

GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES



Report

**on the Status and Rights of Persons
Belonging to National Minorities
2019 – 2020**

Bratislava, May 2021



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Introduction

The Government of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Government of the SR”) stated in its Manifesto for 2020 – 2024 (hereinafter also referred to as the “Manifesto”) that it considers the protection and support of national minorities to be its natural mission. The Government of the SR shall create opportunities for members of national minorities to preserve their cultural customs, language, traditions and will not take measures that would lead to assimilation by the majority population or support such assimilation.

As an advisory body to the Government of the Slovak Republic, the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Plenipotentiary”), performs tasks in terms of preserving, developing, and supporting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and implements systemic measures to improve the status of national minorities. In order to promote compliance with national and international obligations of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "SR") in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the Plenipotentiary monitors, analyzes and evaluates observance of national minority rights by state administration bodies, territorial self-government units and other relevant entities, and every two years submits a report to the government on the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

The present Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the Period 2019 – 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the “Report”), which maps the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, is already the seventh in a row. This Report aims to summarize the current situation in the individual areas of observing the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and, at the same time, to analyze the areas in which progress has been made and those areas which need to be worked on. The Report was prepared by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter also referred to as the “OPGNM”) in connection with Sec. 4 (1) letter a) of the Statute of the Plenipotentiary. The contents of the Report were also prepared on the basis of documents from the relevant state administration bodies and institutions.

The Report consists of five parts, which deal with the exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, international conventions by which the Slovak Republic is bound, as well as national legislation, protection of culture and language of national minorities, education, and training of national minorities and their engagement in public affairs. The Report shall also provide information beyond the reference period if it's required by the given context.

The first part of the Report focuses on national and international obligations of the Slovak Republic in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities and summarizes adopted legislative and non-legislative changes in this area, compliance with international obligations of the Slovak Republic in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities resulting from Slovak membership in multilateral organizations (United Nations, Council of Europe) with an emphasis on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the

"Framework Convention") and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter of Languages").

The second part of the Report maps the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the area of participation in resolving matters concerning them, in terms of legislative, conceptual, and institutional frameworks, participation of national minority representatives in legislative and executive power, management of territorial self-governments as well as participation in consultation mechanisms.

The third part of the presented Report provides comprehensive information on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the field of culture – from the perspective of the activities of individual cultural institutions and the Minority Culture Fund (hereinafter "MCF"). The fourth part deals with the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the field of education and provides data with an emphasis on the teaching of languages of national minorities, as well as the languages of instruction of national minorities. The fifth part deals with the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the field of use of minority languages in relation to the provision of professional and methodological assistance within the use of minority languages, application practice, and results of the Report on the Status of Use of National Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic for 2019 – 2020 period (hereinafter referred to as the "Language report").

The conclusions and recommendations summarize the main findings and recommendations of the Report arising from the current status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities. The Report is supplemented by a separate part of the Annex with detailed and additional information on individual parts of the Report. To promote the interests of gender-sensitive language, wherever the masculine gender is used in the text of this Report, it also includes the feminine gender.

Part I – National and international obligations of the Slovak Republic in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

1.1 National legislation of the Slovak Republic in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

The rights of national minorities and ethnic groups are regulated within the national legislation of the Slovak Republic mainly in the fourth chapter of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, specifically in Art. 33 and Art. 34. The legal regulation contained in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic is followed by several legal regulations that regulate the area of status and rights of national minorities and their members and provide direct or indirect protection of their rights and legally protected interests.¹ During the reference period, several pieces of legislation were adopted or amended.

Legislative changes that have a direct impact on the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities include, in particular:

- **Amendment to Act no. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and School Self-Government and on Amendments to Certain Acts:** Act no. 365/2018 Coll., amending and supplementing Act no. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and School Self-Government and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, and amending Act no. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, effective from 1 January 2019. The above amendment introduced into Section 8 of this Act the obligation of the municipality to take into account, inter alia, the interest of residents of the municipality with permanent residence in the municipality in the education in the state language and the language of national minorities in the municipality. At the same time, it is necessary to take this fact into account, even if the municipality does not establish a primary school, but agrees with neighboring municipalities on the common school district of the primary school.
- **Amendment to Act no. 513/2009 Coll. on Railways and on Amendments to Certain Acts:** Act no. 55/2019 Coll., which, effective from 15 March 2019 on, imposed on the infrastructure manager in Section 34 (6) letter h), the obligation to ensure designations of railway stations and stops in the language of national minorities where regular passenger transport is performed in municipalities according to the Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities.
- **adoption of Act no. 223/2019 Coll. on the Census of Population and Housings 2021 and on Amendments to Certain Acts.** This legislation sets out the basic frameworks for the scope and manner of conducting the census, while defining the themes and characteristics identified in the census, however, it does not contain specific wording for the census forms. Nationalities and mother tongue were also included among the

¹See e.g. Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for 2012 and other reports.

topics related to the citizens. Following the adoption of this Act, the Statistical Office (hereinafter referred to as the “SO SR”) gradually developed measures by which, pursuant to Section 2 (3) of the Act in question, provided details concerning the characteristics and structure of the collected data on topics according to the list, details on the method of data collection, and models of census forms. This relates to, for example:

- The measure of the SO SR no. 44/2020 Coll., laying down details on the characteristics and structure of survey data on topics according to the list, details on the method of data collection, and models of census forms for population and housings, established characteristics of survey data on topics related to the citizens and the population census forms. Form A contains following questions: *10. What is your nationality? 10.1. Do you also claim another nationality? 11. What is your mother tongue?*
- The measure of the SO SR no. 307/2020 Coll. On the Provision of a Subsidy from the State Budget to Cover the Costs of Delegated State Administration for the Preparation, Flow, and Conduct of the Census of Population and Housings 2021, which will arise during the census, and on the remuneration of certain assistants performing the census.
- **adoption of Act no. 371/2019 Coll. On the Basic requirements for the Safety of the Playground and on the Amendment of certain Acts.** In Section 3 of this Act, the legislator stipulated the obligation to place a notice on the playground to warn about risks that cannot be removed during its production or placement, and in Section 5 – the obligation to state the designation of the playground with information required by legislation, while the law, upon the Plenipotentiary's request, stipulated that the notice in question and the designation label shall in accordance with Act no. 184/1999 Coll. On the Use of Languages of National Minorities, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 184/1999 Coll.”) also include a language mutation in the minority language in municipalities determined by a special regulation. The Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic initiated the repeal of this Act due to the financial complexity of its implementation. This law was repealed on February 19, 2021.
- **adoption of the Decree of the Office of the Vice-Chairman for Investments and Informatization no. 438/2019 Coll., which implements certain provisions of the Act on e-Government.** Pursuant to Section 2 (5) of this Decree, the public authority body ensures the creation of information content about its activities for the public under the conditions laid down in Act no. 184/1999 Coll.
- **adoption of the Decree of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic no. 30/2020 Coll. On Traffic Signs, which entered into force on 1 April 2020.** Section 5 (1) of the Decree stipulates that inscriptions on traffic signs shall be in the state language; another language may be used if it is in accordance with a special regulation and an

international agreement by which the Slovak Republic is bound, i.e. also in accordance with Act no. 184/1999 Coll.

- **Amendment to Act no. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts:** Act no. 93/2020 Coll., amending and supplementing Act no. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, and Amending Certain Acts with Effect from 25April2020. Among other things, the Amendment to the Act added a new provision (Section 13b) on the access to the electronic version of handbooks, textbooks, and workbooks in the event of an extraordinary situation, emergency situation or state of emergency. This provision also explicitly refers to handbooks, textbooks and workbooks that are published in the language of a national minority.
- **Amendment to Act no. 372/1990 Coll. On Offences:** Act no. 338/2020 Coll., which amends the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no. 125/1996 Coll. On the Immorality and Illegality of the Communist Regime and amending certain laws with effect from 1 December 2020. The law (Section 47a) regulates the offenses of extremism. Individual bodies of the offense provide protection for a group of persons or an individual against acts explicitly mentioned in the provision, for their affiliation with a particular race, nation, nationality, colour, ethnic group, origin, gender, or religion. The amendment added a new body of offense and provisions related to it (sanctions, removal of illegal status) to this provision.
- **Act no. 138/2017 on the Fund for the Support of the Culture of National Minorities and on the Amendment of Certain Acts, as amended, was amended a total of five times in the reference period.** The changes were in particular related to the membership in the Board of Directors, the preconditions for the performance of the role of the Director, the composition of the Supervisory Board and membership in the Supervisory Board, as well as the provisions determining the conditions for providing funds to be met by the applicant. The last two amendments to the law were adopted in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. This relates to the following:
 - **Act no. 129/2020 Coll., which amends and supplements certain laws within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.** The aim of this amendment, which entered into force on 21May 2020, was, among other things, the unification of selected procedural deadlines within the activities of the Audiovisual Fund, the Arts Support Fund and FSCNM, as well as the unification of administrative processes and requirements in these funds to simplify them in order to significantly reduce the administrative burden on applicants during the crisis period, as these funds

are an effective tool for mitigating the negative effects of the crisis on the cultural community on a large scale.²

- **Act no. 300/2020 Coll., amending and supplementing certain laws within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic in connection with the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic**, effective from 1 November 2020. According to the explanatory memorandum to this Act, its aim in connection with the amendment of Act no. 138/2017 Coll. is to enable the FCSNM, in the event of the adoption of a new legal framework for the provision of European Union funds (hereinafter referred to as "EU"), to become a provider in terms of drawing financial means from the EU funds and also a financial institution for the implementation of financial instruments. In connection with the above, EU funds were added to the FCSNM's revenues as a new source of revenue, and the provisions regulating the use of these revenues and their redistribution to support activities and own operations were amended accordingly. Under this change, the FCSNM is obliged to use at least 95 % of EU funds to support activities and a maximum of 5% of such revenues will be eligible for its own operations. Exceptions are applicable for cases where EU funds will be earmarked for non-support activities. Section 21 was updated with Sub-section (3) and it stipulates that the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is entitled to reserve a part of the contribution under Sub-section (1) that exceeds EUR 8,000,000 and that is tied to support activities within the competence of the Expert council of intercultural dialogue and understanding, up to a maximum of 95 % of this part. In connection with the current pandemic situation, some conditions for providing funding have been waived.
- **Amendment to Act no. 597/2003 Coll. On the Financing of Primary schools, Secondary schools, and School facilities**: Act no. 220/2019 Coll., amending Act no. 245/2008 Coll. On Education (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, and Amending Certain Acts, effective from 1 January 2021. The provision of Section 4aa of this Act containing the right for reimbursement of travel costs for the transport of a pupil has been extended to the right for reimbursement of travel costs for the transport of a child or a pupil from the municipality of his permanent residence to and back from the nearest nursery school with the language of instruction of the relevant national minority. This applies to children visiting nursery schools with the language of instruction of the relevant national minority, for which pre-primary education is compulsory, and in the municipality in which the child belonging to the national minority for which the pre-primary education is compulsory, where the child

²Explanatory Report to Act no. 129/2020 Coll., which amends and supplements certain laws within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

has a permanent address, the nursery school with the language of instruction of the relevant national minority is not established.

1.1.1 Strategic, conceptual documents and action plans

Within his competencies defined by the Statute, the Plenipotentiary prepares, proposes, and implements short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures in the field of preserving, developing, and supporting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in cooperation with the Government Office of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Government Office of SR"), ministries and other central state administration bodies. The most important non-legislative document concerning the support of the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the fulfillment of which was ensured by the OPGNM, is the Action Plan for the Protection of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups 2016 – 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "Action Plan") that was adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic on October 26, 2016, by resolution no. 492/2016. The aim of the Action Plan was to ensure an effective, transparent and reliable system of protection and support of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, including the strengthening of its institutional security.

The given Action Plan was developed into seven operational objectives aimed at:

1. ensuring a comprehensive approach to legislation on the rights and status of national minorities,
2. improving the system of supporting the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups,
3. more effective consideration of the specifics of the educational needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups,
4. improving the conditions for the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups in practice,
5. improving public awareness of national minorities and ethnic groups throughout the media,
6. improving mechanisms for the participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in decision-making on matters concerning them,
7. increasing the knowledge base to better identify target groups – national minorities and ethnic groups and their needs through statistical surveys and research.

The operational objectives were further developed to the level of specific measures and activities with specific indicators and deadlines, responsible managers, cooperating entities, and sources of funding. The year 2020 was the final year for fulfilling the tasks of the Action Plan, while the OPGNM, in cooperation with the responsible managers, prepared in accordance with task B.1 of the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 492/2016 and subsequently submitted the *Information on the fulfillment of tasks from the Action Plan* to the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic within the set deadline, by 31 December 2020.

The presented information included a detailed evaluation of the implementation of the tasks from the Action Plan. By fulfilling the tasks from the Action Plan, a number of

important activities and measures have been implemented. As part of the fulfillment of operational objective no. 1., an informal working group, composed of experts in the field of national minority rights nominated by members of the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter referred to as "CNMEG"), prepared in collaboration with the OPGNM an Analysis of legal regulations on rights and status of national minorities and ethnic groups, including the status of the city districts in Bratislava and Košice in the context of the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups. Following the findings of the given Analysis, a Draft Legislative Intent of the Act on National Minorities (hereinafter also referred to as the "Draft Legislative Intent of the Act") was prepared, which was subsequently approved by CNMEG in January 2020, instructing the President of CNMEG to submit it to the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the "GCHR") and recommended GCHR to submit a Draft Legislative Intent of the Act on National Minorities to the Government of the Slovak Republic. In October 2020, the GCHR took note of the Draft Legislative Intent of the Act and recommended it to its chairwoman to submit it to the Government of the Slovak Republic for discussion. The Government of the Slovak Republic took note of the Draft Legislative Intent of the Act within the Information on the 38th Session of the GCHR in November 2020. The Draft Legislative Intent of the Act has been published on the website of the Plenipotentiary.³ Other documents that OPGNM prepared in connection with the fulfillment of operational objective no. 1 include the Analysis of the possibilities of using temporary compensatory measures in the field of prevention of discrimination of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and the Methodology of adopting temporary compensatory measures in the field of rights of national minorities and ethnic groups with regard to marginalized Romani communities.⁴

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic fulfilled operational goal no. 2 of the Action Plan, primarily through the adoption of the Act on FSCNM and other activities in the field of education and professional methodological assistance for employees of the Ministry, as well as non-formal education events for several target groups. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also referred to as "MESRS SR") and within operational objective no. 3, a number of activities and measures were implemented with regard to the specifics of educational needs, including education in the Romani language and education for tolerance.

Operational objective no. 4 of the Action Plan was implemented through the activities of the Advisory Group of the Plenipotentiary to ensure the harmonization of practice with the applicable Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the "Advisory Language Group of the Plenipotentiary"). The Advisory Language Group of the Plenipotentiary prepared basic materials to ensure uniform professional terminology in the languages of national minorities, informative language mutations of legislative texts, official

³Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7734_legislativny-zamer-zakona-o-narodnostnych-mensinach.pdf.

⁴Available at: <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7722.pdf>.

forms, documents on methodological materials in the use of national minority languages regulated by Act no. 184/1999 Coll.

As part of the fulfillment of operational objective no. 5 of the Action Plan, the OPGNM regularly informed the press agencies about its activities. At the same time, the Plenipotentiary was also active on social networks, where he published information on his activities, as well as information on the use of the languages of national minorities. During the reference period, several methodological materials were added to the website of the Plenipotentiary, translations of important information on the protection of life and health or information related to the Census of Population and Housing 2021 (hereinafter referred to as "CPH 2021").

In connection with the fulfillment of operational objective no. 6 of the Action Plan, the OPGNM provided an internship for five students who are members of national minorities. At the same time, in order to ensure more effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities, the CNMEG Statute was amended, introducing changes concerning the creation of a bicameral system and extending voting rights to all members of both chambers, with one chamber consisting of CNMEG members.

Operational objective no. 7 was fulfilled along with tasks arising from the National Action Plan CPH 2021 for the years 2017 – 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "NAP CPH 2021"). Within the fulfillment of NAP CPH 2021 strategic goal no. 5, increased attention to specific groups of the population whose census requires a specific approach needs to be paid. This applies to citizens whose census requires such a specific approach and, among other population groups, also to the citizens from the point of view of nationality or ethnicity with regard to the mother tongue. The given special attention is to be paid also for the needs of national legislation (especially Act No. 184/1999 Coll.). The OPGNM, in cooperation with the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, developed a Census Methodology in terms of nationality or ethnicity with regard to the mother tongue.⁵ Parties working on this methodology include the following entities: the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Romani Communities, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice.

In addition to NAP CPH 2021, OPGNM was also actively involved in the implementation of other important conceptual documents of the Slovak Republic, which are related to the protection of the rights of members of national minorities. These include the Concept of Combating Radicalization and Extremism by 2024, which is a follow-up of the Concept of Combating Extremism for 2015 – 2019. The aim of this document is to promote respect for universal values and to prevent the emergence of prejudices, stereotypes, and hate speech based on national, racial, ethnic, religious, or other intolerance, as well as to prevent the emergence and spread of attitudes and activities to support and promote racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in a democratic society. Another relevant document within the reference period was the Action Plan for the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination for

⁵Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7470_metodika-sodb-2021.pdf.

2016 – 2019, the aim of which was to increase public awareness of non-discrimination and streamline the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation.

The rights of persons belonging to the Romani national minority were also related to the fulfillment of the tasks of the Action Plans of the Slovak Strategy for Romani Integration by 2020 for 2017 – 2020 period for the following areas: D.2.6 non-discrimination and D.2.7 access to the majority society – Romani Integration Initiative through communication, in which OPGNM also participated. OPGNM also actively participates in the preparation of the Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Romani Participation by 2030. The strategy represents a set of starting points and goals aimed at stopping the segregation of Romani communities, a positive turn in the social inclusion of the Romani, non-discrimination, changing attitudes, and improving their co-existence with the others. One of the goals of this strategy is to support and develop the Romani culture and language.

Manifesto of the Government of the Slovak Republic for 2020 – 2024

Following the 2020 parliamentary elections, a new government was appointed on 21 March 2020. In this context, the newly elected government prepared a Manifesto that included proposals on minority rights presented by the Plenipotentiary, while some of them were accepted. The Government's Manifesto was approved on 30 April 2020 by the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “National Council of the Slovak Republic”).

In its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic declared that it considers the protection and support of national minorities to be its natural mission and commits not to take steps to abolish or limit the already acquired rights of national minorities and continue to provide effective protection to their members while respecting the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Slovak Republic. The Government of the Slovak Republic undertook to create opportunities for members of national minorities to preserve their cultural customs, language, traditions and not take measures that would lead to assimilation by the majority population or support such assimilation.

An exceptionally important commitment of the Government of the Slovak Republic declared in its Manifesto is the adoption of the Act on the Status of National Minorities as one of the means of slowing down the assimilation of members of national minorities and guaranteeing the exercise of minority rights arising from the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Furthermore, the Government declared the possibility of establishing an Office for National Minorities.

In relation to the use of national minority languages, the Manifesto contains several objectives. In addition to the above adoption of the law, it is an obligation to consider the possibility of extending the scope of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. to higher territorial units (hereinafter also referred to as "HTU"). In the case of an amendment to the relevant law, the application of language rights should not be forgotten at the level of those districts whose seats of public administration bodies are not in municipalities listed in the Government Regulation no. 221/1999 Coll., which issues a list of municipalities in which Slovak citizens

belonging to a national minority make up at least 20% of the population, as amended by Government Regulation no. 534/2011 Coll. (hereinafter referred to as "Government Regulation No. 221/1999 Coll."), however, several municipalities in these districts are listed in the Government Regulation No. 221/1999 Coll. Due to the current legal situation, the inhabitants of these municipalities (members of national minorities) do not have the opportunity to use the language of the national minority in official communication at the district level.

The education system is very closely connected with the creation of conditions for the use of languages in official communication, especially with staffing issues. In matters of national education, in accordance with its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic places emphasis on strengthening its quality and professional background, on creating equal opportunities for all pupils with regard to their mother tongue. When pursuing these goals, the Government plans to foster the schools with the language of instruction of national minorities, as well as schools where the national minority predominates and where there is a demand for a school with the language of instruction in Slovak. The Government of the Slovak Republic has committed itself to define the concept of national education within the framework of Slovak legislation and to increase the support and development of education of children and pupils belonging to national minorities in their mother tongue. The Government of the Slovak Republic will also provide current and modern textbooks and other teaching materials for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools with the language of instruction or with the language teaching of national minorities with emphasis on their accessibility for pupils and schools.

In this context, it is also important to mention that, according to the cultural Manifesto, the diverse culture of national minorities has a special status. By supporting such a diverse culture we're increasing the cultural diversity of the regions. The Government of the Slovak Republic has undertaken to implement the prepared Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and the Culture of National Minorities and to create a legislative framework to ensure the development of the culture of members of national minorities and also the so-called new minorities in Slovakia. Furthermore, the Government promised to reform the institutional arrangements, legislative environment, and also financial mechanisms to support the development of the culture of members of national minorities in accordance with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and international obligations.

In its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic also undertook to sensitively take into account the co-existence of the state language with other official EU languages and languages of national minorities and to evaluate and prepare an amendment to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no. 270/1995 Coll. On the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended, so as to prevent unjustified interference with freedom of expression and the right to disseminate information under the pretext of protecting the state language.

Based on the priorities of the Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved a Framework plan of legislative tasks of the Government of the Slovak Republic for VIII. election period (hereinafter referred to as the "Framework Plan") on 9 September 2020

by Resolution no. 547/2020. Based on the proposal of the Plenipotentiary, the material contains several specific measures that will have a direct impact on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In accordance with the commitment of the Government of the Slovak Republic to adopt the Act on the Status of National Minorities resulting from the Manifesto, the Framework Plan for the 4Q 2021 included a task to draft and submit a draft law on the status of national Minorities.

Based on the declaration of the basic results of CPH 2021, which the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will publish in accordance with Section 36 (2) of Act no. 223/2019 Coll. On CPH 2021 and on Amendments to Certain Acts (hereinafter also "Act No. 223/2019 Coll.") no later than 1 January 2022, the Government undertook for the 1Q 2022 to submit a draft regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic that will amend the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 221/1999 Coll.

Amendment to Government Regulation no. 221/1999 Coll. is provided by Act no. 184/1999 Coll. according to Section 2 (1) and 7c (2). In accordance with these provisions, the list of municipalities will be amended by Government Regulation no. 221/1999 Coll. with a change in the quorum for the right to use the language of a national minority in official contact in municipalities where citizens belonging to a national minority make up at least 15 % of the currently valid 20 % of the population, based on the CPH 2021 results.

In connection with the commitment of the Government of the Slovak Republic to extend the scope of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. to the HTU, which flows out from the Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic for the 1Q of 2022 ordered to submit to the Government of the Slovak Republic a Draft law amending Act no. 184/1999 Coll. The Sponsor of all three tasks is the Government Office of the Slovak Republic that organizationally integrates OPGNM.

1.2 International obligations of the Slovak Republic in the field of status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

Based on its statute, the Plenipotentiary participates in the creation of reports on the implementation of international agreements by which the Slovak Republic is bound in the area of the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In 2019 and 2020, the OPGNM cooperated with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "MFEA SR") to prepare reports and conduct a dialogue on the implementation of obligations arising from human rights conventions of the Council of Europe and the United Nations (hereinafter "UN").), as well as on the fulfillment of obligations under bilateral interstate agreements.

In the reference period, OPGNM participated in the 5th round of monitoring the implementation of the Framework Convention, as well as in the 5th round of monitoring the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter of Languages") in the Slovak Republic.

1.2.1 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

As a Party to the Framework Convention, the Slovak Republic has an obligation to submit a report at regular intervals on legislative and other measures taken to fulfill the obligations set out in the Framework Convention.

In the reference period, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved The 5th report on the implementation of the Framework Convention in the Slovak Republic by Resolution No. 44/2019, which was subsequently submitted to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe on 31 January 2019. The Report sent to the Secretary-General is usually followed by a visit by a three-member delegation of the Advisory Committee for the Framework Convention ("Advisory Committee") to assist the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe ("Committee of Ministers") in assessing the level of implementation of the Framework Convention. However, the visit of the Advisory Committee was postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the Advisory Committee sent the MFEA SR a series of questions concerning the implementation of the Framework Convention and requested answers to the first part of the questions of the members of the Advisory Committee. OPGNM and other relevant ministries elaborated them by 15 December 2020. After its visit, the Advisory Committee usually prepares an Evaluation report for the Committee of Ministers on the basis of all available information, on which the Slovak Republic will have the opportunity to send its opinion. The monitoring will be formally concluded with the adoption of a Resolution of the Committee of Ministers, which will include recommendations to improve the implementation of the Framework Convention. After the formal end of monitoring, it is usual to carry out the so-called follow-up seminar as a form of continuing the dialogue with the Advisory Committee.

In 2018, the mandate of the representative of the Slovak Republic, Mr Tomáš Hrustič, ended as a full member at the Advisory Committee. Furthermore, upon a proposal from the Plenipotentiary, he was nominated at national level and subsequently approved at international level to perform this function, supposing he would become a full member of the Advisory Committee on a rotating basis. The number of members of the Advisory Committee is not equal to the number of Parties to the Framework Convention, therefore the membership of the Advisory Committee is rotational, based on a draw.

1.2.2 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Slovak Republic, as a Party to the Charter of Languages, has committed itself to create conditions for the preservation and development of regional or minority languages.

Following the visit of the Committee of Experts of the Charter of Languages (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee of Experts"), The 5th Report of the Committee of Experts of the Charter of Languages (hereinafter "Report of the Committee of Experts") was adopted on 22 March 2019 and subsequently submitted to the Slovak authorities for comments. Following the completion of the commenting procedure and the subsequent incorporation of the individual comments, the Report of the Committee of Experts was then submitted to the Committee of Ministers. Based on the conclusions of the Evaluation report,

the Committee of Ministers adopted the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers on 5 November 2019, thus completing the 5th round of monitoring the fulfillment of the Slovak Republic's obligations under the Charter of Languages. Based on the results of the 5th monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts recommends that the Slovak authorities take into account all the comments and recommendations of the Committee of Experts, in particular:

1. ensure that the languages in Part III are used in practice in the field of administration, regardless of limits,
2. step up their efforts to provide instruction in all minority languages or at all appropriate levels,
3. improve the training of teachers for education in minority languages,
4. extend the duration and frequency of public and private broadcasting media and, where necessary, facilitate the publication of newspapers in minority languages,
5. continue to raise awareness and promote tolerance in Slovak society as a whole towards minority languages and the cultures they represent.

Being aware of the importance of fulfilling the above recommendations, the Plenipotentiary monitors their fulfillment both within his competencies arising from the statute and within CNMEG, where information on the course of fulfilling the obligations of the Slovak Republic arising from the Charter of Languages is regularly discussed by CNMEG and GCHR.

The Report on the course and results of the 5th round of monitoring the level of implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 711 as of 11 November 2020. This Resolution imposed the following tasks on the entities concerned:

- B.1. to get acquainted with the results of the 5th round of monitoring the implementation of the Charter of Languages in the Slovak Republic and with the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, as well as to assess the possibilities of their implementation,
- B.2. as part of the preparation of the 6th implementation report, to inform the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic about the measures taken by 1 September 2023,
- B.3. to get acquainted and implement the recommendations set out in the Report of the Committee of Experts on Immediate Action,
- B.4. to inform the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic about the manner and implementation of the recommendations set out in the Report of the Committee of Experts for Immediate Action by 1 December 2020,
- B.5. to send information on the implementation of the recommendations set out in the Report of the Committee of Experts on Immediate Action by 1 January 2021 to the Committee of Ministers,
- B.6. to send the 6th report on the Implementation of the Charter of Languages in the Slovak Republic by 1 January 2024 to the Committee of Ministers .

Information on the implementation of recommendations for immediate action was forwarded to the Council of Europe through the Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the Council of Strasbourg on 15 December 2020.

In 2019, the mandate of the member of the Committee of Experts of the Charter of Languages, prof. JUDr. Alexandra Bröstla, CSc., as a long-term representative of the Slovak Republic in this body, ended. In 2019, upon the proposal of the Plenipotentiary, Júlia Vrábľová (Choleva) was nominated at the national level as a candidate for a member of the Committee of Experts on the Charter of Languages and subsequently approved by the Committee of Ministers to perform this function. The members of the Committee of Experts are elected for a 6-year term with the possibility of re-election.

1.2.3 Other international mechanisms for monitoring the observance of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities

Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council and implementation of universal human rights conventions

The Universal Periodic Review (hereinafter "UPH") is a special mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council that has been running since 2008. The State concerned is being evaluated by the other UN Member States in that universal process. The aim of this evaluation is to provide a comprehensive and objective picture on the human rights situation in all UN Member States. The periodicity of the evaluation is set at 4.5-year cycles and, from the point of view of the human rights agenda at the national level, the UPH is a key event.

On 28 January 2019, the Slovak delegation led by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic participated for the third time at the UPH on the observance of human rights in the Slovak Republic, within which recommendations for improving the human rights situation in the Slovak Republic were adopted. On 29 May 2019, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved recommendations of the 3rd round of universal periodic evaluation by Resolution no. 252. Of the 195 recommendations, 5 directly related to national minorities, the quality of their application in public life and the preservation of identity and the creation of a relevant legislative framework, and 2 recommendations concerned the prevention of racism and intolerance. One of the most important recommendations of this kind is the recommendation to ensure the use of minority languages in accordance with the obligations of the Charter of Languages and the Framework Convention and the implementation of obligations related to national minorities under the Treaty on Good Neighborhood and Friendly Cooperation between Hungary and Slovakia (UPR 160/2019). Currently, the relevant ministries are preparing documents for the deduction of the implementation of the recommendations of the universal periodic evaluation, which should be processed by the end of 2021.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

In 2019, the Slovak Republic chaired the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (hereinafter referred to as the "OSCE"). One of the three main priorities of the Slovak Presidency of the OSCE (hereinafter referred to as the "SK OSCE") was the support of effective multilateralism. The SK OSCE, therefore, supported the strengthening of cooperation and synergies between the OSCE and other international organizations. Areas of such synergy also include the promotion and protection of national minorities. Human rights standards in this area are based on OSCE, Council of Europe, and UN documents.

Under the SK OSCE presidency in April 2019, a thematic event dedicated to the Bolzano Recommendations on National Minorities in International Relations was held in Chernivtsi, Ukraine. The event was organized by the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (hereinafter the "Office of the High Commissioner") with the participation of representatives from the Ministries of Culture, State Regional Administration, National Minorities, Consulates, and Embassies of OSCE participating States. The main goal of the event was to present international principles, standards, examples of good practice and to support participants to reflect on the main topics concerning national minorities that occur in international relations. Representatives of OPGNM participated in the event on behalf of the Slovak Republic.

In November 2019, the Office of the High Commissioner within the SK OSCE and in cooperation with Sweden commemorated the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life (Lund Recommendations) by organizing an event called *Promoting the participation of National Minorities as a Pathway to the Integration of Diverse Societies*. The aim of the conference was to create an opportunity to assess the relevance and state of implementation of the Lund Recommendations and to discuss ways to support and develop the participation of national minorities in public life, including some new key thematic areas such as the economic sector. The Slovak Republic was represented by the Plenipotentiary. He emphasized at the conference that the effective participation of national minorities in public life is an integral part of a democratic society. The conference participants confirmed the main message of the Lund Recommendations, namely that the participation of national minorities in public life is equally beneficial for the minorities themselves as well as for the state.

Bilateral cooperation on minority issues

The OSCE's Bolzano recommendations on national minorities in interstate relations state that, under international law, the respect for and protection of minority rights falls under the responsibility of the state in which the minority lives. At the same time, they conclude that other states may be interested in the prosperity of minority groups abroad, especially those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic, or religious identity or a common cultural heritage. In accordance with the above recommendations, the Slovak Republic is developing bilateral cooperation, especially with Hungary and Ukraine.

Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Affairs

Bilateral cooperation with Hungary is carried out on the basis of the Treaty of Good Neighborhood and Friendly Cooperation signed on 19 March 1995 in Paris. The dialogue is also conducted within the meetings of the Joint Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the "Joint Commission"), during which recommendations are adopted to improve the quality, development and guarantee the protection of the rights of citizens belonging to the Slovak national minority in Hungary and the Hungarian national minority in the Slovak Republic. The meetings shall evaluate the implementation of the recommendations realized during sessions and the Parties shall agree on the adoption of new recommendations.

In the reference period, the 14th session of the Joint Commission took place on 20 February 2019 in Bratislava. The Parties concluded a strategic partnership in the bilateral relations between Hungary and the Slovak Republic and close cooperation within the V4, which has a positive impact on strengthening the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. On 18 June 2019, new recommendations were approved for the Slovak side by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 305. They relate to, for example, the assessment of the possibility of adopting new legislation in the field of national rights, recognition of diplomas of medical teachers and speech therapists with a diploma from Hungary and cooperation with non-governmental organizations of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. However, recommendations concerning language rights remain in force: the development of technical terminology in minority languages, the use of minority languages in official contact, ensuring the application of existing laws regulating the use of minority languages, and removing obstacles to their application in practice, etc.

In January 2020, the Hungarian side showed its interest in summoning another session of the Joint Commission in Autumn 2020 in Budapest. Due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the session has been postponed for the time being, and a virtual form of the event is not excluded.

Slovak-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture

Bilateral cooperation with Hungary is carried out on the basis of the Treaty of Good Neighborhood and Friendly Cooperation signed between Slovakia and Ukraine on 29 June 1995 in Kyiv. The Slovak-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission for National Minorities, Education, Culture and Scientific Relations (hereinafter referred to as the "Intergovernmental Commission") was established upon the initiative of the Ukrainian side in accordance with the given Treaty by SK Government Resolution no. 362/1994. As agreed with the Ukrainian side, the Intergovernmental Commission has had a new name since 2003: the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture.

The 14th session (the last one so far) of the Intergovernmental Commission took place on 23 March 2017 in Bratislava. The final protocol concluded the fruitfulness of the Slovak-

Ukrainian dialogue and the common interest in addressing the educational, cultural, and information needs of members of national minorities. The session did not identify acute problems within the agenda of minority education and culture. The Ukrainian side has not yet summoned the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Commission due to several circumstances (parliamentary elections, presidential elections, the COVID-19 pandemic).

II. Part – The rights of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the resolution of matters concerning them

2.1 Legislative, conceptual and institutional frameworks

In accordance with the Framework Convention, the Slovak Republic shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social, and economic life, as well as in public affairs, especially in those that concern them⁶. Participation, i.e. effective participation, means removing obstacles that impede equal access for persons belonging to national minorities in all areas of social life in order to create truly equal opportunities for all.⁷ Effective participation in governance is an important tool in a democratic state governed by the rule of law, as well as an evaluation of the processes by which specific measures are put into practice. The use of participatory mechanisms leads to more qualified decisions, effective problem solving, and at the same time a greater degree of acceptability of decisions and measures.

Members of national minorities and ethnic groups are granted the right to participate in the resolution of matters concerning them by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic under art. 34 (2) letter c) and under the conditions laid down by the law. The above relates to the concretization of the law stipulated by art. 30 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, according to which all citizens have the right to participate in the administration of public affairs directly or by free choice of their representatives. These rights are also guaranteed by international conventions by which the Slovak Republic is bound. In particular, it is the already mentioned Framework Convention, which, as an international treaty on human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with art. 7 (5) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic takes precedence over other laws.

In accordance with the Interpretative Report to the Framework Convention and specifically under art. (15), the Parties should create the conditions necessary for the participation of persons belonging to national minorities to act jointly and in particular through their representative institutions of national minorities in the preparation of legislative or administrative measures that directly affect them. In particular, this includes engaging minorities in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of national and regional

⁶Art. 15 of the Framework Convention.

⁷Commentary on the Effective Participation of Persons Belonging to National Minorities in Cultural, Social and Economic Life and in Public Affairs Adopted on 27 February 2008;
<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016800bc7e8>.

development plans and programs; conducting research to assess the possible impact of planned development projects on these persons; effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in decision-making processes and at the level elected bodies at the state and local levels; decentralized or local forms of administration.⁸

In 2008, the Advisory Committee issued a *Thematic Commentary to the Framework Convention No. 2*, which deals, among other things, with the interpretation of the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities, with an emphasis on the word "effective" in terms of participation.⁹ The above statement means that it is necessary for the state to ensure the use of participatory mechanisms not only formally but also materially with an emphasis on their purpose.

The most important area of participation is the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in decision-making processes and at the level of elected bodies at the state and local levels. All forms of political participation: legislative power (National Council of the Slovak Republic), executive power (Government of the Slovak Republic, President of the Slovak Republic), regional (HTU) and local (cities and municipalities) power can be executed, either directly or indirectly, exclusively through the electoral system, political parties, and political movements. The legal order of the Slovak Republic does not exclude the existence of the so-called ethnic political parties which are aimed at representing the interests of a particular national minority or several national minorities. All legal regulations governing the right to vote fully respect the provisions of art. 30 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, which stipulates the access of citizens to elected and other public functions under the same conditions, while the right to vote is universal, equal, and direct and is exercised by secret ballot.

However, the participation of national minorities in the legislative power through the National Council of the Slovak Republic is not regulated and is not ensured by any legal regulation. The fact that the current legislation allows obtaining a mandate in the National Council of the Slovak Republic only for those political parties that exceed the 5% margin limits the possibilities of small parties representing (possibly) also the members of national minorities. As a rule, the participation of national minorities in the executive power in Slovakia also depends on the results of the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, as members of national minorities can be elected as deputies either as candidates for ethnic parties or as candidates for other political parties.

At the level of the Government of the Slovak Republic, as a supreme body of executive power, no member of the government is currently appointed who would be specifically responsible for the protection and support of the status and rights of members of national minorities. Within the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the

⁸Interpretative Report on the Framework Convention;
<https://archiv.vlada.gov.sk/ludskeprava/data/files/4090.pdf>

⁹Commentary on the Effective Participation of Persons Belonging to National Minorities in Cultural, Social and Economic Life and in Public Affairs Adopted on 27 February;
<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016800bc7e8>.

Interior of the Slovak Republic, the plenipotentiaries act as advisory bodies to the Government of the Slovak Republic, including in the area of national minorities and Romani communities. Plenipotentiaries, due to the nature of their powers, act partly as consultation mechanisms, partly as components of the executive power. In the reference period, the amendment to the Statute of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Romani communities was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 759 of 2 December 2020. This given Resolution instructs the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic to ensure the transfer of competencies of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Romani communities (hereinafter "OPGRC") from the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic to the Government Office of the SR as of 1 February 2021. This Resolution was amended by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 60 as of 27 January 2021 in a way that the date of transfer was postponed to 1 June 2021.

The participation of national minorities within territorial self-governments (HTU and municipalities) is based on a different principle, compared to the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, i.e. not only on the basis of political parties and one electoral district, which is the entire territory of the Slovak Republic but, for example, in the case of regional elections, several single-member or multi-member electoral districts are formed within each self-governing region, while the so-called independent candidates without being nominated for the list of candidates of a political party or movement can run for elections. The system of municipal elections, i.e. elections to self-government bodies of towns and municipalities, is regulated in a similar way.

Local and regional authorities also exercise certain powers in relation to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and often play the most important role in promoting the identity and culture of national minorities (they are founders of educational and cultural institutions, they promote local culture and the use of minority languages). From this point of view, those municipalities and local authorities in which a significant part of the population consists of members of national minorities are in a more advantageous position. However, if they form a smaller share in the given municipalities and HTUs, their interests and needs may be overlooked. The representation of national minorities in the elected bodies of HTU corresponds to the level of representation of national minorities at the national level. As far as the HTUs are concerned, the basic mechanisms of consultation processes on issues concerning national minorities are completely lacking. The possibilities for the participation of national minorities are thus limited, as there are no special advisory or consultative bodies that would address the issues of education, language, and culture of national minorities in the region. Compared to the national level of political participation, national minorities have a stronger representation at the municipal level. This applies, in particular, to the Hungarian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and Romani national minorities.

The right to participate in the resolution of matters concerning exclusively a national minority is exercised mainly through advisory bodies at the level of central bodies of legislative and executive power. In the Slovak Republic, CNMEG performs the role of a representative

and consulting institution, which is a professional body of the GCHR – an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic. More information on CNMEG and GCHR can be found in section 2.3 on page 24.

2.2 Participation in legislative and executive power

Forms of political participation at the level of the national executive and legislative power are available to national minorities exclusively through the electoral system, and thus through political parties and political movements. As for the representation of national minorities through their political parties within the legislative power, only the Hungarian national minority had such representation since the establishment of the Slovak Republic in the National Council of the Slovak Republic continuously until 2020.

2.2.1 Participation in the legislative power

In the elections in 2020, none of the political parties defending the interests of members of national minorities entered the National Council of the Slovak Republic, as a result of which national minorities are currently represented in the National Council of the Slovak Republic only through individual deputies who declare themselves to be of non-Slovak nationality. . We can be state that their number within the legislative body of the Slovak Republic has also decreased significantly and does not reflect the national structure of the country. For political parties that explicitly support the interests of members of national minorities, the 5% electoral threshold is very limited for objective reasons and unattainable for all national minorities except the Hungarian and Romani national minority.¹⁰

The differentiation of the political scene in the case of the Romani national minority, whose interests are sometimes represented by several political parties, means that so far none of them has managed to cross the electoral threshold and made it to the parliament. Activities of individual representatives of national minorities within the political parties, especially the Hungarian, appear to be an opportunity for other national minorities, especially the Ruthenian. Activists working in the Ruthenian national movement appear regularly on the candidate lists of such parties. In the last parliamentary elections, also due to the fragmentation of the part of the political spectrum explicitly devoted to, on a long-term basis, to issues of national minorities, representatives of the Ruthenian and also Hungarian and Romani national minorities were part of multi-party candidate lists that do not focus primarily on national minorities. Within them, they formed special platforms or at least included topics related to the legitimate interests and needs of national minorities to the election programs. A detailed overview of the participation of political parties representing the interests of national minorities in the legislative and executive branch from the Velvet Revolution to the present is contained in Annex no. 1.

¹⁰In order to strengthen the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in elected bodies, the Thematic Commentary to the Framework Convention recommends beneficial exceptions to the minimum requirements, or reserved seats or a right of veto; p. 5.

In connection with the elections and with regard to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, it is necessary to mention Act no. 180/2014 Coll. On the Conditions for the Exercise of the Right to vote and on the Amendment of Certain Acts, which regulates the conduct of elections in the Slovak Republic. According to the regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 221/1999, the information on the place and time of elections shall also be given in the language of the national minority in municipalities. In municipalities according to Section 22 (1) and (4) of the above-mentioned Act, the polling station shall be marked in the language of the national minority, and ballots shall be marked with the word "sample" and information for voters on the method of voting shall also be stated in the polling station or in front of the polling station in the minority language.

