



Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality

Third Monitoring cycle of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

After a preliminary examination of the 3rd Periodical Report on the Charter, the Committee of Experts found that additional information on the report would be needed before the committee could continue its examination.

On the 20th of March 2008 the Swedish Government Offices in Stockholm received an invitation from the expert committee to reply to a questionnaire the latest on the 30th of April 2008 in order to allow the Committee of Experts to complete its examination.

Sweden was also invited to make the questionnaire and Sweden's answers to it public. The questionnaire and Sweden's answers to it was made public on the Swedish government website for human rights, www.manskligarattigheter.se on the 28 of April 2008, it was also among others distributed to minority media.

General comments

Before presenting its answers to the questionnaire Sweden would like to give the Committee of Experts some additional information concerning activities concerning the national minorities in Sweden.

The Swedish Government's work to improve the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Language Charter) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Framework Convention) is an ongoing process. The Government Investigation on Finnish and South Sami Languages submitted its reports "*The Right to My Language – Enhanced Minority Rights Protection*" in May 2005 and "*To Reclaim My Language – Measures*

to *Strengthen the Sámi Language*” in February 2006. In its reports the investigator made a number of proposals that are now being processed within the Government Offices.

The current Government and the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality has also commissioned reports in order to explore additional or alternate possibilities of improving the implementation.

In December 2007 the report “*National Minority Languages in Courts and Agencies – An Alternative*” was submitted by Prof. and former Supreme Court judge Mr. Bertil Bengtsson. The report contains a number of proposals regarding the use of Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli, such as:

- The current administrative area for Finnish should not be expanded.
- The current administrative area for Sámi should be expanded with two municipalities (Strömsund and Storuman).
- Individuals have the right to use Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli in the whole country if the government agencies or municipalities in question have staff with language skills in these languages.
- Sámi and Finnish can always be used in written contacts with the following agencies: Parliamentary Ombudsman, The Office of the Chancellor of Justice, the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination, Social Insurance Agency and the tax authorities.
- In municipalities where the population is expected to use Sámi, Finnish or Meänkieli in contacts with the authorities, the municipality and county council should act so that there is staff with appropriate language skills available. Government agencies are to do the same if there is a need for it.
- Healthcare providers should act so that there is staff with appropriate language skills in Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli available where there is a need for it.
- If there are elderly people in need of care in Sámi, Finnish or Meänkieli the municipality is to provide for the availability of staff with appropriate language skills.
- Pre-school in Sámi and Finnish should be provided in the whole country, as proposed by the Government Commission on Finnish and South Sámi Languages.
- If a municipality fulfills the legislated requirements that apply within the administrative areas, the municipality may voluntarily join the current administrative area and thus be entitled to government funding.

The report is currently submitted for consideration by a number of public authorities, municipalities and organizations that represent national minorities.

Additional reports that have been commissioned by the Government and submitted are:

- the Institute for Language and Folklore: *“The Roma Language and Roma Language Planning in Sweden 2007”* February 2008,
- the Institute for Language and Folklore: *“The Situation of Meänkieli in Sweden”* March 2008, and
- the Jewish Community in Sweden (Judiska centralrådet i Sverige) /Ms. Susanne Sznajderman-Rytz: *“Yiddish – A Language without Country but with Domicile in Sweden”* February 2008.

These reports contain a number of proposals to strengthen and to promote Romani chib, Meänkieli and Yiddish in Sweden. The proposals are now being processed within the Governments Offices.

On the 2 of April 2008 the Swedish Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality arranged a conference in cooperation with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions concerning the rights of the national minorities in Sweden. The conference was aimed at all municipalities in Sweden and had as its objective to provide a forum for discussion and sharing of information and good practices on issues related to the implementation of the Language Charter and the Framework Convention in practice in the municipalities. Themes such as e.g. elderly care, right to mother tongue education and consultation mechanisms were examined.

Answers to questionnaire

PRELIMINARY SECTION

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 1: Please inform the Committee of Experts whether any specific measures have been taken to clarify if Elfdalian/Älvdalska corresponds to the definition of a regional or minority language contained in Article 1.a. of the Charter (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, paragraph 26).

