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Addendum 1

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Initial Periodical Report
presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter**

Czech Republic

***Comments/questions submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic
regarding its Initial Periodical Report***

*Prepared by the Secretariat of the
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*

**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS OF THE
EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES**

Comments/questions submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic regarding its Initial Periodical Report

After a preliminary examination of the Initial Periodical Report on the Charter, it was found that additional information on some aspects of the report would be needed before the Committee of Experts could undertake a more detailed examination as required by the Charter.

The Czech Government is therefore invited to reply to the following questions in order to allow the Committee of Experts to complete its examination. This questionnaire will additionally serve as a working document during the Committee of Expert's forthcoming on-the-spot visit to the Czech Republic.

The structure of this document follows the Outline for Periodical Reports to be submitted by States Parties (printed in bold). The questions the Committee of Experts would like the authorities to reply to (presented in numerical order) are inserted into the original text of that Outline. General questions are listed at the beginning of the respective article.

PART I

1. Please state the main legal act(s) whereby the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has been implemented in your State. If you so desire, please mention the general considerations which have guided your country in the ratification process.

Question no. 1. Please inform the Committee of Experts if Czech legislation designates Slovak, Polish, German and Romani as regional or minority languages in recognition of them as an expression of cultural wealth.

2. Please indicate all regional or minority languages, as defined in paragraph a of Article 1 of the Charter, which exist within your State's territory. Indicate also the parts of the territory of your state where the speakers of such language(s) reside.

Question no. 2. Please provide more information on the historical presence of Slovak, Polish, German and Romani. For example, since approximately when (decade) have these languages been spoken in the Czech Republic?

Question no. 3. According to the opinion of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 2005 with regard to the Czech Republic (ACFC/OP/II(2006)005), there are also other groups represented by national minority councils. These are Bulgarians, Croats, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Russians, Greeks, Ukrainians, Serbs and Jews. Please inform the Committee of Experts whether their languages are traditionally spoken in the Czech Republic and if so, by how many people and in which geographical area.

Question no. 4. Relating to the census of 2001, please provide more information concerning the main speaking areas of Slovak, Polish, German and Romani e.g. by indicating the ten municipalities with the highest density of speakers. If possible, the Committee of Experts kindly asks you to do the same for all other regional or minority languages in the Czech Republic, to the extent that the answer to Question no. 3 indicates that there are such.

(...)

PART II

Objectives and principles pursued in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1

Article 7 – Objectives and principles

In respect of regional or minority languages, within the territories in which such languages are used and according to the situation of each language, the Parties shall base their policies, legislation and practice on the following objectives and principles:

(...)

c the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;

Question no. 5. Has the Czech Republic adopted and taken concrete measures regarding the promotion of Slovak, Polish, German and Romani?

Question no. 6. Are there specific objectives or plans and does there exist a mechanism which ensures implementation?

Question no. 7. To what extent are local, regional and other authorities involved in taking concrete measures and how do the central authorities encourage, facilitate and monitor these activities?

Question no. 8. How does the Czech Republic ensure the coherence of its policy by means of financial mechanisms that provide the necessary resources for overall action?

d the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;

Question no. 9. How does the Czech Republic facilitate and /or encourage actively the use of its regional or minority languages especially in public life? Please give further details on the use of German in public and private media (quality and quantity) in broadcasting and in the written press.

Question no. 10. Please give further details on the use of Romani in public and private media (quality and quantity) in broadcasting and in the written press.

Question no. 11. Please give further details on the use of German in economic life (signage, contracts, terminology, etc.) in the Czech Republic.

Question no. 12. Please give further details on the use of Romani in economic life (oral or written).

Question no. 13. The Committee of Experts would appreciate a more detailed list of activities facilitating and encouraging the cultural life (support for cultural organisations, activities, etc.) related to the German language.

Question no. 14. Please inform the Committee of Experts about the activities facilitating and encouraging cultural life (support for cultural organisations, activities, etc.) related to the Romani language.