Elections to the NC SR in 2020

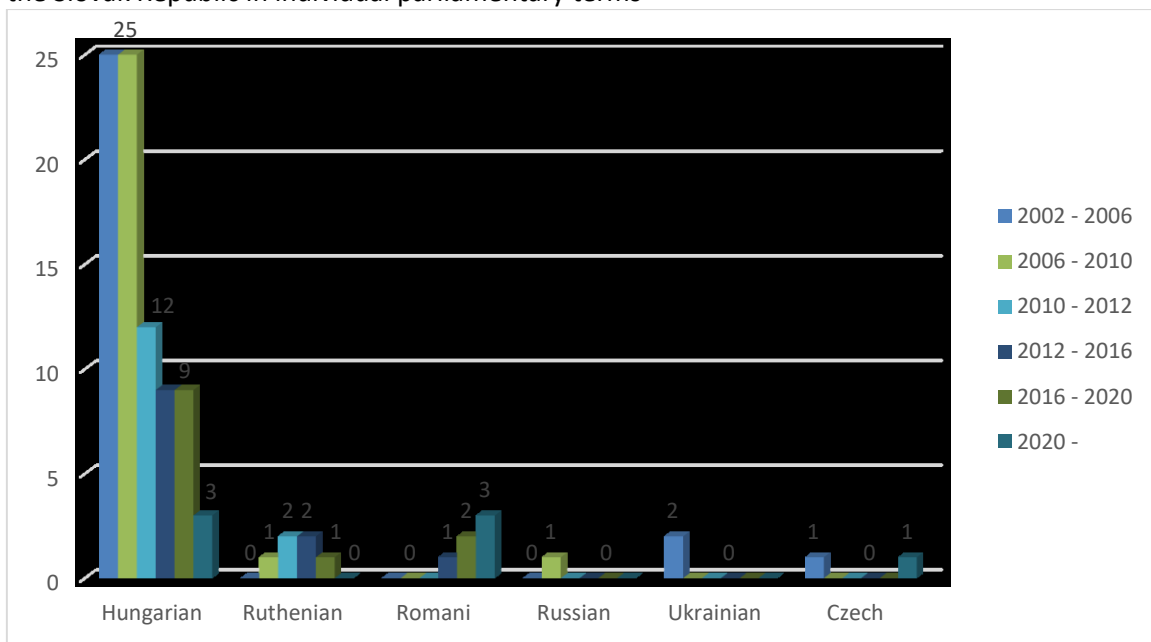
The last elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic took place on February 29, 2020. Prior to the elections, negotiations took place on the merger or creation of a joint list of candidates for political parties that explicitly represent the interests of persons belonging to national minorities, in particular the Hungarian national minority. However, the negotiations did not result in an agreement between all parties involved. Magyar Közösségi Összefogás - Hungarian Community for Co-operation, which was established in October 2019 as an electoral party in which members of the original Összefogás – Co-operation with the members of the Hungarian Community Party – Magyar Közösség Pártja (hereinafter also referred to as "SMK-MKP") and Magyar Fórum – Hungarian Forum, won 3.90% of the vote, MOST-HÍD 2.05% of the vote. No party representing the interests of the Romani participated in the elections. For the first time in the history of the Slovak Republic, no political party has entered the National Council of the Slovak Republic that would explicitly support the protection of the needs and interests of members of national minorities. The number of members of national minorities who also belong to a national minority within other parliamentary groups has been gradually declining over several election periods. At present, the above stands for 4.67% (7 deputies), which is not proportional to the ethnic composition of the Slovak Republic. The only positive trend in this area is the gradual increase in the number of Romani deputies.

Table no. 1: Overview of the number of members of national minorities in the National Council of the Slovak Republic

Nationality	Parliamentary term/number of deputies					
	2002 - 2006	2006 - 2010	2010 - 2012	2012 - 2016	2016 - 2020	2020 -
Hungarian	25	25	12	9	9	3
Ruthenian	0	1	2	2	1	0
Romani	0	0	0	1	2	3
Russian	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ukrainian	2	0	0	0	0	0
Czech	1	0	0	0	0	1
Deputies in total	150	150	150	150	150	150
percentage share	18.67%	18%	9.33%	8%	8%	4.67%

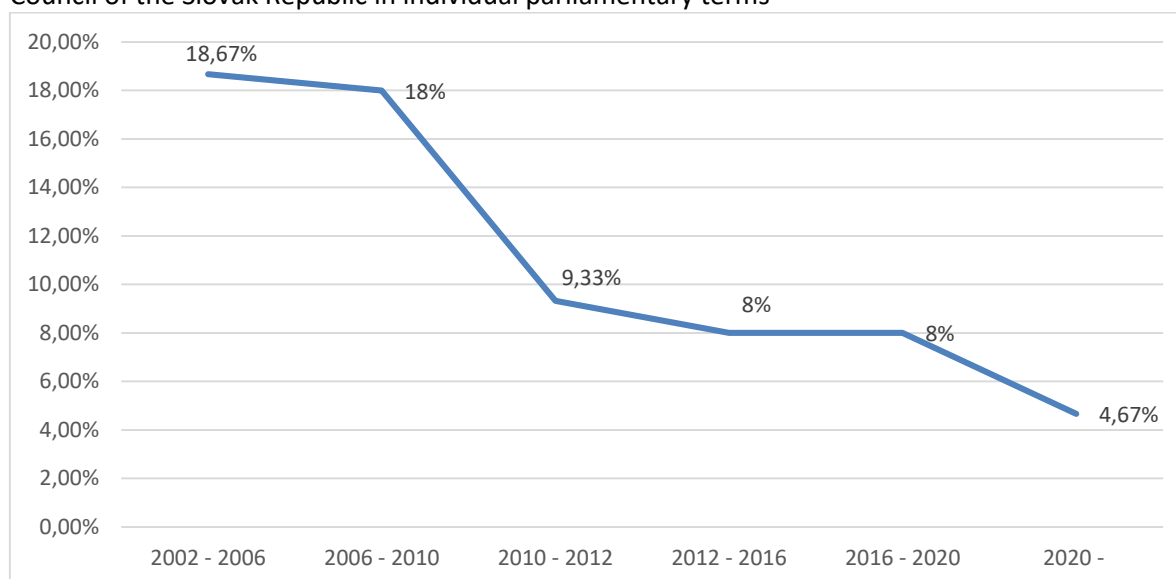
Source: Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the Period 2017 – 2018, p. 37, <https://www.nrsr.sk/web/>.

Graph no. 1: Overview of the number of members of national minorities in the National Council of the Slovak Republic in individual parliamentary terms



Source: Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the Period 2017 – 2018, p. 37, <https://www.nrsr.sk/web/>

Graph no. 2: Overview of the representation of members of national minorities in the National Council of the Slovak Republic in individual parliamentary terms



Source: Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the Period 2017 – 2018, p. 37, <https://www.nrsr.sk/web/> .

2.2.2 Participation in executive power

The Government of the Slovak Republic and an Advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic in the field of national minorities

Since 2012 (appointment of Robert Fico's government), the post of Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights and Minorities has not been held. Instead, a Plenipotentiary and his Office were established, and on 14 June 2012, László A. Nagy was appointed as the first Plenipotentiary. Following his dismissal on 12 June 2013, Mária Jedličková was appointed to manage OPGNM from 1 July 2013 until 13 April 2016, when the Government of the Slovak Republic appointed László Bukovszky as the Plenipotentiary on 14 April 2016.

Presidential elections in 2019

For the Slovak Republic, presidential elections are always an extraordinary event. The President is elected by the citizens of the Slovak Republic in direct elections by secret ballot for a five-year term. Citizens who have the right to vote in the National Council of the Slovak Republic have the right to elect a president. The presidential candidates are nominated by at least 15 deputies of the National Council of the Slovak Republic or citizens who have the right to vote in the National Council of the Slovak Republic, on the basis of a petition signed by at least 15,000 citizens. Proposals for elections are submitted to the President of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no later than 21 days after the announcement of the elections. Every citizen of the Slovak Republic who is eligible to be a member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and has reached the age of 40 on the day of the election can be elected as a president. The oath of office of the President takes place at the National Council of the Slovak Republic and with the presence of the Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the

Slovak Republic. By swearing in the President-elect undertakes, inter alia, to take care of the well-being of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic.

The Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic by his decision no. 8/2019 Coll. as of 10 January 2019 announced the presidential elections on 16 March 2019. Among the presidential candidates who met the criteria and their candidacies were accepted by the chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Béla Bugár, the then chairman of the MOST-HÍD party, and József Menyhárt, who at that time held the position of chairman of the SMK-MKP political party, openly joined their affinity to a national minority. József Menyhárt resigned on February 19, 2019.

In the first round of the presidential elections, Zuzana Čaputová won 40.57% of the ballots, Maroš Šefčovič 18.66%, Štefan Harabin 14.34%, Marian Kotleba 10.39%, František Mikloško 5.72%, Béla Bugár 3.10% and the other 9 candidates less than 3% (2 of them resigned before the elections). Pursuant to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, the second round of elections was held on March 30, 2019, in which Zuzana Čaputová won 58.40% of the valid ballots and Maroš Šefčovič 41.59%. The election turnout reached 41.79%. Zuzana Čaputová took over the position of President of the Slovak Republic during her inauguration on 15 June 2019.

The first female president-elect in the history of the Slovak Republic decided, respecting and fulfilling her presidential oath, to establish an advisory body for minorities - an Expert Advisory Committee for Minorities, composed of:

Hungarian minority:

- Ilona Németh, artist, Academy of Fine Arts;
- Attila Simon, historian, director of the Forum of the Research Institute for Minorities;

Ruthenian minority:

- Anna Plišková, director of the Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture at the University of Prešov in Prešov;
- Peter Medviď, spokesman of the round table of Ruthenians of Slovakia, member of CNMEG;

Romani minority:

- Jurina Rusnáková, Head of the Institute of Romani Studies at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra;
- Viktor Teru, Romani Education Fund, coordinator for Slovakia;

Other national minorities and new minorities:

- Elena Gallová Kriglerová, Director of the Centre for Ethnicity and Culture Research.

2.2.3 Participation in the management of territorial self-government

The basic role of municipalities in the performance of self-government is to take care of the all-round development of its territory and the needs of its inhabitants. Territorial self-governments thus play an important role in the daily lives of the citizens. Their powers in the

field of establishing school and educational facilities, cultural and educational facilities, facilities operating in the field of social services, health care, etc., but also in other areas intensively affect the fulfillment of the rights of national minorities in the field of education, culture, use of languages national minorities and participation in the social and economic life of the municipality.

Elections to municipal self-government bodies in 2019 and 2020

The last elections to the municipal self-government bodies took place on November 10, 2018. Since some municipalities were unable to have an elected mayor or a sufficient number of municipal deputies, or some of these positions were vacated, elections to the self-governing bodies of such municipalities were announced three times in the reference period. Municipal politicians, supported by several political parties, who had an explicit intention in their election program to address the protection and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, did run in the elections. In elections to self-governing bodies, it is not possible to monitor the numbers of candidates and elected deputies according to their affiliation with national minorities, because, unlike the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, such data are not required and are therefore not available.

In the elections, which were announced on 13 April 2019 in 42 municipalities, with the support of the MOST-HÍD party, 3 deputies were elected (2 in the municipality of Girovce, 1 in the municipality of Piskorovce) and 2 deputies (in the municipalities of Dubno and Perín) for the SMK-MKP party Perín-Chym) and no mayors were elected for any of these parties. In the elections announced on 21 September 2019, 2 deputies were elected for the SMK-MKP (both in the municipality of Dubno) in 24 municipalities. The fact that a candidate is running in a municipal election as a political entity that explicitly defends the interests of members of national minorities does not necessarily mean that the candidate is also a member of a national minority. At the same time, even if such a candidate declares himself to be of a nationality other than Slovak, being elected does not necessarily mean that he will also stand up for the rights and interests of members of other national minorities. It is also possible that a candidate running for a political entity that does not explicitly represent the interests of members of national minorities or is running as a so-called independent candidate, cannot be a member of a national minority or he is not fostering the rights and interests of members of national minorities living in the municipality.

The last elections in the reference period were announced on 3 October 2020 in 48 municipalities. In these elections, after 6 years and 11 unsuccessfully announced elections, one mayor and three deputies of the municipality of Ondavka (¹¹ all from MOST-HÍD party) were elected. Even if these elections were not successful, Ondavka would be in accordance with the current wording of the Act of the Slovak National Council no. 369/1990 Coll. On Municipal Establishment a non-functional municipality affiliated to one of the neighboring

¹¹According to CPH 2011, Ondavka had 22 inhabitants, of which 9 of Slovak nationality, 11 of Ruthenian nationality, and 2 of unknown nationality.

municipalities (Becherov or Vyšná Polianka). One female deputy was also elected as a member of MOST-HÍD party in the village of Trávník.

Elections to the European Parliament in 2019

The Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic by his decision no. 28/2019 Coll. of 1 February 2019 declared elections to the European Parliament on Saturday, 25 May 2019. Of all the elections held in the Slovak Republic, elections to the European Parliament traditionally have the lowest turnout, reaching 22.74% of voters in 2019. In the elections in 2019, Peter Pollák (from the OĽANO movement) won the deputy mandate. He has been involved in fostering the interests of members of the Romani national minority for a long time. The coalition of PS and SPOLU parties, which also has a national minority program in their portfolio, won 4 deputy mandates (Michal Šimečka, Michal Wiezik, Martin Hojsík and Vladimír Bilčík). Unlike the previous successful elections, based on which SMK-MKP and MOST-HÍD parties were represented in the European Parliament by one member of parliament, did not win the mandate during these elections.

2.3 Consultation mechanisms

Consultation mechanisms are irreplaceable means of involving national minorities in resolving public affairs. In this context, however, it should be noted that these mechanisms do not replace other forms of participation. In line with the Lund Recommendations issued by the OSCE in 1999, States should establish advisory and consultative bodies within the appropriate institutional framework to serve as channels for dialogue between governmental bodies and national minorities.¹² Consultative bodies should be able to submit questions to decision-makers, make recommendations, formulate legislative proposals and comment on government decisions that directly affect them.

In the Slovak Republic, CNMEG partially fulfills the role of the consulting and, at the same time, acts as a permanent professional body of the GCHR for national minorities and ethnic groups and for the implementation of the Charter of Languages in accordance with Art. 7 (4) of the Charter of Languages and the Framework Convention under Art. 15. The GCHR is a permanent professional, advisory, coordinating and consulting body of the Government of the Slovak Republic in the field of protection of basic human rights and freedoms, political and civil rights, rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, economic, social and cultural rights, environmental protection rights and cultural heritage, children rights and the promotion of their best interests, rights of persons with disabilities and rights of the elderly, rights of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, and intersex people in terms of promoting the principles of equal treatment, equal opportunities and gender equality. The Plenipotentiary, who is a representative and also the chairman of CNMEG at the same time, and the vice-chairman of CNMEG, who is always a member of CNMEG from the Chamber of National Minorities, are both members of GCHR. On one hand, GCHR is regularly informed

¹²<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/7/30325.pdf>, p. 10.

about the activities of VNMES through its representatives, and, on the other hand, CNMEG is informed about the activities of GCHR. Information from CNMEG and GCHR sessions as well as on adopted resolutions are part of the regular information exchange on GCHR meetings, which is subsequently submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic.

During the reference period, the Plenipotentiary submitted several materials to the GCHR session, namely: Draft Legislative Intent of the Act on National Minorities, Language Report and CNMEG Evaluation Report on the Support of National Minority Cultures, the State of National Education and the Use of National Minority Languages (hereinafter "CNMEG Evaluation Report") for the period 2017 – 2018. In the period 2019 – 2020, 6 sessions of the GCHR were held with a total of 23 resolutions adopted.

2.3.1 Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups

The highest body of participation of persons belonging to national minorities in decision-making on matters concerning them is the CNMEG, which is a permanent professional body of the GCHR. The CNMEG consists of two chambers, the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the invited non-voting members. The CNMEG Chamber for National Minorities is composed of 23 elected members representing 13 national minorities. The Chamber of Representatives of State Administration Bodies, which are responsible for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, has 9 members. The members of both chambers and the President shall have the right to vote. At the same time, there are 10 permanent non-voting members being invited to CNMEG. CNMEG is chaired by the plenipotentiary. The vice-president is a member of the Chamber for National Minorities.

CNMEG deals with legislative and non-legislative measures of the government or state bodies, local self-government bodies, and other entities concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities – it submits statements, proposals, declarations. The committee participates in the preparation of periodic reports for the control mechanisms of international treaties on human rights and the rights of national minorities (Charter of Languages, Framework Convention). At two-year intervals, CNMEG submits the CNMEG Evaluation Report to the GCHR for approval.

CNMEG has a specific position among the other committees of the GCHR. Members of CNMEG representing the members of national minorities are elected directly by minority organizations. CNMEG can thus be considered as an elected consulting and advisory body of national minorities, which decides on its affairs. It is not possible to resolve the issues of a specific national minority at a CNMEG session without the participation of its representatives.

In the period 2019 – 2020, four by-elections of alternate members of CNMEG took place, namely: in 2019 – elections of alternate members of CNMEG for the Romani and Jewish national minorities, in 2020 – for the Romani and German national minorities. In 2019, the election of the Vice-Chairman of CNMEG also took place.

During the reference period, 7 CNMEG sessions took place, at which 37 resolutions and one key statement were adopted. In 2019, four regular sessions of CNMEG took place, at which 21 resolutions were adopted (resolutions no. 132 - 152), while resolution no. 148 was

adopted by per-rollam procedure. All these resolutions have been complied with. During 2019, CNMEG dealt with e.g., activities of national museums, Minority Culture Fund (MCF), the state of national broadcasting, the implementation of the Action Plan, the preparation of CPH 2021, the preparation of a draft legislative plan, as well as the preparation of the CNMEG Evaluation Report.

The CNMEG Evaluation Report was prepared on the basis of Article 3 (f) of the CNMEG Statute. This was the first CNMEG Evaluation Report, which was prepared under the new CNMEG Statute, according to which the periodicity of preparing CNMEG Evaluation Reports was changed from annual to biennial. The format of the CNMEG Evaluation Report was also changed, from three separate CNMEG Evaluation Reports to one summary report. The aim of the CNMEG Evaluation Report was to analyze the area of culture, national education, and the use of the language of individual national minorities for the period 2017 – 2018 from the perspective of individual national minorities. A temporary working group was entrusted with the preparation of the CNMEG Evaluation Report, which was composed of representatives of individual national minorities and the state administration. Once the CNMEG Report had been prepared, it was then approved by the CNMEG on 20 September 2019 via per-rollam procedure and subsequently on 30 September 2019 also by the GCHR at its 36th session. The Government of the Slovak Republic took note of the CNMEG Evaluation Report on 8 November 2019 at its 182nd session within the material "Information on the 36th session of the GCHR".¹³

At the CNMEG sessions, the preparation of the legislative intent of the law, which was created by a working group composed of experts mainly from national minorities, had been discussed. CNMEG at its 35th session took note of the draft legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities by resolution no. 150 as of 5 November 2019, and supported the philosophy of the submitted legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities, and undertook to provide its members with the widest possible information within national minority organizations and individual ministries about the draft legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities. At the 36th session that took place in January 2020, the members of CNMEG adopted a key statement no. 4 to the draft legislative intent of the Act, which approved the draft legislative intent of the Act, authorized the chairman of CNMEG to submit the draft legislative intent of the Act to GCHR and recommended the GCHR to submit the draft legislative intent of the Act to the Government of the Slovak Republic. More about the process of approving the draft legislative intent of the Act can be found in subchapter 1.1.1.

In 2020, 3 sessions of CNMEG took place, at which the key statement no. 4 and 16 resolutions (resolutions 153 to 168) were adopted, one of which by per-rollam procedure. 14 of these resolutions, as well as the key statement, have been complied with. Two of the resolutions, namely resolution no. 156 concerning the entire CNMEG to the Report for 2019 on the fulfillment of tasks arising from the Action Plan and Resolution no. 159 concerning the entire CNMEG to the Priorities of the State Administration reflecting the Government's

¹³The CNMEG evaluation report is available at:
https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7609_hodnotiaca-sprava-vnmes-o-podpore-kultur-narodnosteho-skolstva-a-stave-pouzivania-jazykov-narodnostnych-mensin-2017--2018.pdf.

Manifesto in relation to persons belonging to national minorities are being fulfilled on an ongoing basis.

The CNMEG sessions held in 2020 focused mainly on the implementation of the Action Plan, the state of national broadcasting of RTVS (Radio and Television of Slovakia), the preparation of the language report, as well as the process of approving the draft legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities. In 2019 and 2020, CNMEG members were regularly informed about the preparation of CPH 2021, as well as about the preparation of the communication strategy of the OPGNM information campaign to promote the census of members of national minorities.

Due to measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, four sessions could not be held in 2020, as required by the CNMEG Statute. The decision not to hold the fourth session of CNMEG in 2020 was taken on the basis of the Decree of the Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic, which prescribes measures in case of endangerment of public health, and the Regional Public Health Authority in Bratislava, as well as the Order of the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic no. 20/2020 for the implementation of measures taken in connection with the current development of the spread of coronavirus in the Slovak Republic. Even during this period, an intensive communication campaign took place through the CNMEG Secretariat, and information materials prepared in accordance with the CNMEG Work Plan were sent to its members. The planned 39th session of CNMEG was merged with the 40th one and held online in early 2021.

During the reference period, members also received regular information on the activities of the GCHR committees, in particular the Committee on Research, Education and Training in the Field of Human Rights and Development Education and the Committee on the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance. CNMEG as well as OPGNM have their representation in these committees. Since 2020 members of CNMEG have been regularly informed about the activities of the Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations.

2.4 Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities

Based on his statute, the Plenipotentiary fulfills tasks in the field of preservation, development and support of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and implements systemic measures to improve the status of national minorities. Activities of the Plenipotentiary are provided by the OPGNM, which is organizationally integrated into the organizational structure of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. OPGNM is a specialized bureau of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, which performs tasks in the field of implementation of the national policy of the Slovak Republic in accordance with the legal framework for the protection of the rights of members of national minorities, as well as in accordance with the Manifesto. These tasks are performed in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary-General of the Service Office (hereinafter referred to as the "Office of the Secretary-General"), as well as other cooperating organizational units of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

One of the main tasks of the Plenipotentiary is to ensure and support the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in resolving matters concerning them. In this context, the Plenipotentiary chairs the CNMEG, conducts regular consultations with persons belonging to national minorities and with organizations of national minorities and promotes the strengthening of the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the resolution of public affairs. During the reference period, the Office of the Plenipotentiary ensured the preparation of CNMEG meetings, during which the Plenipotentiary opened fundamental topics concerning the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities. On behalf of national minorities, members of the CNMEG had the opportunity to initiate a discussion on selected topics within the CNMEG meetings.

The Plenipotentiary also held several working meetings with representatives of state administration bodies, state institutions, relevant embassies in the Slovak Republic, as well as international organizations. These meetings were focused on exchanging information and consulting proposals to improve the status of national minorities and promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In addition to the Plenipotentiary, many of these meetings were attended by representatives of national minorities on the basis of their nomination as members of CNMEG as national minorities.

During the reference period, the Plenipotentiary continued to comment on materials concerning the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities. One of the most important is the Draft amendment to the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no. 40/1993 Coll. on Citizenship of the Slovak Republic, as amended, to which the Plenipotentiary submitted 7 fundamental comments in the interdepartmental commenting procedure in August 2020, the primary goal of which was to restore the legal status existing until 2010, according to which the only form of loss of Slovak citizenship was to give up the state citizenship upon own request. After the acceptance of the proposed comment by the Plenipotentiary, one would not lose the citizenship of the Slovak Republic by acquiring foreign citizenship, but only by an expression of will. However, the Plenipotentiary's comments were not accepted. The Draft amendment to the Act was approved by the Government on 24 February 2021 by Government Resolution no. 105. Subsequently, it is necessary to discuss the Draft amendment in the National Council of the Slovak Republic. Another material commented on by the Plenipotentiary is the Measure of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic no. 307/2020 Coll. On the Provision of a Subsidy from the State Budget to Cover the Costs of Delegated State Administration for the Preparation, Flow, and Conduct of the Census of Population and Housings 2021, which will arise during the census, and on the remuneration of certain assistants performing the census. During the interdepartmental commenting procedure, and upon Plenipotentiary's initiative, the wording of Section 3 (1) letter m) was amended, as it was not clear enough from the original wording of the present Measure whether the defined categories of eligible expenditures shall include the costs for informational and promotion campaigns. The aim of the Amendment was to achieve clear comprehensibility for the addressee.

The Plenipotentiary made efforts to strengthen the position of national minorities and protect their rights by raising awareness of members of national minorities about the importance of obtaining reliable data on the ethnic structure of the Slovak population within CPH 2021. In this context, the OPGNM prepared and implemented a set of promotional and informational activities.

As part of its own Communication and Promotion Strategy CPH 2021, the OPGNM prepared and published four information leaflets aimed at urging citizens to declare their nationality, including the possibility to indicate another nationality, at declaring their mother tongue, warning about the difference between citizenship and nationality, and at warning before the possible spread of hoaxes in this area. All four leaflets were translated into 11 languages of national minorities. At the same time, *FAQs were prepared and translated* into 5 languages of national minorities. All these materials were provided for use by national organizations, cities, and municipalities where members of national minorities reside. At the same time, the Plenipotentiary, in cooperation with his Language Advisory Group, provided the translation of the information leaflet, poster, and advertising materials of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, the designation of the contact point, and also prepared subtitles for the educational video: Basic information CPH 2021 in five minority languages.

In addition to the above materials, the Plenipotentiary also prepared a promotional video *Census of Population – Slovakia is our home* – in five languages of national minorities, as well as videos with the members of CNMEG giving speeches on behalf of individual national minorities. The aim of these materials was to support and substantially increase the interest in census in terms of nationality, another nationality and mother tongue. The mentioned promotional materials and materials of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic were distributed to the municipalities listed in the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 221/1999 Coll. and municipalities in which, on the basis of the last census, 15% of the population belonged to a national minority. The members of CNMEG were regularly informed about the activities of the Plenipotentiary in connection with the implementation of CPH 2021, while all outputs were also published on the Plenipotentiary's website with a download link for anybody interested.¹⁴

In order to increase the level of participation of national minorities within the Slovak Republic, the Plenipotentiary, in cooperation with the Working group, prepared a Draft legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities. The key part of this draft regulates the participation of national minorities in decision-making on matters concerning them. In this context, the Plenipotentiary organized an international conference entitled *Legislative Models for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities*, which took place on 18 February 2020 in Bratislava. The conference included 3 panel discussions on the following topics: *What law does Slovakia need to ensure the full exercise of the rights of national minorities? What are the working models of protection of the rights of national minorities abroad? and What are the basic needs and expectations of national minorities in a changing Slovak society?* The

¹⁴Materials are available at: <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk//rozmanitost-obohává-scitanie-obyvatelov-2021/>.

conference created a platform for presenting and sharing domestic and foreign experiences in this area, as well as for a fruitful professional discussion on the topics discussed.

Streamlining the participation of national minorities remains task number one, while it relates to requirements of the national minorities and the recommendations of the monitoring mechanisms of the Council of Europe conventions, to which the Slovak Republic is a party to a contract. Following the priorities of the Manifesto, the transformation of CNMEG into a government advisory body still remains one of the current tasks. This includes a revision of the position of the Plenipotentiary within the broader human rights structure in order to ensure that issues related to the protection of national minorities are addressed at the highest political level, i.e. delegating these competencies directly to the Minister or Deputy Prime Minister, as well as to ensure the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in decision-making processes and in elected bodies at the state and local levels, including decentralized or local administration.

III. Part – Rights of national minorities in the field of culture of national minorities

3.1 Legislative and conceptual frameworks

The constitutional legal framework for the rights of members of national minorities in the field of culture is regulated by Art. 34 (1) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. According to this provision, citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic have the right to all-round development under the conditions stipulated by law, especially the right to develop their own culture along with other members of minorities or groups, the right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, assemble in national associations, establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. The rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the field of culture are enshrined in Art. 34 (1) are also regulated by relevant international conventions and documents. The right of persons belonging to minorities to develop their own culture is enshrined in Art. 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in Art. 5 of the Framework Convention.

During the reference period, the Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and the Culture of National Minorities of the Slovak Republic until 2030 (hereinafter referred to as the “Strategy”) was being worked on. In 2019, in cooperation with the OPGNB, the Concept of the Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and the Culture of National Minorities of the Slovak Republic until 2030 (hereinafter referred to as the “Strategy Concept”) was prepared, and its aim was to present the starting positions of a comprehensive strategy. The Strategy Concept was submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic for discussion by the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic without contradictions, and the Government of the Slovak Republic approved it by Government Resolution no. 317 as of 25 June 2019. The resolution in question also instructed the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic to ensure the preparation of non-legislative material – the Strategy and to submit it to the Government of the Slovak Republic by 31 December 2020.

The Concept in section 6.1 states that the preservation, development, and promotion of the rights of national minorities in all areas according to international, bilateral, and national legal obligations and frameworks shall be of top priorities of a functioning democratic state. According to the Concept, it is necessary to create a comprehensive legislative framework to ensure the development of the culture of national minorities and also the so-called new minorities in Slovakia; to reform the system of support for national minorities in Slovakia, institutional arrangements and improve financial mechanisms to support the development of the culture of national minorities. The Concept lists various measures that could contribute to the fulfillment of these objectives. This includes:

- Preparation of an act that will regulate (in detail) the exercise of the rights of national minorities under Art. 34 of the Constitution of the SR;
- Preparation of the Act on the Protection and Support of the Preservation and Development of the Culture of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic on the basis of the Framework Convention and the Charter of Languages;
- Ensuring the smooth functioning of professional theatres, music institutions, and artistic groups of national minorities in Slovakia and supporting the establishment of new professional cultural institutions from a financial, organizational, and legislative point of view;
- Establishment of the Centre for Contemporary National Culture (presentation, research, methodological centre, possibly the seat of MCF and professional national ensembles, etc.), i.e. ensuring the organizational and financial framework for the establishment of the Centre;
- Establishment of a Methodological Centre (possibly also with regional offices) for the culture of national minorities;
- Complementing the system of statistical surveys on the topic of culture of national minorities and obtaining relevant data for the creation and subsequent implementation of strategic documents related to the support and development of the culture of national minorities in Slovakia;
- Stabilization, development (e.g., broadcasting time), improvement and completion of public broadcasting of RTVS (Radio and TV of Slovakia) for national minorities;
- Taking into account the development of the culture of national minorities within the plans of self-governing regions, districts, towns, and municipalities;
- Development of an independent scene of the culture of national minorities in self-governing regions, cities and municipalities;
- Ensuring legislation amendment in the field of development of regional and local broadcasting (including private) media for national minorities;
- Contributing to the cultural and social inclusion of minorities with an emphasis on the systematic maintenance and development of minority identity, essential for cultural diversity.¹⁵

¹⁵Strategy concept available online: <https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/23978/1> .

The area of minority culture is also an important topic in the Government's Manifesto, specifically in the section "*Culture of Minorities, Culture for All*", where the Government of the Slovak Republic states that the diverse culture of national minorities has a special position within culture itself. In this document, the Government undertook to implement the prepared Strategy, to create a legislative framework to ensure the development of the culture of members of national minorities and also the so-called new minorities in Slovakia and to reform the institutional arrangements, the legislative environment, but also the financial mechanisms that serve to support the development of the culture of members of national minorities in Slovakia in accordance with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and international obligations. The Government of the Slovak Republic continues to consider the MCF as the basic instrument of financial support for the non-state culture of national minorities .

In its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic further undertook:

- to foster, within the possibilities of the public administration budget, the functioning of professional theatres, music institutions and artistic groups of national minorities and, according to budgetary possibilities, to support the establishment of new professional cultural institutions, in cooperation with local and territorial self-government;
- to develop public national broadcasting of RTVS and to stimulate regional and local broadcasting of other broadcasters for members of national minorities;
- to develop the independent scene of the culture of national minorities in self-governing regions, cities and municipalities;
- to contribute to the cultural and social inclusion of not only national minorities, with an emphasis on the systematic maintenance and development of any minority identity essential to cultural diversity;
- to create active cooperation between the Ministries of culture and Education in the field of education.

At the same time, in accordance with its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic will ensure that the constitutional right to access the cultural wealth for every citizen of the Slovak Republic is adhered to. It will therefore put in place effective tools to make culture accessible to all groups of citizens in order to increase the awareness, cultural literacy and critical thinking of the population, and to engage the all citizens with culture, including national minorities and other disadvantaged groups.¹⁶

In its Manifesto, the Government of the Slovak Republic undertook to create opportunities for members of national minorities to preserve their cultural customs, language and traditions, while setting a ban on adopting measures that would lead to assimilation by the majority population or support such assimilation.¹⁷

3.2 Institutional protection of the culture of national minorities

¹⁶Manifesto, p. 118.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 18.

Institutional protection of the development of the culture of national minorities is provided by the state, regional self-governments, municipalities and national organizations, unions, etc. In this area, within the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also referred to as the “Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic”), the institutional protection has changed during the reference period with the establishment of the Section for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and Culture of National Minorities as of 1 February 2019. The above Section consisted of the Department of Culture of National Minorities and the Department of Development of Local and Regional Culture, whose staff worked in each self-governing region and also included a coordinator for the least developed districts of Slovakia. The Section ceased to exist in 2019. Since 2020, the culture of national minorities is within the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic protected by the Department of Cross-Cutting Policies, where, in addition to the State Language Department and the Department of Culture of Slovaks Living Abroad, the Department of National Minority Culture also operates with two in-house employees and an freelance associate. Following the above, CNMEG adopted Resolution no. 160 as of 28 July 2020, which expressed concerns in connection with the ongoing changes in the institutional protection of the culture of national minorities within the organizational structure of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, and requested adequate institutional protection of the culture of national minorities within the organizational structure of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

One of the most important tools for supporting the culture of national minorities is the MCF. MCF has been established by Act no. 138/2017 Coll. on MCF (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 138/2017 Coll.”) as an independent public institution whose mission is to support and stimulate the culture of national minorities in the field of cultural and scientific activities of national minorities, in particular by creating support mechanisms for the creation and dissemination of cultural minorities and scientific values. By carrying out its mission, MCF contributes to the implementation of the cultural policy of the Slovak Republic and the EU in the area of support for the development of national minorities.

The decision-making processes of MCF are independent of the central state administration bodies; the allocation of funds is decided by elected representatives of national minorities. In accordance with Act no. 138/2017 Coll., the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic provides contributions to the MCF in the amount of at least EUR 8,000,000 from the state budget within the approved limits for the relevant budget period (one calendar year), according to the Act on the State Budget. The amount of funds intended to support activities will be distributed by the MCF among the professional councils in the proportion defined by Section 7 (4) of Act no. 138/2017 Coll. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is entitled to block a maximum of 20% of the contributions to the MCF that will be used predominantly to foster the priorities determined by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (more on MCF support activities in subchapter 3.8.1).

3.2.1 Cultural and educational facilities

Cultural and educational activity is an activity which leads to respecting human rights and diversity of cultural expressions, to the formation of a cultural way of life, to increasing the cultural and educational level of the Slovak population and to developing creativity as the basic cultural value of a society. In accordance with Act no. 189/2015 Coll. on Cultural and Educational Activities (hereinafter referred to as "Act No. 189/2015 Coll."), the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic performs state administration in the area of cultural and educational activities and establishes the National Education Centre (hereinafter also referred to as the "NEC") based in Bratislava, and the Slovak Central Observatory based in Hurbanov. A cultural and educational facility may also be established by a self-governing region or municipality, while the founder of a cultural and educational facility determines the cultural and educational activities of the facility, its professional focus and territorial scope and controls its activities. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic also determines strategic and conceptual directions for the development of cultural and educational activities.

National Education Centre

During the reference period, the National Education Centre (hereinafter also referred to as "NEC") carried out the following activities:

- Professional seminar "Support and protection of human rights in the field of culture" (Košice, 13 June 2019) with two lectures given:
 - Cultural and educational activities in excluded communities – examples of good practice, Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in Prešov;
 - Reducing prejudices and stereotypes in relation to the Romani people, the Institute of Romani Studies of the University of Prešov in Prešov;
- Article in the journal Social Prevention: Just don't give up and continue. Good experience with non-formal education and upbringing of young Romani.

As part of the digitization of Slovakia's cultural heritage, NEC implemented *the projects entitled Central Application Infrastructure and Registry and Harmonization of Information Systems*, which created a central system for all institutions in the field of culture and which resulted in central registers of cultural objects and a central portal of Slovak cultural heritage. Another implemented project: *Digitalization and Multimedia Products of the National Education Centre*, which created digital film, text, graphic and photographic objects and also a Virtual Excursion, which present the cultural heritage of Slovakia in a comprehensive way on the "Slovakiana" web portal. The cultures of national minorities are also part of Slovakia's cultural heritage. Several virtual exhibitions related to the culture and heritage of national minorities in Slovakia are available at the "Slovakiana" web portal, e.g. exhibition dedicated to Ferdinand Katon, a Hungarian native of Spišská Nová Ves and¹⁸ a master of landscape paintings, Arnold Peter Weisz-Kubínčan, an artist with¹⁹ Jewish roots, and also to regions

¹⁸<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/21214>

¹⁹<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/21209>

(²⁰Gemer), cities (e.g. Dunajská Streda²¹) or sacral monuments (wooden temples in Uličský Kriv²², Ladomirová,²³ a synagogue in Prešov²⁴), which were created by and where members of national minorities live.

Contests

The activities of the NEC also include the organization of contests and shows. Within these activities, the culture of national minorities can be presented, e.g. at the "Šaff's spur" contest (National contest and show of solo folk dancers), "Countryman's Habovka" (village) (national contest and show of musical folklore of children and adults), "Bearers of *traditions*" (national contest and show of folklore groups, which is a top event Slovakia and takes place once every 4 years – last time in 2018) or the "Language of *Dance*" (formerly "Dance, Dance" – a nationwide contest and choreography show of folklore groups, one of the top event of its kind in Slovakia). Contests such as *Strunobranie* (a nationwide contest and a show of non-professional music groups and soloists) can only be participated at in the Slovak language. The civic organization Romano kher – Romani House in cooperation with NEC in 2019 announced the 11th year of the art-literary competition for primary school pupils, primary art schools and children from orphanages *Coloured World – Coloriskeri luma 2019*.

Contest *Tompa Mihály Országos Verseny* (Mihály Tompa Republican Contest) organized by the Csemadok Republican Council and other cultural associations of Hungarians in Slovakia is a competition in reciting poetry and reading prose in the Hungarian language with nationwide scope. This entity also announces a nationwide show of set-to-music national poetry "*All-Slovak festival of set-to-music poetry*". The Gemer-Malohont Education Centre, in cooperation with the Csemadok Regional Committee, organizes the "*István Ferenczy Slovak Art Competition*" for primary and secondary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction, both in Slovakia and also abroad. Every year, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic announces a competition in the presentation of poetry and prose in the Slovak language for primary and secondary school pupils with the Hungarian language of instruction entitled "*Dobré slovo*".

Duchnovič's Prešov is a literary competition that focuses on the artistic recitation of Ruthenian poetry, prose, own work, small stage forms, spiritual recitation (biblical stories) and *folk tales*. The announcer of the competition is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, and the main organizer of the nationwide event is the "Ruthenian Revival in Slovakia" association, while the organizers of the district rounds are the relevant educational centres. Pupils with the Ruthenian language can also take part in the singing *competition entitled "Songs of my Ancestry"*, organized by the "Ruthenian Revival in Slovakia", the Vihorlat Museum in Humenné, the Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa

²⁰<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/20437>

²¹<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/20419>

²²<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/20278>

²³<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/20098>

²⁴<https://www.slovakiana.sk/virtualne-vystavy/20251>

and the Slovak Matica in cooperation with the towns of Humenné and Medzilaborce. "*Makovická string*" is a contest of singers of Ruthenian and Ukrainian folk songs, the national round of which is organized in Bardejov. The main organizer of the event is the Association of Ruthenians-Ukrainians of Slovakia.

3.2.2 Other organizations established by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

Music centre

During the reference period, the Music Centre organized an educational concert called "*Bartók and the Wooden Prince*" (a musical program for primary school children, performed in Slovak, Hungarian and German languages) and an educational concert in the Romani language called "*Džal mange pal tute* (You is what matters).

Centre of Folk Art Production

The Centre of the Folk Art Production has been cooperating for a long time with the producers from various national minorities, e.g. corn husk craftsmanship (Hungarian national minority) or straw pictures (Ruthenian national minority).

Literary Information Centre

There has been a cooperation with the Romani Literary Club during the reference period²⁵. Children from the Romani community performed a musical-literary adaptation of Slovak legends written by Zuzana Kuglerová both in Slovak and their native language. The children's ensemble Bidovčatáz from Bidovce also received a consignment of books for children and youth from the Literary Information Centre. Cooperation with Romani communities in eastern Slovakia has been going on for four years now and the continuity of this cooperation will continue. The Literary Information Centre donated generous consignments of magazines and books to Romani communities for the development of reading and promotion of Slovak literature and for establishing Romani reading clubs.

3.2.3 Cultural and educational facilities established by self-governing regions

Members of national minorities are involved in the activities of cultural and educational facilities listed in Table no. 2, a detailed overview of these activities is in Annex no. 2. The organization of events of these cultural and educational facilities was limited in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the measures in place, some events were organized, especially in periods when the measures were less stringent. However, several events had to be postponed or fully canceled. Such events included the upcoming district singing contests for young Romani talents, the *Golden Romani Nightingale*, which the Hornozemplín Education

²⁵The Roma Literary Club (ROLIK) is a community of authors of poetry and prose who draw inspiration for their work from the life of the Romani. ROLIK was established in 2009 in Banská Bystrica, at the initiative of the Association of Roma Initiatives. The aim of the club is to present the literary work of the Romani and about the Romani.

Centre had to cancel due to COVID pandemic. Some cultural and educational facilities have adapted to the situation by organizing events in the online space. For example, the Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa organized a multicultural online *Christmas program in the Ľubovňa region*, which was attended by *the folklore groups Litmaňivka, Šambriňci and Kečera* (Ruthenians), *Young marmon* (Carpathian Germans) and *Plavčanka* (peoples of Šariš). The event was broadcast via the internet and social networks such as Facebook and YouTube on December 25, 2020. The Galanta Education Centre organized exhibitions through virtual presentations.

Table no. 2: Cultural and educational facilities dealing with members of national minorities or presenting their culture

founder/self-governing region	Cultural and educational facilities	National minorities for whom the events were organized or their cultures are related to such events (number of events, if known)
Banská Bystrica	Novohrad Education Centre in Lučenec	Hungarian (8)
	Gemer-Malohont Education Centre in Rimavská Sobota	Hungarian, Romani (12)
	Hont-Ipeľ Education centre in Veľký Krtíš	Hungarian (18)
	Education Centre Pohronie in Žiar nad Hronom	Romani (4)
	Education Centre Podpoľanie in Zvolen	Romani (1)
Košice	Cultural Centre Medzibodrožie and Použie in Kráľovské Chlmec	Hungarian, Roma (8)
	Cultural Centre of the Bodva and Rudohorie valleys in Moldava nad Bodvou	Hungarian, Romani (4)
	Abova Cultural Centre in Bidovce	Romani (2)
	Gemer Education Centre in Rožňava	Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian (6)
	Spiš Education Centre in Spišská Nová Ves	Ruthenian, Ukrainian (2)
	Museum and Cultural Centre of South Zemplín in Trebišov	(2)
Nitra	Regional Education Centre in Nitra	Hungarian (2)
	Regional Education Centre in Komárno	Hungarian (4)
Prešov	Education Centre Podtatranské in Poprad	Ruthenian, Polish, Romani (4+)
	Upper Šariš Education Centre in Bardejov	Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Romani (5)
	Education Centre Podduklianske in Svidník	Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian (52)
	Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa	Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German, Goral, Polish (30)
	Upper Zemplin Education Centre in Vranov nad Topľou	Romani, Ruthenian (9)
Trenčín	Regional Cultural Centre in Prievidza	German, Jewish (3)
Trnava	Galanta Education Centre	Hungarian, Romani, Jewish (3+)
	Rye Island Education Centre in Dunajská Streda	Hungarian, Romani (4)
Žilina	Regional Cultural Centre in Žilina	Romani (1)
	Turiec Cultural Centre in Martin	Russian (1)

Source: Self-governing regions.