The Government Offices has over the last years had an ongoing dialog with representatives of the Elfdalien community and in February 2008 representatives of the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality met with representatives of the municipality of Älvdalen and *Ulum Dalska*

(an organization for the protection and promotion of Elfdalian). The current situation and needs of Elfdalian were discussed during this meeting. The arguments for recognizing Elfdalian as a regional or minority language will be given further consideration in the Government's ongoing process of reforming the Swedish policy on national minorities.

PART II

Objectives and principles pursued in accordance with Article 2 paragraph 1

Article 7.1c

Question 2: What steps have been taken by the Swedish authorities "to reverse the trend of diminishing support for the associations of Finnish-speakers" (2nd Report of the Committee of Experts. paragraph 37)?

As mentioned in Sweden's 3rd periodical report the objectives of the national language policy emphasizes that everyone must have a right to languages, including developing and using their own mother tongue and national minority language, as well as the opportunity to learn foreign languages. Measures for language conservation are necessary if the national minority languages are to develop and be preserved. In order to promote achievement of the language policy objectives, state-financed language conservation and development activities has be coordinated and given new resources, which makes possible increased efforts in support of the national minority languages. Since the 1 July 2006 the Swedish-Finnish Language Council has been integrated into the Institute for Language and Folklore and receives annual funding from the Swedish Government as a part of this governmental body. As stated in the Swedish 3rd periodical report, this integration has been successful and has given more resources and leverage to the promotion of not only Finnish, but also other national minority languages.

Sweden has taken note of the comment made by the Committee of Experts in its 2nd report paragraph 37 and would like to give the following information. The government subsidies mentioned by the Committee, is granted in accordance with ordinances by the National Board of Health and Welfare. All public authorities in Sweden are independent of the Government Offices and the Government Offices does not have the right to change lawful decisions made by government agencies or interfere in their decision making process.

Article 7.1.d

Question 3: Apart from the survey referred to in the periodical report (see p. 39), what steps have been taken by the Swedish authorities to improve the provision of healthcare in regional or minority languages (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, paragraph 40)?

Sweden has taken note of the comments made by the Committee of Experts in paragraph 40 and agrees that questions concerning health and elderly care for national minorities are important. In addition Sweden would like to inform the committee that Sweden, apart from the survey mentioned in the 3rd periodical report, has taken the following measures.

Public health

In March 2008 the Swedish Government presented a new government bill on a national public health policy (*En förnyad folkhälsopolitik*, prop. 2007/08:110). The current health situation of the national minorities is unknown, inter alia due to lack of health statistics that identify national minorities. The UN Special Rapporteur on Health Mr. Paul Hunt has previously identified specific health related problems that the Sámi population has to deal with. In order to investigate whether the national minorities have specific health problems, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (Statens folkhälsoinstitut) will be given the task to analyze the current public health situation of the national minorities and to propose improvements. The task is to be performed in cooperation with representatives of the national minorities.

Dignity guarantee

The Government has appointed a special investigator that is to propose a dignity guarantee for health and social care for older people. The intention is to make clear what all elderly care will have to offer and what the elderly and their family members can expect. The investigator shall also analyze different ways on how to assure that women and men, regardless of their cultural or ethnical background receive the health care and social care they need, in time and that the health and social care is of good quality. The investigator is to present its proposals at the latest on the 31 of May 2008.

Free choice in elderly care

In 2007 the Government appointed an investigator to examine the conditions for greater freedom of choice in health and social care. The starting point for the proposals to be made by the investigator was to examine the conditions for giving older people and persons with disabilities more opportunity to choose their provider of social services. The intention of making the services more responsive to the needs and wishes of the individual user can for example mean better opportunities

for persons with different language or cultural needs to receive care adopted to their requirements. In February 2008 the investigator presented its report (SOU 2008:15) and the report is at present being circulated for comments. The Government has set aside 300 million SEK to make it easier for and encourage municipalities to introduce a free choice system.

PART III

Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life in accordance with the undertakings entered into under Article 2 paragraph 2.

All Part III languages

Article 8

Question 4: Please specify what concrete measures have been taken by the Swedish authorities to raise the awareness of the right to receive mother-tongue education among local authorities, teachers and parents (see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 68).

