravian culture.

The state report indicates based on the undertakings concerning Article 8 a i, b i Polish and Slovak children attend pre-schools and secondary schools. However, concerning the Slovak language, the experts stated, that the Framework Education Programme does not

specifically refer to the topic of the history and culture reflected by minority languages. Still, its objectives allow the undertakings listed in Article 8 a i to be fulfilled (formally). Considering the fact that Slovak can be taught in places other than those where Slovak is commonly spoken, and with regard to its intelligibility with Czech, Article 8 b i is considered formally fulfilled as well.

Concerning cultural activities Slovak and Czech are often presented together, having joint festivals and events which represent the cultural heritage of both the Slovak and the Czech community. Slovak media and broadcasting are represented in a high number without any limitations. The Slovak community, just like four other minorities, has their own programmes in which they introduce their cultural background. The programmes of the Slovak, German, and Roma minorities are broadcast once a week; the programme of the Polish minority is broadcast daily.

Even though, the situation of implementation of the Charter in the Czech Republic is satisfactory; the government might discuss the possibility of extending the instrument of ratification for other languages as a Part III language.

In view of the data, the authorities should also take measures to make families aware of the advantages of learning minority languages. More emphasis should be put on the teaching of history and culture of national minorities in Czech general education.

Generally speaking, the Committee of Experts were able to reach a conclusion in all cases based on the information provided by the Czech authorities regarding the teaching of minority languages in all levels of education.

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