3.2.4 Observatories

The Regional Observatory and Planetarium in Žiar nad Hronom, founded by the Banská Bystrica self-governing region, offers Hungarian-language lectures for pupils and students of primary and secondary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction during their

visits of the Observatory in Rimavská Sobota. Hungarian-language quizzes are available upon request. The Tekov Observatory in Levice, founded by the Nitra self-governing region, promotes astronomy and related sciences through the portable Starlab planetarium in a very successful way. Children and youth are being educated in the above field since the preschool age. The education is provided also in Hungarian. The Observatory organizes art contests on the subject of *space*, in which authors (primary school students) can express their perception of this fascinating area, as well as educational programs that use the possibilities of a digital planetarium to display the sky and space objects. These activities (digital planetarium related) are being organized exclusively for pupils of Hungarian and Romani nationality. The Observatory in Partizánske, which was founded by the Trenčín Self-governing region, is open to members of various nationalities with the specific content of its activities. In the reference period, the Observatory cooperated with a civic association, which focuses on Romani youth in its activities. An activity focused on the education and popularization of astronomical sciences combined with practical observations of the Sun was devoted to these activities.

3.2.5 Hungarian Education Institute in Slovakia

In addition to cultural and educational facilities established by a central state administration body, a self-governing region or a municipality, cultural and educational activities can be executed by organizations operating beyond the scope of Act no. 189/2015 Coll., namely professional institutions of national organizations, e.g. Hungarian Education Institute in Slovakia, founded by and performing activities in close cooperation with the Republican Council of Csemadok. The Institute organizes, e.g. a nationwide contest in reciting poetry and reading prose in the Hungarian language named *Tompa Mihály Országos Verseny* (Mihály Tompa Republic Competition) or children's art competition *Duna Menti Tavasz* (Danube Spring), folk music camp for children and youth, professional gatherings for lead singing groups and cithara ensembles and so on.

3.3 Libraries

In accordance with Act no. 126/2015 Coll. on Libraries and on Amendments to Act No. 206/2009 Coll. on Museums and Galleries and on the Protection of Objects of Cultural Value and on the Amendment of the Act of the Slovak National Council no. 372/1990 Coll. on Offenses as amended by later regulations as amended by Act no. 38/2014 Coll. as amended, a Library, as a legal entity under a special regulation, may be established by a central state administration body, a self-governing region or a municipality. In accordance with Section 12 of this Act, in municipalities where citizens belonging to a national minority or ethnic group reside, the public library shall be obliged to take the above fact into account in terms of updating and upgrading the library collection. The regional library, which is established by the self-governing region, operates on the territory of several municipalities and, among other things, ensures the replenishment of the library collections of municipal libraries on the basis of contractual relations.

Table no. 3: When creating the library fund and providing methodological assistance and advisory services to municipal libraries, city libraries, school libraries, special libraries, and to their founders, the list of regional libraries shall take into account that citizens belonging to the national library live in these municipalities (they make up either 5% or at least 500 inhabitants of at least one municipality).

Name of the library (districts the methodological assistance is provided)	National minority
Small Carpathian Library in Pezinok (Bratislava IV, Malacky, Pezinok, Senec)	Hungarian, Croatian, Czech, German,
Mikuláš Kováč's Public Library in Banská Bystrica (Banská Bystrica, Brezno)	Romani, German, Czech
Ján Kollár's Library in Kremnica (Banská Štiavnica, Žarnovica, Žiar nad Hronom)	German, Romani
Matej Hrebenda's Library in Rimavská Sobota (Rimavská Sobota, Revúca)	Hungarian, Romani, German
Hont-Novohrad Library of A.H. Škultéty in Veľký Krtíš (Veľký Krtíš)	Hungarian, Romani
Ľudovít Štúr's Regional Library in Zvolen (Zvolen, Detva, Krupina)	Romani
Novohrad Library in Lučenec (Lučenec, Poltár)	Hungarian, Romani, German
Ján Bocatia's Public Library in Košice (Košice I-IV, Košice-okolie)	Hungarian, Romani, German
Gemer Library of Pavel Dobšínský in Rožňava (Rožňava district)	Hungarian, Romani
Zemplín Library of Gorazd Zvonický in Michalovce (Michalovce, Sobrance)	Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian
Zemplín Library in Trebišov (Trebišov)	Hungarian, Romani
Spiš Library in Spišská Nová Ves (Spišská Nová Ves, Gelnica)	Romani, Ruthenian, German,
Anton Bernolák's Library in Nové Zámky, Anton Bernolák Könyvtár Érsekújvár (Nové Zámky)	Hungarian, Romani
József Szinnyei Library in Komárno, József Könyvtár Komárom Library (Komárno)	Hungarian, Romani
Karol Kmeťek Regional Library in Nitra (Nitra, Šaľa and Zlaté Moravce)	Hungarian, Romani
Tek Library in Levice (Levice)	Hungarian, Romani
Tríbeč Library in Topoľčany (Topoľčany)	German
Upper Zemplin Library in Vranov nad Topľou (Vranov nad Topľou)	Romani, Ruthenian,
Ján Henkel Library in Levoča (Levoča)	Ruthenian
P.O. Hviezdoslav Regional Library in Prešov (Prešov, Sabinov)	Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian
Ľubovňa Library (Stará Ľubovňa)	Ruthenian, Romani, German
Dávid Gutgesel District Library (Bardejov)	Ruthenian, Romani
Podduklianska Library in Svidník (Svidník, Stropkov)	Ruthenian, Romani
Podtatranská library in Poprad (Poprad, Kežmarok)	Romani
Vihorlat Library in Humenné (Humenné, Snina, Medzilaborce)	Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Romani
Upper Nitra Library in Prievidza (Prievidza, Partizánske)	German
Považie Library in Považská Bystrica (Považská Bystrica, Púchov)	
Michal Rešetka Public Library in Trenčín (Trenčín, Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Bánovce nad Bebravou and Myjava)	
Galanta Library (Galanta)	Hungarian
Juraj Fándly Library in Trnava (Trnava, Hlohovec and Piešťany)	Hungarian, Romani
Záhorie Library in Senica (Senica and Skalica)	Romani, Moravian
Rye Island Library in Dunajská Streda	Hungarian, Romani, Czech
Regional Library in Žilina (Žilina and Bytča)	
Kysuce Library in Čadca (Čadca and Kysucké Nové Mesto)	
Gašpar Fejérpataky-Belopotocký Liptov Library in Liptovský Mikuláš (Liptovský Mikuláš and Ružomberok)	Romani, German
Anton Habovštiak Orava Library in Dolný Kubín (Dolný Kubín, Námestovo and Tvrdošín)	
Turiec Library in Martin (Martin and Turčianske Teplice)	German, Czech
Source: CPH 2011 results, founding documents of libraries	

As of 2019, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic keeps a total of 1,667 libraries on record, of which 1,421 are public libraries and their branches (this number includes regional libraries with regional scope, regional, city and municipal libraries), 8 scientific libraries and 248 special libraries and their branches.²⁶ The Association of Hungarian Librarians in Slovakia (Szlovákiai Magyar Könyvtárosok Egyesülete) conducted a research in 2019 to map and evaluate the situation of libraries in municipalities with a Hungarian majority.²⁷ To determine exact municipalities, the researchers relied on data from the CPH 2011. The research focused on public libraries (municipal, city), museum libraries, special libraries, and school libraries with Hungarian as the language of instruction in 363 municipalities, which, according to the census, had more than 50% of the population of Hungarian nationality. The subject of the research also included libraries in 25 municipalities and city districts, in which the population of Hungarian nationality made up at least 1,000 persons. The research revealed that in 197 municipalities there is at least one library, 56 municipalities do not have a functional library, only a stagnating one. What this means is that they have a library collection, but the library is passive, as there is no librarian and active services are provided. There is no library in 108 municipalities, which equals to 27.84% of the surveyed municipalities. Almost half of the functioning libraries (48.1%) are public libraries (148), 41.6% are school libraries (128). There are 14 city libraries, 8 regional libraries and 5 museum libraries, 2 regional libraries, and three other libraries without an exact classification. The language composition of the library collection could not be accurately quantified by all libraries, especially those that do not use the library information system (93.24% of public libraries and 94.53% of school libraries), they could only determine it by estimation. The book collections of the researched libraries contain on average 49.79% of books in the Hungarian language. The largest proportion is achieved by public libraries (74%), school libraries (75%), and other libraries (86.50%).

²⁶Annual report about the library for 2019. Available online: https://www.culture.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/KULT10-01_kniznice_sumar_SR_2019.pdf.

²⁷The research report is available online: http://www.szmke.sk/assets/docs/research_report_sk.pdf.

Table no. 4: Data on library units in the Hungarian language in libraries in municipalities with a share of the population of Hungarian nationality higher than 50% or with their absolute number higher than 1000

district	municipalities with a functioning library	the number of citizens of Hungarian nationality in the	total library units	library units in the Hungarian language	number of library units per capita of Hungarian nationality	the share of library units in the Hungarian language within the library collection
Bratislava I-V	2	3386	270688	17432	5	6.44%
Dunajská Streda	39	75384	589937	451255	6	76.49%
Galanta	15	28009	273634	149384	5	54.59%
Košice II + Košice-okolie	6	6890	526114	74586	11	14.18%
Komárno	27	58270	476271	303440	5	63.71%
Lučenec	9	9664	67530	40897	4	60.56%
Levice	19	19871	160447	99631	5	62.10%
Michalovce	2	6128	20249	15319	2	75.65%
Nitra	1	1443	219246	4385	3	2.00%
Nové Zámky	27	40587	426939	202740	5	47.49%
Revúca	2	4874	32058	16286	3	50.80%
Rimavská Sobota	6	9990	167059	45434	5	27.20%
Rožňava	12	10381	180047	61975	6	34,42%
Šaľa	9	15951	141550	116377	7	82.22%
Senec	3	3973	63249	20351	5	32.18%
Trebišov	7	12958	72646	35587	3	48.99%
Veľký Krtíš	11	5159	41361	27818	5	67.26%

Source: Research report of the project "Libraries of Municipalities with Hungarian Majority in Slovakia".

Overview of activities aimed at preserving and developing the culture of national minorities of three libraries within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, i.e. the State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica, the State Scientific Library in Prešov (and its specialized branch, the Documentation and Information Centre of Romani Culture) and the State Scientific Library in Košice, as well as some libraries run by self-governing regions, is listed in Annex no. 3.

Table no. 5: List of regional libraries that organize activities for persons belonging to national minorities or expand their library collection with books in the languages of national minorities according to the information provided by their founders

Library name	National minority
Small Carpathian Library in Pezinok	methodological assistance: Hungarian, Romani
Mikuláš Kováč Public Library in Banská Bystrica	Czech
Ján Kollár Library in Kremnica	Romani
Matej Hrebenda Library in Rimavská Sobota	Hungarian, Romani
A.H. Škultéty Hont-Novohrad Library in Veľký Krtíš	Hungarian, Romani
Ľudovít Štúr Regional Library in Zvolen	Czech
Novohrad Library in Lučenec	Hungarian, Romani
Ján Bocatia Public Library in Košice	cooperation with libraries and institutions in Hungary
Pavel Dobšínský Gemer Library in Rožňava	Hungarian
Gorazd Zvonický Zemplín Library in Michalovce	Romani, Czech
Zemplín Library in Trebišov	Romani
Anton Bernolák Library in Nové Zámky, Anton Bernolák Könyvtár Érsekújvár (Nové Zámky)	Hungarian
József Szinyeyi Library in Komárno, József Könyvtár Komárom Library (Komárno)	Hungarian
Karol Kmeťek Regional Library in Nitra	Romani
Tekov Library in Levice	Romani
Tríbeč Library in Topoľčany	Romani
Upper Zemplin Library in Vranov nad Topľou	Romani,
Ľubovňa Library	Romani, Czech, Ruthenian
David Gutgesel District Library	Ruthenian, Romani
Podtatranská library in Poprad	Polish,
Vihorlat Library in Humenné	Ruthenian, Romani, Ukrainian
Galanta Library	Hungarian
Juraj Fándly Library in Trnava	Hungarian
Rye Island Library in Dunajská Streda	Hungarian
Regional Library in Žilina	Polish, Czech
Gašpar Fejérpataky-Belopotocký Liptov Library in Liptovský Mikuláš	Polish, Czech
Anton Habovštiak Orava Library in Dolný Kubín	Polish, Czech
Turieč Library in Martin	Polish, Czech
Source: Self-governing regions.	

In accordance with Act no. 212/1997 Coll. on Mandatory copies of periodicals, non-periodical publications, and copies of audiovisual works, as amended, the publication of periodicals, non-periodical publications, and the production of copies of audiovisual works in languages other than the state language is not restricted in compliance with the provisions of the given Act and special regulations. The above means that all publications published in the Slovak Republic, including publications published in the languages of national minorities, should be available in the Slovak National Library. In addition, the press with regional coverage (also in the language of the national minority) should also be submitted to the relevant regional libraries.

Table no. 6: Number of non-periodical publications published in the languages of national minorities by entities of national minorities in 2019

the language of the national minority	number of titles	number of copies	entity of a national minority	number of titles	number of copies
Bulgarian			Bulgarian	1	2
Czech	164	188 436	Czech		
Hebrew			Jewish	3	2 655
Croatian	9	13 090	Croatian	1	500
Hungarian	379	325 828	Hungarian	95	54 475
German	31	16 644	German	1	300
Polish	4	850	Polish	2	12
Romani			Romani	21	2 838
Ruthenian	15	3 121	Ruthenian	11	3 800
Russian	22	24 135	Russian		
Serbian			Serbian	1	400
Ukrainian	5	572	Ukrainian	4	900
other	2	101	other/multicultural	6	2380

Source: Annual Report on Non-Periodic Publications for 2019; Annual Report on the Culture of National Minorities for 2019 (<https://www.culture.gov.sk/ministerstvo/statistika-kultury/vysledky/statne-statisticke-zistovanie-v-oblasti-kultury-za-slovensku-republiku-za-year-2019/>); MC SR.

3.4 Theatres

3.4.1 Professional national theatres and artistic ensembles

There are five national professional entities of art in the Slovak Republic, which are under the founding authority of self-governing regions: Alexander Duchnovič Theatre in Prešov, Romathan Theatre in Košice, Thália Színház Theatre in Košice, Jókai Theatre in Komárno and Poddukelský folk art ensemble in Prešov (musical and dance ensemble) and one national professional artistic ensemble, which is under the founding authority of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic – Dance Theatre Ifjú Szivek. Their activity is primarily focused on national culture.

Table no. 7: Overview of funding, number of performances and premiers of national theatres

theatre	performances		premieres		transfer from the founder (EUR)		financial means spent on the activity (EUR)	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Thália Színház Theatre	117	22	4	1	792,087.88	771,329	1,890,312.18	1,710,453.71
Romathan Theatre	87	11	3	3	503,512	523,826	555,525	530,826
Jókai Theatre in Komárno	135	49	5	3	1,231,130	1,153,538.1	1,723,380.34	1,446,625.97
Alexander Duchnovič Theatre	122	51	4	3	647,204	689,250	720,585.46	728,786.19
PULS	90	22	1	1 ²⁸	735,690.46	731,240.65	883,996.04	838,192.81
Ifjú Szívek	83	1	15	2 ²⁹	1,933,746	1,207,894	1,028,365	1,207,894

Source: Annual reports of theatres, Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, self-governing regions, PULS

Ifjú Szívek Dance Theatre

In 2019, the Ifjú Szívek Dance Theatre (hereinafter also "ISDT") participated in the International *Folk Festival in Palma de Mallorca*. In Slovakia, ISDT has participated in 2 important folklore festivals, in Východná and Želiezovce. The theatre also attended a reunion of authentic folklore fans in Transylvania, Romania. In 2019, *Allegro Molto Barbaro* premiered.

In 2020, the Ifjú Szívek Dance Theatre celebrated its 20th anniversary. Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic and restrictive measures, most of the planned events in connection with the anniversary, as well as most other theatrical events, were canceled or postponed to the next year. In 2020, the Ifjú Szívek Dance Theatre also received an invitation to the largest international festival of contemporary theatre in France, the Festival Off d'Avignon. After two successful seasons in 2016 and 2017, the Finetuning show won the Prix Tournesol prize, and in 2020, 18 performances of *Allegro Molto Barbaro* were set at the *Golovine Dance Theatre*. The invitation is postponed to 2021. In 2020, ISDT premiered twice, the ISDT *20 Gala* program and the *Giouco Piano – Traditional String Quartet* (online music concert). In 2020, ISDT released the album *Giouco Piano*. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2 premieres did not take place: *Authentication* and *Mandatory Recommendation*.

Due to the pandemic situation and the closure of theatres, the number of ISDT spectators decreased as a result. While in 2019, when it was possible to organize performances throughout the year, ISDT performances were watched by 28,101 spectators, in 2021 it was only 1,606 spectators. ISDT adapted to the situation by organizing two online performances, namely *Seventy-seven Verbunks* (December 23, 2020) and *Cuckoo Egg / Kakukktójas* (December 30, 2020).³⁰

²⁸Premiere of the musical *Jesus Christ Super Star* in collaboration with the Jonáš Záborský Theatre.

²⁹Due to the pandemic, 2 additional premieres did not take place.

³⁰The current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic also affected the process of reconstruction of the ISDT building. The original date of completion and handover of the renovated building was set for March 16, 2021. The company that is renovating the building informed ISDT by a letter, in which it stated that the work must be suspended for a certain period from 16 December 2020 due to an emergency situation. There was also an increase in the scope of work by 3 months. The preliminary date for the completion of the reconstruction is 15 November 2021. Currently, the biggest challenge is to finance the "extra work" created during the reconstruction. Unfortunately, during the preliminary monitoring of the building in the design phase, several serious problems were not detectable. The real condition of the building was shown only after the theatre staff

Poddukelský Folk Art Ensemble in Prešov

In 2019, the Poddukelský Folk Art Ensemble (PFAE) organized performances in Ruthenian villages with the support of MCF performances with Ruthenian themes outside Ruthenian regions throughout Slovakia in order to promote Ruthenian culture, performances with a representative program that includes sections dedicated to minorities and ethnicities - Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Goral, Jewish, Russian, Moldovan. In 2019, PFAE premiered the performance *Immortal Dancer*, which contains a large part of Ruthenian songs, some are performed in Romani.

In 2020, PFAE continued performances in Ruthenian municipalities organized with the support of MCF, performances with a representative program that includes sections dedicated to minorities and ethnicities - Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Goral, Jewish, Russian, Moldovan, and also recorded *the Immortal Dancer CD*, which contains both Ruthenian and Romani songs.

Alexander Duchnovič Theatre in Prešov

In 2019, the Alexander Duchnovič Theatre (hereinafter referred to as "ADT") presented 3 premiere performances in the Ruthenian language – *Gingerbread Cottage* (fairy tale, March 29, 2019), *Sandpit* (May 17, 2019) and *Known Unknown* (October 18, 2019). On December 6, 2019, the game *They Went Fools* premiered in Ukrainian. In 2019, ADT performed a total of 122 performances. The ADT's activities were affected in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken against the spread of the disease, which resulted in a limited number of performances, only 51 in total. Nevertheless, ADT staged and performed 3 new plays – in the Ruthenian language *Lie Detector* (premiered on September 18, 2020) and Also the *Wise Get it Wrong* (October 14, 2020) and in the Ukrainian language – *Mirandolina* (December 18, 2020).

Thália Színház Theatre in Košice

In 2019, the theatre performed 4 premieres: *Terror* (March 1, 2019), *Women's Lies* (April 18, 2019), *Adventure* (October 10, 2019) and *Today You Go Nowhere* (December 12, 2019). The total number of repetitions and other performances and activities: 117, of which 72 in the Košice self-governing region, 27 outside the region, and 18 performances abroad. As part of the Jubilee Thalia Festival 50 2019, the theatre performed 4 shows as a guest theatre ensemble, of which 2 in the Slovak Republic and 2 in Hungary. In 2020, the COVID-19 year, the theatre played 1 premiere (*The Case of Young Noszty with Marika Tóth* on February 20, 2020). The total number of repetitions and other performances and activities: 22, of which 16 in the Košice self-governing region, 3 outside the region, and 3 performances abroad.

moved out, after the floors and ceilings were uncovered. Several emergencies were detected, the financial coverage of the removal of emergencies was not included in the original budget of the reconstruction. Despite the fact that the dance theatre received funding in the amount of EUR 252,000 at the end of 2020 to eliminate the mentioned emergencies, the biggest challenge of the organization is the current financial security for the completion of the reconstruction, which cannot be at the expense of the main, artistic activity. The pandemic significantly limited the possibilities of performing the main activity of the dance theatre, whose financial impact on the organization's income is significant.

Romathan Theatre

In 2019, the Romathan Theatre performed 3 premieres – *Jacob's Adventures* (May 3, 2019), *The Smiling Stories of the Romanis* (June 27, 2019) and *The Romani Bloody Violin* (December 9, 2019). In addition, on October 17, 2019, a concert entitled *Romathan Theatre and the Košice State Philharmonic perform together took place*. The total number of repetitions and other performances and activities in 2019: 87, of which 80 in the Košice self-governing region, 5 outside the region, and 2 performances abroad.

In 2020, despite the pandemic, 3 premiere performances took place – *Dead City* (September 24, 2019), *Clever Moribundus* (December 7, 2020 – online) and the concert named *Forgotten Melodies of the Romani* (December 17, 2019). The total number of repetitions and other performances and activities was 11, of which 8 in the territory of the Košice self-governing region, 3 outside the region and no performance abroad.

In the area of conceptual materials of the minority national culture of the Košice self-governing region, the development plan of the Romathan Theatre is being developed with the aim of a comprehensive solution of conditions for the development and dissemination of authentic Romani art (even outside the theatrical). Romano kher.

Jókai Theatre in Komárno

In 2019, the Jókai Theatre in Komárno (hereinafter also referred to as "JDK") performed 135 performances from its own repertoire. The guest ensembles played 33 performances in JDK. In 2019, JDK staged 5 new performances - *Complete Strangers* (premiered on February 8, 2019), *Cabaret* (March 29, 2019), *Glass Shoe* (June 7, 2019), *The Glembays* (October 11, 2019) and *The Wizard of Oz* (7 December, 2019).

In 2020, due to the pandemic, only 49 performances from their own repertoire were played and 37 performances were performed by guest ensembles. The theatre had 3 premieres in 2020 - *A bee in the Bonnet* (January 31, 2020), *Love, Don't Fight* (September 18, 2020) and *Hamlet* (September 22, 2020). The theatre continued to perform online.

3.4.2 Other theatres

Theatres under the founding authority of the Banská Bystrica Self-governing region

In 2020, the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen included the author's program entitled *Night with Light for Everyone in the online event Night of Theatres*, which was focused on mutual enrichment with otherness in culture. Within this program, the guests dealing with the Romani issues in practice had a discussion about Romani culture, artistic cooperation with the Romani children and youth, benefits and advantages of interconnection, etc. The Dance Studio Theatre in Banská Bystrica conducted a dance workshop for the Romani children from the local Romani dance ensemble Romka in cooperation with the domestic Arteska cultural centre as part of an outing performance in Detva. In 2020, as part of a live stream of the children's dance performance entitled *Pure Joy*, the theatre organized a public fundraiser for

a civic association Cesta von (Way out), which is dedicated to children in marginalized Romani communities.

Slovak Folk Art Ensemble

In its current repertoire, the Slovak Folk Art Ensemble (hereinafter referred to as "SĽUK") presents dance and musical performances, which are artistic adaptations of the traditional folk culture of national minorities and ethnic groups living in Slovakia, namely the Women's Csardás *from Bídovce, Žirany and Moldava nad Bodvou* (Hungarian and Romani dances), Zbujnice v žinčici (dance of Gorals from Podhaľany), Beľare (youth dances of Ruthenians) and *It was a Dark Night* (Ruthenian songs). SĽUK also offers a CD from the Christmas concert of folk music *Vinšujeme Vám (We wish you a...)*, which is dedicated to the Christmas music of national minorities and ethnic groups living in Slovakia (Ruthenians, Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Croats). In 2020, as part of enlarging the fund of traditional folk culture, SĽUK made about 50 Romani songs (residents of Komárno and Hurbanov) available to visitors.

Theatre Institute Bratislava

As part of the 2019 project, a monodrama by Romani actor František Balog - *A Romani from Swaddling Clothes* was produced by the Actor Theatre under the Košice Tower on 16 October 2019. In 2020, the Theatre Institute prepared one of the most important publications: *History of Slovak Theatre II*. In the *Drama* part, the publication deals with minority theatres and *Dance part* encompasses national folk ensembles. Theatres of national minorities are regularly presented in the journal *kød – specifically about theatre*, which is published by the Theatre Institute. The Theatre Institute ensures the collection of statistical data on theatres of national minorities.

3.5 Museums and galleries

3.5.1 National museums

In the field of protection of the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups representing the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of nationals living in the Slovak Republic, museums of cultures of national minorities with their systematic scientific-research, documentation, collection and exhibition activities have an irreplaceable place.

The Slovak National Museum (hereinafter referred to as the "SNM") includes the following museums of national and ethnic minorities as separate specialized organizational units:

- SNM – Museum of Jewish Culture (in Bratislava);
- SNM – Museum of Carpathian German Culture (in Bratislava);
- SNM – Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia (in Bratislava);
- SNM – Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia (in Bratislava);
- SNM – Museum of Ukrainian Culture (in Svidník);
- SNM – Museum of Ruthenian Culture (in Prešov);
- SNM – Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia (part of SNM in Martin);

- SNM – Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia (part of SNM in Martin).

A detailed overview of the activities of museums of national minorities and ethnic groups (acquisition activities, scientific research activities, permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions, publishing activities, cultural and educational activities, and attendance rate) is provided by the annual reports of these museums.

In particular, it is necessary to mention the Research of the Culture of National Minorities connected with the project of the joint exhibition of national museums prepared for the year 2021 (with an outlook into the year 2022). The professional guarantor of the project is SNM – Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia. The scenario of the joint exhibition of museums of national minorities is called *Me + you = Us, Centuries on a joint journey*, which is submitted for approval to a commission of representatives of all museums of national minorities and external experts.

SNM – Museum of Jewish Culture

SNM – The Museum of Jewish Culture was founded on the premises of the Historical Museum of the SNM as the Department of Jewish Culture and became an independent specialized museum of the SNM with nationwide impact in 1994. The mission of the museum is to preserve and promote Jewish culture and art in Slovakia. The activities of the museum are focused on the presentation of spiritual and material Jewish culture and the documentation of the Holocaust in Slovakia. Its aim is to save three-dimensional Judaicas or documents from destruction, forgetting, or exporting abroad.

From a promotional point of view, in the first half of 2019, there were interesting events related to the laying of wreaths and a reverential memory of the first transport of young Slovak women and girls from Poprad to the Auschwitz concentration camp. The events received attention in all media areas (press, television, radio, and the Internet). Several SNM museums took part in the *Night of Museums and Galleries*, which took place on 18 May 2019, including the Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava. The exhibitions that the museum opened in the first half of the year enjoyed rather great media attention: *Bible exhibition from the library (Museum of Jewish Culture)*, and especially the exhibition on the chess genius Richard Réti, which was opened in Bratislava on June 6, 2019.

The museum provided 13 lectureships, which were attended by a total of 175 visitors, and one cultural event – the opening of the exhibition that was attended by 45 people. The cultural and educational activities, as well as the promotion of the museum also include podcasts, blogs, videos for online promotion and presentation on social networks (Facebook and Instagram) through the tools such as *Calendar of personalities* and *the Subject of the month*.

Holocaust Museum in Sered'

The tragic period of resolving the Jewish question in Slovakia during the Second World War is commemorated by the Museum of the Holocaust in Sered', which was established on the

premises of the former labour and concentration camp in Sereď. Since its opening on January 26, 2016, the museum has commemorated the period of persecution of Jews in Slovakia with a permanent exhibition and thematic exhibitions of period documents, photographs, and objects. The mission of the museum is to bring closer the life of Jews in Slovakia and to help acquire basic knowledge about the Jewish community with regard to the Holocaust. The museum also serves as a memorial to all the murdered Jews from Slovakia, since as many as 16,000 Jews underwent the Sereď camp alone between 1941 and 1945, most of whom were murdered during the Holocaust.

In 2019, the Museum of the Holocaust in Sereď held the following exhibitions :*Sobibor, Dance Cosmopolitan Alica Pastorová-Flachová, Jaroslav Žiak – A project called Heroes, Vedem – a journal for the boys of the Terezín ghetto and the Romani Genocide during the Second World War*. Barrack no. 2 in the Holocaust Museum in Sereď was made public in February 2020 by the Museum of Jewish Culture, and all exhibitions of the museum are now fully completed. In 2020, the museum organized the following exhibitions : *Holocaust: Liquidation, Liberation, Rescue , Testimonies of Survivors , Anti-Jewish Propaganda on the Pages of the Contemporary Press of the Slovak State (1938 - 1945)* and *The Racial Diagnosis: Gypsy, Nazi Genocide of Sinti and Romanis – a long fight for recognition*.

SNM – Museum of Carpathian German Culture

Since its foundation on January 1, 1997, the Museum of Carpathian German Culture, as a specialized SNM museum, has focused on the collection, protection, professional processing, and presentation of documents of material and spiritual culture of Carpathian Germans, as well as the most objective scientific processing of their history and culture. It has its branches in Nitrianske Pravno and Handlová. The museum also includes a documentation and information centre, which specializes in the history and culture of the Carpathian Germans.

The current exhibition entitled History and Culture of the Carpathian Germans was installed 15 years ago. The content of the exhibition reflects the diachronic state of knowledge of the history and culture of the Carpathian Germans, as well as the collection created in the first years of the museum's existence. The exhibition was continuously upgraded with newly acquired objects, but the results of multi-year historical, ethnographic, linguistic, and art history research could not be incorporated into the original exhibition at the required level. It is necessary to process these new results and new views into new trilingual texts (Slovak, German, English) in the exhibition.

In 2019, the Museum of Carpathian German Culture joined the *Night of Museums and Galleries project* and also screened documentaries about the history and culture of the Carpathian Germans. *The film Copper Roads* documents the importance of mining in Slovakia, the activities and the role of the Fugger family in the development of mining and trade. An exhibition named *Metamorphosis of Zuckermanndl* has been taking place at the museum's headquarters in Sunyal's manor on Žižková Street in Bratislava since January 2020. The scientific research activities of the museum in the years 2019 - 2020 were realized in the

following three projects: *Carpathian Germans in the History and Culture of Slovakia*, *Political Life of Carpathian Germans* and *Demography of Carpathian Germans*.

House of the Carpathian-German Association in Handlová

The permanent exhibition entitled *History and Culture of Handlová* offers the opportunity to get acquainted with the history of the settlement, the tradition of mining and crafts, as well as with a number of objects presenting the traditional material, spiritual and artistic culture of the German ethnic group in Handlová.

SNM – Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia is a specialized SNM museum with nationwide operations, which focuses on the history and culture of Hungarians in Slovakia. The mission of the museum is the purposeful acquisition, protection, scientific and professional processing, and access to museum collections and funds documenting the history and development of the material and spiritual culture of Hungarians in Slovakia. The museum is located in the premises of the restored Brämer Curia on Žižková Street in Bratislava. The museum has some expositions in the Imre Madách Castle in Dolná Strehová and in the Kálmán Mikszáth Memorial House in Sklabina. In cooperation with the Hungarian Social and Cultural Association in Slovakia (Csemadok Košice Municipal Committee), the Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia created and operated the *Sándor Mléi Memorial Exhibition (Márai Sándor Emlékkiállítás)* in an apartment building on Mäsiarská Street in Košice, where Sándor Márai, one of the most-read writers of Europe, lived during his childhood. In the Sándor Márai Memorial Exhibition, the museum-pedagogical part was opened in 2020, which serves for the implementation of additional educational activities for children and youth. The Sándor Márai Memorial Exhibition, which was opened in 2019, and the Lajos Grendel Reading Room (Grendel Lajos Olvasóterem) – in 2020, both equipped with digital media, enabling better access to the information presented. As part of Lajos Grendel's research, photographs from the writer's life were collected and digitized, and a list of his publishing activities was created. The exhibitions are enriched with films that are regularly screened.

The outputs from the research activities of the museum are used mainly in its exhibition and publishing activities. In the second half of 2020, a memorial exhibition entitled *VOX HUMANA* on the life and work of the writer Zoltán Fábry was opened, and it will tour around Slovakia. A bulletin about the writer's life was issued for this exhibition, including a documentary film. Exhibition *Food, drinks, dreams... (Étel, ital, álm...)* presents the folk culture of Hungarians living in Slovakia through important material and spiritual monuments from the areas of the traditional households, home crafts, housework, housing culture, clothing, folk art, and customs from the mid-19th century to the present day. The themes are depicted via museum collections, which are complemented by photographs from the 40s and 50s of the 20th century.

Every year, the museum organizes an exhibition of children's art works, which are involved in the nationwide art competition by Károly Harnos. The evaluation of the works and

the opening of the exhibition is connected with a cultural event in the premises of the Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia. The museum, in cooperation with the civic association Traditions and Values, within the framework of cultural and educational activities, regularly organizes discussions entitled *Museum Salon* on various topics of historical, artistic or cultural and social nature in connection with the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

In 2020, for the first time, the museum opened an exhibition of paintings and graphics by the visual artist Júlia Vajda through a virtual gallery on online platforms. All exhibitions and events are also presented in Slovak. A tour of the exposition in Imre Madách's Mansion in Dolná Strehová is also possible with the help of a voice guide in 4 languages (Slovak, Hungarian, English, German), Sándor Memorial Exhibition. Máraia in Košice is also accessible with a guide in more than 4 languages. Every year, the museum participates in an event called *More than a Neighbour* within the *Days of Hungarian Culture* (the main organizer of the event is the Hungarian Institute in Bratislava), which aims to bring Hungarian culture closer to and popularize among the Slovak population.

SNM – Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia is a documentary, scientific research, and methodological centre focused on the history and culture of Croats in Slovakia, mapping their history from arrival to today's territory of Slovakia to the present day. The museum collects, protects, professionally processes, and presents material documents related to its profiling. The museum has three expositions. Two are located in the main building of the museum and the third, *History and Culture of Croats in Devínská Nová Ves*, is located in an adjoining building called the *Museum of Old Devínská*, which was reconstructed by the city district for the purposes of the museum.

In 2019, the Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia presented to the public the issue of emigration from the point of view of Slovaks who had settled in the south of former Hungary since the beginning of the 18th century. The exhibition entitled *The Pejačević Family and the Cultural and Historical Relations of Croats and Slovaks* commemorated a round anniversary, as in 2019, 140 years have passed since the founding of the village of Markovac Našický by the Slovaks. In the years 2019 – 2020, several social events took place, such as the *Night of Museums and Galleries* (May 18, 2019), the *Festival of Croatian Culture* (June 22 – 23, 2019) and the 31st Festival of Croatian Culture *Dobrodošli* (July 13, 2019). During the summer months of 2019 – 2020, a cycle of concerts *Summer Early Evening with classical music* took place. The publishing activity of the museum is represented by the book *Colours of Croatian Moravia*, which was published in cooperation with the authors and the Association of Croatian Citizens in the Czech Republic, and was presented at the exhibition with the same name, and lasted from June to August 2019.

SNM – Museum of Ukrainian Culture

The Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník is a nationwide research, documentation, cultural and educational centre that works in the field of monuments of material and spiritual culture

of the Ukrainian minority, and systematically participates in organizing and implementing various scientific research tasks, as well as conferences and other events. The museum works on synthesizing and international projects, researching primarily traditional folk culture in the Carpathians and adjacent areas. It deals with the documentation of the basic stages of cultural-historical and socio-economic development of Ukrainians in Slovakia. It has three expositions: the *Main cultural-historical exposition*, the *Ethnographic exposition in nature – open-air museum* and the *History and art exposition – Dezider Milly Gallery* in Svidník. In 2020, the museum prepared a year-round event called *2021 Year of Dezider Milly in the SNM – Museum of Ukrainian Culture*.

The museum also contributes to the support of Ukrainian culture by organizing many cultural events such as *New Year's traditions in the open-air museum* (on the occasion of the old New Year according to the Julian calendar associated with traditional hog slaughter and tasting of hog slaughter delicacies), *A Person of the Tourism in the Prešov self-governing region* (prize-giving ceremony to Michal Hudák), *Evening with the Jubilees* (a cultural program dedicated to the meeting of active representatives of the cultural life of Ukrainians in Slovakia, Anna Vaňková and Oľga Uramová), *Lost Wooden Churches of Northeast Slovakia* (presentation of a bilingual Slovak-Ukrainian scientific-popular publication on non-existing wooden churches) *Concert in the garden* (a concert of film music by the Big Band Orchestra of Július Selčan), *A bit different gallery* (a concert of the soloist Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf performed by Richard Šveda and his wife Zuzana, accompanied with piano by Júlia Grejtáková), *Craftweekends*, (traditional craft weekend days bringing history and present-day together via processing of metals, wood, honey, herbs, and weaving craft), *Day of Folk Traditions and Pirohy 2020* (on the occasion of European Cultural Heritage Days together with an international competition in cooking pirohy), *Night of Museums and Galleries* (the popular pan-European was postponed to another date and took place in the online space due to COVID-19 pandemic).

The museum published small prints (invitations and posters) for the exhibitions : *The Magic of Christmas Ornaments, From weaving loom to Krosno* (10th International Biennial of Art Linen Fabric), *Painted Easter eggs "Kraslice" 2019, Serhiy Stepanov, From the Banks of Vorskla* (Echoes of the Worlds of Ancestors), *Development of Craft Skills, Festival 65 (1955-2019), Carpathian Gifts from Museum Funds*, and also published materials for the following cultural events: *New Year's Traditions in the open-air museum, Between the Carpathians and the Tatras, We paint Easter eggs "Kraslice", Opening of the season in the open-air museum, Night of museums and galleries, Rascal's Day, 65th Festivities of Ruthenian-Ukrainian culture of Slovakia – Svidník 2019, Weekends of Crafts, Day of Folk Traditions and Pirohy 2019, Makovický singer, Marko Lukič Kropivnyckyj: They remained fools, Advent concert of music, songs and carols*. Based on many years of folklore-ethnographic research at the Institute of Folklore and Ethnology of the Faculty of Arts of the M.T. Rylsky National Academy of Sciences in Kiev, a monograph of a former museum employee dr Jozef Varchol was published: *Annual and family ceremonies of Ukrainians in Slovakia*.

SNM – Museum of Ruthenian Culture

Based on scientific research, the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov collects, protects, professionally processes, makes accessible to the public, and evaluates evidence of the material and spiritual existence and activities of the Ruthenian population. It focuses on museum documentation of the development of science, culture, art, and technology in Slovakia, as well as facts about the Ruthenian population living abroad (emigration in the past and present). This means that it is becoming an international consultation centre in a compact area inhabited by Ruthenians.

In 2019, the Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov organized several events: Presentation of the publication *Pastusi a gazdivstvo: Ruthenian customs from Spiš, Medallion of Gabriel Beskyd*, which took place on the occasion of his 90th birthday (17September2019), *Ľuba Kráľová School of Ruthenian Language, Elena Sotáková National Folk Creativity Studio, Ruthenian History Studio and drama plays by Jaroslava Sisáková, Medallion of a Ruthenian – Hanka Servická*, singer of folk Ruthenian and Šariš spiritual songs (10October2019), *Medallion Museum Village and Village Museum – a presentation of the history and present of 4 municipalities in the Medzilaborce district: Radvaň nad Laborcom, Volica, Zbudská Belá, Valentovce* (12November2019), *Christmas of the spiritual poetry by Jozef Kudzej and FS Záruba from Ňagov* (17December2019).

Despite the public health measures taken in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic in the second half of 2020, the museum held several exhibitions. Most of them were exhibitions presenting Ruthenian artists, e.g. exhibition *River of Time* dedicated to the life and work of Štefan Hapák. Vladimír Ganaj's exhibition entitled "*Relationships*" presented the work of a young artist. The exhibition *Il'ko Sova from Bajusov*, which is created in collaboration with the well-known Prešov-based painter and author, Fedor Vic, offered visitors a pictorial series of animated grotesque sketches in the Ruthenian language with funny stories about uncle Il'ko. Other events organized in 2020: *History of Ruthenians in Slovakia (permanent exhibition opened on December 30, 2013)* was transformed into an exhibition consisting of the *following parts: History of Ruthenians in Slovakia, depicted on posters, The Wallachia Hut... this is how the Ruthenians lived, Bread of the Soul – an exhibition of worship artifacts of the Greek Catholic Church, Wooden churches of Ladislav Cidyl (miniatures of wooden sacral buildings from northeastern Slovakia), Stand by Me, God – a history of the Orthodox Church in Slovakia until 1948, Medallion of a Ruthenian – Vasil Turok (on the occasion of his 80th birthday, a famous Ruthenian after 1989, founder of the Ruthenian National Revival in Slovakia, playwright of ADT), author's reading in connection with the publication of the poetry collection named Roe deer in (un)paradise by Daniela Kapraľová (16January 2020), Author's evening of jazz pianist and composer Pavel Morochovič, Jazz in the Museum (30January2020), Medallion of Anna Poráčová, b. Šuťáková, who is a well-known singer of Ruthenian, šariš folk and spiritual songs, laureate of the Makovická string (21February2020), Ruthenians on air... for 90 years (cultural event with a program dedicated to the beginning of radio broadcasting for Ruthenians in Subcarpathian Russia and the Prešov region), Medallion of Štefan Hapák*

(prominent pedagogue, artist, and art expert who dedicated his whole life to culture and education).

In the reference period, the museum prepared other exhibitions: *A quarter of a century together: Czechoslovakia and Subcarpathian Rus*, *Easter at the Ruthenians*, *Life in the Ruthenian village in the work of the naive painter, Michal Sirik*, *Starina – Water of faith*, *Štefan Hapák – River of Time*, selection from the work of academic painter, *Vladimír Ganaj – RELATIONS*, an exhibition of a young artist from Prešov.

SNM – Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia is a specialized unit of the SNM in Martin with nationwide operations. Since 2004, the museum has been a documentary and scientific-research centre, which, within the profiling of the museum, places emphasis on methodological-professional, cultural-educational, and acquisition activities. It presents Romani culture and informs about its specifics. Currently, it is located in the area of an open-air museum within the Museum of the Slovak Village in Jahodnícke háje.

SNM – Museums in Martin, which also includes the Museum of Romani Culture (open-air museum), carried out general repairs of shingled roofing on the objects of folk architecture in the Museum of the Slovak Village. The buildings of folk architecture were part of the reconstruction works focused on the repair of shingled roofs in the open-air museum co-financed by EU funds. In 2020, the penultimate Monitoring report was submitted.

In 2019, the exhibition area focused on the presentation of the lives and works of 25 Romanis who made a significant contribution to the cultural and social development of Slovakia. Four new medallions were added to the original portraits in 2019, and more are currently being worked on. The premiere of the *Gallery of Romanis* took place in April 2019 on the occasion of World Romani Day in the exhibition spaces of the SNM – Museums in Martin and a rerun in the Primary School with a kindergarten in Markušovce, a village with one of the largest Romani communities in Slovakia. The exhibition project included various educational and lecture activities. The exhibition *Memories in Us* presented the work of Romani carvers, represented in the museum's collections. It was opened on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of the event *Te prindžaras amen/Let's get to know 2019*.

In addition to the traditional expositions, the educational activities carried out in 2019 were mainly related to the *Gallery of Romani personalities*. Specialized activities included a children's day summer camp for children from excluded communities called *Amare tradiciji*. This event included artists like the *Paľáčovci z Hrochote Folk Music*, the *Pokošovci Folk Music*, one of the largest and longest-running Romani ensembles in Slovakia – the *Romka z Detvy* ensemble, the *Slniečko z Poltára children's ensemble*, the *Terňi vodí z Kežmarka* ensemble with young Romani woodcarvers or students of textile production that are following up on traditions of groups of Romanis living in Slovakia in the past. The event also included various seminars, creative workshops, screenings of documentary films presenting the life of the Romani in Slovakia or professional lectures in the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia.