Question no. 15. Please give further details on the use of Romani in social life (health care, social services, elderly care, etc) in the Czech Republic.

Question no. 16. Please give further details on the use of German in social life (health care, social services, elderly care, etc) in the Czech Republic.

Question no. 17. Please inform the Committee of Experts about the activities facilitating and encouraging the use of German in justice and administration (availability and training of interpreters and translators, regional or minority language speaking staff, possibility to contact administrations in the regional or minority language, provision of services in the language, use/adoption of topographical names) in the Czech Republic.

Question no. 18. Please inform the Committee of Experts about the activities facilitating and encouraging the use of Romani in justice and administration in the Czech Republic.

e the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages

Question no. 19. The Periodical Report states on page 11 that "(...) the Interior Ministry register lists more than 5.000 civic associations of this type; nevertheless, only about one third of them are actually working." Please provide more information about these associations. What are their activities concerning regional or minority languages? Do they receive public funding or other state facilitation of their activities?

Question no. 20. Is there a non-governmental umbrella organisation that facilitates the development of links between the different existing groups?

Question no. 21. The Committee of Experts would welcome more details on the activities of the "National Minorities House" (see Periodical Report, page 11).

f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;

Question no. 22. Is there an overall legislative framework for the teaching of German and Romani?

Question no. 23. Is there a public support scheme?

Question no. 24. How many schools/classes teach German and Romani as a subject? Are other subjects taught through the medium of German or Romani? How does the Czech Republic encourage attendance of pupils at such classes?

Question no. 25. Where are these schools/classes located?

Question no. 26. Can they be easily reached? If not, does the State organize transport?

Question no. 27. How many pupils are needed to set up a language class in German and Romani?

Question no. 28. Is the teaching of the respective languages part of the curriculum? Is it compulsory for all pupils?

Question no. 29. Are there adequate teaching materials for all stages of education in German and Romani?

Question no. 30. When does teaching take place (e.g. during school hours, evening, weekend, summer schools)?

Question no. 31. How is teacher training organised? Are there enough qualified teachers?

Question no. 32. To what extent do private schools teach the respective languages?

g the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;

Question no. 33. Please provide information on educational facilities for the teaching of the regional or minority languages to non-speakers.

Question no. 34. How are they made aware of this offer?

h the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions;

Question no. 35. Please provide further information on the accredited study programmes of Czech Universities concerning regional or minority languages.

Question no. 36. Does the Czech Republic promote research on the regional or minority languages?

Question no. 37. Please specify which regional or minority languages can be studied as subjects at university level.

Question no. 38. Is it possible to study at university level in any of these languages – if so, what subjects (e.g. is it possible to study economics in Polish?).

i the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.

Question no. 39. Please give concrete examples regarding the promotion of transnational exchanges at local and national level including also non-governmental activities, school exchanges, etc. To what extent are regional or minority languages involved within these exchanges?

2 The Parties undertake to eliminate, if they have not yet done so, any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it. The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages.

Question no. 40. The Periodical Report states that “since Czech legislation does not designate any official language, the choice of the language of communication in public life is up to the parties concerned” (p.11). Please inform the Committee of Experts whether there is nevertheless in practice unjustified restriction of the use of regional or minority languages, or whether any special measures in favour of regional or minority languages have been adopted.

3 The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective.

Question no. 41. According to the Periodical Report, in the field of education, a practical result of promoting mutual understanding between linguistic groups is the introduction of so-called framework education programmes (p.12). Please provide more information on the nature of these programmes.

Question no. 42. Do national curricula and mainstream teaching materials raise awareness of the languages and provide a positive portrayal of their history and culture?

Question no. 43. Does teacher training include knowledge of the regional and minority languages of the Czech Republic, their history and culture?

Question no. 44. How does the Czech Republic encourage the private and public media to inform about the languages and to avoid adverse portrayal? Please give some practical examples.

4 In determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages.

Question no. 45. Please give more details on the “national minority boards” (Periodical Report, p. 12). Are the members of these boards representatives of the speakers?

Question no. 46. Has the Czech Republic invited the speakers to participate in the formulation of the language policy?