The National Agency for Education has the responsibility to account the measures that municipalities have taken in order to inform schools and parents concerning pupils rights to mother tongue education on minority languages.

In order to raise awareness of the national minorities right to receive mother tongue education the agency has among other things published brochures, newsletters and information concerning this on the agencies website. The agency has also proposed a pilot ordinance to make it possible for pupils with minority languages to get distance education.

The Swedish National Agency for School Improvement has during 2008 and 2009 received a special task to support development and production of books and other learning materials for the national minorities. For this purpose the agency has received an extra funding of 10 million SEK.

Apart from this the agency has produced learning materials on national minority languages and courses for distance learning of minority languages which are available through the website www.modersmal.net.

Article 8.1.h

Question 5: How many students follow the teacher training in Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli at Luleå Technical university?

In 2007, the number of full time equivalents registered for the teacher education programme directed towards minority language studies, summed up to nearly 7. The vast majority of which were registered for the courses directed towards Finnish.

Article 8.1.i

Question 6: Do the Swedish authorities envisage producing reports on the educational situation of national minorities on a regular basis (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 102, 251)?

Sweden has taken note of the Committee of Experts opinion that the National Agency for Education should be given the task to produce reports concerning the educational situation of the national minorities on a regular basis. At present the National Agency for Education produces statistics, on a regular basis, on the numbers of pupils that participate in mother tongue education and the number of pupils who have the legal right to mother tongue education. For the time being the agency does not produce reports on a regular basis concerning the national minority languages and the Swedish Government has not decided if such a task should be given to the agency.

Article 9.1.a.iv

Question 7: Is there a legal obligation which would oblige judicial authorities to produce, on request, written documents in regional or minority languages (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 112, 188 and 259)?

There is no legal obligation which would oblige judicial authorities to produce, on request, written documents in Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli. However section 5 of the Acts (1999:1175) and (1999:1176) gives the right to have documents pertaining to the court or matter orally translated to Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli.

Article 9.3

Question 8: Have any measures been taken to ensure that the most important national statutory texts (other than the acts concerning the right to use Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli in dealings with public authorities and courts) are also made available in Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 117-119, 189-191, 264-266)?

Sweden has no additional information than already has been presented in the 3rd periodical report.

Article 10.2.c/d

Question 9: Apart from the information project of Kommunförbundet Norbotten (see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 14), what other concrete steps have been taken by the Swedish authorities to publish official documents of regional and local authorities in regional or minority languages (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 128-130, 198-200, 273-275)?

The Swedish Government offices has taken not of the comments made by the Committee of Experts. In order to improve the knowledge on national minorities and minority rights in Sweden the Government has given the Swedish Sámi Parliament an assignment to make a study on a future government website on national minorities. The Sámi Parliament, in its role as a government agency, has previously successfully established a website (www.samer.se) with information about the Sámi and their situation in Sweden. In March of 2008 the Sámi Parliament presented a study proposing the establishment of a government website on national minorities. The purpose would be to disseminate information to government agencies, municipalities, the general public and the national minorities. The proposal is now being considered by the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality within the framework of reforming Sweden's minority policy.

Apart from this the Public Employment Service, which is a governmental agency, has translated some fact sheets on labour market programs to two different varieties of Sámi and to Meänkieli.

The police will shortly translate an information form intended for suspects in custody into 22 different EU languages and another 15 languages commonly used in Sweden, either by minorities or spoken by relatively recent immigrant groups. This publication will be available to the target groups in paper form but will also be more widely accessible to the public, including the national minorities that speak Yiddish, Sámi (North, South and Luleå Sami, Meänkieli, Finnish and Romani Chib.

This information will be accessible via the electronic form system of the police.

Sámi

Article 8.1.a.iii

Question 10: Have additional means been provided to the Sámi School Board in order to facilitate its work to promote pre-school education?

The Sámi School Board is negotiating for an agreement with local public authorities concerning the pre-school education. The result of these negotiations is not satisfactory. The Government has taken measures in order to investigate in what way the financial conditions can be improved.

The National Agency for Education produces statistics on the mother tongue support in the Sámi pre-school, see also answer to question 6.

