



REPORT

ON THE SITUATION AND RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES 2014



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Introduction

Being a multi-ethnic country, the Slovak Republic attaches utmost importance to the harmonious coexistence between the majority population and persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, in compliance with internationally established standards. In this context, the Slovak Republic is committed to the European values and ideas of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic dialogue and development of understanding between the majority society and persons belonging to the various national minority and ethnic population groups. The Government of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “Government”) sees minorities as a permanent part of the modern Slovak society and supports the activities of national minorities living in Slovakia, which significantly contribute to shaping and developing cultural diversity as a traditional and integral part of the development of the Slovak society.

The key area in this context is the preservation, development and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and implementation of systemic measures to improve the position of persons belonging to national minorities; this area falls under the competence of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Plenipotentiary”) as an advisory body to the Government. One of the Plenipotentiary’s key roles is to monitor, analyse and evaluate the respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities by State administration authorities, the authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions and other relevant bodies. In this context, the Plenipotentiary presents to the Government annual reports on the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

The present 2014 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for (hereinafter the “Plenipotentiary’s Report”), which is the third such report, focuses in particular on updating data, information and evaluations, while focusing attention on those areas where changes have been observed since the previous year. Where the context so requires, the content of the Report also covers the periods before and after the year under review.

The Plenipotentiary’s Report consists of five parts. The first part deals with the Slovak Republic’s national and international commitments in the area of the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, maps out the monitoring processes under the control mechanisms for particular commitments and contains an overview of the most substantial legislative changes in this area during the period under review. In the context, the part Strategy and Policy Documents of the Plenipotentiary’s Report deals in detail with the process of preparation of the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “Strategy”), including the Base Document relating to the part of the Strategy concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups.

The part of the Plenipotentiary’s Report dealing with the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance provides a summary of the recent developments in this area, in particular in terms of the changes in the various participatory mechanisms, the results of their activities in the period under review, as well as the initiatives of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter the “Office of the Plenipotentiary”) in this area.

The third part provides comprehensive information on all areas in which the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of persons belonging to national minorities are promoted.

The part concerning education and training for persons belonging to national minorities gives a comprehensive and detailed picture of all aspects relating to education and training for this target group, including informal education.

The fifth part is dedicated to the issue of the use of national minority languages, including application practice. At the same time, it provides information about the work on the report on the state of the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic and the new initiatives in this field.

In its conclusion, the Plenipotentiary's Report gives a summary of the individual parts with emphasis on the most important changes in the situation and respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in 2014. Additional information and data related to the individual parts of the Plenipotentiary's Report are provided in the Annexes.

In the interest of using a gender-sensitive language, whenever the masculine gender is used in the text of this Report, it will be deemed to include the feminine to a reasonable extent.

Part I – National and international commitments of the Slovak Republic in the area of the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

1.1 National commitments of the Slovak Republic in the area of the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

The rights of national minorities and ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic are constitutionally guaranteed, in particular under Article 34 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the “Constitution”) and the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic has produced a number of legal opinions important for the interpretation and basic rules of application of Article 34 of the Constitution.¹

The constitutional provisions are further elaborated in more than 30 pieces of legislation on the protection of the rights of national minorities.² Some of the legislation below was amended in 2014:

- amendment to Act No 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas, protection against discrimination and on amendments to certain laws (Anti-discrimination Act)

Amendment: Act No 307/2014 Coll. on certain measures related to whistle-blowing and on amendments to certain laws, effective from 1 January 2015

The amendment extended the prohibition of discrimination to include discrimination on the grounds of whistle-blowing, thereby strengthening legal protection of whistle-blowers who can now bring the so-called anti-discrimination action before the court with reverse burden of proof on the employer’s side.

- amendment to Act No 372/1990 Coll. on offences

Amendment: Act No 1/2014 Coll. on the organisation of public sports events and on amendments to certain laws effective from 1 February 2014

The new § 47a, which has been added through the amendment, defined acts that will be deemed as extremism offences, which very often occur in connection with participation in public events. They have been defined as follows: “Anyone who uses written, graphic, visual, audio or audio-visual presentations in public advocating, supporting or inciting hatred, violence or unreasonably differential treatment towards a group of persons or an individual due to their affiliation with a race, nation, ethnicity, colour of skin, ethnic group, origin, gender or religious belief will commit an extremism offence. In addition, anyone who commits an offence referred to in § 49(1)a), b) or d) of the Act or an offence against property referred to in § 50 by deliberately damaging or destructing an article for reasons of national, ethnic or racial hatred or hatred on grounds of colour of skin, origin, gender or due to religious belief will also commit an extremism offence. A fine of up to EUR 500 may be imposed for such an offence.”

The purpose of the amendment is to cover such cases that would have otherwise ended up by rejecting or suspending the criminal action in criminal proceedings. These cases relate to illegal acts that are not sufficiently serious (due to the manner in which they were committed, the circumstances under which the act was committed) to constitute the elements

¹ Drgonec, J. Ústava Slovenskej republiky. Komentár. [Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Commentary.] 3rd edition. Šamorín : Heuréka, 2012.

² See, for example, the 2012 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities.

of one of the criminal acts of extremism. The introduction of extremism offences will create a basis for gaining a better overview of the persons committing this type of illegal acts because, if convicted and sanctioned, these offences will be recorded separately as extremism offences, unlike at present, when some of the acts are sanctioned as offences against civil coexistence or offences against public order, while some are not sanctioned at all.

Amendment: Act No 204/2014 Coll. amending Act No 355/2007 Coll. on the protection, promotion and development of public health and on amendments to certain laws, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 August 2014

The following legislative amendments that do not have a direct impact on the issue of persons belonging to national minorities have been adopted:

- amendment to Act No 564/2001 Coll. on the Public Defender of Rights

Amendment: Act No 462/2013 Coll. amending National Council of the Slovak Republic Act No 120/1993 Coll. determining the emoluments of certain constitutional officials of the Slovak Republic, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 January 2014

- amendment to Act No 38/1993 Coll. on the organisation of, proceedings before and position of judges of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic

Amendment: Act No 195/2014 Coll. amending Act No 385/2000 Coll. on judges and assessors and on amendments to certain laws, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 September 2014

- amendment to Act No 99/1963 Coll., the Code of Administrative Procedure, as amended

Amendment: Act No 106/2014 Coll. amending Act No 40/1964 Coll., the Code of Administrative Procedure, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 June 2014

Amendment: Act No 151/2014 Coll. amending Act No 136/2001 Coll. on the protection of competition and on amendment to Slovak National Council Act No 347/1990 Coll. on the organisation of ministries and other central government authorities of the Slovak Republic, as amended, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 July 2014

Amendment: Act No 335/2014 Coll. on consumer arbitration proceedings and on amendments to certain laws, effective from 1 January 2015

- amendment to Act No 301/2005 Coll., the Code of Criminal Procedure, as amended

Amendment: Act No 1/2014 Coll. on the organisation of public sports events and on amendments to certain laws, effective from 1 February 2014

Amendment: Act No 195/2014 Coll. amending Act No 385/2000 Coll. on judges and assessors and on amendments to certain laws, as amended, and amending certain laws, effective from 1 September 2014

Amendment: Act No 307/2014 Coll. on certain measures related to whistle-blowing and on amendments to certain laws, effective from 1 January 2015

1.1.1 Strategy and policy documents

Within the scope of his competence defined by the statute, the Plenipotentiary prepares, proposes and implements, in cooperation with the Government Office of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “Office of the Government”), the ministries and other central government authorities, medium- and long-term measures in the area of preserving, developing and promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In this context, the Office of the Plenipotentiary took part in the work on the Strategy, which continued in 2014.

The Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter the “Committee”) was engaged in the process of preparation of the Strategy already back in 2013, when it set up a working group to draft the part of the Strategy relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups (hereinafter the “working group”) based on the nominations for members of the Committee. The working group was active in the period between December 2013 and April 2014. In accordance with the conclusions of the Coordination Group for the Development of the Strategy, representatives of NGOs, experts from the relevant area and representatives of public administration were proportionally represented on the working group. The working group was composed of six representatives of national minorities, experts on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and representatives of public administration.

In accordance with the plan, the working group prepared a base document, which was presented at two workshops – on 19 February 2014 in Košice and on 25 February 2014 in Bratislava. The workshops were attended by more than 80 participants in total, including members of the Committee, the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter the “Council”), members of the Coordination Group for the Development of the Strategy, representatives of cultural institutions active in the area of national minority cultures, representatives of culture departments of HTU and persons interested in this area. The objective of the workshops was to open an expert discussion on the current issues of protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and create a platform for communicating the comments and recommendations in respect of the base document for the part of the Strategy relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities drafted by the working group.

Both experts and the general public were invited at the workshops to send their comments and suggestions in respect of the presented draft by 12 March 2014. A total of 184 comments and suggestions were received from the various sectors, members of the Committee and experts on the area. A large portion of the comments from citizens (over 170) was received by e-mail or by post and they contained attachments with identical content. Overall, the comments related mostly to the need to adopt comprehensive legislation on the rights and position of national minorities, as well as the financing of national minority culture.

The working group considered all of the comments, both those received within and those received after the deadline, and took them into account when drafting the final version, in particular the final part concerning the priorities and tasks for the future.

The working group presented the base document for the preparation of the part of the Strategy relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups at the Committee’s XIIIth session and, after incorporating the comments and suggestions from the members of the Committee, the document was approved.

The base document relating to the part of the Strategy concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups was subsequently presented to the competent authority – the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MFEA SR”) in April 2014.

The base document contains priorities and tasks, the implementation of which is aimed at improving the position of persons belonging to national minorities. These relate to the areas of legislation, culture, education, training, language, media, support for the development of participatory mechanisms and strengthening of the position of advisory and consultative bodies, including the strengthening of the capacity of organisational units ensuring the functioning of these mechanisms and intensifying comprehensive research on national minorities.

The base document was included among the informative annexes to the Strategy and provided a basis for drafting the Strategy.

Through Resolution No 112 of 6 June 2014, the Council made note of the draft Strategy, including its annexes, before referring it for the interdepartmental consultation exercise (hereinafter the “ICE”). In the context of the ICE, which took place from 6 to 19 June 2014, a total of 163 serious observations were raised concerning the draft Strategy. 22 of these were raised by compulsory participants in the exercise and 141 by parties whose participation is optional, the public and non-governmental organisations. The conference consultation procedure on 23 June 2014 was attended by representatives of all the commenting parties, including representatives of the Office of the Government. The disagreements in respect of the serious observations raised by the Office of the Government within the ICE were eliminated.

With a view to the scope of the observations raised during the ICE, the Chairperson of the Council and the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs were tasked, through the mandate granted by the Council in Resolution No 115 of 26 June 2014, to continue negotiations on the draft strategy - in cooperation with the Minister of Justice, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sports, Minister of Culture, and other members of the Council representing public administration – with the aim of eliminating the disagreements which arose in the course of the ICE. The expert discussions on topics related to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups were attended by representatives of the Office of the Plenipotentiary. Through Resolution No 121 of 1 December 2014, the Council recommended that the Government approve the draft Strategy. On 8 December 2014, the Economic and Social Council recommended that the document be forwarded for further proceedings without comments.

In accordance with point C.1 of Government Resolution No 717 of 16 November 2011 and point A.4 of Government Resolution No 479 of 19 September 2012, relating to the submission of the draft Strategy to the Government, and within the meaning of the extension of the deadline for submission from July 2014, the document, including all of its informative annexes, was forwarded to the Office of the Government with a request for submission at a session of the Government.

At its 18 February 2015 session, the Government discussed and approved the **draft National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak**

Republic through Resolution No 71/2015.³ In the relevant Resolution, under point B.5, the Government tasked the Head of the Office of the Government to draw up, by 31 December 2015, within the scope of his competences, an action plan for those vulnerable and marginalised groups and individuals for which no legislative frameworks, institutional frameworks, separate strategies and application frameworks existed.

Under point B.6, the Government tasked the Head of the Office of the Government to implement the tasks specified in the Strategy and, by 30 June 2016 and then every two years, present to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, who is the coordinator of the implementation of the tasks in the area of human rights, a report on the implementation of the tasks arising from the Strategy, including a proposal for updating them.

Under point B.7, with a deadline on 30 June 2016 and then annually, the Government tasked the Head of the Office of the Government to build upon the Strategy when developing, updating and implementing public policies and apply the Strategy's priorities in all strategic and programming documents of the Government and public policies.

1.2 International commitments of the Slovak Republic in the area of the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities

In accordance with the statute, the Plenipotentiary participates in the drawing up of reports on the implementation of international treaties relating to the position and rights of persons belonging to national minorities that are binding on the Slovak Republic⁴. In this regard, the Office of the Plenipotentiary continued to cooperate with the MFEA SR in 2014 in the drafting of reports and conducting a dialogue on the implementation of the commitments arising from Council of Europe and UN human rights conventions, as well as the implementation of commitments arising from bilateral agreements.

The Office of the Plenipotentiary participated in the 4th cycle of monitoring under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter the “Framework Convention”), the review of the results of the 3rd cycle of monitoring of the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter the “Language Charter”), the preparation of the Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Language Charter, the review of the conclusions of the 5th cycle of monitoring by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the review of the recommendations from the 2nd round of the universal periodic review by the UN Human Rights Council, and the preparation and organisation of the XIIIth session of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture.

³ Due to the complex nature of the information, we provide that one of the annexes to the Strategy is Annex 9 “Rights of persons living at risk of poverty”, which concerns multiple discrimination faced, in particular, by the populations of marginalised Roma communities.

⁴ For the sake of completeness, we provide that, in the context of international commitments related to Roma integration, the Slovak Republic is also fulfilling commitments in relation to the European Union (“EU”). In accordance with the “EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020”, the “Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the Integration of Roma up to 2020” was adopted through Government Resolution No 1/2012 of 11 January 2012. The strategy is a key document in the area of improving the position of Roma as a national minority, the Roma communities and marginalised Roma communities. The Plenipotentiary of the Government for Roma Communities is responsible for this area.