(...)

*Please note that **questions 1 to 46** concern all regional or minority languages covered by the Charter (Parts II and III) unless specified otherwise.*

PART III

Article 8

General questions

Question no. 47. Please provide more information on teacher training with regard to regional or minority languages at all levels of education (pre-school; primary, secondary and vocational education).

Question no. 48. The Periodical Report mentions on page 16 the “Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Schools” and “courses offered by the Polish Teachers Association”. Please inform the Committee of Experts whether teachers are trained to teach Polish as a subject or several other subjects through the medium of Polish. Are there further training possibilities?

Article 8, paragraph 1a)i/ii (Polish) and iv (Slovak)

Question no. 49. Please inform the Committee of Experts of the number of pupils in the 33 kindergartens where pre-school education is provided in Polish and provide more information about the criteria for making exemptions from the minimum class size (see Periodical Report, page 14).

Question no. 50. Please indicate the number of staff-members teaching (in) Polish and give more details on the teaching materials used.

Question no. 51. According to the Periodical Report (p. 14) “Several municipalities in the region have bilingual kindergartens with linguistically mixed staff and pupils.” How many hours are they approximately instructed in Polish? Are there any details of the number and size of the groups?

Question no. 52. How are parents informed about the offer of Polish-medium or bilingual kindergartens?

Article 8, paragraph 1b)i/ii (Polish) and iv (Slovak)

Question no. 53. Please give more details on the teaching material used in the respective schools.

Question no. 54. The Periodical Report states on page 14 that “(...) the pupils receive instruction in Polish and are taught some additional specific subjects”. Please provide more information on these additional subjects. How many hours are taught through the medium of Polish in proportion to Czech-medium-classes and what subjects are these?

Question no. 55. The Periodical Report states on page 14 that “there are 1.739 pupils enrolled in schools with instruction in Polish.” Since the table at the very bottom of the same page displays a different number (1.863), the Committee of Experts kindly requests a clarification of this discrepancy.

Question no. 56. How are parents and pupils actively informed of the possibility to set up a Slovak-medium class? How are they actively encouraged to make use of this possibility?

Article 8, paragraph 1c)i/ii (Polish)

Question no. 57. Please provide information concerning the curricula of the five secondary schools mentioned on page 15 of the Periodical Report specifying in particular the number of hours and the type of subjects taught through the medium of Polish.

Question no. 58. Please provide more details on the teaching material used in the five secondary (and vocational) schools providing instruction in Polish.

Article 8, paragraph 1d)ii (Polish)

Question no. 59. Please give more details on the teaching material used at the Secondary Technical School in Karviná, the Business Academy in Český Těšín and the Secondary Nursing School in Karviná.

Article 8, paragraph 1e)iii (Polish) and iii (Slovak)

Question no. 60. Please give more information on the higher education institutions in the Czech Republic and particularly on their study and research programmes concerning Slovak and Polish.

Question no. 61. Please clarify by which measures the Czech Republic supports actively the facilities of the study of Slovak and Polish.

Article 8, paragraph 1f)iii (Polish)

Question no. 62. How are people actively informed of the possibility to set up courses in Polish? How are they actively encouraged to make use of this possibility?

Article 8, paragraph 1g) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 63. In the Periodical Report (p. 15) the Czech Republic mentions that the teaching of the history and culture which is reflected by the Polish and the Slovak languages, is provided at primary education level. Does such teaching also take place at secondary level?

Question no. 64. Which textbooks are used for this purpose at those education levels?

Article 8, paragraph 1i) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 65. Please provide a copy or the internet address of the report concerning supervision, monitoring and reporting obligations mentioned in the Periodical Report on page 16. Please inform the Committee of Experts if this report is made public.

Article 8, paragraph 2 (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 66. To what extent do the Czech authorities encourage the teaching in or of Polish in territories other than in the Frýdek-Místek and Karviná districts?

Article 9

General Questions:

Question no. 67. Please provide more information about the availability of adequate trained interpreters and translators.