SNM – Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia is the youngest permanent exhibition of the SNM in Martin, which presents a special environment and the work of the couple Anna Horáková-Gašparíková, the administrator of the personal archive of T.G. Masaryk and academician Jiří Horák, both important personalities documenting the traditions of the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks. With occasional exhibitions, the museum systematically maps the life and work of important Czech personalities in relation to Slovakia and the way of life of the Czech minority in our country.

In 2019, the Museum of the Culture of the Czechs in Slovakia prepared an exhibition entitled *We are improving!* This exhibition results from a scientific research task named *The significance of a Czech phenomenon for the economic growth of Slovakia on the example of the activity of the State institution for improving entrepreneurs' licenses*. The task was finished in 2017. Due to its scope, this exhibition was installed in another part of the SNM in Martin – in the Andrej Kmeť Museum. The exhibition was an interesting contribution to the economic history of Slovakia and at the same time the first relatively comprehensive presentation of the so-called Šippich's collection, a gift from the Ministry of Trade to SNM. The second of the realized exhibitions was lent by the Museum of Croatian Culture to approach the life and work of one of the Czech personalities working in Slovakia – ethnographer Antonín Václavík.

In the field of cultural presentation activities, the Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia significantly cooperated with entities associating members of the Czech community and their supporters, in cooperation with which it prepared successful programs presenting the values of Czech culture to the general public. The museum also co-organized the conference in cooperation with the Slovak Chamber of Commerce as an accompanying event of the exhibition *We are improving!*

Table no. 8: List of national cultural monuments of national museums in the SNM report

Name	Museum	Accounting value	Included
The building of the Museum of Culture of the Carpathian Germans, Žižkova 14, Bratislava	Museum of Carpathian German Culture	240,747.71	12/1997
Memorial house of K. Miksáth, Sklabiná	Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	14,060.78	12/2003
I. Madách Castle, Dolná Strehová	Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	275,188.18	12/2003
The building of the Museum of Jewish Culture, Zsigray Curia Židovská 17, Bratislava	Museum of Jewish Culture	950,095.40	8/2008
Construction – warehouses of MJC, Sered'	Museum of Jewish Culture	216,966.25	10/2009
The main exhibition building	Museum of Ukrainian Culture	300,690.20	12/1969
Source: MC SR			

Closure of SNM due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 in four stages (March 12 – May 12; October 24 – November 17; 6– 14 December; 19 – 31 December 2020) and the overall reduction in the mobility of the population significantly affected the attendance of all expositions and exhibitions of the SNM. Even after the opening of the museums, the attendance statistics were significantly lower due to the fact that the maximum number of visitors was limited. This was especially the case in May, June, September and October, when school groups attended museums. The attendance rate at museums was also negatively affected by the fact that due to the coefficient of the number of museum visitors all additional activities were canceled, such as lectures, openings, closing nights, seminars, etc. There was a sharp increase in attendance during the holiday months when castles, palaces, and museums in the countryside were attacked by an increased number of visitors, but this was not enough to compensate for the drop in attendance throughout the year. The drop in traffic is in direct proportion to the drop in income from the entrance fee. Revenues fell by 50 percent, which had a negative impact on several activities in the museum.

Table no. 9: Comparison of revenues from the entrance fee for the years 2020 and 2019

Name of the museum	2019	2020	Decrease / increase
Museum of Carpathian German Culture	0	0	0
Museum of Jewish Culture (including the Sered' Holocaust Museum)	69,867.37	20,336.00	-49,531.37
Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	32,062.10	5,717.40	-26,344.70
Museum of Ukrainian Culture	19,345.72	27,739.06	8,393.34
Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia	402.16	288.46	-113.70
Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia ³¹	1,466.50	100.00	-1,366.50
Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia	263.00	180.00	-83.00
Museum of Ruthenian Culture	510.50	595.00	84.50
Source: SNM Annual Reports			

Table no. 10: Overview of financing of organizational units of SNM – specialized so-called national museums in 2011 – 2020 (these amounts represent current expenditures excluding priority projects and capital expenditures, including funding paid for cultural vouchers).³²

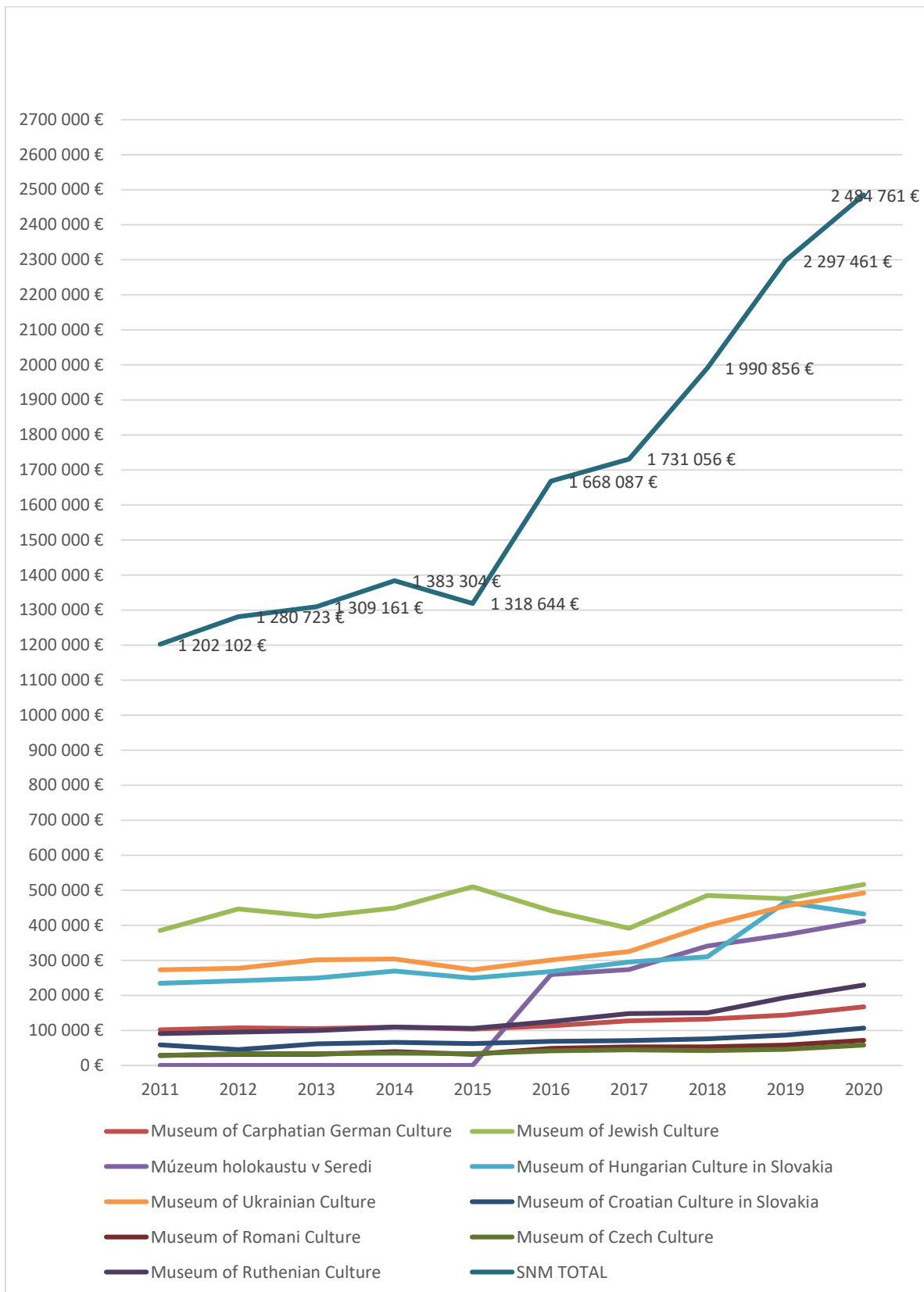
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Name of the museum										
Museum of Carpathian German Culture	101,833	107,530	104,783	109,283	103,282	113,091	126,920	132,546	143,655	167,410
Museum of Jewish Culture	385,127	446,441	424,880	449,363	510,209	441,289	391,184	485,205	475,972	516,695
Holocaust Museum in Sered'	0	0	0	0	0	259,176	273,956	340,731	372,840	411,904
Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	234,614	241,198	249,640	269,074	249,318	268,204	295,219	310,320	466,067	432,311
Museum of Ukrainian Culture	272,561	277,484	301,652	303,278	273,165	300,752	325,198	399,398	455,132	491,915

³¹The Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia is located at the premises of the Museum of the Slovak Village in Martin. It is not possible to sell tickets exclusively to the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia, but it is possible to buy them only as part of tickets to the Museum of the Slovak Village. The methodology for determining the number of visitors to the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia changed in 2014, and data on attendance since that period include only attendance at special events organized by this national museum.

³²The budget of the Museum of Hungarian Culture in the Slovak Republic includes capital funds in the amount of EUR 361,000 for the refinancing of the cross-border project Madách and the restoration of the park near the manor house in Dolná Strehová, which will be returned after refund. In addition to cross-border cooperation for the renewal of the park, the museum received EUR 20,000 and EUR 33,352 for the renewal of exhibition spaces and expositions on Žižková Street. in Bratislava. The budget of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture includes capital funds in the amount of EUR 52,830 for the settlement of land at the open-air museum in Svidník. Furthermore, the museum received a total of EUR 130,000 to repair the roof of the residential building and open-air museum buildings. The Museum of Carpathian German Culture received EUR 8,500 for the renovation of exhibition spaces and expositions on Žižková Street in Bratislava. Minority museums received EUR 95,000 for the purchase of collection items in 2018, most of the funds were used to purchase collection items for the Holocaust Museum in Sered'.

Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia	58 718	45 268	61 501	66 044	62 448	68 694	70 895	75 838	86 471	106 391
Museum of Romani Culture	28 419	31 629	31 629	39 613	31 533	48 372	53 096	52 715	57 835	71 443
Museum of Czech Culture	28 117	33 861	33 861	35 241	33 540	41 767	44 524	42 231	46 054	57 611
Museum of Ruthenian Culture	90 702	95 300	99 202	109 394	105 583	124 726	148 047	149 854	193 435	229 081
Source: MC SR										

Graph no. 3: Overview of financing of organizational units of SNM – specialized so-called national museums in 2011 – 2020



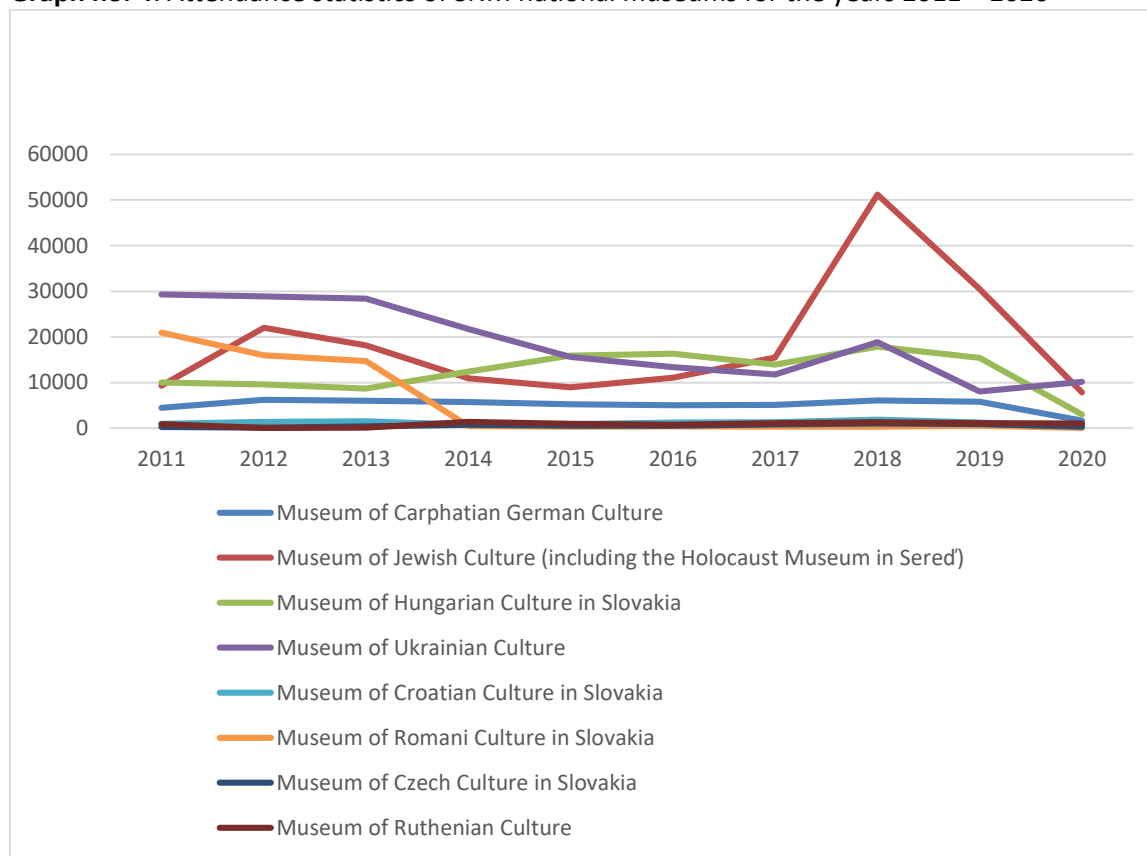
Source: Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

Table no. 11: Attendance statistics of SNM national museums for the years 2011 – 2020

Name of the museum	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Museum of Carpathian German Culture	4 497	6 206	6 036	5 742	5 237	5 068	5 079	6 124	5 829	1 702
Museum of Jewish Culture (including the Holocaust Museum in Sered')	9 347	21 996	18 166	10 963	8 943	11 072	15 505	51 190	30 519	7 848
Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	10 043	9 592	8 711	12 436	15 888	16 312	13 914	17 852	15 397	3 019
Museum of Ukrainian Culture	29 291	28 855	28 363	21 701	15 617	13 382	11 779	18 830	8 023	10 193
Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia	989	1 420	1 533	738	910	1 289	1 326	1 866	1 225	321
Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia ³³	20 936	15 948	14 700	468	333	417	325	345	524	48
Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia	256	144	431	780	537	523	833	1 080	940	343
Museum of Ruthenian Culture	922	49	148	1 416	946	787	1 108	1 346	1 123	1 048
Source: SNM Annual Reports for 2011 – 2020, Activity and Management Reports for 2015 – 2020, information from the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.										

³³The Museum of Romani Culture in Slovakia is located at the premises of the Museum of the Slovak Village in Martin. It is not possible to sell tickets exclusively to the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia, but it is possible to buy them only as part of tickets to the Museum of the Slovak Village. The methodology for determining the number of visitors to the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia changed in 2014, and data on attendance since that period include only attendance at special events organized by this national museum.

Graph no. 4: Attendance statistics of SNM national museums for the years 2011 – 2020



Source: SNM Annual Reports for 2011 – 2020, Activity and Management Reports for 2015 – 2020, information from the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

Museum of the Slovak National Uprising

The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising is a specialized museum with an archive of special significance depicting the development of Slovak society in the years 1938 – 1945 with an emphasis on the documentation of the anti-fascist national liberation fight and the Slovak National Uprising. The museum has a nationwide scope with international outreach, within which it performs a professional-methodological, coordinating, and advisory function.

In the reference period, an annual memorial service was held on the occasion of the Memorial Day of the Romani Holocaust, which was organized by the civic association In minorita. In 2020, a nationwide memorial meeting was held (16th) and it was organized by the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, OGPRC together with the civic association In minorita. The ceremonial speeches were delivered by the highest state representatives of the Slovak Republic. On 28 July 2020, the President of the Slovak Republic laid a wreath at the memorial stone to the Romani Holocaust in the Reverential Hall of the SNP Museum.

In 2019, the SNP Museum in cooperation with the CULT – EK Civic Association prepared 6 art and educational events on the history of Romani culture and its important personalities and the animosities of contemporary society. In April 2020, the program was to continue in two cities, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no events took place. It is therefore planned to carry on with them, should the situation allow, in the school year of 2020/2021. On 18 September 2020, a memorial meeting was held in the Chaviva Rejková Garden on the premises

of the SNP Museum on the occasion of the Memorial Day of the Victims of the Holocaust and Racial Violence. On this occasion, the ninth and tenth commemorative plaques with the names of the victims of racial persecution in the years 1939 – 1945 in the Banská Bystrica region were unveiled.

3.5.2 Regional and local museums and galleries

Regional or local museums are set up by HTUs, cities and municipalities, or by other legal entities. In the reference period, the following museums focused on national minorities:

- under the founding authority of the Banská Bystrica self-governing region
 - Novohrad Museum and Gallery Lučenec
 - Gemer-malohont Museum in Rimavská Sobota
 - Central Slovakia Gallery in Banská Bystrica
- under the founding authority of the Nitra self-governing region
 - Tríbeč Museum in Topoľčany
 - Tekov Museum in Levice
 - Danube Museum in Komárno
 - Ján Thain Museum in Nové Zámky
- under the founding authority of the Prešov self-governing region
 - Šariš Museum in Bardejov
 - Vihorlat Museum in Humenné
 - Tatra Gallery in Poprad
 - Šariš Gallery in Prešov
 - Ľubovňa Museum and Castle in Stará Ľubovňa
 - Regional Museum in Prešov
- other museums and galleries
 - Castle and Museum in Filákov
 - Homeland Studies Museum in Galanta
 - Municipal Museum in Lučenec
 - Senec City Museum
 - Hont Museum and Gallery Ľ. Simonyi in Šahy
 - Municipal Museum in Šurany
 - Municipal Museum and Memorial Room of Franz Schubert in Želiezovce
 - Rye Island Museum in Dunajská Streda
 - Jewish Community Museum

A comprehensive overview of the activities, aimed at the preservation and development of the culture of national minorities of the mentioned museums in the reference period, is listed in Annex no. 4.

3.6 Media

3.6.1 Television and radio broadcasting for national minorities

Radio and television of Slovakia

The legislative and institutional framework of national broadcasting did not change in the reference period in the Slovak Republic. The legal framework of national broadcasting is, in addition to generally binding legal regulations, Act no. 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia (hereinafter referred to as the "RTVS Act") and Act no. 308/2000 Coll. on Broadcasting and Retransmission. The Act on RTVS prescribes the broadcaster to broadcast national programs, namely in Section 5 (1) letters b) and g), in which it prescribes a separate program service for radio broadcasting and a separate organizational unit for national broadcasting as a whole. It also prescribes the broadcasting of content and regionally balanced programs in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic in a time range corresponding to the national and ethnic composition of the Slovak population. The Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission in the reference period also included (in Section 28a) the obligation of the national broadcaster to observe a 35% ratio of Slovak music production on the total broadcasting time between 06:00-24:00. This obligation was abolished on 24 November 2020 by an amendment to Act no. 220/2007 Coll. on Digital Broadcasting of Program Services and the Provision of other Content Services by Means of Digital Transmission and on the Amendment of Certain Acts (the Digital Broadcasting Act), as amended, with the effect from 1 January 2021.

Institutional framework

The production and broadcasting of national RTVS programs takes place in four organizational units:

1. Rádio Patria – Editorial Board of the Hungarian Broadcasting (hereinafter also "RMV");
2. Rádio Patria – Editorial Board of National Broadcasting Košice (hereinafter also "NEV");
3. Editorial Board of National Broadcasting of STV Bratislava;
4. Editorial Board of National Broadcasting of STV Košice.

These four components belong in terms of personnel to two units at the section level, namely the National Broadcasting Section and the RTVS Košice Studio. Methodologically, these four components are covered by the Section of National Broadcasting, whose director is directly subordinated to the General Director of RTVS. The dramaturgy and the creation of the program structure for radio broadcasting are completely separate, in the case of Hungarian broadcasting on separate frequencies of the program service, in the case of national broadcasting, the Radio Patria program is a separate and individual part of Radio Regina, with its separate dramaturgy program. The dramaturgy and program structure of television broadcasting is a part of the Dvojka program service, the classification of programs depends on the program structure of Dvojka, the content of the broadcast is independent. All four components of national broadcasting have a separate program budget. In all areas of

activity, national broadcasting uses the complete support of RTVS – building, studios, technical equipment, personnel agenda, social agenda, economic agenda, production logistics.

The provision of terrestrial and digital broadcasting is covered by RTVS. The national broadcasting section is able to work with relatively low input costs throughout the institution. However, the total cost of broadcasting cannot be quantified precisely. When quantifying the costs of broadcasting and production, only program costs are reported for national broadcasting in the reports for regulatory bodies.

In the case of Rádio Patria, the staffing is at an acceptable level (RMV has 17 program staff, NEV 9 program staff, to which approximately 45-50 permanent external collaborators are added). The staffing of television programs is a combination of dramaturgy and editorial staff through three employees in Bratislava and three employees in Košice, but the program elements themselves are provided by an extensive external infrastructure, the scope of which exceeds 100 external experts. In the case of radio broadcasting, the situation is acceptable, but not ideal, in the case of television broadcasting, there is a shortage in terms of staff, and it will increase depending on the gradual increase in the share of national programs.

The range of broadcasting is diverse – although the separate frequencies of Hungarian broadcasting have provided coverage of the entire territory inhabited by the target group since 2019, approximately 40% of listeners receive only medium waves and, more recently, also DAB+. Despite this limiting circumstance, Hungarian broadcasting is today the dominant media content for Hungarian nationality in Slovakia, with an average reach of 130 – 154,000 listeners. It is possible to say that approximately every second adult Hungarian in Slovakia listens regularly to Rádio Patria (at least on a weekly basis).

Other contents of national broadcasts have a 100% coverage via the DVBT terrestrial circuit RTVS and also a 100% coverage via the FM frequencies of Rádio Regina. However, in the case of small nationalities, it is not possible to measure the impact accurately. In the slots in which the national broadcaster broadcasts, the outreach doubled during the reference period. In television broadcasting, the outreach depends on the viewing habits. Due to the fact that this is a minority genre on the already minority-set program service of Dvojka, the outreach is in the range of 17 – 30,000 viewers.

Radio broadcasting services RTVS

In radio broadcasting, editorial offices have long and successfully tried to approach full-format radio broadcasting. In Hungarian broadcasting, this situation has already been achieved in previous years; in national broadcasting, it is a process that also took place in the reference period. From Bratislava, RTVS broadcasts 12 hours a day in Hungarian, 15 hours a year in Croatian, Serbian and Bulgarian, and from Košice 16.5 hours a week in German, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Romani, Polish and Czech.

It should be noted that during the consolidation period of public service financing, in the period until 2018, the production of the so-called large expensive literary-dramatic formats absented. The change occurred in 2019 when additional funds were allocated under an amendment to the *Treaty with the state*, and the production of radio plays and books read

in the Hungarian language began (more than 50 hours were broadcast in both years). In national broadcasting, contracts for radio plays and reading books were concluded at the end of 2020, and so they can be included within the broadcasting only from 2021. However, for both editorial boards of national broadcasting, the dominant information function of the public service is supplemented by a quality program in the field of the minority language, culture, and education, and it will serve as the main pillar of the national theme.

Television broadcasting of RTVS

Thanks to a small-time allocation, information and magazine genres dominate the television broadcasting. National journals are produced with a time allowance of half an hour: *Hungarian journal* – 40 times a year, *Romani magazine* – 35 times a year, *Ruthenian magazine* – 20 times a year, *Ukrainian journal* – 10 times a year, *National journals* – 40 times a year (per share based on the last census). In addition to journals, *Správy-Hírek* (news) is prepared in Hungarian in an average length of 6 minutes (200 times a year), multilingual *National news* in a length of 10 minutes (40 times a year) and *Tvárrou v tvár* (*face-to-face*) discussion format (26 minutes, 40 times a year). Some other ad hoc programs from the creation of RTVS or from independent producers are assigned to these regular TV shows. In 2019, the regular TV shows were supplemented by a documentary by Petr Scheiner about the Komárno Jewish community (independent production), an entertaining show entitled *Laboda* (8 episodes as pilot programs), a documentary film *Krásna Hôrka – 7 years later* (RTVS production), eight episodes about portraits of exceptionally gifted children *When I'm Big* (RTVS production) and a documentary *Romani and November* (RTVS production).

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, regular programs were supplemented by programs *Home School* – for children with difficult access to distance learning (15 series, RTVS production), *Tumenca khere – learn with us*, *Romani home school for children* (12 series, RTVS production), documentary series *Right here* (18 series about places tied to the most important cultural personalities) and production of a journal cycle *Laboda* – (15 series, RTVS production). The mentioned formats increased the share of national broadcasting in unplanned productions by one third in 2020.

Funding for national programs is linked to genres. In radio broadcasting, program costs are about 8% of the total program costs, while in television broadcasting it is about 2% of production costs. In television production, this amount is given due to the fact that national formats are informative and therefore less costly. In the case of the production of documentaries, or other genres (including fiction), the financial complexity will increase. The budgets for national broadcast formats are similar to most programs of the same genre.

New media

In addition to radio and television broadcasting, RTVS also provides content for national minorities on the web. In addition to the SRO and STV archives, which house all programs for national minorities, whose licensing rights belong to RTVS (it is the dominant part of the programs, as they are created as television and radio primary production), podcasts were

created in 2020 on the most important journalistic topics of national broadcasting. Rádio Patria as well as the national TV shows of STV in Bratislava and Košice communicate their content via social media on their own platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). The provision of content via the Internet is the most extensive part of the new *RTVS Concept of National Broadcasting*, and thus in 2021, RTVS expects to create a full-fledged news portal also in the languages of national minorities.

Problems, shortcomings and their solutions

The RTVS management and the RTVS Board have been pointing out the insufficient number of television programs for national minorities. At the same time, they draw attention to the fact that resolving this situation requires a systemic solution for broadcasting in the public interest, both in legislation and in a systemic way, and also in sufficient funding. These problems are the subject of all RTVS Annual Reports submitted to the National Council of the Slovak Republic.³⁴

Based on several years of experience, the RTVS Board requested the management to prepare a *Comprehensive Report on the Status and Development of RTVS National Broadcasting* (hereinafter referred to as the “RTVS Comprehensive Report”). The material was approved by the Council on 20 August 2020 and contains:

- Comprehensive analysis of programs for nationalities;
- Development of editorial boards and development of program service since the establishment of RTVS as an institution;
- Comprehensive overview of staffing, technical and financial issues;
- Description of the problems arising from the ambiguous legislation and the failure to address the comprehensive and systematic financing of public service broadcasting;
- Suggestions for improvement.

On the basis of the Comprehensive Report of RTVS, the General Director of RTVS received a task from the Board of RTVS to elaborate a new Concept of National Broadcasting of RTVS. The comments of the members of the CNMEG working group were incorporated into the Concept in question, subsequently received and incorporated by the RTVS Board in November 2020. Based on it, a report was created for the Committee for Culture and Media of the National Council of the Slovak Republic. The new Concept includes:

- 3 phases of increasing the time for radio broadcasting, including ensuring accessibility by expanding broadcasting via DAB+;
- 3 phases of increasing the share of programs in television broadcasting, including defining what RTVS is able to do from its own resources, and when synergies between the executive and the legislature powers are needed;
- project for the establishment of a separate web platform for national minorities in the Slovak Republic, including a full-fledged news website, podcasting and designated

³⁴E.g. Annual report on the activities and management of RTVS for 2019. Available online: https://www.rtvs.sk/media/a542/file/item/sk/0002/rtvs_vyrocná_správa_2019_iii.oKxt.PDF.

channels for the dissemination of programs in the public service and in audiovisual form on the web;

- comments incorporated from national organizations on the content of national broadcasts;
- in the first phase, upon RTVS 'own initiative, the establishment of a news website and a doubling of the time allocation for television broadcasting in 2021;
- in the second phase, the expansion of radio broadcasting with a time allowance for all nationalities through a separate DAB+ network and the further expansion of television content by 50%, the establishment of a full-fledged Romani-language news website;
- in other phases, an increase of programs at the level of a separate program slot on the basis of the requirements of the Act on RTVS in television broadcasting.

All steps from the second phase are conditioned by the steps of the executive and the legislative powers, to which both the Comprehensive RTVS Report and the RTVS Concept point out.

Within the member countries of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), RTVS has the following unique contents:

- a full-fledged and full-format radio broadcasting in Hungarian without network and taken-over programs;
- a daily radio broadcasts for the Romani in the Romani language;
- Roma broadcasting with the dominance of the Romani language in television broadcasting (unique);
- Ruthenian broadcasting on radio and television – on a daily basis on the radio and on a bi-weekly on television – exclusively in the Ruthenian language;
- functioning and existence of a separate organizational unit at the N-1 level for national minorities with separate management, separate budget, separate dramaturgy.³⁵

3.6.2 Radio and television broadcasting of private radios and televisions

Régió TV

Régió TV is the first television in the Hungarian language with a reach throughout Slovakia, which provides broadcasting for the Hungarian minority living here. It brings a regular broadcast about events and happenings in the life of the Hungarian national minority from the Sub-Carpathian Basin. Its aim is to enable Hungarian nationals in the region to be informed in their own language of all events that concern them. Broadcasting covers an ever-increasing area, and television is trying to expand it further. Currently, more than 350,000 viewers, mainly from the *Hungarian-speaking countryside*, have the opportunity to watch Régió TV.

³⁵This unique position in the EBU cannot be compared to the much higher broadcasting rate in Catalonia (Catalonia is a federal state and its media cannot be considered a minority), nor to the broadcasting of a public broadcaster in South Tyrol, where the multinational composition of the population is governed by an autonomous decree, although not a nationwide legislative and executive power.

The owner of the license obtained in 2016 is the company Kábel Telekom s. r. o. based in Lučenec. The production of programs is provided by the companies TV LocAll s. r. o and TV LocAll Media s. r. o. based in Filákovo. The preparation of programs is provided in their own modern studio in Filákovo and Rimavská Sobota.

The broadcast has been operating continuously since 2017, on working days there are non-stop three-hour blocks of news coverage, short films, video and text advertising, and discussions, and during Saturday and Sunday the TV broadcasts reruns of the weekly programs. Television brings new or important information from all over Slovakia every day. This year, the TV also plans to launch a Romani journal, should it manage to raise funds for its production.

Radio rusyn FM

Radio rusyn FM successfully started broadcasting on December 3, 2012. It started broadcasting with one-hour block, which was repeated every day of the week. Apart from the shows, the broadcasting included only songs. Subsequently, the program was gradually enriched. From 2018, the formats of shows from other countries where Ruthenians live began to appear on the radio, gradually from Serbian Vojvodina, Polish Lemkovina, Ukrainian Subcarpathia, and from the end of 2020 also shows from the USA. The radio broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It focuses mainly on the Ruthenian repertoire of songs from bands from Slovakia and abroad. According to the genre of bands, several music blocks have been created – dulcimer music, modern bands, and alternative groups. In addition to the songs, the program structure consists of entertaining, discussion, cultural, social, and news programs. A large range of programs is complemented by reading poetry and prose, fairy tales, liturgical records, and religious books. Every year, the radio increases the ratio of spoken word to music. The founder and current director of the radio is Peter Štefaňák.

From the point of view of the slogan "Radio for all Ruthenians in the world", this mass information medium should be the medium of Ruthenians of all ages around the world. The main goal of Ruthenian FM is to spread enlightenment among Ruthenians and to awaken in them an interest in their own culture and language. The internet space in which Ruthenian FM operates has proved to be an ideal place and tool for attracting young people with Ruthenian roots, but also people who live in non-Ruthenian regions and do not have the opportunity to hear their mother tongue.

In the two years of its existence, the rusyn FM radio has reached very good numbers among the Internet media and has managed to maintain them to the present day. In 2020, radio recorded more than 50% year-on-year growth in the number of listeners.

In addition to the radia.sk application, the radio is also registered in the TapinRadio application. It has its own website www.rusyn.fm and it is possible to listen to it from the stream in two qualities. In addition, two playlists can be downloaded equally in two qualities to play the music in music players. The radio has its own applications on iOS and Android. In 2020, the applications underwent new settings with the possibility of access to the archive. The radio can also be listened to via the TuneIN radio application and via the ANTIK TV cable

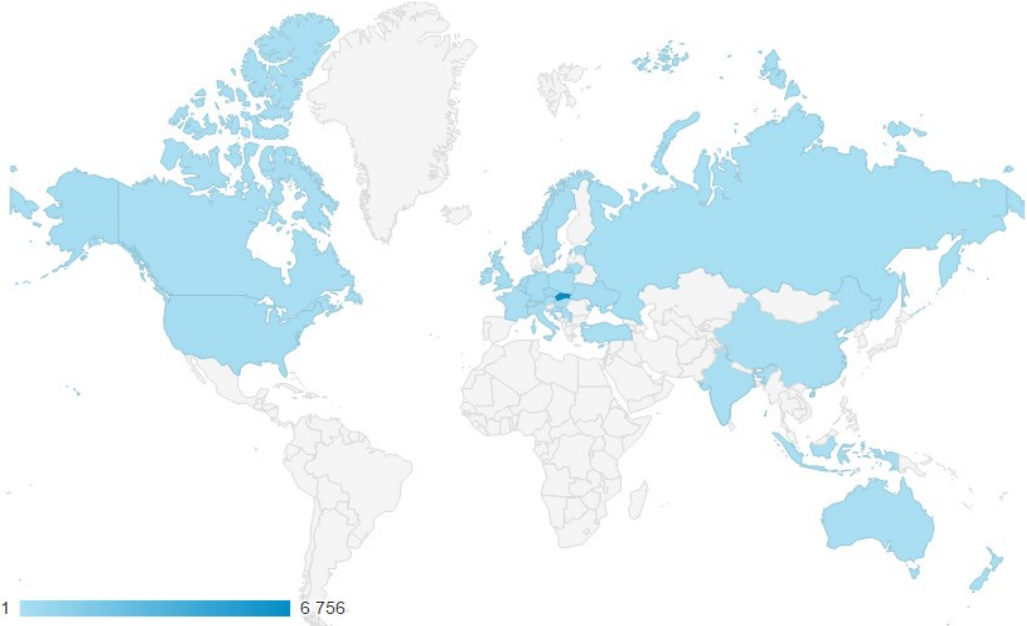
TV. In 2020, it began to bring not only records, but also live broadcasts from the liturgies thanks to the internal programming of suitable software and the Internet coverage of churches.

Thanks to the significant socialization of our days, the radio continues to develop a fan page on Facebook, where the number of fans has grown to 7,800 (a year-on-year increase of about 1,000), which is an indicator of the radio's success due to the absence of paid campaigns and advertising. The radio has a separate account on the Instagram. Since February 2015, a new website www.rusyn.fm has been in operation, as a new domain has been purchased and the entire design of the website has been changed, which is modified every year. In 2020, the design of the player was improved.

The radio is registered with SOZA, it cooperates with the Lemko radio lem.fm, the Novi Sad radio from Vojvodina and the national broadcast RTVS. In 2019, it actively participated in activities connected with the Year of the Ruthenian Village. Since 2020, radio has been actively participating in the campaign before CPH 2021.

Based on the website traffic statistics, it can be estimated that more than 20,000 people listen to the radio each month. The radio develops and programs its own listening monitoring systems. Due to the gradual predominance of the younger generation, the age group over 55 is also becoming increasingly strong. The radio is listened to from more than 30 countries around the world and delivers premier programs on a daily basis, keeping it in contact and interaction with the listener. The radio currently employs 16 people who work as editors, moderators, social network administrators, programmers, proofreaders, webmasters, and technical or music editors.

Picture no. 1: Countries from where the rusyn FM radio is listened to (Note! Blue colour)



Despite these successes, the radio has faced many technical, staff, and financial problems since it began to operate. Despite the fact that there is public television and radio, in which

there is also room for Ruthenian broadcasting, the broadcasting of Internet radio has its place and justification. Thanks to the support of MCF, the radio can operate, but it must apply for subsidies every year and the money is credited to its account only in the second half of the year, which is not ideal for ensuring year-round broadcasting. The radio employs 16 people, each of whom broadcasts only a few sessions due to their capacity in addition to working hours. Radio cannot create space for commercial advertising, as terrestrial radio is more interesting for advertisers. The radio thus relies on donations from sponsors or funding from the radio management from its own resources.

Other radios

In connection with broadcasting intended for national minorities, or broadcasting about national minorities, it is also possible to mention Rádio LUMEN, in which the project of a Romani journal was launched. In the years 2018 – 2020, thanks to the support of MCF, Rádio LUMEN had also broadcast a journal called Romanis – Mission Possible, moderated by young Romanis. The show had been broadcast at two-week intervals for two years. The journal of the F6 Art Centre on the Romani Mission to Slovakia offered information on the religious and cultural life of the Romani national minority, testimonies, evangelistic music, as well as examples of good practice of social change in Romani communities. A total of 40 programs were broadcast. For the project Romani – Mission Possible, Radio LUMEN won the award for the best radio initiative in September 2019, at the CERC meeting of Christian Radios in Europe in Lisbon, Portugal. The archive of shows can be heard online in the archives of Radio LUMEN.³⁶ The project was preceded by the cooperation of the Greek Catholic Romani Mission with LUX Television, which, in the years 2016 – 2018, recorded and published 25 testimonies of Romani-Slovak friendships, and 20 testimonies of changing the lives of Romani after their conversion.

Regional religious broadcasting in Hungarian has been provided by Mária Rádió Mirjam civic association since 2012, first through the Mária Rádió internet broadcast in Hungary. In 2019, the limited liability company MIRJAM s.r.o. was founded in Slovakia, which obtained a license to broadcast the MIRJAM RADIO program service on the frequencies in Dunajská Streda and Levice. The goal of the Hungarian version of Radio Mária, which was founded in 1983 in the Diocese of Milan in Italy with branches all over the world, is to broadcast the word of the Gospel to every family in with the Hungarian language. The radio does not broadcast advertising, operates on a voluntary basis, and exists on donations from listeners.

3.6.3 Publication of periodicals of national minorities

Article 34 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic guarantees citizens forming national minorities or ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic the right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue. By ratifying the Framework Convention in Article 9, the Slovak Republic also undertook to recognize that the right to freedom of expression of every

³⁶<https://cutt.ly/YbPuQlp>

person belonging to a national minority includes freedom of opinion and freedom to receive and communicate information and ideas in minority language without interference by state authorities and regardless of borders and that persons belonging to national minorities will not be discriminated against in terms of receiving access to the media. The Slovak Republic further undertook not to obstruct persons belonging to national minorities in the establishment and use of print media.

According to Act no. 167/2008 Coll. on Periodicals and Agency News and on Amendments to Certain Acts (Press Act), Periodicals are newspapers, magazines, or other press, published under the same title, with the same content focus, and in a uniform graphic design, at least twice a calendar year. In accordance with Section 11 of the said Act, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic registers periodicals by an entry into the list, change of entry into the list, and deletion of an entry from the list. The list is a publicly accessible register of periodicals published in the Slovak Republic. A person who intends to publish a periodical or a publisher of a periodical shall apply in writing for the entry of a periodical into the list no later than on the day of the commencement of the publication of the periodical, and the application shall also include the language of the periodical.

Table no. 12: Periodicals published in the languages of national minorities according to periodicity³⁷

language of the national minority	number of titles	daily papers	weekly papers	biweekly papers	monthly papers
Bulgarian	1				
Czech/Slovak and Czech	6/27		0/1		1/10
Hebrew ³⁸					
Croatian	1				
Hungarian/Hungarian and Slovak	41/67	1/0	5/1	0/2	18/24
German	3				1
Polish	1				1
Romani/Romani and Slovak	0/1				
Ruthenian/Ruthenian and Slovak*	3/5			0/2	0/2
Russian/Russian and Slovak*	1/1				0/1
Ukrainian/Ukrainian and Slovak*	3/1			1/0	1/1
*possibly another language					
Source: List of periodicals (https://www.culture.gov.sk/pertlac/modul/tlac).					

Internet news portals are becoming increasingly important for disseminating information. All daily papers, including the only print papers published in the language of a national minority (*ÚjSzó*), have web portals, the content of which brings fresh news every day, more often also in the form of podcasts. The news portals with the content not published in the printed press, include ma7.sk, parameter.sk, bumm.sk, felvidek.ma, hirek.sk, korkep.sk, and portals in Hungarian, then romana.tv – web portal in Slovak language on the Romana Television that is focused on news from the Romani world, similarly focused portal gipsytmv.eu operating on the Gypsy *Television* in the Slovak language, or the web portal of radio.rusyn.fm published in Ruthenian. Slovak legislation does not yet reflect this situation. So far, no law has been adopted that would specifically regulate the online news portals, and no public authority has been designated to keep records of these portals.

3.7 Science and research

Forum Institute for Minority Research

The Forum Institute for Minority Research (hereinafter referred to as the "Institute") was established by the Forum and Department foundations in 1996 in Dunajská Streda. It currently functions as a public non-profit and non-governmental and service organization in Šamorín and Komárno. The mission of the Institute includes professional research of national minorities living in Slovakia, documentation of their history, culture, documents, and other related monuments. The Institute has 7 departments: Department of Sociology and Demography, Research Centre of European Ethnology (Komárno), Department of Historical Research, Gramma – Language Department, Bibliotheca Hungarica – Library and Archives,

³⁷The table does not contain scientific journals published in world languages, or in several languages, including the Czech language, which do not primarily focus on members of national minorities.

³⁸The Jewish religious community in Komárno publishes the monthly *Novinkyodaj - Hitközségi Híradó* in Slovak and Hungarian - <https://kehreg.com/hitkozsegi-hirado-spravodaj/>.

Hungarian Archives in Slovakia, Centre for Digitization and Internet Databases and Publishing Department. The Institute employs 14 researchers, 8 librarians, documentarians, translators and computer scientists, and 4 administrative workers.

In 2019, the staff of the Institute implemented 16 projects (Collection and bibliographic processing of library material in the Bibliotheca Hungarica, Processing of newspapers and magazines, Building a collection of estates, Influence of the past 100 years on geographical names and use of space in Rudná (part 1 of the two-year project), Changes in Funeral Culture in Silica, Silická Brezová and Complete Documentation of Cemeteries in Štúrovo – Part I of two-year research, Documents on the History of the Hungarian Minority in Czechoslovakia 1918 – 1992, Velvet Revolution in 1989 in Southern Slovakia, Fates of Sculptures in Southern Slovakia, Memories for a period without a homeland. The Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia in the period from 1945 to 1948 – Oral history, Processing of the Csemadok archive (1976 – 1989), National identity of Hungarians in Slovakia – qualitative sociological research, Közélet 2019, Value orientations of Hungarians in Slovakia, Hungarian documents of the Velvet Revolution, 100 years in 100 minutes II., Az első lépés (The first step) – documentary, 30 minutes). The publishing activities of the Institute were also rich (4 monographs, *yearbook of the Acta Ethnologica Danubiana*, 4 issues of *the journal Fórum Társadalomtudományi Szemle*, 40 other publications). When organizing 5 conferences in 2019 (*Slovak-Hungarian relations yesterday and today*, *New State Borders (1918/1920) and their consequences in the Carpathian Basin*, *Hungarian political representation from 1989 to the present*, *Musaeum Hungaricum XVI*, *Eternal Builder – Memorial Conference in honour of Károly Tóth*), the Institute has collaborated with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Institute for Minority Rights and the International Institute for Regionalism (INTEREG) in Munich, J. Selye University in Komárno, the Research Centre for European Ethnology in Komárno and the Ferenc Rákóczi University in Berehovo.