1.2.1 International treaties

1.2.1.1 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

The 4th cycle of monitoring of the Slovak Republic formally started by presenting the Fourth Periodic Report of the Slovak Republic on the Implementation of the Framework Convention to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 28 January 2014. The implementation of the Framework Convention is monitored by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe with assistance from the Advisory Committee comprising independent experts from the Member States of the Council of Europe.

The Fourth Periodic Report contains, in particular, information about the developments in the area of the protection of national minorities at the national level since 2009, with emphasis on the implementation of recommendations from the previous monitoring cycle. It contains general information on the developments in legislation and social practice in the preceding period and, in a separate part, responds to the main recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from the previous monitoring cycle. The final part provides information on the measures taken to implement the commitments under the individual articles of the Framework Convention. Attached to the Report are separate annexes providing supporting information for the data presented in the Report.

A standard part of the monitoring is a visit by the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention to the Member State of the Council of Europe in question. The Advisory Committee paid a visit to the Slovak Republic between 22 – 26 September 2014. The schedule of the delegation of the Advisory Committee included a visit to regions with high concentration of national minorities (eastern and southern Slovakia), meetings with independent institutions, national minorities, the civil society and State authorities. The dominating topics of the meeting with Plenipotentiary Mária Jedličková and representatives of other State authorities included the Committee's activities and the situation of the Roma minority, in particular the segregation of Roma children in education.

The results of the visit by the Advisory Committee provided a basis for the preparation of the Advisory Committee's evaluation report on the Slovak Republic. On the basis of the report, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe will adopt a resolution identifying areas of progress in the protection of national minorities and areas in which further effort is needed in the State under evaluation. The adoption of the resolution by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe will complete the 4th cycle of monitoring in relation to the Slovak Republic.

2015 will mark the 20th anniversary of opening for signature of the Framework Convention. The Slovak Republic was one of the first countries to ratify the Framework Convention.

1.2.1.2 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Language Charter has a three-year monitoring cycle. It begins by presenting the implementation report by the State under evaluation on the current situation and developments in legislation and practice in the area of the protection and promotion of

regional or minority languages. The submission of the implementation report is followed by a visit by the Committee of Experts, which is an independent body consisting of experts from the Member States of the Council of Europe in the country under evaluation. The conclusions of the Committee of Experts, together with the implementation report, form a basis for drawing up the evaluation report on the application of the Language Charter in the State in question. Based on the report, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopts recommendations addressed to the State in question, thereby concluding the given monitoring cycle.

On the initiative of the Language Charter's Secretariat, an Implementation Round Table on the Report on the Course and Results of the Third Cycle of Monitoring of the Standard of Implementation of the Language Charter was held on 29 and 30 April 2014 in Bratislava. The event was organised by the Council of Europe and the Office of the Plenipotentiary. The aim of the round table was to discuss openly, in particular, the state and progress achieved in the process of implementation of the Language Charter. The round table was opened by Plenipotentiary Mária Jedličková, who responded in interactive communication to the questions and topics raised by the participants of the round table. The round table was also attended by members of the Committee of Experts of the Language Charter (hereinafter the "Committee of Experts"), representatives of the relevant sectors, the Committee, and representatives of the various national minorities living in the Slovak Republic. The members of the Committee of Experts appreciated the constructive dialogue with the representatives of the government and national minorities: Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Roma, German, Croatian, Polish and Bulgarian, who took part in the round table.

Slovakia is scheduled to present its fourth report on the implementation of the Language Charter in 2015.

1.2.2 International mechanisms for verifying respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities

1.2.2.1 Universal periodic review by the UN Human Rights Council

On 3 February 2014, the Slovak Republic was subject of the 2nd round of universal periodic review. The universal periodic review (UPR) is a special mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council which has been in place since 2008. This is a universal process, in which the State concerned is evaluated by other Member States. The aim of the review is to provide a comprehensive and objective picture of the state of human rights in all UN Member States. The review follows a regular 4.5-year cycle. From the perspective of the human rights agenda, the UPR is a key event at national level.

The review of the Slovak Republic was based, in particular, on the situation report on the protection of human rights in the Slovak Republic (the national report), a compilation of the recommendations addressed to the Slovak Republic by UN treaty bodies and information from regional and non-governmental organisations.

67 countries took part in the review of the Slovak Republic, which took the form of an interactive dialogue. The main theme of their presentations was the situation of the Roma, including their access to housing, employment, sanitation and drinking water, the segregation of Roma children in education, as well as police violence against the Roma. As regards other thematic issues, the presentations concerned the national human rights institution (which is

the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights in the Slovak Republic), the strengthening of institutional and legislative protection of lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender and intersexual (LGBTI) persons, the adoption of measures to improve the position of women, stepping up of the fight against trafficking in persons, the fight against extremism and racial discrimination, and the adoption of measures in the fight against hate speech and promotion of tolerance towards minorities. Most delegations also addressed recommendations to the Slovak Republic on the relevant human rights issues. A total of 146 recommendations were addressed to Slovakia, which is a standard number for the 2nd round of the UPR.

Between 6 February 2014, when the UPR report was adopted, and 20 June 2014, the report was formally approved at the 26th session of the UN Human Rights Council, the Slovak Republic had the opportunity to review and give its opinion on the recommendations, including the possibility of refusing them. Of the 146 recommendations, the Slovak Republic did not accept 9 and partially accepted 4. The recommendations that were refused contradicted, or had already been addressed under, the existing national legislation. The remaining recommendations were accepted and will be implemented by the Slovak Republic. At the same time, in its position on the recommendations, the Slovak Republic declared its voluntary commitments in the human rights area. In this respect, the Slovak Republic reaffirmed that, among other things, it would continue to be engaged in the area of the rights of the child at the regional and universal levels and encourage a widespread ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the preparation of which it had initiated. On 20 June 2014, the UN Human Rights Council endorsed the final report on the UPR of the Slovak Republic by consensus, which concluded the 2nd round of the review in relation to the Slovak Republic.

Although the recommendations are not legally binding in nature, the State under review is expected to address them and adopt measures to implement them. The recommendations provide a useful guidance for further improvement in the various areas of human rights. They also play an important role in the adoption and implementation of national policies with an impact on the area of human rights.

1.2.2.2 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

In 2013, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) commenced the 5th monitoring cycle of the Member States of the Council of Europe. In the course of the cycle, it evaluates the individual Member States and submits situation reports on the progress achieved in the implementation of specific recommendations relating to combating racism and intolerance and their concomitants.