Question no. 68. Please clarify how the interpreters are trained and if legal terminology is available.

Question no. 69. The Committee of Experts would appreciate some concrete examples of proceedings held in the respective languages. Are there any statistics on proceedings in regional or minority languages?

Question no. 70. How are the parties and judicial authorities informed about the possibility to have proceedings in Slovak or Polish?

Question no. 71. Does the right exist to use Polish and Slovak in civil, criminal proceedings and in proceedings before courts concerning administration matters, regardless of whether the speaker in question has a command of the Czech language?

Article 10

Article 10, paragraph 1a)iv (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 72. Please give concrete examples of how the administrative authorities make public the possibility of using Polish and Slovak with the administration.

Question no. 73. The Committee of Experts would welcome further information on the language training of the administrative authority's officials.

Article 10, paragraph 3c) (Slovak)

Question no. 74. Is there a legal provision that allows for the use of Slovak in the submission of requests for public services?

Article 11

General Question:

Question no. 75. To what extent does the Czech Republic encourage the private media to broadcast in the respective regional or minority languages or topics on minorities? Are there any concrete examples?

Article 11, paragraph 1a) iii (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 76. The Periodical Report states on page 21 that there are several TV programmes broadcasting in the regional or minority language (Polish) or topics on minorities (multicultural programmes). The Committee of Experts would appreciate to receive details on the length of time of broadcasting of these programmes.

Question no. 77. At what time of the day do these television broadcasts take place? Are the multicultural programmes broadcast in Czech or in the regional or minority languages?

Question no. 78. Please inform the Committee of Experts on the length of time of broadcasting of the Polish language programmes on Czech Radio Ostrava.

Question no. 79. Please indicate as well the length of broadcasting time of Slovak language programmes on Czech Radio Prague.

Article 11, paragraph 1 d) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 80. Please provide some concrete examples of audio and audiovisual works that have been produced in Slovak and Polish.

Article 11, paragraph 1 e)i (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 81. Please indicate, if possible, the average number of pages of the following periodicals in Polish: "Glos Ludu", "Nasza gazeta" and "Zwrot" and give further details on their content.

Question no. 82. Please indicate, if possible, the average number of pages of the following periodicals in Slovak: "Korene", "Slovenské dotyky", "Listy" and "Zrkadlenie" and give further details on their content.

Article 11, paragraph 2 (Polish and Solvak)

Question no. 83. Regarding the right to receive broadcasts from neighbouring countries, are there any bilateral agreements on transfrontier media?

Article 12

Article 12, paragraph 1 a) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 84. Since the Report on the situation of National Minorities mentioned in the Periodical Report on page 23 refers to the year 2006, the Committee of Experts would welcome an updated list of the funds allocated from the state budget to support the cultural activities of the Polish and Slovak minority.

Article 12, paragraph 1 f) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 85. Please provide more information on the direct participation of representatives of Polish and Slovak in providing facilities and planning cultural activities.

Article 12, paragraph 1 g) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 86. Please give concrete information on the projects subsidized by the Czech Republic to establish documentary centres for Polish and Slovak.

Question no. 87. Please provide specific examples of how the Czech Republic has reflected regional or minority languages in its cultural policy abroad.

Article 12, paragraph 2 (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 88. The Committee of Experts would welcome more information on measures taken to encourage and/or provide cultural activities and facilities in territories other than those in which Polish and Slovak is traditionally used.

Article 13

Article 13, paragraph 1 c) (Polish and Slovak)

Question no. 89. The Periodical Report states on page 23 that the “Trade Act (...) enables Czech citizens belonging to national minorities to communicate with administrative authorities in their own language (...)”. How are citizens belonging to national minorities made aware of this possibility?

Question no. 90. Please complete the information contained in footnote number 28 (Periodical Report, page 23).

Article 14

General questions:

Question no. 91. To what extent do the international agreements on cultural co-operation include language issues referring to Polish and Slovak?

Question no. 92. The Committee of Experts would welcome more concrete examples of co-operation in the fields of education, culture and media at national, regional and local level.