The agency also inspects the responsibility for pre-schooling on the municipality level.

Article 8.1.e.iv

Question 11: How many pupils in secondary education not attending Bokenskolan in Jokkmokk have made use of the possibility of distance learning? Does that method include teaching of and in Sámi?

Sweden do not have any statistics on how many pupils in secondary education, not attending Bokenskolan in Jokkmokk, that have made use of the possibility of distance learning. The teaching that is offered is on the Sámi language.

Article 8.1.d.iv

Question 12: To what extent is Sámi vocational education made available at Bokenskolan in Jokkmokk (see 3ⁿ¹ Periodical Report, p. 65)?

At Bokenskolan in Jokkmokk a specially designed program called “Sámiska programmet” (“Sámi program”) is offered. The program

consists of a total of 2 500 upper secondary credit points, 500 of those credit points, that is 20 percent, is vocational education.

Article 8.1.e.iii

Question 13: Has the trend in reducing the provision for the study of Sámi at the University of Uppsala been stopped (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 94)?

Uppsala University has no special means to support the study of Sámi languages. This means that all the courses that the Department of Modern Languages provide have to be financed by funds generated by students as they register for – and complete – courses. For a number of years the number of students studying Sámi has been quite low. This year, for example, there are eight students registered on the Sámi courses. As a consequence of this, Sámi was redefined from a major to a minor discipline in 2006.

Even so, it is possible to graduate as a PhD in Sámi within the subject Finish-Hungarian languages.

Question 14: To what extent do the universities of Umeå and Luleå offer teacher training in Sámi (e.g. number of classes and students; see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 65)?

Umeå University and Luleå University of Technology have special assignments regarding the Sámi language. Following the provisions in the annual appropriation directions, Umeå University is obliged to offer education in Sámi. Umeå University does not have any assignment regarding teacher training. Luleå University of Technology, however, is obliged to offer teacher training directed towards Sámi language teaching in primary and secondary school. It is important to note that the teacher training itself is not in Sámi, which seems to be implied in question 14. The teacher training directed towards Sámi language teaching is a specialisation within the ordinary teacher training programme.

In the year 2007, there were only one applicant to the Sámi language teacher course in Luleå. However, the applicant finally opted for the corresponding course at Umeå University instead.

In 2007, as well as in 2006 and 2005, the number of active students participating in the Sámi language teacher course at Luleå University of Technology sums up to the equivalent of less than half a student studying full time. However, if one were to count also the education in Sámi at Umeå University, the figure for 2007 would be slightly more

than 25 Sámi language students studying full time. Occasionally, teacher training students at Umeå University follow Sámi language courses within the framework of the teacher training programme.

Luleå University of Technology is also obliged to offer teacher training directed towards Finnish and Meänkieli. As in the case of Sámi language, in 2007 there were only one applicant to the Meänkieli language teacher course at Luleå University and finally the applicant opted for the corresponding course at Umeå university instead. In 2006 there were only 2 applicants and none in 2005.

The teacher training course directed towards Finnish had 12 applicants in 2007. Corresponding numbers of applicants for the years 2006 and 2005 are 4 respectively 3.

Article 8.1.h

Question 15: Have other measures (see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 66 and 67) been taken to overcome the shortage of Sámi teachers (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 99)?

Apart from what has already been mentioned in Sweden's 3rd periodical report the Swedish Government has set up a committee to reform teacher education in Sweden. The government has decided to assign the committee new tasks, among other things to analyse in what way teacher education courses in Finnish, Sámi and Meänkieli should be designed in order to cover the demand for competent minority language teachers in compulsory school and upper secondary school.

Article 9.1

Question 16: Have any steps been taken to remedy the lack of legal terminology in Sámi (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 109)?

As mentioned in Sweden's 3rd periodical report (page 31) the Sámi Parliament (Sámi Language Board) is responsible for conservation of the Sámi language. This means that the Sámi terminology is first and foremost a responsibility for the Sámi Language Board within the Sámi Parliament. For this work the Sámi Parliament receives state-funding. The Sámi Parliament has, for instance, been commissioned by the government to put together a handbook on the Sámi language for the benefit of the public authorities. For more information concerning the handbook please also see question 17.