At its 10 September 2014 session, the Committee of Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe formally adopted the 5th Final ECRI Report on the Slovak Republic and decided to forward it to the Slovak Government. The report on Slovakia was published on 16 September 2014 as a follow-up to the visit to Slovakia held in November 2013. In the report, the experts note that, since 2008, progress has been made in Slovakia in a number of fields of combating racism and intolerance, however, some issues give rise to concern. In relation to these issues, recommendations for the Slovak Republic were formulated, including the following:

- the area of criminal law (define racial motivation as an aggravating circumstance for all criminal offences; explicitly include citizenship and language among the

characteristics of potential victims of racist conduct, which is punishable under the Criminal Code);

- reform of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights;
- putting in place of a mechanism for collecting and making public data on hate speech and racist homo/transphobic violent incidents;
- ratification of the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime (criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature);
- the area of Roma integration (coordination between ministries, making pre-school education readily available to Roma children aged between 3 and 6 years);
- making available of gender reassignment treatment and reimbursement of the associated costs from public health insurance schemes.

The effective implementation of ECRI recommendations will be subject of the 6th monitoring cycle scheduled to begin in 2018.

1.2.2.3 EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) was set up in 2007 in Vienna as the successor organisation of the European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia. Its key role is to provide independent expertise and recommendations on the problematic areas of fundamental rights to executive institutions of EU Member States. These recommendations are prepared on the basis of thematic analyses, targeted surveys and independent data collection. The FRA formulates its recommendations independently of the Member States and it also provides expertise on upcoming EU legislation on fundamental rights.

No questionnaires on human rights were initiated by the FRA in 2014.

1.2.2.4 Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Issues

Bilateral cooperation with Hungary takes place under the Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation (hereinafter the “Treaty”) signed on 19 March 1995. 2015 will mark the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty which created the foundations for cooperation in all areas of bilateral relations, including the establishment of commitments relating to the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Slovak Republic and Hungary.

12 mixed expert commissions have been set up on the basis of the Treaty. The most recent, XIIth session, of the Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Issues was held on 11 December 2013 in Bratislava. The session was interrupted due to a number of open issues. The next session is expected after the chairperson of the Hungarian part of the mixed commission is appointed.

1.2.2.5 Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission on National Minorities, Education and Culture

Bilateral cooperation with Ukraine is based on the Treaty on Good Neighbourliness, Friendly Relations and Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and Ukraine (Kiev, 29.06.1993). In accordance with this Treaty and on the initiative of the Ukrainian party (during the official visit by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine A. Zlenka to the Slovak Republic in February 1994), the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission on National Minorities, Education, Culture and Scientific Contacts was set up through Government Resolution No 362/1994. In agreement with the Ukrainian party, since 2003, the Commission carries the name Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission on National Minorities, Education and Culture (hereinafter the “Commission”). The Commission’s meetings take place alternately in the Slovak Republic and in Ukraine.

The Commission is an important tool for ongoing dialogue between Slovakia and Ukraine on selected issues in order to reinforce good neighbourliness and mutual friendship. Both parties have expressed their interest in broadening the scope of competence of the Commission, which currently plays the role of an advisory body to the cabinets of both countries, and support extending it to include two separate sub-commissions for education and culture, which would have a wider impact on mutual exchange of information and projects and provide the space for cooperation and support for the transformation effort in the country.

The Commission deals with the complex issue of the Slovak minority in Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in the Slovak Republic with the aim of promoting the preservation and development of their identities and cultures. It also monitors the overall bilateral relations in the fields of education, science and culture. After each meeting of the Commission, the MFEA SR presents at a Government’s session information about the course of the Commission’s deliberations and the conclusions adopted.

Through Resolution No 136/2014 of 19 March 2014, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Report on the Course and Results of the XIIth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission taking note of the information on the course and outcomes of the Commission’s work and tasked the relevant members of the Government, the Chairperson of the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad and the Plenipotentiary to familiarise themselves with the Commission’s conclusions and recommendations and, within the scope of their competence and existing possibilities, support the implementation of the proposed recommendations and evaluate progress of their implementation. Subsequently, the Slovak party at its two separate meetings in 2014 prepared an evaluation and review of the tasks adopted in the Report from the Joint Meeting of the Slovak and Ukrainian Parties approved by the Government and informed the Ukrainian party about them at the meeting in Kiev.

The XIIIth session of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission on National Minorities, Education and Culture was held on 8 and 9 December 2014 in Kiev. The Slovak delegation at the meeting was led by MFEA SR Secretary of State Peter Burian. The Ukrainian delegation was led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture of Ukraine Vyacheslav Anatoliyovych Kyrylenko.

The agenda of the Commission’s December 2014 meeting included the exchange of information on state policies in the area of ensuring the rights of persons belonging to national

minorities in the Slovak Republic and Ukraine, as well as the issues of bilateral cooperation in the fields of culture, education and science, and cooperation between the media in the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. The Commission evaluated progress of the implementation of the recommendations adopted in the Report from the Commission's XIIth session (Prešov, October 2013).

The outcome of the XIIIth session of the Commission held on 8 and 9 December 2014 in Kiev is a Report signed by both participating parties, in which they confirmed that, in compliance with their own legislation, they would continue to create appropriate conditions at the State level to ensure the preservation and development of ethnic identity of the members of both minorities (Slovak minority in Ukraine and Ukrainian in Slovakia). The representatives of both minorities are loyal citizens of their respective countries and, rather than a problem, they represent a contribution to the development of the relations between Slovakia and Ukraine. The report on the course and outcomes of the Commission's XIIIth session was approved through Government Resolution No 161/2015 of 8 April 2015.

Part II – Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance

The participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance is guaranteed by the Constitution and international conventions, in particular the Framework Convention.

Under Article 34(2)c), the Constitution **guarantees citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups the right to participate in addressing matters relating to national minorities and ethnic groups.** According to the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic, this constitutional right should guarantee citizens belonging to the minorities or groups concerned the opportunity to learn about and express their opinion on the content of upcoming measures relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and seek to impose their own idea of an appropriate solution by appropriate means.⁵

The fundamental rights conferred by Article 34(2) of the Constitution are also guaranteed under the Framework Convention, which, under Article 154c(1) of the Constitution, takes precedence over the legislation of the Slovak Republic if it provides for a greater scope of constitutional rights and freedoms.⁶ Article 15 of the Framework Convention states that the Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the **effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.**

According to the explanatory report to the Framework Convention, Article 15 aims, above all, to **encourage real equality between persons belonging to national minorities and those forming part of the majority.** In order to create the necessary conditions for such participation by persons belonging to national minorities, **Parties could promote consultation with these persons, by means of appropriate procedures and through their representative institutions.** This consultation should relate to areas that affect the minorities directly, in particular: the contemplation of legislative or administrative measures, preparation, implementation and assessment of national and regional development plans; undertaking studies; the area of effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the decision-making processes and elected bodies both at national and local levels.⁷

To date, the Framework Convention has been ratified by 39 states⁸, each of which implements Article 15 of the Framework Convention in a different manner (see the implementation reports to the Framework Convention on the Council of Europe website⁹).

The Plenipotentiary's Report focuses on the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the State's mechanisms of consultation with persons belonging to national minorities. Within the wider context of political and civil rights, the report also partly

⁵ Drgonec, J. Ústava Slovenskej republiky. Komentár. [Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Commentary.] 3rd edition. Šamorín : Heuréka, 2012.

⁶ Ibidem

⁷ Explanatory Report to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

⁸ Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Moldavia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

⁹ <http://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/country-specific-monitoring>

reflects the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the elections of the President of the Slovak Republic, the elections to the European Parliament elections and municipal elections.