In 2020, the staff of the Institute, as well as external co-researchers, implemented 16 projects (Collection and bibliographic processing of library material in the Bibliotheca Hungarica, Processing of newspapers and magazines, Thirty years of history in the local press, *Ivágó, Turecká, Hodža-rabina, Esztéká...* The influence of the past 100 years on the use of space and on geographical names in Rudná, Changes in funeral culture in the villages of Silica and Silická Brezová, and comprehensive documentation of cemeteries in Štúrovo – Part II of the project, Forms of collectivization – cases in the Danube region, Trianon 2020 – exhibition, Kassától Košicéig. Historical research and digitization of a rare source on the history of Hungarians in Slovakia, Question of the Slavic Corridor and the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, National and religious composition of the Slovak population by the municipality based on data from the 1950 census, Breakthrough historical events and personalities through the eyes of Hungarians in Slovakia, Elaboration of sociological source materials about Hungarians in Slovakia – Part I, Digitization of the cultural heritage of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, Photo-bank of national events from 1950 to 1990, Administration and maintenance of websites Forum of the Institute for Minority Research, Extension of the Hungarian Database of Settlements in Slovakia), published 6 monographs, a yearbook and 4 issues of the above-

mentioned magazine and 21 other publications. In 2020, the Institute organized an international scientific conference named *How many of us will there be? (Census of population 2021)*.

Holocaust Documentation Centre

The civic association Holocaust Documentation Centre (hereinafter also "HDC") is an affiliated organization of the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also "CUJRC"). It was established in its current form in 2005. HDC's activities are focused on the research of the Holocaust, dissemination of knowledge about this historical period, as well as on the Jewish national minority, its place within Slovak society in the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as phenomena related to this issue (anti-Semitism, xenophobia, intolerance, and racism). HDC has 4 employees. Its tasks and goals are research and documentation, education and consulting activities, publishing activities, adequate forms of reminders, networking of experts and activists, and cooperation with the public and the media. In addition to historical research, the Centre publishes publications and educates the public about the Holocaust.³⁹

3.8 Promoting the culture of national minorities

3.8.1 Minority Culture Fund

In 2019, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic identified the following priorities: support of the local and regional culture of national minorities and preparation and implementation of projects *for the Year of Slovak Theatre (2020) – national minority theatres as part of Slovak theatre*. In 2020, the Centre supported the *Year of the Slovak Theatre – National Minority Theatres as a part of Slovak theatre*.

Priorities of support activities for the entire structure of support activities are also determined by the Board of Directors of MCF. In 2019, the Centre supported activities for the *anniversary of the Velvet Revolution of 1989* and the *City of Culture Banská Štiavnica – activities in the field of culture of national minorities* and in 2020, the *City of Culture Nové Zámky in 2020 – activities in the field of culture of national minorities* and *preparation for the Census in 2021* (especially social campaigns, research, educational activities). Priorities of the structure of support activities can also be set by MCF expert councils. In 2019, expert councils for the Czech, Romani and Hungarian national minorities used this opportunity⁴⁰, and in 2020, the expert councils for the Hungarian and Romani national minorities.⁴¹

³⁹Information on publications is available: <http://www.holokaust.sk/published> .

⁴⁰More information is available online:

<https://kultminor.sk/attachments/article/475/%C5%A0TRUKT%C3%9ARA%20PODPORNEJ%20%C4%8CINNOSTI%20FPKNM%20rok%202019.pdf> p. 6-7.

⁴¹More information is available online:

<https://kultminor.sk/attachments/article/475/%C5%A0TRUKT%C3%9ARA%20PODPORNEJ%20%C4%8CINNOSTI%20FPKNM%20na%20rok%202020.pdf> p. 6-7.

Within the grant year 2019, the MCF announced a total of six calls⁴² for applications for subsidies or scholarships.⁴³ In 2019, based on calls to MCF, 2,086 applications were received in the total required amount of EUR 20,380,758. Pursuant to Section 17 of the MCF Act, all projects underwent the prescribed inspection. 1,899 applications met the conditions for completeness and were submitted to the expert councils for assessment. The expert councils recommended a total of 1,440 projects (of which 70 scholarships) were supported in the total amount of EUR 7,573,920.60. In the case of 12 projects, the applicants withdrew from the implementation of the projects. A total of 17 contracts were not signed by the MCF due to incorrect documentation (financial and factual shortcomings). In 2019, MCF concluded a total of 1,411 contracts with the beneficiaries in the total amount of EUR 7,422,899.60.

Table no. 13: Overview of project support by national minorities in 2019

National minority	Number of evaluated projects	Number of projects supported	Number of withdrawals	Number of concluded contracts	Number of unconcluded contracts	Total amount paid in EUR
Bulgarian	31	23	1	22	0	84 365.00
Czech	55	47	0	45	2	221,752.00
Croatian	10	10	0	10	0	76,000.00
Hungarian	1044	808	3	794	11	3,951,461.00
Moravian	10	10	0	10	0	106,400.00
German	16	15	0	15	0	136,780.00
Polish	32	29	0	29	0	109,363.00
Romani	325	230	5	222	3	1,658,694.60
Ruthenian	149	130	3	127	0	484,700.00
Russian	35	25	0	25	0	83,600.00
Serbian	20	15	0	15	0	53,200.00
Ukrainian	34	31	0	31	0	152,000.00
Jewish	38	26	0	26	0	83,600.00
intercultural dialogue and understanding	100	41	0	40	1	220,984.00
TOTAL	1899	1440	12	1411	17	7,422,899.60

Source: MCF

From the regional point of view, the most supported applications were in the Trnava region, followed by the Nitra region and the Bratislava region. The fewest applications were supported in the Žilina Region and the Trenčín Region.

⁴²The text of the calls is available online: <https://kultminor.sk/sk/moznosti-podpory/vyzvy-2019> .

⁴³The structure of FPKNM support activities for 2019 is available online : <https://kultminor.sk/attachments/article/475/%C5%A0TRUKT%C3%9ARA%20PODPORNEJ%20%C4%8CINNOSTI%20FPKNM%20rok%202019.pdf>

Table no. 14: Total number of supported/unsupported applications from a regional point of view

Requests	BB	BA	KE	NR	PO	TN	TT	ZA	TOTAL
supported	201	253	206	283	175	21	285	16	1440
unsupported	60	87	60	86	51	7	101	7	459
TOTAL	261	340	266	369	226	28	386	23	1899

Source: MCF

Within the grant year 2020, a total of seven calls⁴⁴ for applications for subsidies or scholarships were announced. An *Extraordinary call no. 1/2020 to deal with the consequences of a crisis situation* (hereinafter referred to as "Extraordinary Call No. 1/2020") was announced.⁴⁵ In 2020, a total of 2,119 applications were received by MCF on the basis of calls (Call no. 1 – 6) in the total required amount of EUR 20,256,963. Pursuant to Section 17 of the MCF Act, all projects underwent the prescribed inspection. 1,950 applications met the conditions for completeness and were submitted to the expert councils for assessment. The expert councils recommended a total of 1,467 projects in support of a total amount of EUR 7,970,740. In the case of 68 projects, the applicants withdrew from the implementation of the projects. A total of 38 contracts were not signed by the MCF due to incorrect documentation (financial and factual shortcomings). In 2020 MCF concluded a total of 1,348 contracts with the beneficiaries in the total amount of EUR 7,501,499.

⁴⁴The text of the calls is available online: <https://kultminor.sk/sk/moznosti-podpory/vyzvy-2020> .

⁴⁵The structure of FPKNM support activities for 2020 is available online: <https://kultminor.sk/attachments/article/475/%C5%A0TRUKT%C3%9ARA%20PODPORNEJ%20%C4%8CINNOSTI%20FPKNM%20na%20rok%202020.pdf> .

Table no. 15: Overview of project support by national minorities in 2020

National minority	Number of evaluated projects	Number of supported projects	Number of withdrawals	Number of concluded contracts	Number of contracts not signed by MCF in 2020	Total amount paid in EUR in 2020	Number of concluded contracts in 2021
Bulgarian	28	22	0	20	0	70,889.00	2
Czech	62	49	0	44	0	229,826.00	0
Croatian	10	10	0	10	0	76,093.00	0
Hungarian	1048	791	42	736	13	4,106,723.00	0
Moravian	11	11	0	11	0	106,838.00	0
German	15	14	3	11	0	99,544.00	0
Polish	35	25	0	24	1	103,100.00	0
Romani	365	270	7	244	13	1,682,384.00	6
Ruthenian	170	142	11	126	5	455,951.00	0
Russian	26	23	0	23	0	85,607.00	0
Serbian	13	10	0	5	5	24,039.00	0
Ukrainian	39	35	1	34	0	155,284.00	0
Jewish	31	21	0	21	0	83,600.00	0
intercultural dialogue and understanding	97	44	4	39	1	221,621.00	0
TOTAL	1950	1467	68	1348	38	7,501,499.00	8

Source: MCF

From the regional point of view, the most supported applications were in the Nitra region, followed by the Trnava region and the Bratislava region. The fewest applications were supported in the Trenčín region and the Žilina region.

Table no. 16: Total number of supported/unsupported applications from a regional point of view

Applications	BB	BA	KE	NR	PO	TN	TT	ZA	TOTAL
supported	194	258	214	282	206	18	273	22	1467
unsupported	72	67	75	92	61	4	102	10	483
TOTAL	266	325	289	374	267	22	375	32	1950

Source: MCF

Extraordinary call no. 1/2020 was announced for all thirteen national minorities to submit applications for scholarships in the sub-programs of theatre, music, dance, art and audiovisual arts, and in the sub-program to support intercultural dialogue and understanding between citizens of Slovak nationality and citizens belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups. Eligible applicants could apply for a scholarship for 1 to 5 months. The total amount of funds was EUR 475,000. Within the Extraordinary Call No. 1/2020, 236 applications were received by MCF in the total requested amount of EUR 1,194,648. 218 applications met the conditions for completeness and were submitted to the expert councils for assessment. The expert councils recommended a total of 161 projects in support of a total amount of EUR 448,812.

Table no. 17: Overview of project support according to national minorities within the Extraordinary Call no. 1/2020 in 2020

National minority	Number of evaluated projects	Number of projects supported	Total amount paid in EUR	Share of the amount paid for a national minority in the total amount paid
Bulgarian	2	2	4,368.00	0.97%
Czech	5	4	13,104.00	2.92%
Croatian	1	1	2,184.00	0.49 %
Hungarian	119	79	251,160.00	55.96%
Moravian	1	1	5,460.00	1.22%
German	4	4	7,644.00	1.70%
Polish	1	1	4,368.00	0.97%
Romani	55	45	105,924.00	23.60%
Ruthenian	15	13	29,484.00	6.57%
Russian	2	2	4,368.00	0.97%
Serbian	4	3	3,276.00	0.73%
Ukrainian	1	1	4,368.00	0.97%
Jewish	4	1	2,184.00	0.49 %
intercultural dialogue and understanding	4	4	10,920.00	2.43%
TOTAL	218	161	448,812.00	100 %
Source: MCF				

3.8.2 Other subsidy programs

Subsidy system of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

Within the support of projects in the field of culture aimed at preventing discrimination and social exclusion of children and youth living in marginalized Romani communities through the subsidy system of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic program Culture of disadvantaged groups, priority area culture of marginalized Roma communities, a total of 17 projects in the total amount of EUR 55,100 were supported in 2019. In 2020, 15 projects were supported in the total amount of 83,200 EUR. These were related to the support of cultural activities with an emphasis on the interactive involvement of disadvantaged groups of children and youth (children and youth living in marginalized Romani communities / - especially creative workshops). The intention is to develop their motor, creative and intellectual abilities in order to support their integration into society. Informal and educational activities, as well as important cultural and social activities in the subject area, were also supported - research, creative events (*Fragile Memories - Sanore myšli*), oral history (*Stories of the 20th Century*), as well as social activities (*Roma Spirit, Romani Gospel Festival*, etc.)

Table no. 18: List of target groups supported through the subsidy system of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic of the culture program of disadvantaged groups culture of marginalized Romani communities

Applicant	Project	Approved subsidy
NEW LIGHT	Time travelers	5 000
VRUTOCKI	Festival of creative workshops: 140th anniversary of the birth of M.R. Štefánik "Successful life"	4,000.00
Romani Community Centre	Marginalized children and youth from the village of Roštár	8 000
Association FOR A BETTER LIFE	Romani SUV	5 000
Home in the family	PAINTED SCHOOL	1,000
ANNOGALLERY	Heart wide open (interactive workshops)	3 000
Košice-Jungle district	Colours of life: art creative workshops for Romani children and youth	2.300
Let's renew Gemer, non-profit organization	Let's restore Gemer's Romani memory	4,000.00
EUROSIA	One, two, tree (interactive workshops)	2 900
AMARE ČHAVE	Heme kamav! (I want it too!)	5 000
Art Activista Association	Holidays in the slum #2	4,000.00
The Association for Culture, Education and Communication (ACEC)	Roma Spirit 2020	15 000
POST BELLUM SK	We document the stories of the 20th century - the Romani minority	11 000
The youth element of the Future, non-profit org.	Romani Gospel Festival	5 000
The youth element of the Future, non-profit org.	Music that opens the door	8 000
Total		83 200
Source: MC SR		

Subsidy system of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic

The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "MJ SR") annually ensures the operation of the subsidy scheme in the field of human rights to promote, support, and protect human rights and freedoms and to prevent all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance. In 2019, a total of 48 projects were supported, in 2020 - 43 projects. In both years, the allocation set aside for the implementation of projects amounted to EUR 769,500. Projects aimed at supporting national minorities in the reference period include the programs listed in the table.

Table no. 19: List of relevant projects supported through the MJ SR grant system

Applicant	Project	Approved subsidy
2019		
Civic Association of Roma Children and Youth	Let us reject racism and anti-Semitism	11 050
J. Selye University	Majority and minority and their coexistence, Part III "What do we know about ourselves?"	17 100
DUEL - PRESS s.r.o.	Új Szó Akadémia 2019 – Basic Human Rights	17,000
In minorita	Remembrance of the Romani Holocaust – Ma bisteren!	12 500
Centre for Ethnicity and Culture Research (CECR)	Sport as a way out of the ghetto	20 000
The Association for Culture, Education and Communication (ACEC)	Roma Spirit – 10 years of good practice	15 000
PARADYSIO	Art therapy – fairy tales against xenophobia and racism	15 000
ETP Slovakia – Centre for Sustainable Development	We are building hope on Luník IX	30,000
EDAH o.z. (civic association)	Testimonies of Holocaust Survivors – A Meeting of Generations	25 000
TOTAL		162 650
2020		
The Association for Culture, Education and Communication (ACEC)	Roma Spirit 2020	5 000
FEMAN Association	"MACIKY 2020" Festival of music, dance, reading, and art in the world of blind children and youth from marginalized groups	14 000
J. Selye University	Majority and minority and their coexistence, Part IV	25 000
Galanta Education Centre	Tragedy in the history of the Romani – the Romani Holocaust	5 000
EDAH o.z. (civic association)	Support for education in the field of teaching about the Holocaust	15 000
Romani Hearts – Romane Jile	All together	7 113
Centre for Ethnicity and Culture Research	(Un)ited country: monitoring of minority policy in Slovakia	20 552
Youth street	Support for people at risk of radicalization and extremism: EXIT	25 000
TOTAL		116 665
Source: MJ SR.		

Support for the culture of national minorities at the level of higher territorial units

In the area of supporting the culture of national minorities, local authorities also perform tasks by providing subsidies, which could also be applied for by organizations focusing on national minorities. OPGNM requests to send information on subsidies in the field of culture of national minorities to all HTUs. On the basis of the call, data on the provision of subsidies from the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (Table No. 20) and the Nitra Self-Governing Region (Table No. 21) were sent to the OPGNM in the above structure.

Table no. 20: Relevant projects supported by the Bratislava Regional Subsidy Scheme

2019
CATCH XXLL, Association for the Development of Culture and Integration of the Physically Handicapped OPGNM Gypsy Jazz Festival 2019 (jazz music festival with ethnic elements, highlights the contribution of Romani jazz artists into the world of music and in Slovakia the support for multiculturalism)
European Media Centre – Gypsy Fest – World Roma Festival (world Romani festival, minority initiative contributes to the development and consolidation of the identity of the national minority and positively promotes it)
Milan Šimečka Foundation – [fusion] – festival of new minorities (support for intercultural exchange between the majority and foreign communities, raising awareness and awareness of migrants and new minorities in society)
Curatorial Studies Institute – Wandering gallery of nomadSPACE (art drawing attention to the issues of extremism, xenophobia, racism with an emphasis on the Romani community).
2020
Andrea Kutlíková – ART talk (discussions on minority topics and problems in society, increasing tolerance towards minorities through art)
Wild Poppies – Gala program of Wild Poppies (multi-genre show of Romani culture and art)
Non-investment fund of the Jewish cultural heritage – Menorah – Treasures of the Jewish Museum in Prešov II (research and presentation of the cultural heritage of the Jewish community in Slovakia)
Post Bellum SK – Exhibition dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II (exhibition in the cities of the Bratislava region on the topic of anti-Semitism)
Source: Bratislava self-governing region.

Table no. 21: Support of the culture of national minorities of the Nitra self-governing region

Entities	2019		2020	
	No. of entities	Allocated amount in €	No. of entities	Allocated amount in €
Civic associations of national minorities	50	54 800	50	47 760
Civic associations of Romani communities	4	2 500	2	2900
Csemadoky	24	23 330	17	30 210
Other (church organizations, schools)	19	14 440	7	13 540
TOTAL	97	95 070	101	94 410
Source: Nitra self-governing region.				

Part IV – Rights of national minorities in the field of education and training of national minorities

4.1 Legislative and conceptual frameworks

The right to upbringing and education is guaranteed to the citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic in Article 34 (2), which guarantees, under the conditions laid down by law, in addition to the right to learn the state language, the right to education in their mother tongue. The Slovak Republic also undertook to ensure this right by ratifying the Framework Convention and the Charter of Languages. These rights are regulated primarily by Act no. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended⁴⁶. Other laws

⁴⁶This law has been amended a total of seven times in the reference period under review, while only one of the amendments also concerned national minorities. For more information on the amendments, kindly see section

governing the relevant area are as follows: Act no. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and School Self-government and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended⁴⁷; Act no. 597/2003 Coll. on Financing Primary schools, Secondary schools, and School facilities, as amended; Act no. 138/2019 Coll. on Pedagogical staff and Professional staff, Amendments to Certain Acts.

In accordance with the Education Act, children and pupils belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups have the right to learn the state language, as well as the right to receive education in the language of the national minority. The education of persons belonging to national minorities takes place in schools and classes with the language of instruction of national minorities or in schools and classes in which one of the subjects taught is the language of a national minority and the language of instruction of other subjects is the state language.

Education and training in primary and secondary schools with a language of instruction other than the state language also includes a compulsory subject of Slovak language and literature in the scope needed to learn it. In schools and classes with the language of instruction in a national minority language, some subjects may be taught in the language of a national minority, especially art education, music education, and physical education. The education obtained in schools with the language of instruction of national minorities is equivalent to the education obtained in schools with the language of instruction in the Slovak language. The educational process in schools with the language of instruction of national minorities and with the teaching of the language of national minorities is carried out in accordance with state educational programs for individual levels of education.

One of the most important conceptual documents in the field of education and training of national minorities is the Government Manifesto, which, in 2020, set several important priorities in this area. In accordance with this document, the Government of the Slovak Republic places emphasis on increasing the quality of the national education and also pays attention to creating equal opportunities for all pupils with regard to their mother tongue. In the *National Education* section, the Government of the Slovak Republic undertook to support the functioning of schools with the language of instruction of national minorities, as well as schools where the national minority predominates and where there is a demand for a school with Slovak as the language of instruction. The Government of the Slovak Republic has undertaken to adopt the concept of national education and to increase the support and

1.1, p. 4 of this Report. At the same time, an extensive amendment to this legislation is currently being prepared. The bill was the subject of an inter-ministerial comment procedure from 19 January 2021 to 8 February 2021. A total of 1,119 comments were submitted, of which 713 were substantial. The Plenipotentiary made 11 comments, of which 10 were substantial. Due to numerous comments, the bill was included, after the evaluation of the inter-ministerial comment procedure, into an additional inter-ministerial comment procedure that took place from 9 March 2021 to 17 March 2021. A total of 631 comments were submitted in this comment procedure, of which 434 were substantial. The Plenipotentiary made 8 key comments. Most of the Plenipotentiary's comments were made to reflect the specifics and needs of national education in the provisions of the law. Currently, an inter-ministerial comment procedure is being evaluated.

⁴⁷This law has been amended a total of six times in the reference period under review, while only one of the amendments also concerned national minorities. For more information on the amendments, kindly see section 1.1, p. 3 of this Report.

development of education of children and pupils belonging to national minorities in their mother tongue. The Government of the Slovak Republic has also undertaken to provide current and modern textbooks and teaching materials for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools with the language of instruction or with the language teaching of national minorities with emphasis on their accessibility for pupils and schools. The Government of the Slovak Republic has committed itself to supporting pedagogical staff and schools in the use of digital technologies in the teaching process, ensuring adjustments in the methodology of teaching the Slovak language in schools with the language of instruction or teaching the language of national minorities and the development of Slovak language didactics as a second language. At the same time, the Government of the Slovak Republic will ensure the improvement of vocational training, continuous education and personal development of teachers and professional staff teaching in schools with the language of instruction or language teaching of national minorities, with emphasis on the principles of inclusive education, intercultural and interethnic dialogue, including training of qualified Hungarian, Romani and Ruthenian teachers, which will serve as a basic precondition for ensuring the possibility of continuing education in the language of national minorities. The Government of the Slovak Republic has also promised to carry out an analysis of the situation of small-class schools, which contribute to the preservation of the minority identity of members of national minorities.⁴⁸

4.2 Institutional protection

The provision of the educational process of members of national minorities is covered by the MESRS SR, specifically the Section of National and Inclusive Education. Key tasks and competencies in the field of the educational process of members of national minorities are also provided by the State Pedagogical Institute (hereinafter referred to as "SPI"), the State Institute of Vocational Education, the National Institute of Certified Measurement of Education (hereinafter referred to as "NICME"), the State School Inspectorate hereinafter referred to as "SSI", IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute, as well as the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre (hereinafter referred to as "MPC"), which is further divided into the Directorate General, three regional and six detached branches, of which the detached branch of MPC Košice (hereinafter referred to as "DP MPC Košice") and the regional branch of MPC Prešov (hereinafter referred to as "RP MPC Prešov") are particularly important for national minorities.

Tasks in the area of ensuring the educational process of members of national minorities are also performed by local self-government bodies and local state administration bodies (district offices located in the region), which have competencies primarily in the field of founding and dissolving schools, provision of premises as well as material and technical provision of the educational process.

⁴⁸Manifesto, p. 74.

An important body for the field of education of persons belonging to national minorities is also the Council of the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for National Education (hereinafter the "Council of the Minister"), which is an advisory, initiative and professional body of the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport the field of education and training of persons belonging to national minorities and the implementation of Article 7 (4) and Article 8 of the Charter of Languages. With effect from 14 October 2020, the Order of the Minister no. 57/2020 amended the Statute of the Council of the Minister, which extended the membership of the Council of the Minister by a representative from the OPGNM and a representative from the OPGRC. Prior to the change in the Statute, the 3rd meetings of the above body took place, which focused on information on the accreditation of the new study program of the University of Prešov in Prešov – *Romani language, literature and studies* and Framework curricula for schools with the language of instruction of national minorities and teaching the language of national minorities. No meeting of the Council of Ministers took place after the change of the Statute.

4.3 Content protection

Schools and school facilities carry out the process of education and training on the basis of educational programs. The MESRS SR issues state educational programs that define the compulsory content of education in schools to acquire key competencies. State educational programs define educational standards and framework curricula (hereinafter referred to as "FEP").

In the years 2019 – 2020, the following changes took place in terms of content of education:

- On 30 November 2019, the MESRS SR approved two amendments to the State Educational Program for Primary Schools (hereinafter also referred to as "SEP for PS") with the minority language of instruction:
 - Amendment no. 4 adopted under the no. 2019/11788: 5-C1620 regulates the FEP for Primary schools with the language of instruction of national minorities with effect from 1 September 2020 (from the 1st to the 3rd grade). The Amendment regulates the FUP with regard to the possibility of choosing the first foreign language in primary education;
 - Amendment no. 5 adopted under the no. 2019/11788: 6-C1620 regulates FEP for Primary schools with the language of instruction of national minorities with effect from 1 September 2020 (from the 1st to the 3rd grade). The Amendment regulates the FUP with regard to the possibility of choosing the first foreign language in primary education;
- On 26 May 2020, the MESRS SR approved an Amendment no. 6 under the no. 2020/10884:1-C1620 to the State educational program for primary education – 1st level of primary school, an Amendment to Educational standards for the subjects of Regional studies and Music education in schools with the language of instruction

of the national minority – 1st level of primary school with effect from 1 September 2020;

- MESRS SR approved an Amendment no. 7 to the Measures to eliminate or minimize the consequences of extraordinary interruption of school teaching in schools in the school year 2019/2020 and to harmonize the wording of State educational programs with the wording of the Education Act of 29 June 2020 as part of the SEP for primary schools with Slovak as the language of instruction and teaching the language of a national minority with effect from 1 September 2020. Its aim is to take into account the needs of pupils in connection with the interruption of school teaching due to the extraordinary situation, in particular by adjusting the educational standards and curricula of school educational programs. Within the document, the content of education at the first and second level of primary school is divided into three comprehensive parts of the educational program – cycles, while the second cycle combines the last year of the first level of primary school and the initial year of the second level of primary school. The revised goals and content of education define the compulsory content of education in primary schools. The educational standards serve as means to acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities that students have to acquire in order to be able to continue their education in the follow-up part of the educational program. In the educational area entitled *Language and Communication – Language and Literature – modified goals and content of educational areas and subjects*, educational standards were developed for the following subjects, for all three cycles of education:
 - Slovak language and Slovak literature;
 - Hungarian language and literature;
 - German language and literature;
 - Romani language and literature;
 - Ruthenian language and literature;
 - Russian language and literature;
 - Ukrainian language and literature.
- With effect from 1 September 2021, starting with the first grade, the MESRS SR approved 23 amendments to State educational programs for vocational education and training, which contain FEP for individual groups of education departments and individual levels of education provided by secondary vocational schools. FEPs are developed for schools and classes with the Slovak as the language of instruction, and for schools and classes with the language of instruction in a minority language. At the same time, the FEPs for secondary vocational schools teaching the language of a national minority were also adjusted. In classes with the teaching of the language of a national minority, the subject *Language of National Minority and Literature is a compulsory part of the educational area entitled Language and Communication* with a minimum subsidy of 1 hour per week;

- On 30 August 2019, the MESRS SR approved the Educational standard for the subject Ruthenian language and literature for upper secondary education for schools with the Ruthenian language of instruction and Ruthenian language teaching, with effect from 1 September 2019.

In the interest of streamlining work in national education, several methodological materials were prepared in the period 2019 – 2020:

- SPI developed the content of education in primary schools during the extraordinary interruption of teaching in schools, i.e. Methodological guidelines for the content and organization of the educational process in primary schools and primary schools for pupils with special educational needs⁴⁹ valid from 16 November 2020. Chapter 2.3.4. contains the Schedule for the distance learning for schools with the language of instruction of the national minority;
- MESRS SR 2019-2020 provided professional terminological dictionaries/glossaries of school terminology⁵⁰ with an effort to simplify, facilitate and streamline the work of the professional public in education in the use of professional terminology in the language of national minorities, namely: Slovak-Hungarian, Slovak-Romani, Slovak-Ruthenian, Slovak- Ukrainian and Slovak-German dictionary;
- SPI has created a methodological portal to help pedagogical and professional employees of regional education⁵¹, which contains methodological suggestions, content orientations of optional subjects, or outputs from SPI's projects;
- MESRS SR has set up a *National Education portal on its website*⁵². It publishes on this website information related to the upbringing and education of persons belonging to national minorities. The information contains documents and materials that provide assistance to schools and their founders, as well as other useful information sources. Currently, the site contains a translation into Hungarian, Romani and Ruthenian languages.

4.4 Education in the languages of national minorities

Education and training of persons belonging to national minorities take place in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, and school facilities with the language of instruction of the national minority or with teaching the language of the Bulgarian, Hungarian, German, Romani, Ruthenian, Russian, and Ukrainian national minorities. The founder of schools may be a municipality, a self-governing region, a district office at the region, a state-recognized church or religious society, or another legal or natural entity.

⁴⁹Methodological guidance is available at: https://ucimenadialku.sk/usmernenia/otvorenie-skolskeho-roka-2020-2021/Metodicke_usmernenie_ZS_16-11-2020.pdf.

⁵⁰Professional terminological dictionaries/glossaries are available at: <https://www.minedu.sk/odborna-terminologia-pre-narodnostne-skolstvo/>.

⁵¹The SPI methodological portal is available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/metodicky-portal/>.

⁵²The page "National Education" is available at: <https://www.minedu.sk/narodnostne-skolstvo/>.

A. Kindergartens

As of 15 September 2020, a total of 3,042 kindergartens (2,754 state, 189 private and 99 religious) were included in the network of schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic, of which 357 (11.74%) with the language of instruction of the national minority, specifically with Bulgarian, Hungarian, German, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

Table no. 22: Number of kindergartens in the Slovak Republic by the language of instruction of national minorities

Language of Instruction	Number of kindergartens	Percentage share
Bulgarian	1	0.03%
Hungarian	278	9.14%
German	1	0.03%
Ruthenian	3	0.10%
Slovak-Hungarian	72	2.37%
Ukrainian	2	0.07%
TOTAL	357	11.74%

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Kindergarten Education.

B. Primary schools

As of 15 September 2020, a total of 2,069 primary schools were included in the network of schools and school facilities, of which 1,886 were state, 116 religious and 67 private, with a total of 24,250 classes. As of 15 September 2020, a total of 249 (12.03%) primary schools with Hungarian, German, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Russian, and Bulgarian languages of instruction were established within the network of primary schools out of the total number of primary schools.

Table no. 23: Number of primary schools in the Slovak Republic by the language of instruction of national minorities

Language of Instruction	Number of primary schools	Percentage share
Bulgarian	1	0.05%
Hungarian	216	10.44%
German	2	0.10%
Ruthenian	1	0.05%
Slovak-Hungarian	26	1.26%
Slovak-Ruthenian	1	0.05%
Ukrainian	1	0.05%
Russian	1	0.05%
TOTAL	249	12.03%

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Primary School Education.

The following schools with the Hungarian as the language of instruction were attended by:

- 27,778 pupils in state schools, of which 13,185 pupils in grades 0-4 and 14,593 pupils in grades 5-9;
- 1,507 pupils in religious schools, of which 696 pupils in grades 0-4 and 811 pupils in grades 5-9.

The following schools with the German as the language of instruction were attended by:

- 27 pupils in public schools in grades 0-4;

- 128 pupils in private schools in grades 0-4.

The following schools with the Bulgarian as the language of instruction were attended by:

- a total of 69 pupils in private schools, of which 44 in grades 0-4 and 25 pupils in grades 5-9.

The following schools with the Ruthenian as the language of instruction were attended by:

- a total of 67 pupils in state schools, of which 34 pupils in grades 0-4 and 33 pupils in grades 5-9.

The following schools with the Ukrainian as the language of instruction were attended by:

- a total of 143 pupils in state schools, of which 68 pupils in grades 0-4 and 75 pupils in grades 5-9.

The following schools with the Russian as the language of instruction were attended by:

- 35 pupils in private schools in grades 0-4.

Table no. 24: Number of pupils in primary schools with the language of instruction of national minorities in the period 2016 – 2020

	Hungarian	German	Ukrainian	Bulgarian	Ruthenian	Russian	Total
2016	29 077	164	168	76	0	0	29 485
2017	29 236	157	171	84	53	6	29 584
2018	29 399	166	141	84	62	10	29 862
2019	29 264	168	148	83	60	25	29 748
2020	29 285	155	143	69	67	35	29 754

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Primary School Education.

C. Secondary schools

As of 15 September 2020, a total of 437 secondary vocational schools (including 335 state, 83 private and 19 religious) were included in the network of schools and school facilities. Out of the stated number of secondary vocational schools, 37 secondary vocational schools were established with the language of instruction of national minorities, of which 23 with the Slovak-Hungarian language of instruction and 14 with the Hungarian language of instruction. At the same time, 233 grammar schools (including 144 state, 38 private, 51 religious) schools were included in the network of schools and school facilities. Of the stated number of grammar schools, 25 were with the language of instruction of national minorities.

Table no. 25: Number of secondary vocational schools in the Slovak Republic by the language of instruction of national minorities

Language of Instruction	Number of kindergartens	Percentage share
Hungarian	14	3.20%
Slovak-Hungarian	23	526%
TOTAL	37	8.47%

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Secondary Vocational School Education.

Table no. 26: Number of grammar schools in the Slovak Republic by the language of instruction of national minorities

Language of Instruction	Number of kindergartens	Percentage share
Hungarian	16	6.87%

Slovak-Hungarian	6	2.58%
Ukrainian	1	0.43%
German	1	0.43%
Bulgarian	1	0.43%
TOTAL	25	10.73%
Source: Statistical Yearbook of Grammar School Education.		

There is still no secondary school in Slovakia with Romani or Ruthenian languages of instruction. In this context, it should be noted that the teaching of the Romani language within the compulsory optional subject takes place in the Private Grammar School of Zefyrín J. Malla in Kremnica. Due to the fact that the Romani nationality was claimed by 105,738 inhabitants of the Slovak Republic (Romani language as their mother tongue was stated by 122,518) in the 2011 Census of Population and Housings (hereinafter referred to as “CPH 2011”) and 33,482 inhabitants of the Slovak Republic claimed Ruthenian nationality (Ruthenian language as a mother tongue was stated by 55,469), there is a strong need to establish such schools.

D. Higher education institutions

Universities on the basis of Act no. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, are divided into public, state, private and foreign. As of 31 October 2020, higher education was in the academic year 2020/2021 provided by 34 universities, of which 20 were public universities, 3 state universities, and 10 private universities with a total of 128 faculties.

It is possible to attend university subjects at departments, institutes and schools, within which several languages of national minorities are taught (Hungarian, German, Russian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Romani, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian and Polish):

- Comenius University in Bratislava (Department of Hungarian Language and Literature, Department of German Studies, Dutch and Scandinavian Studies, Department of Russian Studies and East European Studies, Department of Slavic Philology at the Faculty of Arts and Department of German Language and Literature at the Pedagogical Faculty);
- University of Prešov in Prešov (Institute of Russian Studies, Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Institute of German Studies at the Faculty of Arts, and the Centre for Languages and Cultures of National Minorities with the Institute of Hungarian Language and Culture, Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture and Institute of Romani Studies);
- University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (Department of Russian Studies, Department of German Studies within the Faculty of Arts);
- Catholic University in Ružomberok (Department of German Studies within the Faculty of Arts);
- Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra (Department of German Studies, Department of Russian Studies at the Faculty of Arts and the Institute of Hungarian Linguistics and Literary Studies and the Institute of Central European Languages and Cultures at the Faculty of Central European Studies);

- Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (Department of German Studies, Department of Slavic Languages within the Faculty of Arts).

The only public university in Slovakia, where teaching takes place primarily in the language of the national minority – in Hungarian, is the J. Selye University in Komárno. This means that it completes continuing education and training in the minority language, from kindergarten to university.

4.5 Activities in the field of upbringing and education of children belonging to national minorities in schools and school facilities

In the reference period, several activities related to the upgrading of education and the upbringing of members of national minorities were implemented. Most of them were also related to the fulfillment of tasks from the Action Plan, specifically to the operational objective 3 entitled *More effective consideration of the specifics of educational needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups*, which is managed by the MESRS SR.

During the period of interruption of teaching in schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SPI launched activities supporting distance learning for children from excluded Romani communities. SPI, in cooperation with experts, prepared several workbooks for primary school students with Slovak as the language of instruction and with Hungarian as the language of instruction from excluded Romani communities.⁵³ Workbooks are prepared separately for primary and secondary school students. Workbooks have been published under the title *Notebook for each day* and are intended to help pupils in practicing and consolidating the curriculum during school interruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to ensure access for all pupils to education, even under difficult conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Special attention is required for pupils who grow up in excluded Romani communities. These children often do not have access to the internet connection and technical equipment needed to participate in distance education. At the same time, the conditions of their home environment can be a significant obstacle to their progress in education during the interruption of full-time teaching in schools. With regard to the development of the epidemiological situation, these workbooks are still up-to-date.

Within the document System model of creation of curricular documents, including the process of their periodic innovation, the SPI also solved in the reference period the process of renewal and innovation of curricular documents for the following subjects – Slovak language and Slovak literature, Hungarian language and literature, Romani language and literature, Ukrainian language and literature, Ruthenian language and literature, German language and literature, Russian language and literature at all types and levels of education. The aim of this task for 2020 was to develop a professional study, which included an analysis of the FEP with

⁵³Workbooks are available at <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/distančne-vzdelavanie/distančne-vzdelavanie-ziakov-z-vylucených-romských-lokalít/> and <https://ucimenadialku.sk/ro> .

a comprehensive definition of the scope of individual educational areas and subjects based on the current state of general education in the Slovak Republic. The professional study will serve as a starting point for possible modifications of the FEP for schools with the language of instruction of the national minority and with the teaching of the language of national minorities.

In connection with the performance of activity no. 4 of the operational objective 3 of the Action Plan *Strengthening educational programs for pedagogical staff, professional staff of schools and school facilities in the field of education of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, inclusive education, intercultural and interethnic dialogue*, MPC provided in years 2019 – 2020 continual education for pedagogical staff (hereinafter also referred to as “PedS”) and professional staff (hereinafter also referred to as “ProfS”) of regional education through accredited educational programs (hereinafter also referred to as “AEP”) in accordance with Act no. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff and on the Amendment of Certain Acts, as amended, and from 1 September 2019 also education in professional development in accordance with Act no. 138/2019 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff and on the Amendment of Certain Acts, as amended, and the Decree of the MESRS SR no. 361/2019 Coll. on Education in professional development.

Within the framework of continuous education, in 2019, a total of 2,522 PedS and ProfS took part in AEP within the mentioned issues, including AVP implemented within the sustainability of national projects Education of pedagogical staff for inclusion of marginalized Romani communities (MRK1) and Inclusive model of pre-primary education (MRK2) and AVP within the national project *The school, open*.

4.5.1 Activities of the detached branch MPC Košice

In the reference period, DB MPC Košice continued to provide continuing education in the language of national minorities, which was mainly intended for teachers of kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction from the Košice self-governing region. In the field of national education, DB MPC Košice cooperates with the detached branch MPC Komárno, organizing methodological days, workshops, and professional seminars reflecting the requirements of teachers and providing education for school groups, as well as consultations for teachers in Hungarian in the first and second attestation. The consultations were focused on solving problem situations in the educational process, on eliminating various problems through innovative methods, the structure of the attestation portfolio and other activities. Groups were created for educators and teachers of kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools with the language of instruction of the national minority within the framework of update programs. The education was conducted in the language of national minorities. Together with the Kráľovský Chlmec elementary school with the language of instruction of the national minority, and the Zoltán Fábry Joint School with the language of instruction of the national minority in Rožňava, DB MPC Košice organized a methodological day for teachers. At the same time, since March 2020, webinars have been created for kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers with Hungarian as the

language of instruction. A website with a presentation of methodological articles on the topic of *Developing Visual Literacy was created for teachers of art subjects from national education.*

In addition to the training of ProfS and PedS teaching in Hungarian, DB MPC Košice, in cooperation with the Federal Office for Foreign Education in Germany, organized training for German language teachers involved in the program entitled *German language diploma.*

4.5.2 Activities of the regional office MPC Prešov

In 2019, the regional office of MPC Prešov (hereinafter referred to as “RO MPC Prešov”) provided training for national minorities, with an emphasis on teachers with the Ruthenian language of instruction. All activities associated with the individual needs and specifics of educating the Ruthenian were directly based on the provisions of the strategic framework of the most current *Concept for the Development of Ruthenian Language Teaching in Kindergartens, Primary Schools and Secondary Schools in the Slovak Republic.* In the field of cooperation with the Ruthenian community, the strategic framework of the mentioned Concept defined the need to create a professional Slovak-Ruthenian dictionary of pedagogical terms for Ruthenian school teaching practice.

In the area of professional development of Ruthenian language and literature teachers, MPC implemented training in AEP and non-accredited educational programs. Within the AVP, the training was realized in two upgrading educational programs:

- Ruthenian language and its teaching at primary and secondary schools (accreditation number 1434/2014-KV, 2 educational groups – a total of 36 applicants and at the same time successful graduates, 42 hours full-time/18 distance learning);
- Development of professional competencies of pedagogical staff in the field of exploring the Ruthenian national minority (accreditation number 1782/2018-KV, one educational group – a total of 23 applicants, of which 16 graduates, 11 hours full-time/9 distance learning).

As part of non-accredited forms of education, DB MPC Prešov participated in the organization of a professional seminar for teachers of the Ruthenian language entitled *Selected Facts from the History and Language of the Ruthenians.* The seminar took place on September 26, 2019, in the premises of DB MPC in Prešov, and was organized in cooperation with a civic association OZ Kolysočka – Kolíska.

In 2020, DB MPC Prešov, together with DB MPC Košice, responded to the social situation caused by the pandemic of the COVID-19 by the transition of education from full-time to distance learning. However, this fact did not affect the diversity of activities that DB MPC Prešov/DB MPC Košice implemented. Their activities focused mainly on the professional development of pedagogical staff in schools with the Ruthenian language of instruction and with the teaching of the Ruthenian language, namely:

- implementation of online non-accredited educational events (6 webinars and 1 professional seminar, 43 participants) on the topic of teaching the Ruthenian language;

- preparation of educational resources for participants, preparation of educational programs in the form of PowerPoint presentations and text documents with recommendations for pedagogical practice offered for continuous viewing and downloading in the Moodle system;
- elaboration of Analysis of the level of acquired competencies of pedagogical staff and their application in practice in Ruthenian language and literature in Pedagogical perspectives no. 5/2020 and in Ruthenian professional periodicals;
- as part of the TEACHERS project, a separate teachers' forum was set up in July 2020 for teachers from schools with the Ruthenian language of instruction or from schools with the teaching of the Ruthenian language, elaboration of a framework proposal for the design of an innovative education program with the theme of education of national minorities;
- ongoing consulting services for the segment of Ruthenian national education.

4.5.3 Activities of the Roma Education Centre Prešov

ROCEPO, which also has a nationwide scope, also operates within the DB MPC Prešov. In 2019, ROCEPO implemented education in AEP focused on PedS and ProfS focused mainly on methods and forms of work supporting the development of critical thinking of students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, application of methods of active learning of children and students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds with an emphasis on developing psychomotor abilities and skills, global education and its application in the educational process, multicultural education, creating a favorable educational environment and breaking down prejudices by getting to know students from marginalized communities, etc. The education was carried out according to the following AEP:

- Multicultural education against prejudice and racism;
- Application of methods of active learning of children and students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, with an emphasis on the development of psychomotor abilities and skills;
- Enhancing teachers' competencies to manage classroom activities and guide students in learning processes;
- Control activity in the work of the leading pedagogical employee;
- Getting to know students from marginalized Romani communities to create a favorable educational environment and break down prejudices;
- Scientific experiments in science at the first level of primary school;
- Natural sciences.