Article 9.1.a/b/c.ii

Question 17: Have the Swedish authorities taken practical and organizational measures to ensure that Sámi can be used before courts (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts. para. 110/113/115)¹

The Government has commissioned the Sámi Parliament to make a handbook on how municipalities and government agencies should be able to make the Sámi language more visible, increase the Sámi-speaking staff and increase the usage of Sámi in contacts with municipalities and public authorities. The handbook also, among other things, includes a suggestions for an action plan concerning the use of the Sámi language.

Article 10.1.a.iii.c

Question 18: Have the national authorities taken further measures (see 3rd Periodical Report. p. 17) to increase the proportion of Sámi-speaking staff?

The Public Employment Service in the county of Norrbotten has a large network with other state agencies and municipalities through which it is possible to offer service in Sámi, however this kind of service is very seldom asked for. The Public Employment Service has also been participating in the working group with representatives from state agencies, with the mission to present a handbook in the Sámi language (see also answer to question 19).

When it comes to the police it welcome all new applicants and when advertising vacant posts it emphasise that it regard manifoldness and diversity as an asset and that people with differing backgrounds are welcome, regardless of linguistic and cultural origin, sexual preferences, handicaps, etc. A prerequisite is of course that the applicants have the necessary professional qualifications and otherwise possesses the competence needed for the job. The police trainee recruitment drive is aimed at the public and young people in general and this means that it can also reach those who belong to national minority groups, for example the Sámi. In its capacity as employer the police management has occasionally granted leave to employees who for a while wish to pursue Sámi handicraft, reindeer herding or some other branch of livelihood, and in this manner indirectly promoted Sámi culture.

Please see also answer to question 17.

Article 10.2.b

Question 19: Have the Swedish authorities taken any further steps to remedy the lack of Sámi speaking staff in local and regional authorities and to encourage the users of Sámi to submit oral and written applications in their language (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 126-130)?

In the recruitment of new staff to the Public Employment Service's service center in the county of Norrbotten one of the requirements were that the applicants should have a good command of one of the varieties of the Sámi language.

When recruiting, provided of course that the applicant otherwise meet the employment requirements, the police have a positive attitude towards applicants of Sámi descent. When Sámi speaking police officers are needed in the police force it is even specifically stated in vacancy advertisements that Sámi speaking applicants will be favourably received. However, no specific written material, such as forms, etc., is published in Sámi, as practically everyone reads, writes and speaks Swedish.

Please see also answer to question 17.

Article 10.4.a

Question 20: Are translators and interpreters systematically provided in practice (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, p. 135)?

In the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 1998:286) section 8 it is also stated that public authorities should provide interpreters if needed. This law applies to all governmental agencies.

As mentioned in Sweden's 3rd periodical report translations and interpretations should be provided if needed and without extra cost for anyone who is party to a case. These cost are born by the court. The National Courts Administration (NCA) has been allocated extra funds by the Government to be able to meet such costs. NCA does not, however, report its costs for regional language translation separately.

When it comes to the Public Employment Service it does not have interpreters or translators employed. The agency however purchases this service when necessary. The same applies for the police, when there is no Sámi speaking personnel.

As a part of a survey, Sápmi 2008, commissioned by the public service companies SR Sámeradio and Sveriges Television questions concerning the use of Sámi in dealings with courts and public authorities were asked. According to the survey only 4% of the Sámi speaking population uses Sámi in dealings with courts and public authorities. The survey also shows that a greater number of the Sámi speaking population makes use of the rights to get elderly or child care fully or partially in Sámi. Since most of the contacts with courts and public authorities usually are pursued in writing these differences shown by the survey could indicate that one reason for the low number of persons using Sámi in dealings with public authorities depend on the circumstances that many Sámi speaking persons does not know how to read and write in Sámi.

According to the survey 60% was of the opinion that the law (1999:1175) concerning the right to use the Sámi language in dealings with public authorities and courts fill an important function.

Article 11.1.e.i

Question 21: Have the Swedish authorities taken concrete measures to encourage and/or facilitate the creation of a newspaper in Sámi?