2.1 Activities of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities in the area of participation of persons belonging to national minorities

Within the meaning of his statute, the Plenipotentiary is tasked with duties in the area of preserving, developing and promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and implements systemic measures to improve the position of persons belonging to national minorities. One of the areas of competence of the Plenipotentiary is the **support for the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance**. In this regard, the Plenipotentiary, in particular, chairs the Committee, holds regular consultations with persons belonging to national minorities and organisations of national minorities and promotes greater participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance.

In order to support the Plenipotentiary's activities, the Office of the Plenipotentiary has been set up within the organisational structure of the Office of the Government. In 2014, Plenipotentiary Mária Jedličková took the initiative to organise a number of professional events (workshops, round tables, seminars, etc.) with the aim of engaging persons belonging to national minorities in the discussion on the current topics of the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

Workshops on the base document relating to the part of the Strategy concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, organised by a working group composed of representatives of national minorities (see 1.1.2 Strategy and Policy Documents), were held on 19 February 2014 in Košice and 25 February 2014 in Bratislava.

The **Implementation Round Table on the Report on the Course and Results of the Third Monitoring Cycle of the Standard of Implementation of the Language Charter** was organised on 29 and 30 April 2014 in Bratislava in cooperation with the Council of Europe (see 1.2.1.2 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages).



Source: archives of the Office of the Government

As part of the **Open Doors Day at the Office of the Government** on 7 June 2014 in Bratislava, the Office of the Plenipotentiary organised a set of accompanying activities focusing on the culture and traditions of national minorities. An information stand set up in cooperation with representatives of the various national minorities provided the general public with information about the life, traditions and activities of all thirteen national minorities living in Slovakia. The varied programme included performances by four artistic ensembles representing the cultures of the Croatian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and Roma minorities.



Source: archives of the Office of the Government

The Office of the Plenipotentiary organised a **moderated discussion entitled “Seeking the Roots” on the topic of cultural and ethnic identity of the inhabitants of Bratislava**, which was held at the premises of the Primate’s Palace on 17 October 2014 in Bratislava, under the auspices of Prime Minister Robert Fico. This was one of the events of the Seniorfest Bratislava 2014. Members of national minorities participating in the discussion presented the specific characteristics of the national minorities to which they belong, including their contribution to the values of diversity in the context of cultural life not only in Bratislava, but also throughout Slovakia. The national artistic ensembles performing at the event, representing the cultures of the Ukrainian, German, Ruthenian, Bulgarian and Croatian minorities, namely – the Taras Shevchenko Music and Drama Ensemble, Singende Omas – Singing Grandmas, the “Veselje” dance group and the Čunovski bečár, were also received very positively.



Source: archives of the Office of the Government

The Office of the Plenipotentiary acting as the Committee’s secretariat also provided for the proper functioning of the Committee in 2014 (see 2.2.2 Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups).

The www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk website was not only regularly updated in 2014, but also expanded to provide all the necessary and up-to-date information on the activities of the Office of the Plenipotentiary and relay information about national minority events interactively to a broad spectrum of users.

2.2 Consultation mechanisms

2.2.1 Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality

The Council is a standing expert, advisory, coordination and consultative body of the Government for the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, political and civil rights, rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, economic, social and cultural rights, the right to the protection of the environment and cultural heritage, the rights of the child and promotion of the best interests of the child, the rights of persons with

disabilities and senior citizens, and for the promotion of the principle of equal treatment, equal opportunities and gender equality.

Members of the Council include the Plenipotentiary and the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee representing a national minority or ethnic group. In 2014, Plenipotentiary Mária Jedličková and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee Pavel Traubner presented at the Council's session the Committee's 2013 evaluation reports on the promotion of the culture of national minorities, national minority education and the use of national minority languages, as well as the 2013 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities. The 2013-2014 Report on the State of the Use of National Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic was submitted by the Head of the Office of the Government. This report was drawn up by the Office of the Government in cooperation with the Office of the Plenipotentiary.

In 2014, the Office of the Plenipotentiary actively participated in the work of the Council's working group to streamline the process of providing grants in the area of human rights. The Council took note of the information on the working group's activities and recommended that the competent government authorities represented on the Council, which provide State budget grants in the area of human rights, apply the working group's recommendations in practice.¹⁰

The Office of the Plenipotentiary also participated in the activities of the Council's working group to draft an amendment to the Council's Statute and Rules of Procedure.¹¹ The adopted amendment established a conciliation procedure, extended the Council's composition to include the Head of the Office of the Government and one member in the civil chamber, further clarified the method of appointment and removal of the members of the Council representing civil society and the method of appointment and removal of experts from the Council.

2.2.2 Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups

The Committee is an institutionalised consultation mechanism on matters of participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in addressing matters that concern them. The Committee is the Council's standing expert body for issues relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and persons belonging to them in the area of the implementation of the Language Charter within the meaning of Article 7(4) of the Charter and Article 15 of the Framework Convention.

The Committee is chaired by the Plenipotentiary and its members include representatives of all 13 national minorities (Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Czech, Ukrainian, German, Polish, Moravian, Russian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Jewish and Serbian) and representatives of the relevant government authorities:

¹⁰ The Council took note of the information on the activities of the Working Group of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality to streamline the process of providing grants in the area of human rights through Resolution No 118/2014 of 17 September 2014.

¹¹ The Council approved Draft Amendment No 4 to the Statute of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality through Resolution No 117/2014 of 17 September 2014 and the Government approved Amendment No 4 to the Statute of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality through Resolution No 479/2014 of 24 September 2014.

The Council approved Draft Amendment No 3 to the Rules of Procedure of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality through Resolution No 120/2014 of 22 October 2014.

- MFEA SR,
- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MESRS SR”),
- Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MC SR”),
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MLSAF SR”),
- Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MI SR”),
- Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MJ SR”),
- Plenipotentiary of the Government for Roma Communities.

The Committee comprises 5 representatives of the Hungarian, 4 representatives of the Roma, 2 representatives of the Czech, 2 representatives of the Ruthenian and 2 representatives of the Ukrainian minorities and the German, Polish, Moravian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Jewish, and Serbian minorities each have 1 representative.

The Committee, above all, presents suggestions, within the scope of its competence, aimed at increasing the standard of support, protection and respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; it participates in the drafting of reports under the control mechanisms of international treaties on human rights and rights of persons belonging to national minorities and draws up annual evaluation reports, which are presented to the Council for approval.

The Committee has a specific position within the structure of the Council’s committees. In particular, only the representatives of national minorities and the Chairperson of the Committee have voting rights according to the “one vote per minority” principle. Representatives of government authorities take part in the Committee’s sessions without having voting rights. Representatives of national minorities are elected to the Committee by minority organisations for a three-year term. The issues of a particular minority are not dealt with at the Committee’s sessions unless a representative of that minority is present at the session.