In 2020, ROCEPO organized several professional activities:

- 24 webinars – 360 participants;
- Forum for teaching assistants – 15 participants;

- Forum for educators working with students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds – 16 participants;
- functional education – 82 hours (full-time and distance);
- advanced education – 20 hours;
- completion of functional education – 8 examination commissions;
- introduction of PedS – 2 PedS;
- creation of short methodological inspirations (hereinafter referred to as “SMI”) – 21 SMI, a set of 21 worksheets and a SMI catalog for home learning for children and pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds without an online connection;
- creation of 8 educational programs;
- creation of 2 quizzes on the topic (for primary and secondary schools) of *Memorials of the Romani Holocaust in Slovakia*, in cooperation with the State Scientific Library in Prešov and the Documentation and Information Centre of Romani Culture;
- ROCEPO activity bulletin;
- processing the focus-interviews aimed at finding out the introduction of inclusion elements in schools with an increased number of students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds (analysis of the results of focus interviews of 4 schools in the West Slovakia region and 4 schools in Central Slovakia region, implementation and processing of focus-interviews from 4 schools in East Slovakia region).

In the reference period, several AEPs were added and the most important are as follows:

- a) AEP for MPC as a training provider for pedagogical staff and professional staff:
 - five programs of continual training for pedagogical and professional staff working in schools with a minority language of instruction (4 Hungarian, 1 Ukrainian);
 - one program of continual training devoted to Ruthenian minority (*Ruthenian Studies*) and the possibility of its inclusion into the educational program of a primary school.
- b) In UKF Nitra, it was the AEP *Basics of the Romani language for pedagogical staff*.

Within fulfilling activity no. 5 of the operational objective 3 of the Action Plan: *Creation of teaching material focusing on the history and culture of national minorities in the Slovak Republic*, SPI, in cooperation with experts, prepared a publication entitled *National Minorities – Let's Get to Know Them*. The publication is a supplementary teaching material for primary school teachers, and it should be emphasized that it does not have the character of a textbook. The aim of the publication is to briefly present the documented historical context of the life of national minorities in Slovakia, in a form and language appropriate to the age of the recipients. The publication includes following national minorities: Bulgarian, Czech and Moravian, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Russian, Ruthenian, Romani, Serbian, Ukrainian and Jewish. It is available as a teaching material. So far, a total of 2 700 pcs of this publication have been printed and, according to the CVTI SR registry, it has been disseminated

via post to 2 280 schools. Based on a request from the MESRS SR, the publication has also been translated into Hungarian.⁵⁴

4.6 Supporting the improved Slovak language teaching for members of national minorities

An important role in supporting the improvement of Slovak language teaching for members of national minorities is played by the National Project - Educational Process of Teaching Slovak Language and Slovak Literature in School with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction (hereinafter referred to as the "National Project"), implemented by the MPC in cooperation with SPI, NICME and SSI. The national project is aimed at increasing the quality of teaching Slovak language and literature in schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction and monitoring the implementation of an innovated state educational program (practical application of student-oriented pedagogy, support of individual learning, creating an inclusive teaching environment, effective and efficient use information and communication technologies). Duration of the National Project is planned until 2021. Activities of the MPC within the National Project for the period 2019 – 2020 include evaluation reports of the National Project, specifically Evaluation report IV and Evaluation report V.

Within the National Project, the creation of individual chapters of the Methodological Model of Teaching Slovak Language and Slovak Literature (hereinafter referred to as “SLSL”) continued, which is based on the Concept of Teaching Slovak Language and Slovak Literature in Primary Schools with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction for 2018 – 2021. The final version of the methodological model will be developed according to the approved schedule at the end of the project. According to the minutes of the workshop, monitored lessons were to be held from 27 August 2020 on to the second half of November 2020, with a change that while observations were to continue at the 2nd grade of primary school, and in the classes of the 1st grade of elementary school with two-month intervals. In the school year 2020/2021, monitoring of the teaching process was to take place in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade of primary education and in the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade of lower secondary education of selected schools in October and December 2020. Due to the 2nd wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the 2020/2021 school year, the teaching process monitoring was not carried out. The research and development staff of the SPI consulted issues with the teachers over the telephone or online, when needed.

In accordance with the National Project, the creation of Methodical *Sheets for the Slovak language and Slovak literature for teachers of the 9th grade of elementary school with the language of instruction of a national minority* continued in the reference period. By August 2020, sample Annual plans and Methodological sheets were prepared according to the components of the subject taught for a teacher teaching SLSL in the 9th grade of elementary school with the language of instruction of the national minority. These were handed over to schools in printed and electronic form on 24 August 2020:

⁵⁴The publication is available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/publikacna-cinnost/ucebne-texty/>.

- model annual plan of a teacher teaching SJSL in the 9th grade of elementary school with the language of instruction of a national minority – integrated component entitled communication, essay writing and language communication;
- model annual plan of a teacher teaching SJSL in the 9th grade of elementary school with the language of instruction of a national minority – literature communication;

16 Methodological sheets on SLSL from the integrated component entitled communication, essay writing and language communication and 16 Annexes were prepared for the 9th grade of primary school with the language of instruction of the national minority. Due to the long-term absence of a Slovak textbook for the 9th grade of primary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction, it was necessary to create a study material in accordance with the educational standard with appropriate background texts, tasks and grammar in the first place, and then the methodological sheets. Furthermore, 20 Methodological sheets on SLSL from literary communication were prepared. Each methodological sheet also contains a worksheet. At present, the comments of teachers teaching SLSL in the monitored schools are being processed, model annual plans for all grades of primary schools with the language of instruction of the national minority and methodological sheets for the 1st stage of primary school with the language of instruction of the national minority are being adjusted. In the next stage, the comments of teachers teaching SLSL will be evaluated, and based on the results of monitoring the educational process, methodological materials will be modified and supplemented.

Part V – Rights of national minorities in the field of the use of the language of national minorities

5.1 Legislative and conceptual frameworks

Art. 34 of the Constitution of SR guarantees its citizens forming national minorities in the Slovak Republic the right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue and, under the conditions laid down by law, the right to use their language in official communication. The legislative framework for the use of languages of national minorities in the sense of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic consists mainly of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. This Act regulates the rights of Slovak citizens who belong to national minorities to use the language of a national minority and establishes rights and obligations in the area of using the language of a minority in official communication and in other areas for public administration bodies and other entities. In addition to Act no. 184/1999 Coll., a number of other generally binding pieces of legislation regulates this area⁵⁵.

Implementing regulations to Act no. 184/1999 Coll. are as follows:

⁵⁵See e.g. Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for 2012 and other reports. For more information on the changes that have taken place in the given area in the reference period, kindly see section 1.1, p. 3 of this Report.

- Regulation of the Government of the SR no. 535/2011 Coll., which implements some provisions of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. (hereinafter referred to as “Government Regulation No. 535/2011 Coll.”). This Regulation regulates the details of informing citizens about the possibility of using the languages of national minorities in official contact and lays down the formal requirements for bilingual official documents;
- Regulation of the Government of the SR no. 221/1999 Coll.

In the area of language rights of national minorities, the Government of the Slovak Republic undertook in its Manifesto to sensitively take into account the coexistence of the state language with other official EU languages and the languages of national minorities. And also consider the possibility of extending the scope of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. to HTUs, which, for example, in relation to the Hungarian national minority, would apply to two HTUs (Trnava and Nitra)⁵⁶. In relation to the Romani national minority, the Government has committed itself to strengthen the Romani cultural identity as well as the Romani language.⁵⁷

The Slovak Republic is also bound by international treaties in the field of protection of the linguistic rights of national minorities. The most important are the Framework Convention and the Charter of Languages. The Charter of Languages is a framework multilateral international treaty of a cultural nature. It is designed to protect and promote regional and minority languages as an endangered aspect of Europe's cultural heritage. Therefore, it contains not only an anti-discrimination clause on the use of these languages, but also sets out measures that open up the possibility of actively promoting regional and minority languages: the aim is to ensure, where possible, the use of regional or minority languages in education and the media, and to approve their usage within the judicial and official spheres, social and economic life and cultural activities. If necessary, we would achieve compensation for the past disadvantages, and the languages mentioned would be preserved and developed as a living aspect of European cultural identity.⁵⁸

The guarantor of activities related to the process of monitoring the Charter of Languages is MFEA SR. CNMEG is a permanent professional body of the GCHR for the implementation of the Charter of Languages in line with Art. 7 (4) of the Charter of languages⁵⁹. The Slovak Republic, as a party to the Charter of Languages, submits Implementation reports on the fulfillment of obligations at three-year intervals, which are assessed by an independent Committee of Experts.⁶⁰ In cooperation with MFEA SR, OPGNM is preparing the publication of language mutations of manuals (so-called Language Guides) for national minorities on the Language Charter website.

5.2 Professional and methodological assistance in the use of languages of national minorities

⁵⁶Manifesto, p. 18.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 19.

⁵⁸Explanatory Report to the Charter of Languages, Art. 10 Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7244_vykladova-spava.pdf .

⁵⁹See: Art. 2 (1) of the CNMEG Statute.

⁶⁰For more information on the Language Charter, kindly see section 1.2.2 of this Report.

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic provides in accordance with § 7a par. 1 of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. professional and methodological assistance to public administration bodies, as well as organizational units of security and rescue services and in the implementation of this Act in accordance with § 7b (3) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. discusses administrative offenses in the use of the languages of national minorities. In accordance with the Organizational Rules of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, the OPGNM cooperates with the Office of the Secretary-General in handling submissions pursuant to Act no. 184/1999 Coll. and in providing professional and methodological assistance to public administration bodies and organizational units of security and rescue services in implementing the provisions of this Act.

For the elaboration of methodological guidelines and opinions on suggestions submitted pursuant to § 7b of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. The Government Office of the Slovak Republic has established an Expert Commission for the Application of Act No. 184/1999 Coll. (hereinafter referred to as the "Expert Commission"), which is the permanent advisory body to the Secretary-General. No complaint was submitted to the expert commission in the monitored period. Therefore, no administrative proceedings were conducted in connection with the violation of the law in the monitored period. Information on the resolution of complaints received in connection with a possible violation of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. are listed below. In the period 2017 - 2018, the expert commission dealt with the Methodological Guidelines to Act no. 184/1999 Coll., Prepared by ÚSVNM. This material was published on the website of the Plenipotentiary in Slovak, Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and German in the reference period.⁶¹ The translations in question were provided by the Plenipotentiary's Language advisory groups.

Pursuant to the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 10/2019 of 9 January 2019, the Plenipotentiary, to speed up works on the Report on the state of use of languages of national minorities in the Slovak Republic for the period 2017 – 2018, created an interdepartmental working group to elaborate materials for the application of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. Based on the documents of the working group, the Plenipotentiary issued Guidelines for the application of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll.⁶² Pursuant to the above resolution, the Plenipotentiary also issued Methodological Guidelines for the provision of language competence education aimed at maintaining and improving the level of language proficiency of national minorities for a group of civil servants performing civil service in municipalities defined in a special regulation.⁶³

During the reference period, the Plenipotentiary and his Office provided professional and methodological assistance upon request to 18 entities, namely public administration bodies and legal entities. Requests from public authorities related in most cases to designating buildings in the languages of national minorities, the provision of bilingual official forms, the

⁶¹Available at: <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk//metodicke-usmernenie-k-zakonu/>.

⁶²Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7750_usmernenie-k-aplikacii-%C2%A7-4-ods-6-zakona-o-pouzivani-jazykov-narodnostnych-mensin.pdf.

⁶³Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7733_metodicke-usmernenie-k-zabezpeceniu-jazykoveho-kompetencneho-vzdelavania.pdf.

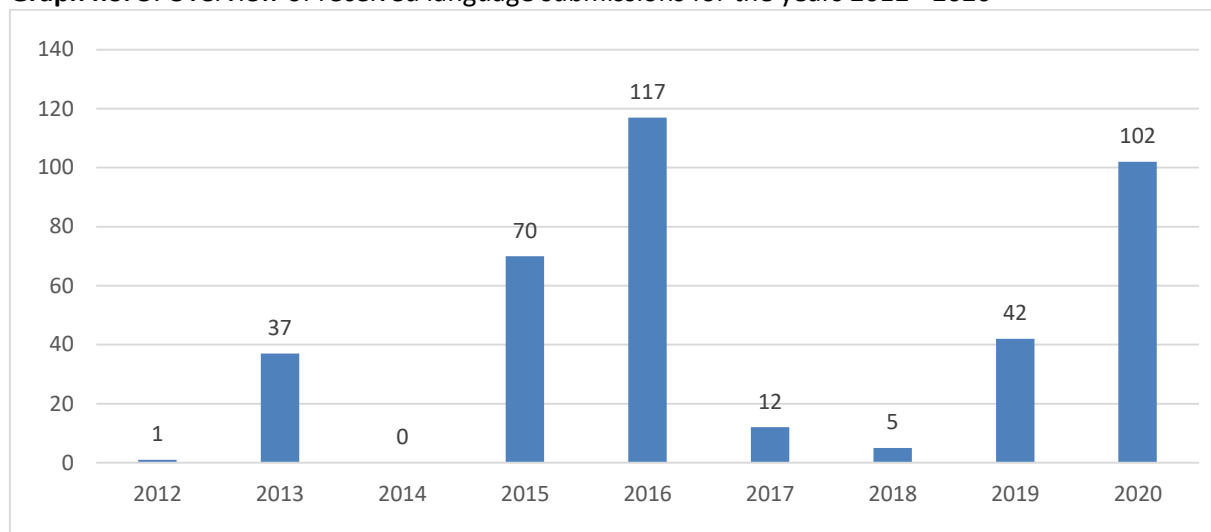
mandatory publication of information on the possibilities of using the minority language in official contact, and the indication of the correct linguistic form of surnames of persons belonging to national minorities. The methodological assistance provided to legal entities mainly concerned the guidelines in connection with the application of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., in accordance with which in municipalities with a national minority, the information, inscriptions and announcements on the threat to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens shall be indicated in places accessible to the public both in the state language and in the language of the minority.

Number of submissions received from citizens according to Act no. 184/1999 Coll. increased significantly during the reference period. Most of the submissions concerned violations of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., i.e. they failed to provide information on the threat to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens in places accessible to the public both in the state language and also in the language of the minority. Three complaints concerned the violation of Section 2 (5) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., pursuant to which the birth certificate, marriage certificate, death certificate, permits, authorizations, confirmations, statements, and declarations shall be issued bilingually in a municipality with a minority, i.e. both in the state language and in the language of the minority. In this connection, the Regional Court in Nitra issued a decision denying the applicant the right to receive a fully bilingual birth certificate at the Registry Office of Nové Zámky.⁶⁴

In 2019, the Plenipotentiary and his office, in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary-General, processed a total of 42 language submissions concerning a possible violation of the provisions of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. (5 submissions from legal entities and 37 from natural persons). In 2020, there were a total of 102 submissions (all from natural persons). In the reference period, 93 language submissions were processed, while another 51 are in the process of being solved. For several, the defect rectification phase is in progress. In the period under review, the ÚSVNM completed the processing of the mass submission from 2016, which included 117 complaints.

⁶⁴More information on the Resolution of the Regional Court in Nitra of 22 July 2020, file no. 23Sa/90/2019, which concerns issuing bilingual registry statements, is available in the Report on the Status of Use of Languages of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic for the Period 2019 – 2020, Pp. 8-9. Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/share/svnm/spravy-a-koncepcne-materialy/sprava_o_pouzivani_jazykov_narodnostnych_mensin_2019-2020.pdf.

Graph no. 5: Overview of received language submissions for the years 2012 - 2020



Source: Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

OPGNM continued to ensure the activities of Advisory language groups, which, in order to support the improvement of the conditions for the use of languages of national minorities in practice, prepared translations of legislative texts, forms, methodological materials for the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. (including methodological guidelines to Act No. 184/1999 Coll.), as well as translations of information on the threat to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens, also in connection with providing information on measures related to the COVID pandemic. 19 (more information to be found in section 5.4).

5.3 Report on the state of use of languages of national minorities in the Slovak Republic for the period 2019 – 2020

In accordance with 7a (2) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., every two years, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, submits to the Government of the Slovak Republic a Report on the state of use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic. In the reference period, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved by Resolution No. 10/2019 of 9 January 2019 the Report on the state of use of languages of national minorities in the Slovak Republic for the period 2017 – 2018. By this resolution, it imposed on the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and the Plenipotentiary several tasks to be delivered by 31 December 2019, namely in points B.1. to B.3.:

- to establish an inter-ministerial working group for the elaboration of documents for the application of § 4 par. 6 of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. ;
- to draw up methodological guidelines for the provision of competent education aimed at maintaining and improving the level of command of the language of national minorities for a group of civil servants performing civil service in the municipalities defined in a special regulation;
- to establish an inter-ministerial working group for the coordination of the issuance of bilingual forms within the competence of municipalities and state administration bodies.

In point B.4, the Government of the Slovak Republic imposed on the Vice-Chairman and Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic, Vice-Chairman and Minister of Agriculture and

Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, Vice-Chairman for Investment and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Family the Minister of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Defense of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic and the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Romani Communities to take measures to eliminate the shortcomings listed in Annex no. 10 reports and continuously evaluate their implementation within its scope by 31 December 2019.

The Plenipotentiary, in accordance with task B.1., established an inter-ministerial working group for the elaboration of documents for the application of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., which created the Guidelines for the application of Section 4 (6) of Act no. 184/1999 Coll.⁶⁵ The Methodological Guideline defines the obligations of entities and provides professional and methodological assistance through summary information and recommendations in order to ensure uniform application of the said provision for a) public administration bodies (local state administration bodies, local self-government bodies, legal entities established by local self-government); (b) legal entities; c) natural persons-entrepreneurs; d) organizational units of security and rescue forces.

Pursuant to task B.2, the Plenipotentiary, in cooperation with the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, prepared Methodological Guidelines for providing competent education aimed at maintaining and improving the language proficiency of national minorities for a group of civil servants performing civil service in municipalities defined in a special regulation.⁶⁶

In accordance with task B.3., the Plenipotentiary established an inter-ministerial working group for coordinating the issuance of bilingual forms that falls under the competence of municipalities and state administration bodies. The group was composed of representatives of the Government Office, OPGNM, Office of the Vice-Chairman for Investment and Informatization, Ministry of Interior of SR, Ministry of Transport and Construction of SR, Ministry of Labour, Social and Family Affairs of SR, Ministry of Health of SR, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of SR and the Ministry of Finance of SR. The task of the working group was to select the relevant forms that fall under the competence of individual ministries and to prepare an analysis of the legal situation in the mentioned areas as well as to take the necessary measures.

Following the adoption of the report by the Government of the Slovak Republic, the Plenipotentiary addressed a letter to the local self-government bodies and responsible ministries to eliminate the shortcomings identified in the Report on the Use of National Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic for 2017-2018. The Plenipotentiary organized a series of meetings with representatives of the responsible ministries, self-governing regions, and municipalities, the subject of which was to acquaint them with the obligations arising from

⁶⁵Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7750_usmernenie-k-aplikacii-%C2%A7-4-ods-6-zakona-o-pouzivani-jazykov-narodnostnych-mensin.pdf .

⁶⁶Available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7733_metodicke-usmernenie-k-zabezpeceniu-jazykoveho-kompetencneho-vzdelavania.pdf .

Act no. 184/1999 Coll. and the possibilities for the use of the languages of national minorities arising from this Act. These activities were, to some extent, reflected in the results of the latest Language Report.

Last year, the OPGNM conducted an extensive questionnaire survey in connection with the preparation of another, the fifth Language Report. The said report was approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic on 13 January 2021 by Resolution no. 24/2021.⁶⁷ The largest report to date is based on the most detailed questionnaire survey of the use of languages of national minorities, which involved 772 respondents (637 municipalities,⁶⁸ 6 self-governing regions, 89 state administration bodies,⁶⁹ 6 district directorates of the Fire and Rescue Corps, 6 organizational units of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic – military units and 1 organizational unit of the Corps of Prison and Court Guards – Correctional facilities).

The report included a summary of the national legislative and institutional framework for the use of national minority languages, with emphasis on changes in the area under review, the international legal framework for the use of national minority languages, and the use of national minority languages by public authorities and Fire and Rescue Service, armed security forces, the armed forces of the Slovak Republic and other armed forces. The report provides a comparison of the scope of application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. in time series, which enables a deeper analysis of the factors influencing the use of languages of national minorities, and, for the first time, it also tried to analyze the costs of applying this law. The survey aimed to identify those areas where there are shortcomings in the use of national minority languages in application practice.

The Language report mapped three categories of language rights arising from Act no. 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) language rights, the observance of which is obligatory and their non-observance is an administrative offense pursuant to Section 7b of Act no. 184/1999 Coll.;
- b) language rights, the observance of which is obligatory and their non-observance is not an administrative offense under Act no. 184/1999 Coll.;
- c) language rights, the exercise of which is stipulated by Act no. 184/1999 Coll. as an option.

The Report also included a separate Annex no. 10, which contained a list and the number of specific shortcomings in the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. identified on the basis of a questionnaire survey.

A comparison of the results of the surveys in the time series showed:

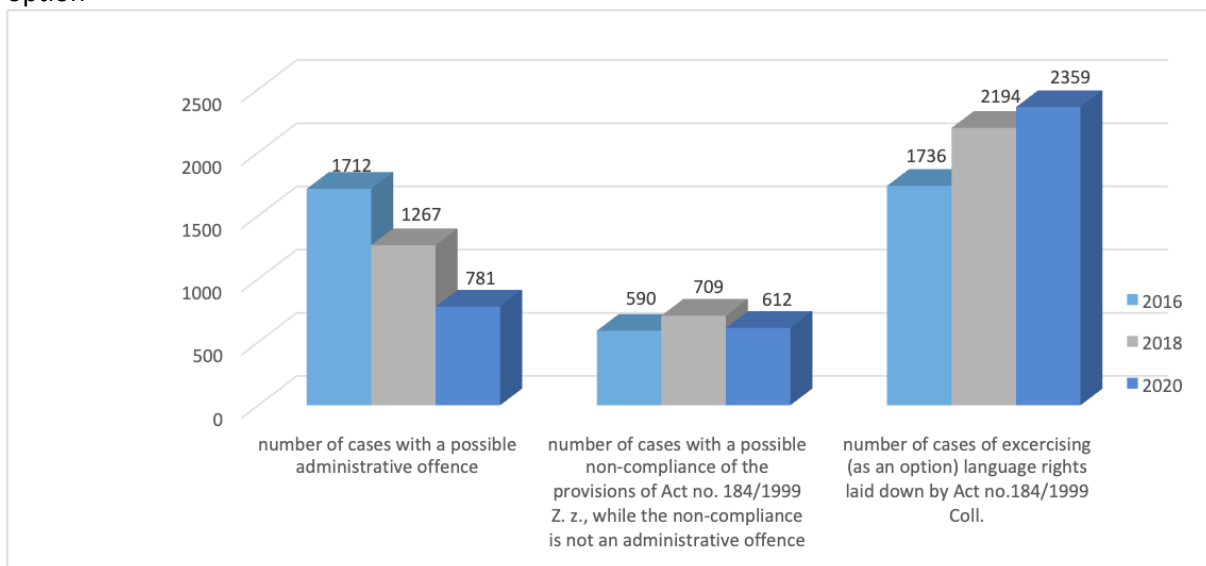
⁶⁷The Report is available at: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/share/svnm/spravy-a-koncepcne-materialy/sprava_o_pouzivani_jazykov_narodnostnych_mensin_2019-2020.pdf.

⁶⁸Of which 507 municipalities with a population belonging to the Hungarian, 56 to the Ruthenian, 50 to the Romani, 6 to the Ukrainian, 1 to the German national minority, as well as 18 municipalities with a population belonging to two national minorities (Ruthenian and Ukrainian 11, Hungarian and Romani 5, Ukrainian and Romani 1 and Ruthenian and Romani 1).

⁶⁹This number also includes 27 district directorates of PF, to which the questionnaires were not delivered.

- gradual improvement of the state of application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. and thus reducing the cases in which an administrative offense may have occurred:
 - in 2016: 1 712 cases;
 - in 2018: 1 267 cases;
 - in 2020: 781 cases.
- gradual reduction of cases where there may have been non-compliance with the provisions of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., non-compliance with which is not an administrative offense:
 - in 2016: 590 cases;
 - in 2018: 709 cases;
 - in 2020: 612 cases.
- on the contrary, a gradual increase in the number of cases where language rights were used, the exercise of which is provided for by Act no. 184/1999 Coll. as an option:
 - in 2016, they used: in 1 736 cases; partially used in 698 cases and did not use in 2 440 cases;
 - in 2018 they used: in 2 194 cases; they partially used in 1 053 cases and did not use in 2 611 cases;
 - used in 2020: in 2 359 cases; partially in 1,096 cases and did not use in 2,294 cases.

Graph no. 6: Overview of the number of cases in which an administrative offense may have occurred, the number of cases in which non-compliance with the provisions of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. may have occurred, the non-observance of which is not an administrative offense, and the number of cases where language rights were used, the exercise of which is stipulated by Act no. 184/1999 Coll. as an option



Source: Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

The above data showed that the purposeful and sustained efforts made to improve the application practice of the use of the languages of national minorities have produced tangible results, which are reflected in the results of the survey. Visible improvement of the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. is especially evident in municipalities with Hungarian, Ruthenian and

Romani national minorities. There were no major changes in the municipalities with the Ukrainian national minority, and the situation slightly deteriorated in the municipality with the German national minority. Compared to previous periods, the state administration improved the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll. in all areas in municipalities with both the Hungarian and Ruthenian national minorities. The languages of national minorities have generally been used to a greater extent in the official contact with the state administration bodies, and informing the public and indicating bilingual signs and announcements have also improved.

Compared to the previous survey, the number of municipalities that assessed the creation of conditions as problematic increased, and the number of municipalities that described it as problem-free decreased (more than half of municipalities and state administration bodies rated it as problem-free, 12% of municipalities and state administration bodies rated as problematic and 30% partially problematic). On the contrary, several state administration bodies assessed the creation of conditions as problem-free and less than problematic. As the biggest obstacles to the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., respondents identified lack of funding, lack of professional support, and lack of staff. Despite the fact that 162 municipalities and 9 state administration bodies cited lack of funds as the cause of the unsatisfactory situation, most of the entities in question could not quantify the amount of funds that would be necessary for the full application of the provisions of the Act.

Despite the improvement in the application of Act no. 184/1999 Coll., many challenges remain unsolved in this area. The use of national minority languages would improve the consideration of candidates' language skills in recruitment, support for the development of language competence training for staff aimed at improving mastery of technical terminology in national minority languages, and the establishment of a compensation fund from which state, local and regional authorities, as well as legal entities established by the self-government bodies, could draw funds to cover costs associated with the fulfillment of obligations imposed on them by Act no. 184/1999 Coll. (obligations to place bilingual to trilingual information boards, to publish multilingual notices, to provide, process and translate bilingual forms, public documents, and other official documents). In connection with the shift of power of public authorities to digital space form in accordance with Act no. 305/2013 Coll. on The Electronic Form of the Exercise of Powers of Public authorities and on the Amendment of Certain Laws (the e-Government Act), the central public administration portal is a key element of official contact. The issue of the availability of bilingual electronic forms and electronic official contact is, in general, becoming increasingly urgent.

Based on the conclusions of the Report, which was approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic by Resolution no. 24/2021, several tasks were assigned to members of the Slovak Government. The Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and the Plenipotentiary were instructed by the Government of the Slovak Republic to prepare and issue Methodological Guidelines of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic on the details of using languages of national minorities in the Slovak Republic, to prepare and issue Methodological Guidelines of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic on financial

protection of tasks arising from Act no. 184/1999 Coll. carried out by public administration bodies and to prepare and issue Methodical Guidelines to ensure the fulfillment of tasks arising from Act no. 184/1999 Coll. under the conditions of HTUs. The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic were instructed by the Slovak Government to expand existing competence training aimed at improving minority language competence for a group of civil servants who work in municipalities defined in a special regulation, and to ensure its availability in public administration bodies within its competence; Vice-Chairman of Government and Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, Vice-Chairman of Government and Minister of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Minister of Health and Minister of Defense of the Slovak Republic were instructed to adopt measures to remove shortcomings listed in Annex no. 10 of the Report, and continuously evaluate their implementation within its scope.

5.4 Support the improvement of the application practice of respecting the rights to use the languages of national minorities

During the reference period, the Plenipotentiary continued his efforts to improve the application practice of the Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities. In this context, he held several workshops aimed at exchanging information and consulting on proposals to improve the application practice of respect for the language rights of minorities.

The Plenipotentiary held a series of negotiations with state administration bodies, self-government bodies, as well as state enterprises, and other legal entities, such as State Institute for Drug Control, Railways of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Post, or the National Bank of Slovakia. The result of negotiations with these entities is an improvement in the application practice of indicating information on threats to life and health, safety or property of Slovak citizens in places accessible to the public, both in the state language and in the minority language, as well as using public information in minority language, i.e. bilingualism in the municipalities, which are listed in the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 221/1999.

One of the important activities of the Plenipotentiary in this area was also a series of negotiations with representatives of HTUs, cities and municipalities, the aim of which was to eliminate the shortcomings identified in the Language Report for the period 2017 – 2018. These mainly included the non-issuance of registry documents or official forms in the language of a national minority, as well as the inability of citizens belonging to a national minority to communicate in oral and written form in the language of a national minority.

As part of improving the conditions for the use of languages of national minorities in official contact, the OPGNM initiated competent language training of district office employees in Hungarian and Ruthenian, which was provided in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior

(Centre for education and psychology, Department of HR and Social activities and the HR Office of the MI SR) and in cooperation with the Faculty of Central European Studies of the University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra, the Department of Hungarian Language and Literature and the Centre for Languages and Cultures of National Minorities of the University of Prešov in Prešov, the Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture. A total of 67 employees of district offices took part in the training.

At the same time, in the context of the recommendations of the Charter of Languages, which stipulates that the parties to the contract undertake to make available, in regional or minority languages, the most important national legislation on persons using these languages, and the basic legislation in national minority languages. The Advisory Language Group of the Plenipotentiary, consisting of five separate sub-groups for the five languages, prepared in this period translations of the most important legal norms on minority rights. In cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, these were published in the Legal Regulations in the Language of National Minorities section on the SLOV-LEX legal and information portal.⁷⁰ A total of 16 Hungarian, 15 Romani, 11 Ruthenian, 9 Ukrainian and 8 German translations of laws have been published on the portal.

In the reference period, in addition to the translation of legal norms, the Advisory Language Group of the Plenipotentiary also provided translations of other texts, which mainly concerned information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Plenipotentiary worked proactively and intensively to improve the awareness of persons belonging to national minorities by providing translations of basic information and instructions related to the COVID-19 pandemic into Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and German. In cooperation with the Public Health Office, these translations were published on the websites of the relevant regional offices, as well as on the website of the Plenipotentiary and the web portal <https://korona.gov.sk/>,⁷¹ and sent to the crisis departments of all relevant district offices. At the same time, the Plenipotentiary addressed the public administration bodies and the legal entities established by them, as well as other legal entities and natural persons-entrepreneurs, to publish all information, inscriptions and announcements related to the COVID-19 pandemic also in the languages of national minorities in accordance with Act no. 184/1999 Coll.

Conclusions and recommendations

The presented Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the period 2019 – 2020 contains an assessment of the fulfillment of key areas of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. The Report focuses on the area of national and

⁷⁰Legal regulations in the languages of national minorities are available at: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy-v-jazyku-narodnostnych-mensin> .

⁷¹Basic information and instructions related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, and German are available at: <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk//covid-19/> and <https://korona.gov.sk/>.

international obligations of the Slovak Republic, participation, culture, upbringing and education and the use of languages of national minorities. The material contains relevant data and information that are directly related to the area in question. Additional information is attached to this report.

The material provides information on individual instruments and policies (legislative, conceptual and institutional) that have had a direct impact on the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the areas concerned. The material also provides a detailed overview of quantitative indicators that comprehensively complement the analyzed areas. Based on an evaluation of the available information and data, the following conclusions can be summarized and the following recommendations made:

- In the area of domestic obligations, the adoption of the Manifesto was a very significant step. The presented document has been, for the first time, translated into Hungarian. The Report maps intentions and goals, resulting from the Manifesto, for the upcoming period, covering areas of fulfilling rights of persons belonging to national minorities. Intention of the Slovak Government to create possibilities for the national minority representatives to preserve their cultural habits, language, traditions is a key obligation. An act on the status of national minorities would be one of the tools to slow down the minority representatives' assimilation and a guarantee to exercise minority rights stipulated by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. The Act shall regulate the status of national minorities and thoroughly apply and define their rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Following the successful completion of the Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016 – 2020, it will be necessary to develop and adopt an update of the Action Plan for 2021 – 2025 with specific tasks ensuring the conditions for more effective fulfillment of national minority rights.
- In the area of international obligations of the Slovak Republic, more effective coordination of the implementation of individual recommendations of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, as well as the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council and bilateral commitments at the level of individual ministries appears to be necessary. With regard to the fact that these recommendations concern the application of non-mandatory commitments of the Slovak Republic, the ministries concerned should pay due attention to the implementation of the tasks arising from the recommendations.
- In the field of culture, the preparation of the Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and Culture of National Minorities of the Slovak Republic until 2030 continued, which will also include an Action Plan with specific measures in the field of local and regional culture and culture of national minorities for the following period. Within the institutional protection process, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic established a Section for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and Culture of National Minorities, however, the given Section ceased to function shortly, and this area has been covered since then by the Department of cross-cutting policies. In the field of culture, the

COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of measures taken to prevent it from spreading, blocked most of the events planned in 2020. On the other hand, the situation enabled new forms of presentation, especially a more intensive intertwining of culture and the digital space, enabling anyone, from anywhere and at any time to get connected, which, in some cases, led to higher participation in online events compared to regular (not online) events. Preservation of a virtual form of presentation of the culture of national minorities may disseminate it in the future both among members of national minorities (not living close to given institutions) and among the public. The distance and the foreign language (if subtitled) will no longer be an obstacle. The ability to adapt to the situation, to some extent, reflects the viability of individual institutions, although it is not possible to fully replace the physical participation of the visitor in the exhibition space or the spectator at the event in the field of culture. The revenue outage, which has added to the long-term underfunding of culture, will certainly be significant in the upcoming period. One of the tools for mitigating the negative effects of the crisis on the cultural community is the Fund for the Support of Culture of National Minorities (through an amendment to the Act), which, for this purpose and within the special Call no. 1/2020, allocated a total of EUR 475,000. In the field of national culture, the state needs to strengthen institutional protection and mechanisms for professional and methodological assistance at all levels.

- A significant share of support for the culture of national minorities is under the responsibility of higher territorial units, running a number of cultural institutions and facilities and providing subsidies in the field of support for regional culture. In this context, it would be desirable, if the regions with national minorities had a clearer definition of the roles of the organizations and facilities in question, with adequate staffing, including fulfilled minority culture needs. Therefore, higher territorial units shall develop strategies for the protection and development of minority culture in cooperation with minority organizations or minority representatives.
- In the area of national education, several changes took place in the reference period, including the extension of the right to reimbursement of travel costs for transporting a pupil from the municipality of his/her permanent residence address to the nearest school with the language of instruction of the national minority. A positive step in this area was the introduction of the obligation of the municipality to take into account, inter alia, the interests of residents of the municipality with permanent residence in the municipality in the education in the state language and the language of national minorities in the municipality when determining the primary school district. In the reference period, the field of education was significantly affected by the pandemic of the COVID-19 disease. Many students remained dependent on distance learning, which caused problems, especially for students without or with poor technical equipment. This group of pupils mainly includes pupils from marginalized Romani communities, including pupils from primary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction, who have had significantly more difficult conditions for education due to pandemic measures. However, in the area of

national education, there is still a lack of adequate legislation, which remains a challenge for the next period. The challenge is to strengthen the process of taking into account the specific educational needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups based on different conditions and requirements, including education in their mother tongue.

- The institutional forms of participation of national minorities did not change even after the formation of the new government of the Slovak Republic after the elections in February 2020. However, for the first time in the history of the Slovak Republic, there is not a single political party represented in the National Council of the Slovak Republic, representing the interests of national minorities. Apart from these facts, the most significant shifts in the area of participatory mechanisms include the elaboration of the legislative intent of the Act on National Minorities in cooperation with the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, experts from national minorities, and representatives of renowned national organizations. At the same time, the preparation of the wording of the legislation began, the adoption of which is one of the priorities of the Manifesto. The working group set up by the Plenipotentiary prepares documents in a participatory manner with the participation of minority experts. These documents are subject to a general discussion, both at the Committee's level and at national organizations and professional forums. The priority is to meet all possibilities and forms of participatory mechanisms and platforms in accordance with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities within the drafting process of the Act on the Status of National Minorities.
- With regard to the use of the language of national minorities, the work of the Plenipotentiary's Language Advisory Group should be highlighted for the regular translation and publication of relevant information on the COVID-19 pandemic into five minority languages, thus ensuring that members of national minorities are informed on the latest pandemic-related topics. In the reference period, the involvement in the processes of creating legislative and non-legislative measures related to the use of languages of national minorities, as well as the provision of methodological assistance in this area, intensified even more. As a result of the extraordinary commitment in the field of language rights, the current situation in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities in official contact has improved, especially in the case of the Hungarian and Ruthenian languages. Despite these facts, increased attention will need to be paid to coordinating the application of the language rights of persons belonging to national minorities in other areas (digitization of public administration, traffic signs, the private sector, etc.).
- Following the results of the report, it can be stated that challenges remain in a number of areas. In addition to addressing the lack of funding, which identifies as one of the most serious reasons for the current situation those bodies and institutions that have specific areas of responsibility, it is important to support language skills training for staff of these bodies and further professional support. At present, when the exercise of state power is

also being transferred from regular to electronic form, it is important to set up a central portal of public administration and similar systems and applications that enable and support the exercise of language rights also in electronic official communication. At the same time, it must be stated that national and international obligations have not yet been fully met in practice. The use of temporary compensatory measures in relation to achieving real equality of opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities remain a challenge.

List of abbreviations

Action Plan – Action Plan for the Protection of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016 – 2020

AEP – accredited educational programs

ADT – Alexander Duchnovič Theatre

DB MPC Košice – detached branch of the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre Košice

EU – European Union

MCF – Minority Culture Fund

CNMEG Evaluation Report – Evaluation Report of the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups on the Support of the Cultures of National Minorities, on the State of National Education and on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities

Charter of Languages – European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Language Report – Report on the Status of Use of Languages of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic for the Period 2019 – 2020

JDK – Jókai Theatre in Komárno

Office of the Secretary-General – the Office of the Secretary-General of the Service Office

SMI – short methodological inspirations

Concept of the Strategy – Concept of the Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and the Culture of National Minorities until 2030

Lund Recommendations – Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life

Intergovernmental Commission – Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education, Culture and Scientific Relations

MC SR – Ministry of Culture of the SR

MPC – Methodological and Pedagogical Centre

MJ SR – Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic

MESRS SR – Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic

MI SR – Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

MFEA SR – Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic

NAP CPH 2021 – National Action Plan of the Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings 2021 for the years 2017 – 2020

Regulation of the Government of the SR no. 221/1999 Coll. – Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic amending Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 221/1999 Coll., Which issues a list of municipalities in which Slovak citizens belonging to a national minority make up at least 20% of the population, as amended by Government Regulation no. 534/2011 Coll.

NEC – National Education Centre

NC SR – National Council of the Slovak Republic

NICME – National Institute of Certified Measurements of Education

OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

expert commission – Expert commission for the application of law no. 184/1999 Coll.

UN – United Nations

Plenipotentiary's Language Advisory Group – Advisory group of the Plenipotentiary to ensure the harmonization of practice with the applicable Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities

Advisory Committee - Advisory Committee for the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Manifesto – Manifesto of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the years 2020 – 2024

PULS – Poddukelský folk ensemble

Council of the Minister – Council of the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for National Education

Framework Convention – Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Framework plan – Framework plan of legislative tasks of the Government of the Slovak Republic for election period VIII

RB MPC Prešov – regional branch of MPC Prešov

FEP – Framework educational plans

GCHR – Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality

SK OSCE – Presidency of the Slovak Republic in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

SNM – Slovak National Museum

CPH 2011 – Census of Population and Housing 2011

CPH 2021 – Census of Population and Housing 2021

Plenipotentiary – Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities

Report – Report on the Status and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for the Period 2019 – 2020

SR – Slovak Republic

Strategy – Strategy for the Development of Local and Regional Culture and the Culture of National Minorities until 2030

SPI – State Pedagogical Institute

SSI – State School Inspection

SO SR – Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

ISDT – Ifjú Szívek Dance Theatre

UPE - Universal Periodic Evaluation (Universal Periodic Review)

Government of the SR - Government of the Slovak Republic

Government Office of the SR – Government Office of the Slovak Republic

Office of the High Commissioner – OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Constitution of SR – Constitution of the Slovak Republic

OPGNM – Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities

OPGRC – Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Romani Communities

CNMEG – Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups

Committee of Experts – Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Committee of Ministers – Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

HTU – Higher Territorial Unit

Act no. 184/1999 Coll. – Act no. 184/1999 Coll. on The Use of Languages of National Minorities, as amended

Mixed Commission – Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Affairs

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Annex no. 1: Overview of the participation of political parties representing the interests of national minorities in the legislative and executive branch from the Velvet Revolution to the present

Participation in the legislative power

The first democratic elections after 1989, i.e. elections to the Slovak National Council (hereinafter "SNC") in 1990, the political party Coexistence, or the full name Együttélés–Spolužitie–Wspólnota– Soužití, was running for elections and formed a coalition with the political party Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (hereinafter "MKDH"). The Coexistence presented itself as a political party of national minorities, with the majority of its members being of Hungarian nationality. The coalition won 8.66% of the votes and 14 seats in the SNC and became the fifth-strongest fraction in the Parliament. With 0.73% of votes, the Democratic Union of the Romani of Slovakia (hereinafter referred to as "DURS") did not get into the SNC.⁷² In the elections to the SNC in 1992, the coalition MKDH and Coexistence ran for elections again, and they managed to gain 7.42% of the votes with 14 seats in the SNC, while being the fifth-strongest group in the National Council of the Slovak Republic⁷³.

The Hungarian Civic Party (hereinafter "MOS") with 2.29% of the votes, and the Romani Civic Initiative with 0.59% of the votes did not exceed the eligibility threshold in 1992.⁷⁴ Before the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 1994, the Coexistence formed a coalition of Hungarian political parties, which this time, in addition to Coexistence and MKDH, also included the MOS. The coalition was officially named the Hungarian Coalition. It won 10.18% of the votes and 17 seats in the National Council of the Slovak Republic. The Romani Civic Initiative did not make it to the NC SR with 0.67% of the votes. The Coexistence ceased its operation in June 1998 by merging with another two Hungarian political parties – MKDH and MOS. The newly formed party was named the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja.

In the parliamentary elections in 1998, the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja won 9.12% of the votes with 15 seats in the National Council of the Slovak Republic and managed to become a part of the governing coalition. The Hungarian People's Movement for Reconciliation and Prosperity – Magyar Népi Mozgalom and Megbékélésértés and Jólétért – did not get into the National Council of the Slovak Republic with 0.19% of the votes. The Romani political party did not run in the 1998 elections. In the 2002 elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja managed to win 11.16% of the votes and with 20 seats in NC SR and again became a part of the governing coalition. In these parliamentary elections, two political parties holding the interests of the Romani ran for the first time – the Roma Political Movement in Slovakia – ROMA, which won 0.21% of the vote, and the Romani Civic Initiative of the Slovak Republic with a gain of 0.29%. None of them got into the NC SR. The 2006 elections meant the highest share of votes so far for the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja (11.68%), but

⁷²Simultaneously with the elections to the SNC in 1990, elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Federal Assembly took place, in which the Coexistence – MKDH coalition with 8.58% of votes won 5 seats, and in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Federal Assembly with 8.49% 7 seats.