In its 3rd periodical report on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Sweden informed about the final report of Presskommittén [the Swedish Press Committee] which was submitted in January 2006. The Press Committee's report, which has been circulated for comments, included inter alia proposals for amendments to the press subsidies system that are intended to facilitate the publication of daily newspapers in languages other than Swedish, including Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli. Based on the Press Committee's report, the Riksdag decided in June 2006 on certain changes to the production subsidies that were to come into force on 1 January 2007. The decision did however not contain any of the proposals for changes that were especially intended to facilitate the publication of daily newspapers in languages other than Swedish. These proposals are still being discussed within the Government Offices.

The European Commission was notified of the amendments adopted by the Riksdag but then announced that the changes could not preliminarily be approved. Instead, a review of the entire press subsidy system would be undertaken to examine whether it was compatible with the European common market. With regard to the Commission's decision, the coming into force of the amended conditions for production subsidies was postponed.

The European Commission's review of the Swedish press subsidies system is still ongoing. The Swedish Government intends to submit a government bill to the Riksdag, preliminary in the autumn of 2008, which will include proposals to amend the press subsidies system with the aim of making it compatible with the common market. The adoption of the bill will inter alia entail the implementation of the changes adopted by the Riksdag in 2006, e.g. that the minimum requirement for the number of copies in a newspaper issue will be reduced from 2 000 to 1 500 subscribed copies. This will lower the threshold for establishing new daily newspapers in both Swedish and national minority languages. The amendments will be notified to the European Commission, and the implementation of the new conditions requires an approval of the Commission. Before such an approval, other amendments to the press subsidies system can not be implemented.

Finnish

Article 8.1.a.iii

Question 22: What action has been taken by the Swedish authorities to promote Finnish pre-school education, in particular with regard to awareness-raising among municipalities, schools and parents (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts. para. 160/162)?

Please see answer to question 4.

Article 8.1.b/c.iv

Question 23: What steps have been taken by the Swedish authorities to ensure that municipalities are aware of their obligation to offer teaching in or of Finnish and to inform parents of this possibility?

Please see answer to question 4.

Question 24: Has the 2008 budget bill, which included less strict requirements regarding mother tongue instruction in Finnish (see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 38 and 39), been adopted by the Riksdag?

As mentioned in the 3rd periodical report the Government has, in the budget bill for 2008, proposed that the rules for mother tongue tuition in Finnish and Yiddish shall be the same as regards Romani Chib, Sámi and Meänkieli. The budget bill has been adopted by the Riksdag.

Article 10.1.a.iii.c

Question 25: Have the Swedish authorities taken measures to improve the competence in producing written documents in Finnish (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 194)?

An important part of improving the competence in producing written documents is the improvement of terminology. As mentioned in Sweden's 3rd periodical report and under question 2 above, the state-financed language conservation and development activities has been coordinated and given new resources which makes possible increased efforts in support of the national minority languages. Since the 1 July 2006 the Swedish-Finnish Language Council has been integrated into the Institute for Language and Folklore and receives annual funding from the Swedish Government as a part of this governmental body. This means that the Finnish terminology is first and foremost a responsibility for the Language Council within the Institute for Language and Folklore.

At the Public Employment Service in the county of Norrbotten all service is available in Finnish. The staff is to a very large extent bilingual (Swedish and Finnish). In the Haparanda-Torneå area there is a very close co-operation between the Public Employment Services in the two countries.

There is, in almost every police station in the county of Norrbotten Finnish speaking personnel to meet the possible need for assistance in the Finnish language.

Article 10.2.g

Question 26: What progress has been made with regard to the use of Finnish place names (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 201)?

It is the responsibility of the governmental agency called Lantmäteriet to promote an appropriate and careful handling of place names and formally approving place names. Lantmäteriet also has an advisory board on place names where, amongst others, the Institute for Language and Folklore and the Sámi Parliament are represented. This is one way to safeguard the use of traditional place names in Finnish and other national minority languages.