The Committee held an election session on 4 July 2014. The candidates for the members of the Committee and their alternates were proposed by the respective national minorities. A total of 101 representatives of national minority organisations took part in the vote. The election session was overseen by a collective body – the election board comprising representatives of the MESRS SR, MC SR, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, the Office of the Public Defender of Rights, the Office of the Plenipotentiary and the Office of the Government. A notarial deed was made on the course of the election session. The nominees who received the largest number of votes from national minority organisations were appointed members of the Committee by the Chairperson of the Committee for a three-year term.



Source: archives of the Office of the Government

Based on its statute, the Committee draws up annual evaluation reports on the promotion of the cultures of national minorities, the state of national minority education and the use of national minority languages (hereinafter the “evaluation reports”), which are presented to the Council for approval. On the proposal of the Chairperson of the Committee, in the interest of streamlining and strengthening the participatory process in the preparation of the reports for 2013, a working group was set up comprising representatives of the various national minorities – experts on the relevant issues, and representatives of the State administration, which drew up the 2013 evaluation reports.¹² The evaluation reports were unanimously approved by the Council on 6 June 2014.

In 2014, the Committee held four regular and one extraordinary session and adopted a total of 26 resolutions and 1 position in principle (**resolutions 37 – 62**). All of the resolutions and the minutes of the Committee’s sessions have been posted on the website of the Office of the Plenipotentiary.¹³

As regards policy and legislative documents, last year, the Committee dealt with and approved the Base Document for the preparation of the part of the Strategy relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and the upcoming legislative changes in the education and culture sectors.

In the area of promoting the culture of national minorities, the Committee was regularly updated on the grant programme of the Office of the Government – the Culture of National Minorities (hereinafter the “CNM”) and also paid attention to the issue of financing periodical and non-periodical publications of persons belonging to national minorities.

In relation to the exercise of linguistic rights by persons belonging to national minorities, the Committee discussed the 2013-2014 Report on the State of the Use of National Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic and the possibilities for developing the Roma language in the area of education and linguistics, as well as the preparatory process relating to the possibility of recognising Russian and Serbian as minority languages in Slovakia within the meaning of the Language Charter.

¹² See <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/spravy/>

¹³ See: <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/vybor-pre-narodnostne-mensiny-a-etnicke-skupiny/>

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Slovak Republic's membership of the European Union, the Committee discussed the information on the Evaluation Report on the Decade of the Slovak Republic's Membership of the EU. Within the framework of the control mechanisms under international treaties, the Committee discussed the information on respect for human rights in Slovakia in the context of the recommendations from the 2nd round of the universal periodic review by the UN Human Rights Council.

The Committee also paid attention to all the reports it is required to discuss under its statute and the statute of the Plenipotentiary and initiated declarations and a position in principle on a memorial day and several current affairs.

Through **Resolution No 37** of 25 April 2014, the Committee took note of the extra Information from the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee from the Council's eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth sessions.

Through **Resolution No 38** of 25 April 2014, the Committee approved the Committee's plan of activities for 2014 with a comment from the MC SR.

Through **Resolution No 39** of 25 April 2014, the Committee approved the Base Document for the preparation of the part of the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups with a comment from a member of the Committee representing the Ruthenian minority.

Through **Resolution No 40** of 25 April 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Preparation of the 2013 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities within the meaning of Article 4(1)a) of the Statute of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities.

Through **Resolution No 41** of 25 April 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Provision of Grants under the Culture of National Minorities Programme in 2014.

Through **Resolution No 42** of 15 May 2014, the Committee approved the 2013 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities within the meaning of Article 4(1)a) of the Statute of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities.

Through **Resolution No 43** of 15 May 2014, the Committee approved the 2013 Evaluation Report on the Promotion of National Minority Cultures with a comment from the MC SR; 2013 Report on the State of National Minority Education; 2013 Report on the Use of National Minority Languages with a comment from the MC SR and tasked the Chairperson of the Committee to present the report to the Council for approval.

Through **Resolution No 44** of 15 May 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Possibilities for the Development of the Roma Language in the Areas of Education and Linguistics.

Through **Resolution No 45** of 15 May 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Proposal to Include Russian and Serbian among Minority Languages Used in the Slovak Republic under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Through **Resolution No 46** of 15 May 2014, the Committee recommended to the Chairperson of the Committee that further calls for projects under the 2014 Culture of National Minorities grant programme be published to provide for the widest possible choice of sub-programmes.

Through **Resolution No 47** of 15 May 2014, the Committee approved a declaration condemning pseudo-artistic manifestations offensively charged against any nationality.

Through **Resolution No 48** of 15 May 2014, the Committee took note of the information provided by a representative of the MFEA SR about the intention to set up a working group on Amendment No 4 to the Statute of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups and recommended that the Chairperson of the Council reconsider the usefulness of setting up this working group.

Through **Resolution No 49** of 15 May 2014, the Committee expressed great appreciation for Mária Jedličková's competent, independent, fair and honest work in the post of acting Plenipotentiary.

Through **Resolution No 50** of 14 August 2014, the Committee approved the Declaration on the Occasion of the Roma Holocaust Memorial Day.

Through **Resolution No 51** of 21 October 2014, the Committee requested that the competent authorities – the Office of the Government and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, take all necessary steps to resolve the issue of financing periodical and non-periodical publications of national minorities, i.e. that they intervene with the competent authorities of the Council or the Commission to provide a prompt opinion on the request for an exemption regarding periodical and non-periodical publications of national minorities, considering, among other things, the period of time elapsed since this request was filed.

Through **Resolution No 52** of 21 October 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Provision of Grants under the 2014 Culture of National Minorities Programme and the information on the Call for Applications under the 2015 Culture of National Minorities Grant Programme.

Through **Resolution No 53** of 21 October 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic.

Through **Resolution No 54** of 21 October 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Evaluation Report on the Decade of the Slovak Republic's Membership of the EU.

Through **Resolution No 55** of 21 October 2014, the Committee recommended that the Committee's Secretary initiate a working meeting with the participation of the competent and relevant parties before the Committee's next session in order to consider the need for amendments to the Committee's statute and rules of procedure.

Through **Resolution No 56** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on Progress in the Preparation of the Act on Cultural and Educational Activities.

Through **Resolution No 57** of 28 November 2014, the Committee approved the Committee's 2015 Plan of Activities.

Through **Resolution No 58** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note of the document "Respect for Human Rights in the Slovak Republic in the Context of the Recommendations from the 2nd Round of the Universal Periodic Review by the UN Human Rights Council".

Through **Resolution No 59** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note with comments of the Information on Progress in the Preparation of Amendments to the Legislation on Education and Training, Financing of Schools and School Facilities, Vocational Training, Teachers and Specialised Staff and tasked the Chairperson of the Committee to request that the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport extend the working group on the act on the financing of schools and school facilities set up at the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic to include new members nominated by members of the Committee who are engaged in the issue of national minority education.

Through **Resolution No 60** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the 2013-2014 Report on the State of the Use of National Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic in accordance with § 7(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended.