⁷³SNC has been acting as the National Council of the Slovak Republic since 1 October 1992.

⁷⁴The elections took place simultaneously in two chambers of the federal parliament. In the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Federal Assembly, the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement and Együttélés – Spolužitie – Wspólnota - Soužití with 7.37% won 5 seats, in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Federal Assembly with 7.39% - 7 seats.

with their 20 seats they were part of the opposition in this election period. The Romani Party did not run in these elections.

In 2009, the MOST-HÍD party was formed, which won 14 seats in the 2010 elections to the National Council and they became a part of the governing coalition, while the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja, remained with just 4.33% outside Parliament. The party of the Romani coalition – SRK did not get into the National Council of the SR with 0.27% of votes. In the 2012 elections, MOST-HÍD won 6.89% of the vote and, with 13 seats in parliament, served in the opposition during the parliamentary term. SMK-MKP⁷⁵ did not get into parliament again with 4.28% of votes. The Roma Union Party in Slovakia won 0.11% of the vote. In the 2016 elections, MOST-HÍD won 6.50% of the vote and, with 11 seats, became part of the governing coalition. The Hungarian Christian Democratic Alliance - Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Szövetség (hereinafter "MKDA-MKDSZ") received 0.09% of the vote and SMK-MKP 4.04% of the vote.

The last elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic took place on February 29, 2020. Magyar Közösségi Összefogás – Hungarian Community for Co-operation, which was established in October 2019 as an electoral party in which members of the original Összefogás – Coexistence with the members of SMK-MKP and Magyar Fórum – Hungarian Forum, won 3.90% of the vote, MOST-HÍD 2.05% of the vote. No party representing the interests of the Romani participated in the elections. For the first time in the history of the Slovak Republic, no political party has entered the National Council of the Slovak Republic that would explicitly support the protection of the needs and interests of members of national minorities.

Participation in executive power

Regarding the evaluation of the period since the establishment of the Slovak Republic from the point of view of the most important form of participation of members of national minorities in matters concerning them, i.e. their participation in the executive power of the state, the following facts can be summarized. Among the political parties explicitly advocating for the protection of the interests of members of national minorities, the Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja – joined the Slovak government for the first time since the establishment of the Slovak Republic on October 30, 1998, and remained in the coalition with the Slovak Democratic Coalition, Democratic Left-Wing Party and the Party of Civic Understanding until October 15, 2002. Pál Csáky held the position of the Vice-Chairman for Human and Minority Rights and Regional Development during this period, László Miklós (Minister of the Environment since August 12, 1999, Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications) and Minister of Construction and Regional Development - István Harna.

The Hungarian Coalition Party – Magyar Koalíció Pártja entered the Slovak government for the second time on October 16, 2002, and together with the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (since January 21, 2006, the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party, hereinafter "SDKÚ-DS"), the Christian Democratic Movement ("KDH") and the New Citizen Alliance, operated there until 4 July 2006. Pál Csáky was again the Vice-Chairman for European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities, Zsolt Simon, the Minister of Agriculture, László Gyurovszky, the Minister of Construction, László Miklós, the Minister of the Environment and László Szigeti, the Minister of Education (since 8 February 2006).

⁷⁵The Hungarian Coalition Party in October 2012 was renamed Magyar Közösség Pártja - Hungarian Community Party.

The MOST-HÍD party was founded on June 7, 2009. In the period 2010 – 2020, MOST-HÍD was the only parliamentary party explicitly committed to protecting the interests of persons belonging to national minorities. After the elections in 2010, MOST-HÍD joined the Government of the Slovak Republic together with SDKÚ-DS, Sloboda and Solidarity (hereinafter referred to as "SaS") and KDH. During the tenure of this Slovak government, Rudolf Chmel was the Vice-Chairman for Human Rights and Minorities, Zsolt Simon, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, and József Nagy, the Minister of the Environment of the Slovak Republic.

In the election period 2016 – 2020, on March 23, 2016, MOST-HÍD became part of the Slovak Government within the coalition with the SMER party – SD, SNS and #SIEŤ.⁷⁶ Until 22 March 2018, Lucia Žitňanská was the Vice-Chairman of the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Minister of Justice, substituted by Gábor Gál, the Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic (since 31 August 2016), Árpád Érsek, and the Minister of the Environment of the Slovak Republic, László Sólymos, who became the Vice-Chairman of the Government of SR on 22 March 2018. After the 2020 elections, no political party explicitly committed itself to the protection of the interests of members of national minorities entered the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and thus the participation of such a political party in the executive power is not possible.

Table no. 1: Overview of government coalitions since the establishment of the Slovak Republic	
Term in office	Composition of the Government of the Slovak Republic
24. June 1992 – 15 March 1994	HZDS, SNS
15 March 1994 – 13 December 1994	DÚ, KDH, SDĽ
13 December 1994 – 30 October 1998	HZDS, RSS (NAD), ZRS, SNS
30 October 1998 – 15 October 2002	SDK, SDĽ, SMK, SOP
16 October 2002 – 4 July 2006	SDKÚ (SDKÚ-DS), SMK, KDH, ANO
4 July 2006 – 8 July 2010	SMER - SD, SNS, ĽS - HZDS
8 July 2010 – 4 April 2012	SDKÚ (SDKÚ-DS), SaS, KDH, MOST-HÍD
4 April 2012 – 23 March 2016	SMER - SD
23 March 2016 – 20 March 2020	SMER - SD, SNS, MOST-HÍD, (#SIEŤ)
21 March 2020 –	OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OĽANO), SME RODINA, SaS, Za ľudí

⁷⁶After the extraordinary assembly of the #SIEŤ party, 5 deputies left the party in August 2016, and later joined the MOST-HÍD parliamentary group, and, as a result of the resignation of the only #SIEŤ party minister, this post was filled by the MOST-HÍD party. On 1 September 2016, a coalition agreement was signed by the chairmen of the parties SMER-SD, MOST-HÍD and SNS, without party #SIEŤ.

Annex no. 2: Cultural and educational facilities under the founding competence of Self-governing regions dealing with members of national minorities or presenting their culture

Table no. 1: Activities of cultural and educational facilities established by Self-governing regions

Founder	Cultural and educational facilities	Event
Banská Bystrica Self-governing region	Novohrad Education Centre in Lučenec	District competition in an artistic lecture in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019, 2020)
		József Kármán Cultural Days (2019, 2020) - main organizer - Basic organization of Csemadok in Lučenec
		Poipeľský Art Festival (2019)
		Palócký folk art camp (2019)
		Sounding Song (2019)
		District celebration on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of founding Csemadok (2019)
	Gemér-Malohont Education Centre in Rimavská Sobota	District competition in an artistic lecture in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019, 2020)
		Children's Folklore Festival (2019)
		Cinka Panny Festival (2019)
		Good word (2019)
		István Ferenczy Art Competition (2019, 2020)
		Gemér-based Hungarian Cultural Festival (2019)
		Desző György Cultural Days (2019)
		Life on the move (2019)
	I Can Do It too (2019, 2020)	
	Hont-Ipeľ Education centre in Veľký Krtíš	District competition in reading literature in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019)
		Astra (2019, 2020) – a national competition of Hungarian singers
		Juniáles (2019 – 2020)
		Report from the Past (2019) – a multi-genre festival of traditional and contemporary culture
		Festival of young talents (2019)
		In the footsteps of literary creators (2019)
		Craft Camp (2019)
		Memorial Day of Kálmán Mikszáth (2019, 2020) – a commemoration of a writer, journalist and politician
		Memorial Day of the Events of 1848/49 (2019, 2020)
		Memorial Day of Lajos Kubányi (2019) – commemorating a painter
		Memorial Day of Bálint Balassi (2019) – commemorating a Renaissance poet
		Memorial Day of Zsélyi Nagy Lajos (2019) – anniversary of the poet's birth
		Memorial Day of Gul Krúdy (2019) – commemorating a playwright
		Imre Madách Memorial Day (2019) – the anniversary of the death of the writer and journalist
	Education Centre Pohronie in Žiar nad Hronom	Winter Customs (2020) – production of a multimedia medium about Christmas customs from the region and creative workshops
		Mosaic of children's rights and obligations (2019) – discussion for children of Romani nationality
		Police known unknown (2019, 2020) – regional art competition
	Education Centre Podpoľanie in Zvolen	Romani skills in clay and wood (2020) – exhibition of works by Romani children

Košice Self-governin g region	Cultural Centre Medzibodrožie and Použie in Kráľovské Chlmec	XVII Tokaj Festival (2019) – an international multi-genre event in the spirit of tradition and folklore; the festival contributes to the rapprochement of European nations through culture and art
		IX St. Martin's Festival and Fair of Domestic Products Libagaliba (2019)
		IV Mulatos Romale – regional Romani festival was prepared with the aim of presenting the unusual and characteristic temperament of Romani culture in cooperation with other cultural organizations in the region (2019)
		Colourful world of little black eyes – art competition connected with the exhibition (2019, 2020)
		Hungarian Culture Day (2020)
		In memoriam Gyüre Lajos – competition in reciting poetry and prose (2019)
		Virtual presentations – memories of famous literary personalities of Medzibodrožie – László Dobos and Elemér Török (2019)
	Cultural Centre of the Bodva and Rudohorie valleys in Moldava nad Bodvou	Vászonrafel! – experiential painting with professional teachers in order to create a space for the presentation of Hungarian national culture; (2019)
		Elveszettörköségünk – music camp (2019, 2020)
		International Meeting of Bethlehem Shepherds – Revived Customs and Traditions in the Culture of National Minorities (2019)
	Abova Cultural Centre in Bidovce	Beautiful life – daily creative activities for Romani children in the TUKE classroom-training facility in Herľany (2019)
		Thanperdal Roma – day camp for children from Romani settlements – manor house in Nižná Kamenica (2020)
	Gemer Education Centre in Rožňava	II year of the All-Slovak Conference of Hungarian Craftsmen in Slovakia in cooperation with Hagymányok Háza Hálózat – Slovakia and the Association of Gemer Craftsmen Krásnohorská Dlhá Lúka – exchange of experiences, preservation and renewal of traditional crafts (2019)
		XII Year – International Bobbin Lace Festival "Bobbin, csipkeverés, koronki" (2019)
Folklore evenings carnival customs from southern Gemer also in the Ruthenian dialect (2019)		
Hungarian Culture Day, also with the screening of a film based on a theme by Sándor Márai Eszterhagyatek (2020)		
Inspiring cultural heritage – the start of the Interreg/ViaCarpatia project to support cross-border cooperation in craft and minority culture in cooperation with Palócföldi Népilemővészek Egyesülete Kozard HU (2020)		
On-line activities in 2020: Gemer dances (teaching Hungarian and Romani csárdás); Recipes of typical dishes from the Hungarian national cuisine in the villages of Gemera; Shepherd's dances from Silická Brezová, etc.		
Spiš Education Centre in Spišská Nová Ves	Hospodi pomiluj – parade of church choirs of the Eastern Rite (2019)	
	Makovická string – show of Ruthenian-Ukrainian songs (2019)	
Museum and Cultural Centre of South Zemplín in Trebišov	Activities in the field of astronomy for children in ethnically mixed communities within the region – Space through the eyes of children, What do you know about the stars; multimedia lectures – Night under the Sky (2019, 2020)	
Nitra Self-governin g region	Regional Education Centre in Nitra	Songs from Podzoborie – international folklore festival (2019, 2020)
	Regional Education Centre in Komárno	Competition shows of children's and youth choirs in Hungarian Once upon a time .../ Hol volt, hol nem volt ... – exhibition of art works (2019, 2020)
Prešov Self-governin g region	Education Centre Podtatranské in Poprad	Zamagurské folklore festivities in Červený Kláštor – the announcer is NOC Bratislava, the organizer is POS Poprad (2019)
		Collection of artworks for the nationwide art competition: Romani Palette (2019, 2020)

Upper Šariš Education Centre in Bardejov	Christmas star – a show in the singing of Christmas songs performed by children and adults and groups in cooperation with the Museum of Ukrainian Culture (2019)
	Creative workshops for Romani pupils (2019)
Education Centre Podduklianske in Svidník	Traditional Romani Culture – Summer Camp for Children and Parents (2019)
	Romani Festival – 2-day folklore event in the village of Stročín connected with an accompanying program – creative workshops (2019)
	Creative workshops for Romani in the villages of Nižný Mirošov, Kečkovce, Nižná and Vyšná Olšava, Bukovce, Nižný Komárnik (2019, 2020)
	Cultural traditions of the Romani – a one-day folklore event in the village of Kečkovce (2019)
	Craft traditions – creative workshops in town Nižný Komárnik (2019)
	Educational events in the field of social prevention at almost all schools in the district of Svidník and Stropkov (2019)
	Songs of my family, regional show of folk singers (2019)
	Ruthenian folklore festivals in the villages of Olšavka, Nižná and Vyšná Olšava, Lomné, Kurimka, Cernina, Vyšný Mirošov, Vápeník, Svidníčka, Kružlová (2019)
	Ruthenian folklore festival in Svidník – 5-day multi-genre festival (2019, 2020)
	Bethlehem Evening – a traditional Christmas event with children's performers (2019, 2020)
	Between Two Mountains – full-length program presented by DFS Makovička and FS Makovica (2019)
	Festivities of Ruthenian-Ukrainian culture of the Slovak Republic in Svidník (2019, 2020)
	Makovická String – regional competition show of folk singers (2019)
	Weekly summer camp for Roma children and parents (2020)
	Ancestor traditions – a 5-day event focused on cultural traditions in the village of Vápeník
Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa	Songs of my family – regional selections for the all-Slovak competition of Ruthenian folk song performers (2019, 2020)
	Duchnovič Prešov – a district competition in recitation in the Ruthenian language (2019, 2020)
	Czechoslovak World in the Carpathians – a presentation of a book on the historical events of Carpathian Ruthenia (2019)
	Makovická String – regional competition of singers of Ruthenian and Ukrainian folk songs (2019, 2020)
	Ruthenian and Ukrainian Folklore Festival of Slovakia (2019, 2020)
	Days of German Culture – Spiš German Culture (2019)
	Holose, holose – a competition show of Ruthenian songs (2019)
	XV Ruthenian World Congress (2019)
	Exhibition of works of art by Ruthenian artists – part of the World Congress of Ruthenians (2019)
	National Ruthenian Day celebrations in Slovakia (2019)
	Ruthenian and Lemkow Culture Festival – a national event uniting Ruthenians from the Slovak and Polish sides (2019)
	Ruthenian bonfire in Malý Lipník – a festival of Ruthenian culture (2019)
	Lackovský cart – an event presenting Polish and Goral culture (2019, 2020)
	Get to know and preserve the traditions of your ancestors – an event of Ruthenian culture in the village of Jarabina (2019)
	Celebrations of Polish-Goral culture in Stará Ľubovňa (2019)
We are all here at home – a multinational cultural program organized within the Ľubovňa Fair (2019)	

		The Promised Land – a concert of the folklore ensemble Ruthenia from Bratislava (2019)
		District show of a sacred song – an event of church choirs and folklore groups from all over the region (2019)
		Exhibition Get to know your costume – a photographic exhibition of primary research and documentation of folk costumes of municipalities in the Ľubovňa region (2019, 2020)
		Primary research Get to know your costume (2019, 2020)
		Presentation of the publication Drotári – an autobiographical novel by Ivan Ivanovič Kindja (2020)
		Seminar on the folk song – a nationwide seminar organized annually in a different region of Slovakia and in cooperation with the Association of Musical Folklore from Bratislava, from which a collection was created (2020)
		Christmas in the Ľubovňa region – a multicultural online program created in cooperation with the regional Ľubovňa media company. The event was attended by folklore groups Litmaňivka, Šambriňci and Kečera (Ruthenians), Mladý marmon (Carpathian Germans), Plavčanka (ethnic group from Šariš region). The event was broadcast via the Internet and social networks, e.g. Facebook and YouTube, on December 25 – during the Christmas (2020)
		Slicing an Apple – preparation of a Collection of Poetry by National Authors (2020)
	Hornozemplín Education Centre in Vranov nad Topľou	Easter creative workshops – painting Easter eggs and production of Easter decorations with Romani children (2019)
		Christmas workshops – production of Christmas ornaments and decorations with children (2019)
		Children's Art Vranov – Romani art and craftwork was presented as part of the competition (2019, 2020)
		Craft celebrations – presentation of Romani crafts combined with creative workshops (2019)
		Šaffo's Spur (2019)
		Hornozemplín Folklore Festival (2019)
EthnoFest (2019)		
PSK Day – HZOS Open Day – dance school for Romani children (2019)		
Trenčín Self-governing region	Regional Cultural Centre in Prievidza	Harmony – a festival of music groups of Carpathian German associations (2019, 2020)
		Concert of the music group Presburger Klezmer Band presenting traditional Jewish music (2019)
Trnava Self-governing region	Galanta Education Centre	Jewish Culture Week – a memorial event focused on the presentation of the Jewish cultural heritage (2020)
		Golden Strings of Zither – a festival of ensembles and soloists in playing the zither from the Trnava region (2019)
		Kodály's Galanta 2019 – a festival of children's choir
	Rye Island Education Centre in Dunajská Streda	International Romani Day – a show of Romani talents (2019), which included the evaluation and opening of the Coloriskeriluma district art competition
		Bihari Festival – a festival with a gala program in honour of the famous gypsy primate, János Bihari (2019, 2020)
Žilina Self-governing region	Regional Cultural Centre in Žilina	International Roma Day, cultural event – a motivational musical performance of a young Romani pianist from Heľpa, Stanislav Harvan (2019)
	Turieč Cultural Centre in Martin	Russian Literary Evening – In the Sunbeams of the Native Language (2019)

Table no. 2: Activities of cultural and educational facilities established by Self-governing regions

founder	Cultural and educational facilities	event
Banská Bystrica Self-governing region	Novohrad Education Centre in Lučenec	District competition in an artistic lecture in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019, 2020)
		József Kármán Cultural Days (2019, 2020) - main organizer - Basic organization of Csemadok in Lučenec
		Poipeľský Art Festival (2019)
		Palócký folk art camp (2019)
		Sounding Song (2019)
		District celebration on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of founding Csemadok (2019)
	Gemer-Malohont Education Centre in Rimavská Sobota	District competition in an artistic lecture in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019, 2020)
		Children's Folklore Festival (2019)
		Cinka Panny Festival (2019)
		Good word (2019)
		István Ferenczy Art Competition (2019, 2020)
		Gemer-based Hungarian Cultural Festival (2019)
		Desző György Cultural Days (2019)
		Life on the move (2019)
		I Can Do It too (2019, 2020)
	Hont-Ipeľ Education centre in Veľký Krtíš	District competition in reading literature in Hungarian by Mihály Tompa (2019)
		Astra (2019, 2020) – a national competition of Hungarian singers
		Juniáles (2019 – 2020)
		Report from the Past (2019) – a multi-genre festival of traditional and contemporary culture
		Festival of young talents (2019)
		In the footsteps of literary creators (2019)
		Craft Camp (2019)
		Memorial Day of Kálmán Mikszálth (2019, 2020) – a commemoration of a writer, journalist and politician
		Memorial Day of the Events of 1848/49 (2019, 2020)

		Memorial Day of Lajos Kubányi (2019) – commemorating a painter
		Memorial Day of Bálint Balassi (2019) – commemorating a Renaissance poet
		Memorial Day of Zsélyi Nagy Lajos (2019) – anniversary of the poet's birth
		Memorial Day of Gul Krúdy (2019) – commemorating a playwright
		Imre Madách Memorial Day (2019) – the anniversary of the death of the writer and journalist
	Education Centre Pohronie in Žiar nad Hronom	Winter Customs (2020) – production of a multimedia medium about Christmas customs from the region and creative workshops
		Mosaic of children's rights and obligations (2019) – discussion for children of Romani nationality
		Police known unknown (2019, 2020) – regional art competition
	Education Centre Podpoľanie in Zvolen	Romani skills in clay and wood (2020) – exhibition of works by Romani children
Košice Self-governing region	Cultural Centre Medzibodrožie and Použie in Kráľovské Chlmec	XVII Tokaj Festival (2019) – an international multi-genre event in the spirit of tradition and folklore; the festival contributes to the rapprochement of European nations through culture and art
		IX St. Martin's Festival and Fair of Domestic Products Libagaliba (2019)
		IV Mulatos Romale – regional Romani festival was prepared with the aim of presenting the unusual and characteristic temperament of Romani culture in cooperation with other cultural organizations in the region (2019)
		Colourful world of little black eyes – art competition connected with the exhibition (2019, 2020)
		Hungarian Culture Day (2020)
		In memoriam Gyüre Lajos – competition in reciting poetry and prose (2019)
		Virtual presentations – memories of famous literary personalities of Medzibodrožie – László Dobos and Elemér Török (2019)
	Cultural Centre of the Bodva and Rudohorie valleys in Moldava nad Bodvou	Vászonrafel! – experiential painting with professional teachers in order to create a space for the presentation of Hungarian national culture; (2019)
		Elveszett örköségünk – a music camp (2019, 2020)
		International Meeting of Bethlehem Shepherds – Revived Customs and Traditions in the Culture of National Minorities (2019)
	Abova Cultural Centre in Bidovce	Beautiful life – daily creative activities for Romani children in the TUKE classroom-training facility in Herľany (2019)
		Thanperdal Roma – day camp for children from Romani settlements – manor house in Nižná Kamenica (2020)

	Gemér Education Centre in Rožňava	Association of Gemér Craftsmen Krásnohorská Dlhá Lúka – exchange of experiences, preservation and renewal of traditional crafts (2019)
		XII Year – International Bobbin Lace Festival "Bobbin, csipkeverés, koronki" (2019)
		Folklore evenings carnival customs from southern Gemér also in the Ruthenian dialect (2019)
		Hungarian Culture Day, also with the screening of a film based on a theme by Sándor Márai Eszterhagyatek (2020)
		Inspiring cultural heritage – the start of the Interreg/ViaCarpatia project to support cross-border cooperation in craft and minority culture in cooperation with Palócföldi Népművészek Egyesülete Kozard HU (2020)
		On-line activities in 2020: Gemér dances (teaching Hungarian and Romani csárdás); Recipes of typical dishes from the Hungarian national cuisine in the villages of Gemera; Shepherd's dances from Silická Brezová, etc.
	Spiš Education Centre in Spišská Nová Ves	Hospodi pomiluj – parade of church choirs of the Eastern Rite (2019)
		Makovická string – show of Ruthenian-Ukrainian songs (2019)
	Museum and Cultural Centre of South Zemplín in Trebišov	Activities in the field of astronomy for children in ethnically mixed communities within the region – Space through the eyes of children, What do you know about the stars; multimedia lectures – Night under the Sky (2019, 2020)
Nitra Self-governing region	Regional Education Centre in Nitra	Songs from Podzoborie – international folklore festival (2019, 2020)
	Regional Education Centre in Komárno	Competition shows of children's and youth choirs in Hungarian Once upon a time .../ Hol volt, hol nem volt ... – exhibition of art works (2019, 2020)
Prešov Self-governing region	Education Centre Podtatranské in Poprad	Zamagurské folklore festivities in Červený Kláštor – the announcer is NOC Bratislava, the organizer is POS Poprad (2019)
		Collection of artworks for the nationwide art competition: Romani Palette (2019, 2020)
	Upper Šariš Education Centre in Bardejov	Christmas star – a show in the singing of Christmas songs performed by children and adults and groups in cooperation with the Museum of Ukrainian Culture (2019)
		Creative workshops for Romani pupils (2019)
	Education Centre Podduklianske in Svidník	Traditional Romani Culture – Summer Camp for Children and Parents (2019)
		Romani Festival – 2-day folklore event in the village of Stročín connected with an accompanying program – creative workshops (2019)
Creative workshops for Romani in the villages of Nižný Mirošov, Kečkovce, Nižná and Vyšná Olšava, Bukovce, Nižný Komárník (2019, 2020)		

		Cultural traditions of the Romani – a one-day folklore event in the village of Kečkovce (2019)
		Craft traditions – creative workshops in town Nižný Komárnik (2019)
		Educational events in the field of social prevention at almost all schools in the district of Svidník and Stropkov (2019)
		Songs of my family, regional show of folk singers (2019)
		Ruthenian folklore festivals in the villages of Olšavka, Nižná and Vyšná Olšava, Lomné, Kurimka, Cernina, Vyšný Mirošov, Vápeník, Svidníčka, Kružlová (2019)
		Ruthenian folklore festival in Svidník – 5-day multi-genre festival (2019, 2020)
		Bethlehem Evening – a traditional Christmas event with children's performers (2019, 2020)
		Between Two Mountains – full-length program presented by DFS Makovička and FS Makovica (2019)
		Festivities of Ruthenian-Ukrainian culture of the Slovak Republic in Svidník (2019, 2020)
		Makovická String – regional competition show of folk singers (2019)
		Weekly summer camp for Roma children and parents (2020)
		Ancestor traditions – a 5-day event focused on cultural traditions in the village of Vápeník
Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa		Songs of my family – regional selections for the all-Slovak competition of Ruthenian folk song performers (2019, 2020)
		Duchnovič Prešov – a district competition in recitation in the Ruthenian language (2019, 2020)
		Czechoslovak World in the Carpathians – a presentation of a book on the historical events of Carpathian Ruthenia (2019)
		Makovická String – regional competition of singers of Ruthenian and Ukrainian folk songs (2019, 2020)
		Ruthenian and Ukrainian Folklore Festival of Slovakia (2019, 2020)
		Days of German Culture – Spiš German Culture (2019)
		Holose, holose – a competition show of Ruthenian songs (2019)
		XV Ruthenian World Congress (2019)
		Exhibition of works of art by Ruthenian artists – part of the World Congress of Ruthenians (2019)
		National Ruthenian Day celebrations in Slovakia (2019)
		Ruthenian and Lemkow Culture Festival – a national event uniting Ruthenians from the Slovak and Polish sides (2019)

		Ruthenian bonfire in Malý Lipník – a festival of Ruthenian culture (2019)
		Lackovský cart – an event presenting Polish and Goral culture (2019, 2020)
		Get to know and preserve the traditions of your ancestors – an event of Ruthenian culture in the village of Jarabina (2019)
		Celebrations of Polish-Goral culture in Stará Ľubovňa (2019)
		We are all here at home – a multinational cultural program organized within the Ľubovňa Fair (2019)
		The Promised Land – a concert of the folklore ensemble Ruthenia from Bratislava (2019)
		District show of a sacred song – an event of church choirs and folklore groups from all over the region (2019)
		Exhibition Get to know your costume – a photographic exhibition of primary research and documentation of folk costumes of municipalities in the Ľubovňa region (2019, 2020)
		Primary research Get to know your costume (2019, 2020)
		Presentation of the publication Drotári – an autobiographical novel by Ivan Ivanovič Kindja (2020)
		Seminar on the folk song – a nationwide seminar organized annually in a different region of Slovakia and in cooperation with the Association of Musical Folklore from Bratislava, from which a collection was created (2020)
		Christmas in the Ľubovňa region – a multicultural online program created in cooperation with the regional Ľubovňa media company. The event was attended by folklore groups Litmaňivka, Šambriňci and Kečera (Ruthenians), Mladý marmon (Carpathian Germans), Plavčanka (ethnic group from Šariš region). The event was broadcast via the Internet and social networks, e.g. Facebook and YouTube, on December 25 – during the Christmas (2020)
		Slicing an Apple – preparation of a Collection of Poetry by National Authors (2020)
	Upper Zemplin Education Centre in Vranov nad Topľou	Easter creative workshops – painting Easter eggs and production of Easter decorations with Romani children (2019)
		Christmas workshops – production of Christmas ornaments and decorations with children (2019)
		Children's Art Vranov – Romani art and craftwork was presented as part of the competition (2019, 2020)
		Craft celebrations – presentation of Romani crafts combined with creative workshops (2019)
		Šaffo's Spur (2019)
		Hornozemplín Folklore Festival (2019)

		EthnoFest (2019)
		PSK Day – HZOS Open Day – dance school for Romani children (2019)
Trenčín Self-governing region	Regional Cultural Centre in Prievidza	Harmony – a festival of music groups of Carpathian German associations (2019, 2020)
		Concert of the music group Presburger Klezmer Band presenting traditional Jewish music (2019)
Trnava Self-governing region	Galanta Education Centre	Jewish Culture Week – a memorial event focused on the presentation of the Jewish cultural heritage (2020)
		Golden Strings of Zither – a festival of ensembles and soloists in playing the zither from the Trnava region (2019)
		Kodály's Galanta 2019 – a festival of children's choir
	Rye Island Education Centre in Dunajská Streda	International Romani Day – a show of Romani talents (2019), which included the evaluation and opening of the Coloriskeriluma district art competition
		Bihari Festival – a festival with a gala program in honour of the famous gypsy primate, János Bihari (2019, 2020)
Žilina Self-governing region	Regional Cultural Centre in Žilina	International Roma Day, cultural event – a motivational musical performance of a young Romani pianist from Heľpa, Stanislav Harvan (2019)
	Turieč Cultural Centre in Martin	Russian Literary Evening – In the Sunbeams of the Native Language (2019)

Table no. 3: Cultural and educational facilities under the founding competence of self-governing regions dealing with members of national minorities or presenting their culture

founder/self-governing region	Cultural and educational facilities	National minorities for whom the events were organized or their cultures are related to such events (number of events, if known)
Bansko-bystrický	Novohrad Education Centre in Lučenec	Hungarian (8)
	Gemer-Malohont Education Centre in Rimavská Sobota	Hungarian, Romani (12)
	Hont-Ipeľ Education centre in Veľký Krtíš	Hungarian (18)
	Pohronské enlightenment centre in Žiar nad Hronom	Romani (4)
	Education Centre Podpoľanie in Zvolen	Romani (1)
Košice	Cultural Centre Medzibodrožie and Použie in Kráľovské Chlmec	Hungarian, Roma (8)
	Cultural Centre of the Bodva and Rudohorie valleys in Moldava nad Bodvou	Hungarian, Romani (4)
	Abova Cultural Centre in Bidovce	Romani (2)
	Gemer Education Centre in Rožňava	Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian (6)
	Spiš Education Centre in Spišská Nová Ves	Ruthenian, Ukrainian (2)
	Museum and Cultural Centre of South Zemplín in Trebišov	(2)
Nitra	Regional Education Centre in Nitra	Hungarian (2)
	Regional Education Centre in Komárno	Hungarian (4)
Prešov	Education Centre Podtatranské in Poprad	Ruthenian, Polish, Romani (4+)
	Upper Šariš Education Centre in Bardejov	Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Romani (5)
	Education Centre Podduklianske in Svidník	Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian (52)
	Ľubovňa Education Centre in Stará Ľubovňa	Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German, Goral, Polish (30)
	Upper Zemplin Education Centre in Vranov nad Topľou	Romani, Ruthenian (9)
Trenčín	Regional Cultural Centre in Prievidza	German, Jewish (3)
Trnava	Galanta Education Centre	Hungarian, Romani, Jewish (3+)
	Rye Island Education Centre in Dunajská Streda	Hungarian, Romani (4)
Žilina	Regional Cultural Centre in Žilina	Romani (1)
	Turiec Cultural Centre in Martin	Russian (1)

Source: Self-governing regions.

Annex no. 3: Library activities aimed at preserving and developing the culture of national minorities

State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica

The activities of the State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica (hereinafter "SSLBB") in the field of cooperation with national minorities and support of their culture were in 2019 mainly focused on cooperation with civic associations and associations whose objective is to develop and make accessible the culture of national minorities:

- cooperation with the Bulgarian national minority – with the civic association Raduana – House of Nations in the preparation of the opening of the exhibition of the Bulgarian photographer, *Jordan Kolarov, entitled Bulgaria – known and unknown* piano concert in which young Bulgarian pianists Petia Christova and Lili Bogdanova performed (22 May 2019);
- cooperation with the Russian national minority and with the civic association Molodaya Rossiya, 2nd International Scientific Conference *Russian Culture in the Contemporary World (philology, culturology, translation)*, which took place at SSLBB (14-15 February 2019);
- 3rd International Scientific Conference *Russian Culture in the Contemporary World (Philology, Culturology, Translation Studies)*, held at SSLBB in cooperation with the Russian national minority, the civic association Molodaya Rossiya and the Faculty of Arts of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (25 June 2020);
- An educational event – *a concert by Lara Abou Hamdan*, which took place in the Courtyard of Maria Theresa, was prepared by the State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica – Centre for Slavic Studies. The event presented the work of a Syrian woman living in Slovakia, who composes music and writes lyrics in English, Arabic and Slovak (August 12, 2020).

In 2020, the library fund was supplemented with documents related to the issue of national minorities, periodical and non-periodical publications in the languages of national minorities were made available in printed or electronic form. Periodicals in Hungarian, German, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish and Romani were made available.

State Scientific Library in Košice

In the reference periods, the library realized the following exhibitions and events:

- an exhibition *Theatre and Theatre Societies in Košice in the Years 1900 – 1926* on the pages of the art weekly *Kassai Színházi Ujság*, borrowed and installed at the premises of the Theatre Museum in Miskolc (January – February 2019);
- a movie *Sad Languages* is about the fate of the Carpathian Germans in Slovakia, and it was screened during the *Slovak Libraries Week 2019* with the participation of producer and director Anna Grusková, and representatives of this national minority, an event organized in cooperation with the Goethe Institute in Bratislava (March 6, 2019);
- providing facilities and information and technical facilities for participants in a series of six events aimed at developing the basic computer skills of children and young people from the socially disadvantaged Romani community (November – December 2019);

- an exhibition *Theatre and Theatre Societies in Košice in the Years 1900 – 1926* on the pages of the art weekly *Kassai Színházi Ujság*, borrowed and installed in the premises of the Thália Theatre on the occasion of its 50th anniversary (December 2019);
- an exhibition of posters on the topic of integration of foreigners in cooperation with ETP Slovakia (permanent exhibition since 2020);
- traveling multilingual exhibition *Košice bohemia on the website of the Kassai Színházi Ujság 1911-1923* (presents the cultural contribution of the Hungarian minority in Košice, made available at the Thália Košice Theatre (January – March 2020);
- a journalist circle for Romani children in cooperation with ETP Slovakia (three times in the months of January - February 2020);
- a summer STEM academy for Romani children – work with Lego robots in cooperation with ETP Slovakia in cooperation with ETP Slovakia (three times in the months of January – February 2020).

State Scientific Library in Prešov

A specialized within the State Scientific Library in Prešov is the Documentation and Information Centre for Romani Culture (hereinafter "DICRC"), which expanded the library's portfolio and added activities focused on documenting, mapping, and building a database of digital objects of Romani culture in Slovakia.

- processing of 81 digital cultural objects in the categories video, photo, scans that are available at www.portalsvk.sk (2019);
- 2 realized exhibitions (2019);
- 6 realized discussions (2019);
- in cooperation with the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in Prešov, they prepared a professional event with international participation on the topic of Romani Culture in the Digital Environment (November 2019).

According to the contract between the State Scientific Library in Prešov and the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, the DICRC, within the sustainability of the project of the Operational Program Informatization of Society – PO2, shall be obliged to:

- ensure the creation of at least 120 digital cultural objects (DCO) broken down by types of cultural objects as follows: 30 video objects, 30 audio objects, 40 photographs, 20 scans of 2D objects;
- implement at least 3 events on important events related to Romani culture and the life of the Romani ethnic group;
- record at least 15 new memoirs;
- realize 2 virtual tours.

Regularly organized events

Since 2015, DICRC has been organizing regular events within *the Living Books Project*. The content of the events is focused on important days – *World Roma Day* (April), *Remembrance of the Victims of the Roma Holocaust* (September), *World Roma Language Day* (November).

In connection with the measures of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and the Public Health Authority SR in the period March – June 2020, no events were organized for the public. When the COVID measures were eased down, the event *World Roma Day*, which was to take place in April, took place on July 8, 2020, but without public participation. The

event was presented to the public online via Facebook page of the State Scientific Library in Prešov on August 27, 2020.

University Library in Bratislava

The University Library in Bratislava (ULB) is the oldest and largest scientific library in the Slovak Republic. It was established in 1919 as the Library of Comenius University. In parallel with its academic mission, it served as a national library until 1954. Already in the year of its establishment, it acquired the right to the obligatory printing of books and periodicals from the territory of Slovakia. Since 1954, it has been an independent scientific library serving the public. However, it retained the name University Library because it expresses its history, the broad profile of the collection, and the user background; under this name, it became famous abroad. The University Library in Bratislava is a state budget organization involved in budget revenues and expenditures through the chapter of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, which is its founder. It gradually transformed from a classical library into a modern library and information institution.

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- in cooperation with the organization Romanokher – Roma House organized the competition *Colour World – Coloriskeri luma 2019* (19 June 2019);
- for students of UNESCO affiliated schools, IDS UNESCO, in cooperation with the Holocaust Documentation Centre, organized a lecture *We and They? The Holocaust in Slovakia 1938 – 1945*, focused on relations between Jews and Slovaks in the years 1938 – 1945 in connection with the emergence of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust in Slovakia (January 25, 2020).

Banská Bystrica Self-governing region

Among the libraries established by the Banská Bystrica Self-governing region, the Matej Hrebenda Library in Rimavská Sobota and the Novohradská Library in Lučenec operate in the ethnically mixed area. Events for national minorities are organized for the public, especially for the children of kindergartens and primary schools and high school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction.

Novohrad Library in Lučenec

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Society of Friends of the Word* – events dedicated to personalities associated with the city of Lučenec, the topics were the Lučenec Almanac, new books, the achievements of writers in the last century, and many more. The event was held in Hungarian (2019, 2020);
- *Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka in Novohrad* – a lecture on a painter and pharmacist on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death. The event for secondary school students and 8th and 9th-grade primary school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction took place in Hungarian (2019);
- Experiential reading for primary school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction on various topics: *Winter stories, Carnival tales, The time of joy of merriment, From fairy tale to fairy tale, Different forms of love, reading with writers (K. Balúchová,*

G. Futová), Tales about snowmen and other. The event took place in Slovak and Hungarian (2019, 2020);

- Experiential reading for Romani children – experiential reading for children from Special primary school (mostly Roma children) on various educational and cheerful topics: *Sticker, Carnival tales, reading from Gabika Futová's books, Looking forward to the holidays, How Hermína went to the ball, Winter stories, Monkeys from our shelf, Cats in a bag* and others. The event took place in the Slovak language (2019, 2020);
- *Creative workshops* (2019) – creative workshops on various interesting topics for pupils of the Special Primary School;
- *How the Egg Went Wandering* (2019) - a dramatization of a fairy tale connected with feedback given by students of the Secondary Vocational School of Pedagogy for pupils of the Special Primary School (mostly Romani children);
- *Reading through the periodicals of Lučenec* – a reading from the old press connected with the story of a historian and a playwright about various interesting topics and information. The event was held in Hungarian at the library's Facebook page (2020);
- *A fairy tale not only for a good night* – reading fairy tales for the little ones, such as the fairy tale *About an Ugly Duckling*, performed by the theatre director Štefan Csák from the J. Kármán Theatre. The event was held in Hungarian at the library's Facebook page (2020);

Matej Hrebenda Library in Rimavská Sobota

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *How to learn effectively* – a lecture and brainstorming by a psychologist from the Centre for Pedagogical-Psychological Counseling and Prevention (2019);
- *Hrebenda's legacy* – a lecture on the occasion of *March – the month of the book* on the historical development of books as bearers of wisdom and on libraries, their mission, and the services provided to high school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Wanderings through the main square* – a professional lecture and excursion on the main square in Rimavská Sobota for the 5th-grade pupils from primary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Pavol Dobšínský and the Day of Folk Tale* – a story about a Slovak fairy tale associated with a quiz for the 3rd-grade pupils from a primary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Development and strengthening of mutual relations in the classroom* – lecture by a psychologist from the Centre of Pedagogical-Psychological Counseling and Prevention for pupils of the 7th-grade from primary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019, 2020);
- *Zlatá krajina* – a literary exhibition of author's works by pupils in primary schools and eight-year grammar schools in the town and district of Rimavská Sobota, independently lectured in Hungarian (2019, 2020);
- *Slovakia – a country full of secrets: Water adventures* – experiential reading for pupils of the 3rd-grade of primary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Let's Protect Nature* – an event for 5th-grade primary school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);

- *The forest hidden in the book* – a cycle of nature events for the 1st-grade primary school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Welcome to the library* – an event about the library and books, information preparation for primary schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Ján Botto – a poet of Slovak literary Romanticism* – a literary lesson about a regional poet for primary school pupils with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *How to continue?* – a lifelong learning by writer Eva Bolemantová for grammar school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2019);
- *Historic buildings of our city* – a lecture and discussion about historic buildings in Rimavská Sobota for high school students with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2020);
- *Vándormeseíró* – a puppet show by Ádám Badin for primary school pupils with Hungarian as the language of instruction (2020);
- *Information education – about the library, its services and possibilities of use for secondary students with Hungarian as the language of instruction* (2020).

Hont-Novohrad library in Veľký Krtíš

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *March the Book Month* – a discussion on the significance of reading and books, plus a literary quiz for Romani pupils from the Special Primary School in Veľký Krtíš (2019);
- *Regional writers* – a non-traditional lesson of literary education in the library for Roma pupils from the Special Primary School in Veľký Krtíš (2019);
- *How the book is written* – a computer training on the origin, production, and significance of books for Romani pupils from the Special Primary School in Veľký Krtíš (2019);
- *Regional personalities* – a non-traditional lesson of regional education in the library for Romani pupils from the Special Primary School in Veľký Krtíš (2019);
- *Comics* – a non-traditional literary education lesson in the library, supplemented by a creative workshop focused on the production of one's own comics for Romani pupils from the Special Primary School in Veľký Krtíš (2019).

Regional Library in Zvolen

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *15th year of the Czech-Slovak Reciprocity Week* in cooperation with the Czech Association in Zvolen and the company Bona Fide Prague (2019);
- *Czech Literature for Children* – an exhibition of Czech books from the library collection for children and youth (2019);
- *Hadil's Writer* – a presentation of Jiří Teper's book connected with a discussion, author's reading, and an exhibition of illustrations by Pavel Hrach (2019);
- *The Mysterious World of Illustrations* – an opening of an exhibition of Czech children's book illustrators (2019);
- *And the sadness is gone* – a presentation of children's books by the writer Marek Míková connected with a theatrical performance of Bajka (2019);
- *Belly, belly, who lives in you? (Bříško, bříško, kdo v tobě bydlí?)* – a presentation of a bilingual book by the author M. Pešková and illustrator Iva Dražská connected with the author's reading, discussion, and exhibition of illustrations (2019);

- *Fairy tales are fairy tales* – a dramatized reading from books by Czech authors in the original language and in Slovak translations (2019);
- *Roches and Bžunda* – a dramatized reading connected with a presentation by the writer Marek Míková and the illustrator Juraj Horváth (2020);
- *About the Bunny and the Fox* – a puppet show for the youngest, played by the Puppets in the Hospital Association (2020);
- *How Mother Welcomes* – from Michal Viewegh's book *Short Fairy Tales for Tired Parents* (2020);
- *Old Czech rhymes* – the stories of old Czech legends were smirked by Jiří Teper and complemented by illustrations by Jiří Winter - Neprakty (2020);
- *Musical greeting to Zvolen* – performed by Krystyna Sklaická and Libor Heřman (2020);
- online Festival of Czech and Slovak works for children in Zvolen in cooperation with Bona Fide Prague – 9 online videos of performances available on YouTube.

Ján Kollár Library in Kremnica

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Information education – information education in the library to increase reading and information literacy for students of the private grammar school Zefyrín Jimenéz Malla in Kremnica* (2020).