It is important to keep in mind however that neither Lantmäteriet, nor any other national body, has the formal capacity to approve place names chosen by the municipalities in Sweden. Since the question of Finnish place names is to a great extent a question for the northern counties in

Sweden, a special responsibility has been given to the Department of Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research in Umeå (DAUM). DAUM is a part of the Institute for Language and Folklore and receives annual funding from the Swedish Government. The task of the institute is to preserve our immaterial cultural heritage by, on a scientific basis, maintaining and mediating the knowledge of dialects, folklore, folk music, place names and person names. DAUM has the geographical responsibility for the two northernmost counties in Sweden, Västerbotten and Norrbotten. As a part of the responsibility for place names, DAUM is responsible for providing expertise and opinions when the local authorities take decisions on place names and names used on public maps.

Meänkieli

Article 8.1.a.iii

Question 27: Have additional measures (see 3rd Periodical Report, p. 42) been taken to improve the offer of pre-school education in Meänkieli, in particular in municipalities other than Pajala (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 231/232)?

Sweden has no additional information than already has been presented in the 3rd periodical report.

Article 8.1.b.iv

Question 28: Only few pupils outside Pajala receive mother tongue education in Meänkieli (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 235). What action has been taken by the Swedish authorities to ensure that municipalities are aware of their obligation to offer teaching in or of Meänkieli and to inform parents about this possibility?

Please see answer to question 4.

Article 8.1.c.iv

Question 29: Are the Swedish authorities developing a strategy to strengthen the offer of Meänkieli in secondary education (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 239)?

A strategy has not been developed largely because of a lack of teachers able to teach technical and vocational education in Meänkieli in secondary education.

Article 8.1.h

Question 30: Has teacher training been improved with a view to strengthening secondary education in Meänkieli (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 247/248)?

Please see answer to question 15.

Article 9.1.a/b/c.ii

Question 31: Have the Swedish authorities taken any practical and organizational measures to ensure that Meänkieli can be used before courts (see 2 Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 257/260/262)?

Sweden has no additional information than already has been presented in the 3rd periodical report.

Article 10.1.a.iii/c

Question 32: Have the Swedish authorities taken measures to improve the competence in producing written documents in Meänkieli (see 2nd Report of the Committee of Experts, para. 269)?

When it comes to the Public Employment Service in the county of Norrbotten the command of Meänkieli is not a problem for the staff. Along the Finnish border it is very common with the command of Meänkieli among the staff at the Public Employment Service. However the job seekers with Meänkieli as their mother tongue usually speaks Swedish when they visit the Public Employment Service. There have been no initiatives to produce written documents in Meänkieli,

Please also see answer to question 2 and 25, the same applies for meänkieli.

Article 10.2.b

Question 33: Have the Swedish authorities taken any concrete steps to encourage users of Meänkieli to submit applications in their language to local and regional authorities (see *ibidem*, para. 271/275)?

Meänkieli is a often used as a colloquial language and it is therefore very unusual that anyone sends an application or other written document in Meänkieli. Should this be the case the police have the capacity to handle the situation as most police stations in the county of Norrbotten have Meänkieli speaking personnel.

Apart from this information Sweden has no additional information than already has presented in the 3rd periodical report.

Article 11.1.e.i

Question 34: Please provide further information about concrete measures to encourage and/or fascinate the creation of a newspaper in Meänkieli.

Please see answer to question 21.

Article 12.9

Question 35: Are the bodies responsible for collecting, keeping a copy of and presenting or publishing works produced in Meänkieli (e.g. Riksarkivet, Kungliga biblioteket, Nordkalottbiblioteket, Lansbiblioteket in Norrbotten, see 3 Periodical Report, p. 29/30, 115) also collecting audio or audiovisual works?

As part of their general responsibility for cultural heritage, it is conceivable that these institutions might in some cases collect material of this kind. However the institutions with the primary responsibility for collecting audio and audiovisual works are the Institute for Language and Folklore, that also has a special responsibility for Meänkieli, and the Swedish National Archive of Recorded Sound and Moving Images (SLBA). The SLBA has existed since 1979 and the collections consist mainly of radio, TV, film, video, records and multimedia. According to Swedish Legal Deposit law one copy of every such product must be sent to the archive. The long-term goal is to collect, preserve and disseminate the complete production of recorded sound and moving images in Sweden, and therefore, also audio and audiovisual works in Meänkieli issued in Sweden.