Through **Resolution No 61** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Conclusions of the Working Meeting Convened in Accordance with Resolution No 55 and recommended that, in accordance with the conclusions of the working meeting, the representatives of national minorities prepare written proposals for the topics to be included on the agenda and for the system of voting and deliver these written proposals to the Committee's Secretariat by 31 January 2015. These proposals will be presented by the Chairperson of the Committee at the Committee's next meeting.

Through **Resolution No 62** of 28 November 2014, the Committee took note of the Information on the Provision of Grants under the 2014 Culture of National Minorities Programme.

Through its **Position in Principle No 2** of 15 May 2014, addressed to the Government within the meaning of Article 8 of the Statute of the Committee, the Committee requested that, in the interest of impartiality and objectivity, the Government fill the vacant post of the Plenipotentiary by a person who does not belong to a national minority or ethnic group.

2.3 Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the elections of the President of the Slovak Republic

The elections of the President of the Slovak Republic are held in accordance with Act No 46/1999 Coll. on the method for election and plebiscite on removal of the President of the Slovak Republic and on amendments to certain other laws. Under § 14(3) of the Act,

municipalities have the obligation to send out notifications, not only in the State language, but also in minority languages, of the time and place of the elections, the elector's obligation to prove his identity by an identity card before voting and a brief description of how to mark a ballot paper.

The first round of the elections of the President of the Slovak Republic took place on 15 March 2014 and the second round was held on 29 March 2014.

One of the candidates for the President of the Slovak Republic was Gyula Bárdos, a candidate of the Hungarian Community Party, who failed to gain an absolute majority of the votes of eligible voters in the first round (5.1%). He received the largest number of votes in the districts of Dunajská Streda (51.5%) and Komárno (50.13 percent).¹⁴

2.4 Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the elections to the European Parliament

On 24 May 2014, the elections to the European Parliament ("EP") were held in the Slovak Republic to elect 13 MEPs. The elections took place in accordance with Act No 331/2003 Coll. on elections to the European Parliament, as amended. Under § 20 of the Act, municipalities have the obligation to send out notifications, not only in the State language, but also in minority languages, of the time and place of the elections, the elector's obligation to prove his identity by an identity card before voting and a brief description of how to mark a ballot paper.

The results of the elections show that the Hungarian Christian-Democrat Alliance – Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Szövetség, won 0.20% of the votes cast and failed to meet the condition for earning a seat in the EP. MOST-HÍD received 5.83% of the valid votes, which earned the party one seat in the EP (József Nagy). The Party of the Hungarian Community – Magyar Közösség Pártja, received 6.53% of the valid votes, earning it one seat in the EP (Pál Csáky).¹⁵

2.5 Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in municipal elections

The municipal elections took place on 15 November 2014 in accordance with Act No 346/1990 Coll. on municipal elections, as amended. Under § 27(2) of the Act, municipalities have the obligation to send out notifications, not only in the State language, but also in minority languages, of the time and place of the elections, the elector's obligation to prove his identity by an identity card before voting and a brief description of how to mark a ballot paper.

The data on the precise ethnic composition of the candidates for mayors of municipalities and city districts and members of municipal parliaments are not available. Certain conclusions can be drawn by analysing the results, if we consider the results achieved

¹⁴ Results of the elections of the President of the Slovak Republic 2014. Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

¹⁵ Results of the elections to the European Parliament in 2014. Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

by political parties that expressly represent the interests of persons belonging to national minorities (see Table 1).

In response to certain inappropriate methods of campaigning during the municipal elections, **Plenipotentiary Mária Jedličková**, in her immediate **statement, condemned any manifestations of intolerance, racism or unequal treatment and, at the same time, underlined the need to promote the creation of a multicultural society respecting each other's differences.**¹⁶

Table 1: Results of political parties expressly representing the interests of national minorities in the 2014 municipal elections¹⁷

political party	number of mayors elected	number of MPs elected
MOST-HÍD	87	829
Party of the Hungarian Community – Magyar Közösség Pártja	107	1151
Hungarian Christian-Democratic Alliance - Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Szövetség	1	17
Roma Initiative of Slovakia	2	12
Roma Coalition Party - SRK	6	53
Roma Union Party in Slovakia	2	39
NÁŠ KRAJ [OUR REGION]	0	71

Note: the above parties also earned mayor's offices and seats in municipal parliaments in coalitions with other parties. Please refer to the website of the Statistical Office for further information.¹⁸

¹⁶<http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/poverena-splnomocnenkyna-vlady-sr-pre-narodnostne-mensiny-reaguje-na-udalosti-ostatnych-dni/>

¹⁷ Results of the 2014 municipal elections. Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

¹⁸ <http://volby.statistics.sk/oso/oso2014/oso2014/sk/data.html>

Part III – Promoting the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of persons belonging to national minorities

The EUR 3 829 250-worth Culture of National Minorities grant programme of the Office of the Government, which falls under the responsibility of the Plenipotentiary, played a key role in promoting the expression, protection and development of identity and cultural values of persons belonging to national minorities in 2014. The programme also served as a means to pursue other objectives, such as education and training on the rights of national minorities and the promotion of inter-ethnic and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding between the majority community and national minorities and ethnic groups.

In this area, the MC SR performed tasks defined under the competences act. These tasks related to, above all, the operation of specialised national minority museums, as well as the drafting of legislative standards and strategic documents in area of the media and audiovisuals (national minority broadcasting), the State language in relation to the use of national minority languages, libraries (development of library holdings in minority languages), the traditional folk culture and other areas.

3.1 Support provided within the network of cultural centres and libraries

The **National Edification Centre** (hereinafter the “NEC”) is one of the MC SR bodies carrying out cultural activities aimed at developing the culture of national minorities. It promotes the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the Slovak Republic through its methodological, advisory, organisational and publishing activities. In the performance of the tasks that fall within its competence, the NEC applies the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunities. The NEC initiated, guided, prepared or participated in a wide range of cultural activities creating opportunities for presenting the culture of national minorities living in the Slovak Republic with no discriminatory barriers. In the area of leisure artistic activities, the NEC creates conditions and opportunities for participation by non-professional artists in all events and activities, across all genres, regardless of nationality. Teams and individuals belonging to national minorities can join all multi-round competitions of elementary art schools and the NEC also guided the organisers of district and regional contests in this spirit. In the context of competition events, teams and individuals belonging to national minorities not only participated, but in many cases also earned awards in national competitions and displays. National minorities were also represented on juries, programme and organisational committees of competitions and in expert groups. Events worthy of special mention include: the Amfo a Cineama photography competition, Šaffova ostroha folk dance contest, Vidiečanova Habovka competition of children’s folk ensembles, Coloriskeri luma (Colourful world - Roma children’s literature contest), Východná folklore festival, Scénická žatva non-professional theatre festival, etc. These cultural shows and festivals also provide representatives of national minorities with opportunities to present their art.

In 2014, the NEC organised a total of 17 educational events under the Europe for Citizens programme, which were attended by 343 participants, including 69 participants from the Hungarian national minority living in Slovakia. Although the events were held in Slovak, the handbooks for the preparation of projects are also available in Hungarian¹⁹, Polish²⁰, Czech²¹ and Slovak²².