Self-governing region of Bratislava

The Regional Methodology of the Small Carpathian Library in Pezinok monitors the situation concerning national minorities in municipal and city libraries of the Bratislava Self-governing region and monitors activities and projects focused on national minorities (library collection, discussions with authors, creative workshops, events for children and youth, school and extracurricular activities of schools and classes with Hungarian as the language of instruction, or activities, projects and events supporting the integration of the Romani population – especially children).

Košice Self-governing region

Pavol Dobšinský Gemer Library in Rožňava

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- literary lessons;
- Interview books.

Zemplín Library in Trebišov

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- loud readings and presentations about authors;
- *A week in rainbow colours Ko– Let's get to know each other;*
- *Language pairs game;*
- experiential readings with understanding for Romani children.

Gorazd Zvonický Zemplín Library in Michalovce

Activities focused on members of national minorities in cooperation with the Czech Association in Michalovce:

- Women in Czech literature;
- Czech national music;
- Czech interwar prose *Persons and events*;
- One hundred years of Czech comics;
- experiential readings with understanding for Romani children.

Library at KCMaP in Královské Chlmeč

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- meeting with representatives of children's literature;
- Book is the key to a child's heart.

Ján Bocatia Public Library in Košice

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- thematic exhibitions – *Browsing through Slovakia*;
- *Literary Chronicle of the First Republic*;
- an exhibition of photographs from *the One-Click Behind the Monument project*;
- *The second life of Vendulka V. etc.*

Nitra Self-governing region

Libraries provide services to readers and visitors of both Slovak nationality and members of national minorities and ethnic groups. They develop the identity and cultural values of members of national minorities and ethnic groups, working primarily with children and young people from schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction and with children who speak Romani. In addition to providing library and information services, libraries also carry out cultural and educational events. Particularly important are the dramatizations of books for the youngest and children from Roma communities, literary lessons and fairy tale afternoons, preventive-educational events, holiday creative workshops and quizzes. They also organize competitions in the recitation of poetry, where a separate category consists of a lecture in Hungarian, the *Day of Hungarian fairy tales*, reading Romani fairy tales, meetings, and discussions with Hungarian writers and personalities of Hungarian cultural life.

Anton Bernolák Library in Nové Zámky

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

For kindergartens (a total of 9 events, the most important of which were):

- competition *I have a poem on my tongue* (recitation of poetry and prose) – a separate category for Hungarian-speaking children;
- *Show what you know* (talent competition) – a separate category for Hungarian-speaking children;

For primary schools (a total of 19 events, the most important of which were):

- registration ceremony of first-graders;
- IT education;
- experiential reading;
- Hungarian Folk Tale Day;

- participation in an international project to support the reading of *Night with Andersen*, in which children worked in two groups (Hungarian and Slovak);

For students of a Grammar school with Hungarian as the language of instruction in Nové Zámky:

- a meeting with *Alexander Strba*, a local historian and author of publications on the history of the town in Hungarian;
- a *Poetry Day* event dedicated to Hungarian poetry;

Also,

- on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the 1st transports of the Jewish population from the region, in cooperation with the Jewish religious community in Nové Zámky, a lecture by I. Tomas Lang, PhD., and a presentation of his book: *DISCHARGE OF RIGHT – PROPERTY – LIFE (Jews in the Arbitration Territory of Southwest Slovakia 1938-1947)*;
- in cooperation with the GENERATION club, which works at the library, a meeting with a translator from Hungarian and a poet, Jitka Rožňová, as well as a presentation of the book by Alexander Strba *Nové Zámky II* (in Hungarian);
- as part of the *Rendezvous project with literature*, a discussion with the Hungarian writer, Péter Forgacs, and a presentation of the work of the regional Ruthenian poet Květa Halásová.

Since the organization of events in the library was banned or very restricted by the measures of the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic since March 2020, the library used the online space for its realization. Through social networks, it made various events available to the public (reading fairy tales, presentations of authors and their books, quizzes, creative workshops...), 21 of which were in Hungarian. As part of international cooperation, KAB is developing long-term cooperation with the County and Municipal Library of Josef Attila in Tatabánya (Hungary), with which they signed a Cooperation Agreement in 2015. KAB actively participated in the organization of the International Conference for Librarians: *A Place of Knowledge – Is Your Name a Library?* The partners were also the Institute of Library and Information Science Budapest, National Széchenyi Library Budapest.

Tekov Library in Levice

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- Every year, the performance of the theatre-dance and music group THEATRO HORA – a band of Roma dances and songs in Levice, which is part of the organization of the *Slovak Libraries Week*, is a great success.

József Szinnyei Library in Komárno

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- discussions with authors of books in the Hungarian language, workshops, lectures, theatre performances and leisure activities – *Entertainment Library*. Once a month, "Saturday morning *"Saturday morning with a fairy tale"* – *"Mesekuckó"* was held.

Karol Kmeťek Regional Library in Nitra

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Roma Culture Day in the Library (2019)* – the morning program consisted of creative workshops attended by Romani children from primary schools in the Nitra district. The

afternoon was dedicated to the performance of the *folk group of Folk Music* by Michal Lazar, which prepared a presentation of Roma songs for the participants of the event.

Tríbeč Library in Topolčany

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- dramatization of fairy tales (*Devil in the service, No pain, no gain*), loud reading, creative workshops.

Self-governing region of Prešov

Ľubovňa Library in Stará Ľubovňa

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Hello, neighbour* – a project dedicated to the presentation of Romani culture. During the three-day festival, participants met a Romani artist at educational concerts with a Romani pop-flame duo, a fashion show of a young Romani fashion designer, and a theatrical performance about a Romani boxer (2019);
- 10 events on and for Romani (2019);
- 3 events for the Romani national minority (2020);
- close cooperation with the Czech Association in Stará Ľubovňa, in cooperation with which it organized 18 events for young people and adults;
- 1 lecture was given to the Ruthenian national minority *Ruthenians – a small nation in the heart of Europe* (2019).

Upper Zemplin Library in Vranov nad Topľou

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Thirteenth Chamber* (2019) – meetings with Romanis with mental and physical disorders, children from the DSS in Vranov n. T., which resulted in an exhibition of artworks. The world of the book is made accessible to children not only by borrowing them but also by reading them loud (2019);
- literary cloths, classical fairy tales, literary activities such as *Pippi Longstocking, Mimi and Líza, About a snowman with hot heart intended for Romani children* (2019);
- educational lectures, such as *History of Vranov nad Topľou, Aesop and the World of Fairy Tales* (2019);
- *Book Honey Days* – the main musical guest was a Roma dance and singing group Čiriklore from Čičava, which accompanied us through the entire program (2020);

Events for the Joint Boarding School in Vranov nad Topľou:

- *About crows near Topla (six times)* – a legend about the origin of the town of VT;
- *Folk tale* (five times) – a presentation about P. Dobšinský and folk tales;
- *Happiness is a fox* (once) – an experiential reading on the topic of gratitude, happiness;
- *Squirrel Vierka* (once) – an experiential reading on friendship;
- *The world of fables* (twice) – a presentation about fables and Aesop;
- *About a snowman with a hot heart* (twice) – an experiential reading with a Christmas theme;
- Bibliographic information education + book exchange (three times);
- *Pippi Longstocking* (twice) – an experiential reading;

- *Book Honey Days* (once) – an illustration workshop, an exhibition of honey and honey products, Roma dances;

Event for secondary school Budovateľská:

- *About Twelve Months – a dramatization of a fairy tale*;
- Event with the United School in Čaklov;
- Creation of Christmas ikebana – practical demonstrations associated with the exhibition of students' works.

The Upper Zemplin Library submitted a project Multifunctional Centre 4.0. The aim and primary mission of the project is to provide a comprehensive service to the people, their families, and the entire local community so that they can acquire social skills, self-realization and non-formal education.

In addition to the primary goal, the project aims to fulfill specific objectives such as support for meaningful leisure time, presentation of culture, customs, traditions, assistance in applying in the labour market, prevention of undesirable sociopathological phenomena in these communities, and the support during education.

Vihorlat Library in Humenné

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- Discussion and presentation of a collection of Slovak and Ruthenian poems by the artist and photographer Daniela Kapraľová (October 2019);
- Literary discussion with the poet and translator Milan Bobák on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of his birth (2019);
- exhibition of books by Milan Bobák (2019);
- processing and publishing of personal bibliography: *Rudolf Demjan – writer, translator, pedagogue* (2019);
- realization of exhibitions and book exhibitions on the anniversaries of writers and important social events (2019);
- *Ukrainian writers in Slovakia*: elaboration of the personal bibliography of a writer (2020);
- promotion of literature of national minorities;
- work with a story in the Community Centre Humenné – in 2019, the library began to work closely with the Community Centre Humenné, which is primarily intended for children, youth, but also adults from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, especially from the Romani settlement of Podskalka. They met the children in their temporary environment, at the Rainbow Leisure Centre. The first two pilot meetings took place in the autumn months, during which the children verified the work system and the children's feedback to the prepared activities (2019);
- the plan of activities for 2020 included a meeting with Romani children and young people aged 6-16 on a regular monthly basis in the Community Centre Humenné, which has been established in the settlement of Podskalka. Due to the unfavorable epidemiological situation, it was not possible to hold all the planned meetings, and at the end of the day, only 5 of them took place. Each meeting is prepared for a specific topic, which is always prepared based on the requirements of children and social workers of the centre. The topics covered were as follows: *Roma fairy tales, Comics, Books on sports, Roma Holocaust, The school calls*.

21 regional competitions of non-professional literary creators in poetry and prose in the Ukrainian language had been organized until 2014. The reason for ending this event was the

abolition of the teaching of the Ukrainian language at primary and secondary schools, and subsequently also the abolition of the Ukrainian school in Humenné.

Dávid Gutgesel District Library in Bardejov

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- *Hanka Servická – Špivanky Servickej Hanky* – presentation of a book connected with an autograph session, Ruthenian national minority (January 2020).

Podtatranská library in Poprad

Activities aimed at members of national minorities:

- cooperation with a civic association OZ Polonus within the implementation of joint events within the Tatra Expo Exhibition Markets – *Days of Polish Culture with Goral Music and* a lecture on Easter traditions for primary school pupils (2019);
- in cooperation with the Matejovce primary school – regular meetings (very limited in 2020 due to the pandemic) of Romani pupils of this school at library events to support reading and reading literacy (loud reading, experiential reading, creative workshops);
- building the collection of the Polish Library (monographs and series) in cooperation with the civic association OZ Polonus and the Central Mountain Library of the Polish Tourist and Patriotic Association in Krakow.

Trnava Self-governing region

The Rye Island Library in Dunajská Streda, the Galanta Library, and the Juraj Fándly Library in Trnava, when updating the library collection and providing methodological assistance and counseling services to the municipal, city, and special libraries, they take into account the fact that citizens belonging to a national minority reside in regions that fall under their competence. The intention is to create an interesting offer for the Hungarian national minority living in the Trnava region.

Žilina Self-governing region

Liptov Library of G.F. Belopotocký in Liptovský Mikuláš

Activities focused on national minorities, especially the Czech and Polish minorities, form an integral part of the daily activities of the Liptov Library of G.F. Belopotocký in Liptovský Mikuláš.

Activities dedicated to *the Polish national minority*:

- Since 2014, the library has been open to the public and is continuously updating the so-called *The Polish Library*, which contains books in Polish. The library subscribes to the magazine *Monitor polonijny – a social and cultural monthly magazine of Poles in the Slovak Republic* and continuously cooperates with the civic association OZ Poľský klub (Polish Club), with which it has signed a new cooperation agreement;
- In August 2020, the library joined the *Bridge project* that was moderated by the editor-in-chief of the *Polonijne Monitor*, Malgorzata Wojcsieszynska.

Activities dedicated to *the Czech national minority*:

- discussion with M.Z. Kučer, a Czech writer, researcher, traveler, and mystery hunter (March 2019);

- a lecture on the life and work of the Czech writer Milan Kundera on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of his birth (April 2019);
- as part of the *Night of Literature* event, works by Czech authors were also read (May 2019);
- fairy tale afternoons for children – the topic was *K. Čapek's book About a dog and a cat* (May to October 2019);
- exhibition of books with illustrations by the Czech artist Helena Zmatlíková (June 2019);
- the library staff took part in an excursion to the libraries in Třinec and Frýdek-Místek, organized by the Regional Branch of the Association of Slovak Librarians and Libraries (June 2019);
- as part of the *Library Code* event, they promoted the book *Mach and Šebestová* (2020) to the children;
- Czech actor, *singer*, musician and director Jiří Suchý (August 2020) was also a guest within the Bridges project, in which the GFB Liptov Library also participated.
- The Literary Club at the GFB Liptov Library organized a meeting on the topic of *Karel Čapek: The Road to the North* (September 2020);
- during 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis and the limitation of cultural events within the *Virtual Library: Library Science Hall* project, articles in the Czech language were also published on the website and FB profile 10 times in total (2020).

For the Czech national minority living in Liptovský Mikuláš and its surroundings, books in Czech are being continuously bought. In 2019 and 2020, they acquired and made available 350 books in the Czech language.

Anton Habovštiak Orava Library in Dolný Kubín

The events in the library are held in the Slovak language, exceptionally in Polish and Czech.

The library makes documents (books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs) available to national minorities in their mother tongue – specifically to readers of Polish nationality who have at their disposal the collection of the *Polish Library* that was established in 2008 (more than 330 library items). With the intention of associating citizens of Polish nationality living in the Orava region and supporters of Polish literature and culture, a *Polish Club* has been opened. Its program activities depend on the interests of its members (it was not active in the period under review). For members of the Czech nationality, the library fund has a rich collection of books and magazines in the Czech language, documents are available in Russian, German, English, French and other languages.

The library prepares cultural and educational events for various categories of users, such as lectures on human rights and their observance, including the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups. It cooperates with the local community and low-threshold centre in organizing leisure activities for their clients, including children and youth of Romani nationality. In the reference period of 2019-2020, the library actively cooperated with the Krnov Municipal Library on the project *Cross-border Cultural Dialogue*, which was supported by the INTERREG V-A Program Slovak Republic – Czech Republic 2014-2020 within the Small Projects Fund. In 2019, the first activity entitled *Armchair for a Guest* took place, when the Czech author, Jaroslav Konvička, presented his fiction work at OKAH. In 2020, a meeting was held with the Czech historian, Jakub Mamul, on the topic of *The Image of Krnov from the Beginning to the Present Day*. The events were intended for the public, including residents of Czech nationality. In 2020, the library with its traditional cross-border partner Miejska Bibliotek Publiczna in Limanowa participated in the preparation of their project entitled

Literatura bez granic – transgranicznezwiazkiliterackie, which they had applied for and submitted to the INTERREG V-A Poland – Slovakia Program 2014-2020 and it will be implemented in 2021.

Regional Library in Žilina

The library traditionally co-works with the Czech minority in the field of cooperation with national minorities in Slovakia.

Cooperation with the Czech Association of Žilina was mainly based on co-organizing events and making Czech periodicals available. These periodicals were partially bought thanks to the Czech Association of Žilina (in 2020 the Czech Association of Žilina ceased to exist and the Czech Club Žilina was established at the Czech Association Bratislava, which initiated support for the purchase of Czech periodicals). In 2019, two informal meetings of members of the association and representatives of the library with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic, Tomáš Tupý, took place at the premises of the Regional Library in Žilina (March 6, 2019, September 12, 2019). In 2019, two events took place with the co-organizing contribution of the members of the Czech Association of Žilina, especially the chairman, Mr Svätopluk Pacha:

- exhibition of Czechoslovak caricatures *Before and After*;
- exhibition of photographs of members of the Czech Association of Žilina entitled *From the perspective of generations of two centuries*;

By promoting among its members, the association contributed to the realization of the Photoliter *exhibition* of the members of the Czech Provincial Association FISAIC.

Cooperation with the Polish national minority:

- the Library of the Polish Club has been built on the grounds of a library, which is being developed with the support of a civic association OZ Polonus and which offers mainly belles-lettres literature in Polish;
- exhibition with OZ Polonus and the Polish Institute in Bratislava entitled *Get to know the Polish language*, which presented the development of the Polish language and the pronunciation of Polish words based on digitized materials (October 2020).

In 2019, the library hosted a meeting of the Carpathian-German Association in Slovakia, Žilina, and in 2020, the meeting was canceled due to the anti-pandemic measures.

Turiec Library in Martin

In 2019 and 2020, the library cooperated mainly with the Czech national minority, which has the largest representation in Martin. The support of this national minority consisted not only in upgrading the library collection with the books in the Czech language, but also in purchasing Czech newspapers and magazines.

In 2020, the library worked on a project entitled Jaroslav Vodrážka – *Feeling Creates Art*. The aim of the project is to draw attention to traces of Czech culture and Czech-Slovak reciprocity in the Turiec region. The project consists of the realization of an exhibition of information panels, which is dedicated to the Czech illustrator, graphic artist, painter, and writer, Jaroslav Vodrážek, who had spent time living in Martin. The implementation of the project was postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Polish minority is represented by the civic association Polonus (Association of the Polish Minority in the Žilina Region). From 2009 to 2017, a corner of Polish literature was available to visitors in the library at the fiction department, which was established in cooperation with OZ Polonus. In connection with the relocation of the newspapers and

magazines reading room to these premises, the mentioned collection of Polish literature was divided into individual departments of the library, where it is accessible to all visitors to the library. In 2020, the Polish minority expressed (again) its interest in closer cooperation, which should continue after the stabilization of the situation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annex no. 4: Museum activities aimed at preserving and developing the culture of national minorities

Museums and galleries under the founding authority of the Banská Bystrica Self-governing region

The Novohrad Museum and Gallery Lučenec marks collection objects both in permanent exhibitions and in exhibitions and in Hungarian. At the same time, it provides lectures in this language. In 2019, the museum dedicated exhibitions to artists Béla Bacskai and Tivadar Kosztka Csontváry. In 2020, the museum collaborated with the Vince Warth Foundation from Hungary in the preparation of an international exhibition of contemporary ceramics, and organized a creative workshop for children in elementary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction, entitled Create Your Paraphrases.

In 2019, the Gemer-Malohont Museum in Rimavská Sobota prepared the 12th exhibition and, at the same time, a competitive show of children's artworks *Romano dživipen – a Roma life*. The artworks were inspired by the manifestations of Roma culture in various forms. The museum has prepared an exhibition presenting the work of the unique and non-professional Romani artist, Dezider Fertő, a Romani carver. Through documents from his personal legacy, the exhibition introduced the life of István Hatvani, a polyhistor and scientist from the 18th century, a native of Rimavská Sobota. The work of Kálmán Tichy, an artist and collector of Gemer folk art, was presented at the exhibition that was prepared in cooperation with the Mining Museum in Rožňava.

In 2020, the museum prepared an exhibition of the selection of works by Romani artist, Charlotte Bott, who focuses mainly on drawing portraits with graphite pencils. The exhibition entitled Július Szabó, Under the Copper Sky, presented a collection of oil paintings by a native of Budapest. The exhibition János Fábri introduced the founder and first director of the Gemer-Malohont Museum, his versatile career along with the history of the family. The museum provides guided tours of all exhibitions, as well as a permanent exhibition in Hungarian.

In the reference review, the Central Slovak Gallery in Banská Bystrica carried out 3 activities dedicated to the Romani national minority – during the festival The First Man Was an Artist, they screened 4 movies the Roma/the Gypsies through the lens of a documentary movie until 1989. Romani and ethnologist René Lužica commented on the projection of the movie. Zuzana Mojžišová led the lecture *Black Woman, White Man (transformations of stories about Carmen)*. The gallery presented an exhibition of the East Slovak Gallery Expelled/the Gypsies in Slovak Fine Arts of the 19th and 20th Centuries, which outlined the way of life of the Romani in the Slovak Republic in the mentioned period through classical art types and documentary photographic material. During the exhibition, experience programs for families with children, lectured shows, creative workshops, and animation programs were presented. Exhibition *Kereskultura! (We make culture!)* Works of a young-generation artists who work with the themes of Romani identity. The exhibition was complemented by a workshop on the relationship between minorities and the majority and various forms of identity, and an educational program was implemented.

Museums under the founding authority of the Nitra Self-governing region

The Tribeč Museum in Topoľčany , as part of activities supporting the development of the culture of national minorities in 2019, held the exhibition *Christmas in the 20th Century* – it presented the history of the celebration of traditional Christmas holidays and the changes they went through in the 20th century. It was supplemented by accompanying information panels in Slovak and Hungarian.

The Tekov Museum in Levice installed the taken-over exhibition of the Association of Hungarian Craftsmen in Slovakia entitled "*The Craftsmen*", and in cooperation with Csemadok Levice and Hungarian institutions in Levice, the museum participated in preparation and realization of *10th Summer Festival* at the Castle of Levice with 680 visitors attended the event. In cooperation with the Business Academy and UNIS in Vienna, the museum organized an event dedicated to the *International Holocaust Remembrance Day* with a poster exhibition with the participation of 80 students. As part of the presentation of the permanent exhibition, the Tekov Museum in Levice also provides an explanation in the language of the Hungarian national minority, and trilingual guides are also available to visitors. It also provides professional and methodological assistance to students and participants of quizzes.

The Danube Museum in Komárno (hereinafter referred to as the "DM") focuses on research, documentation, presentation of the history, ethnography, and cultural history of the Hungarian national minority as well as research and documentation of interethnic relations in the Nitra Self-governing region. As part of the mentioned activities, the museum workers participate in many scientific types of research, publish in professional journals, and attend scientific conferences. As part of the cultural and educational activities, the DM organized a joint exhibition of the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest, the Móra Publishing House and the Danube Museum in Komárno entitled *Boys from Pavlovská Street – a youth novel and its city contexts*. Another cultural and educational events organized or co-organized by DM: a ceremonial program on the occasion of the "*Day of Hungarian Prose*", a ceremonial program on the occasion of the "*Poetry Day*" in cooperation with the civic association OZ Karpátia, a lecture by Márko Görbe (Budapest) on the work of a painter Árpád Feszty, a ceremonial program in the museum's representation hall on the occasion of "*Hungarian Prose Day*" (in cooperation with the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Bratislava and the Jókai Association), presentation of Mihály Mácz's book *Életememlék cserepei* ("*Shards of the Memory of My Life*") in Komárom (Hungary).

The Ján Thain Museum in Nové Zámky carries out events and activities that are suitable for visitors from marginalized Romani communities, as well as visitors from national minorities, especially the Hungarian ones - screening of a documentary film within the exhibition *Castles of King Matej* in Hungarian, Fairy tale *Forest Veľké Lovce* for the Hungarian-speaking Romani community, a year-long lecture *The Life and Work of Gergely Czuczor* in Hungarian. The museum also organizes exhibitions and openings, which are bilingual in Slovak and Hungarian, with the help of lecturers and multilingual banners and posters (Slovak, Hungarian, English).

Museums and galleries under the founding authority of the Prešov Self-governing region

In the reference period, **the Šariš Museum in Bardejov** cooperated mainly with the local organization of the Ruthenian Revival in Bardejov on the preparation and implementation of two traditional festivals in the Museum of Folk Architecture in Bardejov Spa (exposition of the Šariš Museum) - Exhibition of *Ruthenian and Šariš Folklore*. In 2019, a large wooden model of the defunct Greek Catholic Church in Rovné (Svidník district) was installed at the premises of the Bardejov exposition of the Šariš Museum entitled The Icons. During this long-term presentation, the Šariš Museum cooperates with the management of the municipality of Rovné and with the author of the model. The given exhibit was located in the part of the exhibition, where there are rare icons from the 16th century from Rovné (they got into the museum before the demise of the original wooden church from the 18th century). During the presentation of the model of the church, 2 discussions with the author of the model took place for primary school students from Bardejov. There was also further promotion of the model through an article by V. Koščová in Bardejovské novosti magazine (August 2019). The article had the title: *A new exhibit within the exhibition Icons – a model of a wooden church from Rovné*.

In 2019 and 2020, the Šariš Museum collaborated with the parish offices of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox Church in Bardejov: on the project of reviving wooden churches from the Ruthenian villages of Mikulášová (Bardejov district) and Zboj (Snina district) for regular liturgies, marriages, and baptisms. The open-air museum in Bardejovské Kúpele showed demonstrations of a Ruthenian Christmas Eve Dinner and Bethlehem in a wooden peasant house from the 19th century from the village of Frička (Bardejov district). Thus, the customs of the local Ruthenian culture have been revived. In 2021, the Šariš Museum in Villa Rákoci in Bardejovské Kúpele is preparing a new permanent ethnographic exhibition, in which, in addition to Šariš, it will also present the rich Ruthenian culture, its customs, and traditions, old crafts, and clothing.

In 2019, the Vihorlat Museum in Humenné carried out research of the life and work of the academic painter Orest Dubay. The text of the publication was translated into English and Ruthenian. A graphic design of the publication was made, and the monograph was published in August 2019. The publication was presented to the public during the opening of the Orest Dubay exhibition. The museum has also prepared an exhibition *On the History of the Romani in Slovakia*. The panel exhibition with textual and pictorial material was supplemented by the collection items of the Vihorlat Museum presenting Romani culture. The exhibition focused on historical and ethnographic backgrounds. As part of the exhibition, there were guided tours and educational lessons on regional history.

As part of the European Cultural Heritage Days, other events took place from August to September 2019, including the Orest Dubay exhibition, the Ruthenian Folklore Festival, the Day of Traditional Crafts in the Open-Air Museum, and the Podvihorlat Breeding Exhibition. Based on the research of the songs of the Ruthenian singer Mária Čokynová from the village of Ublá in the Snina district, a CD entitled Songs of Mária Čokynová was presented to the public as part of the opening of the Carpathian Easter Egg exhibition.

As part of the Multicultural Museum – a Meeting of Cultures in the Museum was realized as a continuation of the project of a multi-genre presentation of the culture of the Ukrainian minority in the Upper Zemplín region, and a program called the Day of Ukrainian Culture at the Vihorlat Museum in Humenné was also a part of that event. Part of the event was the opening of the exhibition Colourful Memories. There was also a regional competition

of children's music folklore (singers, instrumentalists, singing groups, and folk music) for the districts of Humenné, Snina and Medzilaborce. The 12th Festival of National Reciprocity – Folklore Afternoon in the Open-Air Museum of the Vihorlat Museum in Humenné and in the town of Humenné, took place on September 8, 2019, with the participation of 115 performers and more than 500 spectators. As part of the support of hobby activities in the field of folk culture, the regional competition of adult musical folklore (singers, instrumentalists, singing groups, and folk music) for the districts of Humenné, Snina and Medzilaborce, took place on September 8, 2019, with 65 performers and 450 spectators. The 15th year of the Ruthenian Song Festival entitled Songs of My Family (children's part) took place on from 24 to 26 March, 2019, with the participation of 60 children and youth singers of Ruthenian songs from the regions of Snina, Medzilaborce, Humenné, Prešov, Stropkov, Svidník, Bardejov and Stará Ľubovňa. In cooperation with the city government and national organizations, the program of the fourth year of the conference A.I. Dobriansky's legacy for the present took place. The event took place on December 14, 2019, with the participation of two lecturers and 40 listeners.

In 2020, on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of the singer Mária Čokynová from Ubl'a, two concerts were held under the title *Songs of Mária Čokynová*. The employees of the museum provided the recording of Christmas carols in the radio studio of Rádio Regín in Košice as a replacement for the cancelled event. As part of the research activity, a transcript of the research of wedding customs in Ulič, a transcript of a song collection from Stakčín (43 songs), and other songs from the Uličská and Ublianská valleys were carried out. Another task was the research of the life and work of the artist Vojtech Borecký, which served as a basis for the publication of a representative publication. Due to the pandemic situation, the show of customs was moved from Nová Sedlica under the title Christmas walks, and a presentation dedicated to the theme of the Madonna and Child in the drawings of Vojtech Borecký.

Despite the pandemic, in 2020 we managed to organize a regional competition Musical folklore of adults on September 5, 2020, in the open-air museum in Humenné, Musical folklore of children on September 18, 2020, in the open-air museum in Humenné, *Vojtech Borecký* exhibition opened online on November 12, 2020, Ruthenian folk festival was also held on 5 September 2020 in the open-air museum in Humenné, a cycle of 5 creative workshops of traditional *crafts for the public Revived Crafts* (July - August 2020), the Day of Ruthenian Culture (16 August 2020) and the *Day of Roma Culture* (20 September 2020).

In 2019, the Tatra Gallery in Poprad worked on the Romani national minority as part of the *Integration through Art 2019* project, within which it organized the 3rd art-educational project aimed at bringing art closer through cultural activities of various kinds and types. The project was also intended for the Romani minority (persons living in marginalized Romani communities, children's homes, re-education facilities, diagnostic centres, medical and educational sanatoriums, and resocialization facilities. The project took place from 9 October 2019 to 29 October 2019 at the premises of the Tatra Gallery in Poprad. The project also addressed a Romani illustrator of the first Roma syllabary, Erika Šajgalová. The Romani group, KESAJ TCHAVE led by Ivan Akimov, performed as a musical guest within the final program of the project. During the final program of the project, the private secondary vocational school Biela voda in Kežmarok presented its fashion collection, which they also presented at the all-Slovak *RomaSpirit competition*, in which students from Romani marginalized groups already participate regularly and gain success.

The 77th anniversary of the event was dedicated to the Jewish national minority on the occasion of remembrance of the victims of the first transport of girls and women from

Slovakia to the Auschwitz concentration camp, and a concert: *Mojše band-Zipserim* (March 17, 2019). On March 24, 2019, the ceremonial opening of the photographic exhibition by Anna Ondrušeková - *Light into Darkness*, took place on the occasion of the memory of the first transport of girls and women from Slovakia to the Auschwitz concentration camp, followed by the Memorial Concert – *From Poprad Railway Platform to Auschwitz Concentration Camp*. On March 25, 2019, the laying of wreaths took place at the memorial plaque at the Kukučínova Poprad Grammar School and the laying of wreaths at the memorial plaque to the Holocaust victims in Poprad (railway station). The Art Integration 2020 project was postponed to 2021, as was the *We to You* project (the project will focus on supporting cultural activities of the Romani national minority (e.g. living in marginalized Romani communities, children's homes, re-education facilities, diagnostic centres, medical and educational sanatoriums, and rehabilitation facilities, etc.).

In 2019, the Šariš Gallery in Prešov prepared an *exhibition entitled The Unusuality of Ordinairiness* (Orest Dubay 1919 – 2005). As part of the 25th International competition of animated humour on the topic of BEER, the Ruthenian cartoonist Fedor Vico created exhibition 2. *Golden Barrel 2019*. A representative cross-sectional exhibition: *Sweet Temptation* (Süsse Versuchung) was dedicated to the work of the non-conformist and controversial artist, a Carpathian German by origin, Helmut Bistika. An exhibition dedicated to *Andy Warhol - I come from nowhere*, was also installed and prepared. *Warhol Tour 2019* from the collections of the Andy Warhol Museum of Modern Art in Medzilaborce.

In 2020, as part of the 26th International Competition of Animated Humour on the topic of BEER, Fedor Vico prepared the exhibition *Golden Barrel 2020*. The gallery offered visitors another 4 exhibitions, which also marginally concerned national minorities: *6th - 18th and 19th centuries in the collections of Š.G. in Prešov*, *Metamorphoses of the landscape. Autumn*, *Metamorphoses of the landscape. Winter* and *Work of the Month of December 2020: Michal Čabala: East Slovak Landscape*.

Ľubovňa Museum - a castle in Stará Ľubovňa, in 2019, as part of the Feast of St. Cyril and Methodius, an opera singer Igor Kucer with a repertoire of popular Ruthenian songs by Andy Warhol's mother - Júlia Varholová, performed. There was also a four-day public meeting (festival) of the descendants of rescuers and the rescued who came from Israel and Great Britain – *The East Wind Vertical*, which involved participants in a real-life story of several local families who helped to save 11 members of a Jewish family (the Honigs) during World War II. from Malý Lipník.

In 2020, on the occasion of the celebration of the Feast of the Three Kings, St. liturgy celebrated in the Church in a Slavonic language, which is used in their devotions by people of predominantly Ruthenian nationality. The accompanying program presents a traditional culture of the Ruthenians - in 2020, the village of Údol. As part of the event *Ej, Fašiangy, Fašiangy*, there was a celebration of carnival with the presence of people from various ethnic groups of the Stará Ľubovňa district, especially Gorals and Ruthenians. As part of the Feast of St. Cyril and Methodius, a traditional culture of the Ruthenians from the Spiš and Zamagurie regions as well as other ethnic groups in the district were presented by FS Staroľubovňan and SS Stoličného Džyvky.

The Ľubovňa Museum cooperated with the civic association *Moloda Rusyny* in the presentation of folk clothing of the Ruthenian municipalities of the Stará Ľubovňa district - presented on the FB page of FS Ruthenia, with Jánon Jendrichovský et al. during the presentation of the Goral ethnic group (probably a new minority) in the Stará Ľubovňa district

through musical folklore, numerous collection items *for the exhibition Ruthenians* in Spiš were lent by the Spiš Museum in Spišská Nová Ves and with a partner from Poland - Muzeum okręgowe w Nowy Sączu took part in the project *Poloniká in the Spiš Archive in Levoča - IV stage* - the result of the project is also published on the LM website.

In 2019, the Regional Museum in Prešov presented a chain of Romani Vajda (leader) and the work of Three Gypsies by Pavel Szinyei Merse as valuable documents of the life of the Romani population as part of online presentations of collection items. A lecture, held at the Palace of Stropkov (at the organizational unit of the Regional Museum in Prešov), was dedicated to an important Jewish community in the vicinity of Stropkov that was represented there before World War II, as evidenced by the old Jewish cemetery in the vicinity of Stropkov.

In 2020, one of the lectures within the cycle *Tea at Five at Rákoci in 2020* was devoted to the topic of *Porraimos - the Roma Holocaust*, which was presented by Mgr. Lucia Seglova, PhD. from the Institute of Romani Studies of the University of Prešov in Prešov. In this lecture series, in 2019, a lecture was dedicated to women working in Eastern Slovakia (accompanying event of the exhibition *Women of the East in Literature*), who tried to elevate people nationally and morally with their literary work. Six writers were presented, two of them, Elena Lacková, a writer of the Romani minority in eastern Slovakia, and Irina Novická, who was the author of the post-revolutionary and interwar literature of the Ukrainian minority in Slovakia.

Other museums and galleries

The Castle Museum in Fiľakovo (hereinafter also "CMF") was established in 2007 as a contributory organization of the town of Fiľakovo. At the end of 2011, the Municipal Library in Fiľakovo and the Novohradské Tourist Information Centre were attached to the institution. The organization has retained its original name, but in addition to museum activities and the protection of cultural heritage, it also performs library activities and provides tourist information services. The Fiľakovo Castle, a national cultural monument, and the Municipal Museum of National History in Fiľakovo (MNH) perform usual museum activities and foster the protection of cultural heritage. CMF is a regional museum and has a patriotic focus with a closer specialization in documenting the history of the *Fiľakovo Castle and the history of Fiľakovo, with an emphasis on the development of the local industry with permanent exhibitions of the Fiľakovo Castle Centuries, Monuments of the fossilized life in Fiľakovo, From the Fiľakovo palm to the well-known rooster, and The city of Fiľakovo (Füleki 1938 – 1945)*. In 2020, the museum opened new exhibitions: *Crafts in Fiľakovo in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times and Castles and Palaces in the vicinity of Fiľakovo*.

In 2019, the museum and gallery installed 9 exhibitions, all of which were dedicated to national minorities, namely *Fiľakovo Roma musicians and bands, Pieces of History in the 21st Century – Exhibition of Fiľakovo primary school, Shards of Light and Magnificent Signs – exhibition by Rozália Molnár and Olga Valacsay, Medvešský photomathon, Exhibition of the World Association of Hungarian Photographers, Old and New Treasures of the Museum, Acquisition of Recent Years, History of Customs, Giants of Novohrad – The Life and Work of Béla Bacskai, 30 Years of Nature Protection in the Cerová vrchovina Highlands and a Secrets of the Gingerbread Heart*. In 2020, the museum and gallery managed to present 3 exhibitions, namely *Magic Easter Eggs – an exhibition by folk artist Tünde Benko, an exhibition by the World Association of Hungarian Photographers and a photographic exhibition documenting the extensive reconstruction of the interiors of the Roman Catholic Church in Fiľakovo*.

Due to the fact that the ethnic composition of the population in the city is mixed, and visitors to Fiľakovo Castle and the Municipal Museum are not only Slovaks but also Hungarians from

Slovakia and abroad, and that is why bilingual information panels are installed in throughout the exhibition spaces, and the names of exhibited objects are indicated on in two language versions, i.e. in Slovak and Hungarian. The openings of the exhibitions also take place bilingually. For those who want to hear an expert explanation of the history of the castle and the town, as well as about the exhibited artefacts, CMF employees provide quality explanations in both languages. All events of the museum are bilingual. In the case of lectures and attractions, the interpretation of which is very demanding, the effort is to adhere to the same number of programs in Slovak and Hungarian.

The Lučenec City Museum is an organizational unit of the budget organization LUKUS (Lučenec Cultural Centre), which administers the restored buildings of the Synagogue, the historic Town Hall and the Hall of important personalities belonging to the City of Lučenec. The subject of the organization's activities is organizing cultural events, lectures, and access to the history of the city and its personalities, then concerts, exhibitions, shows, etc., in cooperation with local social organizations, national-cultural associations, schools, churches and other institutions. The focus of the Lučenec Municipal Museum is the purposeful acquisition, protection, and access to the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of local and regional character. In its activities, it emphasizes the ethnic diversity of the town of Lučenec and the historical region of Novohrad, which is also documented by a permanent exhibition dedicated to the history of the town. The dramaturgy of the museum's cultural, presentation, and educational events is based on the idea of the coexistence of several nationalities living in the city.

In the renewed Synagogue, a permanent exhibition of Judaica borrowed from the Centre of Jewish Religious Communities, objects originating from Lučenec, has been set up. Part of the exhibition is an overview of the building works of the synagogue, documentation of its construction and transformation. The victims of the Holocaust are commemorated by an art installation called MEMENTO by Petr Kalmus, located in the interior of the building. Since 2017, the budgetary organization RO LUKUS/Lučenec Municipal Museum has been organizing an event to mark the Day of the Victims of the Holocaust and Racial Violence (September 9) entitled *The Journey of the Unknown*, with the subtitle *We call the numbers, we name stories*. Every year, a part of the symbolic path/road created from the stairs with engraved names of the Jewish inhabitants of Lučenec, who disappeared in the dark times of the 1940s, is added in front of the Synagogue. The event includes lectures dedicated to personalities and various aspects of the life of Jewish citizens of the city, be it history, religion, architecture, art. In 2019, a concert by the group *Solamentenaturali - Thesaurus*, 16th to 19th centuries took place in the Synagogue.

A series of events called *Near and Far* is dedicated to the presentation of national minorities living in Lučenec. Through exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, demonstrations of gastronomy and folklore, we draw attention to less numerous nationalities and countries of origin, in 2019, specifically Romanians in an event called *Other Romania*.

The Senec Municipal Museum was established in the period 2007-2009, and a broadly conceived professional team took part in its creation. The grand opening of the institution took place on January 28, 2010, in the building of the Turkish House – a Renaissance mansion, standing on Senec Square. The museum has two permanent exhibitions – the *Exposition of Nature* and the *Exposition of Older History*. In 2019, the museum prepared 2 exhibitions:

*Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837)*⁷⁷ and *100 years of club football in Senec*. The exhibition *From Your Gifts – Önökhozták 2016 – 2020* has been opened. A professional conference took place in 2020: *Who is the pedestrian zone in Senec named after? Ján Lichner (1897–1979)*. In April 2020, the museum began creating its own videos, in order to improve communication with potential and existing visitors. As part of the videos, the museum gradually presented one oil painting from *the 19th century, Martinský les*, which is located near the town of Senec (in Slovak with Hungarian subtitles), another video called on the public to help build a new fire brigade exhibition. The following video was dedicated to the exhibition of *100 years of club football in Senec*. Among the published videos, there were also recordings of conference lectures *Who is the pedestrian zone in Senec named after? Ján Lichner (1879-1979)*. The videos had good responses and proved to be one of the communication options with the public. Most of the museum's PR with the visitor is bilingual, including some lectures organized for the public.

The Šurany Municipal Museum was established as a part of the Municipal Cultural Centre in 2007. Its aim is to collect, rescue, treat, document, and present objects that have historical informative value and are evidence of the development of society, especially the city and its immediate surroundings. The museum collects archaeological, historical, and ethnographic objects, old photographs, documents (archival materials), and old periodicals. The permanent exhibition on the floor of the synagogue shows the history of the city, as well as the city districts of Nitriansky Hrádok and Kostolný Sek from prehistory to the 20th century. The Orthodox Synagogue in Šurany is one of the gems of synagogue architecture in Slovakia. It was built in 1916. During the 90s of the 20th century, the interior of the synagogue was reconstructed, and in May 2005, it was opened to the public. Museum and gallery exhibitions, concerts, lectures, and presentations are organized here. In 2019, the museum held 4 lectures – presentations on Jewish culture and the history of the Šurany Jewish communities for students of the Šurany primary and secondary schools.

The Municipal Museum and Memorial Room of Franz Schubert in Želiezovce, founded by the civic association Castellum ZELIZ, has been available to the public with its exhibits for more than ten years. The number of visitors to this museum is more and more popular every year. In addition to the possibility of tours of the museum and the nearby Esterházy manor house, the museum also regularly organizes the spring and autumn Schubertiade. These chamber concerts attract not only locals but also visitors from the spas in Dudince, Podhájská, and also guests from nearby Esztergom and Budapest. These concerts are connected with an introductory word on the history of F. Schubert's stay in the town of Želiezovce (in 1818 and in 1824), both in Hungarian and Slovak. The bilingual, approx. 80 mins long tour attracts both Slovak and Hungarian-speaking schools from both sides of the river Danube. The decrease in attendance did not become negative until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Jewish Community Museum was founded in 2012 as a joint project of the Jewish Religious Community in Bratislava and the Jewish Cultural Heritage – Menorah. The partner organization of the museum is the Jewish Cultural Institute (established by the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in the Slovak Republic) as well as other JRC in Slovakia. The museum professionally manages the collection of JRC Bratislava and operates a permanent

⁷⁷The exhibition was opened for a very short time in 2018, but due to the reconstruction, all admissions were canceled.

exhibition of *Jews in Bratislava and their cultural heritage* on the floor of a functional synagogue on Heydukova Street in Bratislava, which is open seasonally from late May to early October. Since 2013, the museum has been presenting a seasonal exhibition-publishing project every year, which is the result of extensive research in the field of Jewish history and cultural heritage. In 2019 and 2020, it successfully realized the first two parts of the three-year exhibition cycle *Treasures of the Jewish Museum in Prešov*, on which it has long-term cooperation with the Jewish religious community Prešov, which owns the collection of the used-to-be museum. An extensive professional team was formed, which involved Judaists, art historians, historians, restorers, genealogists, rabbis, archivists from Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Israel. This team examined selected items that were restored and exhibited. The output of its activities included two extensive exhibition catalogues entitled *Treasures of the Jewish Museum in Prešov* and *Treasures of the Jewish Museum in Prešov II*.

The museum is also focused on educational activities. In addition to cooperation at the events *European Day of Jewish Culture*, *the Bratislava City Museum* and the civic association OZ Bratislavské rožky, the museum has implemented a successful educational program for secondary schools entitled *Jewish Cultural Heritage in Bratislava*. The program is designed for a limited number of groups and is divided into 4 sections (7 teaching hours in total): 2 seminars in the classroom, an interactive seminar in the synagogue/exposition of JCH and an excursion to the Chatam Sofer Memorial. The program is implemented in cooperation with the Faculty of Theology of the University of Trnava within the program of Jewish-Christian studies. In 2020, the program was not implemented for pandemic reasons.