¹⁹ <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/comm2014000430000hu.pdf>

In 2014, the NEC supported the culture of national minorities through its methodological, advice, educational and implementation activities. In 2014, the **Javisko** magazine published reviews and photographs from the national festival of Hungarian amateur theatres in Slovakia held in Moldava nad Bodvou and Buzica. The **Výtvarné spektrum** national multi-round non-professional art contest promoted the development of leisure activities, including those of persons belonging to national minorities, across the whole spectrum of genres of art.

In 2014, NEC personnel took part in the process of evaluation of projects submitted under the CNM programme as members of evaluation panels to assess the grant application projects.

Libraries

Under § 14(3) of Act No 183/2000 Coll. on libraries, on amendment to Slovak National Council Act No 27/1987 Coll. on State heritage preservation and on amendments to Act No 68/1997 Coll. on the Matica slovenská institution, as amended, libraries have the obligation to take into account the satisfaction of the needs of citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups when developing their library holdings. The development of library holdings referred to in § 14(2) of the above Act must not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship or commercial considerations. The MC SR does not use any national statistical surveys or other forms of monitoring of the language structure of library holdings, nor does it monitor the nationality of users. Libraries develop their holdings at their own discretion, according to their user base. In addition, libraries in mixed territories fall under the administration of higher territorial units and municipalities and the MC SR has no direct say in them. The setting up of mobile libraries in these areas is also a matter of the local self-government authorities, not the ministry. Nevertheless, the MC SR has created a grant sub-programme - 2.5 Library Acquisitions - to support the purchases of library holdings (irrespective of language), through which it supports the acquisition of library book holdings (magazines or other types media are not eligible) and which places no restrictions in terms of the language in which the books are written or obligations to purchase books in minority languages. The selection and purchases of books (including recommendations to purchase books in other than the State language) are subject to decision of the library's acquisition commission, which takes into account, in particular, the requirements of the users. The MC SR has no legal means to influence and interfere with the libraries' acquisition activities. The MC SR is currently preparing the data collection stage for 2014 statistical surveys in the area of culture²³, which also apply to the activities of libraries and which will be followed by the data processing stage.

The national project **Roma Culture Documentation and Information Centre** has been implemented by the State Scientific Library in Prešov since 2012 under the Operational Programme Information Society. The role of the Roma Culture Documentation and Information Centre (RCDIC) is to collate in one place comprehensive information about Roma culture, history, language, traditions and other areas of the life of the Roma community. This will provide for a single point of access to the necessary and required information about

²⁰ <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/comm2013003670000pl.pdf>

²¹ <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/comm2013003670000cs.pdf>

²² <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/comm2013003670000sk.pdf>

²³ Within the meaning of Act No 540/2001 Coll. on State statistics, as amended, the ministry conducts long-term annual State statistical surveys in the area of culture.

all things related to the topic of Roma and, at the same time, give a new perspective on the culture of Roma as part of the European cultural heritage. The centre has defined three basic areas to be documented – oral history, music heritage and Roma crafts. The centre’s premises include a presentation room, Elena Lacková study room and an archive of Roma culture artefacts. Project activities continued in the 2013–2014 period (the project’s total budget is EUR 1 913 406.46).²⁴ The outcomes of the project will include concrete presentable formats of digital content accessible via an on-line service introduced for a broad user audience. These will represent an extensive information portfolio aimed at disseminating information about Roma culture.

The **first and unique specialised database in Slovakia called ROMANO has been available** in the State Scientific Library in Košice since 1994; it is accessible on-line on a website, which also provided links to other institutions dedicated to Roma communities. It captures information from all scientific disciplines, legislative documents, organisational, socio-political and cultural activities of this community, including the prevention of discrimination and racism.²⁵ The database is based records from periodical press, both newspapers and magazines, as well as studies from conference proceedings. The majority of the documents is owned by the library. In terms of language, the information sources used are mostly in Slovak, Roma and Czech, but also in English, French, Hungarian and German. Since 2002, the records have been part of the national article bibliography. The database currently contains over 6 500 records and this number grows by around 500 new records annually. The ROMANO database is used by a variety of institutions and individuals.

3.2 Facilitating the activities of professional national minority theatres and artistic ensembles

Promoting traditional folk culture

Within the meaning of Government Resolution No 666 of 8 August 2007 concerning the Concept of Preservation of Traditional Folk Culture, the MC SR set up the **Traditional Folk Culture Coordination Centre** (as part of the Slovak Folk Art Collective), whose mission is to protect and preserve the wealth of traditional folk culture in Slovakia, including intangible cultural heritage of national minorities living in Slovakia. In 2012, the Traditional Folk Culture Coordination Centre prepared a unique electronic encyclopaedia project entitled **Traditional Folk Culture in Slovakia in Words and Pictures**.²⁶ This is a unique information resource, which is easily accessible to be used for both educational and didactic purposes in the relevant area. With the aim of making elements of intangible cultural heritage more visible, the Representative List of Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovakia was created, which is open to suggestions and nominations of exceptional intangible cultural heritage elements of national minorities living in Slovakia. In 2014, the MC SR submitted a new **Concept of Preservation of Traditional Folk Culture**²⁷ at a Government session. It also places emphasis on the protection of intangible cultural heritage of persons belonging to national minorities in Slovakia and was approved through Government Resolution No 12 of 7 January 2015.

²⁴ Basic information about the project is available at: <http://www.svkpo.sk/sk/narodny-projekt/>

²⁵ The database is available at: <https://sclib.svkk.sk>.

²⁶ The project is available on the website: <http://www.ludovakultura.sk/>

²⁷ The concept is available on the website: <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=24176>

Act on theatre activities

In the legislative area, the MC SR initiated the draft act on theatre and music activities, which applies to all professional theatres and professional music institutions, including national minority theatres. **Act No 103/2014 Coll. on theatre and music activities and on amendments to certain laws** (hereinafter the “Theatre and Music Act”) entered into force on 1 July 2014 and was amended through Act No 40/2015 Coll. of 3 February 2015, which will enter into force on 1 July 2015.

The Theatre and Music Act deals comprehensively with theatre and music activities and its individual provisions govern the setting up, founding, merging, terminating and status of professional theatres and professional music institutions, the scope of competence of State authorities and authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions²⁸ in the area of theatre and music activities, the organisation of working time of theatre and music artists, changes to the conditions for awarding the special allowance, as well as the method of selection and term of office of statutory bodies of institutions falling under the competence of State authorities. In accordance with the Act, **Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic No 230/2014 of 14 August 2014 concerning the scope of selected information required from theatres and music institutions** has entered into force. In connection with the Decree, the MC SR prepared a form to collect selected information and sent it to professional theatres and professional music institutions, including national minority theatres.

Ifjú Szivek Dance Theatre²⁹

Ifjú Szivek Dance Theatre (hereinafter the “ISDT”) is a partly publicly-funded organisation of the Office of the Government, which is financing its activities from State budget contributions and its own revenues. As a professional dance ensemble, the ISDT undertakes tasks in the areas of art, education, organisation and documentation in the area of traditional culture.

The ISDT’s mission is to study and professionally perform folk dances, music, songs, vocal and instrumental works of the classical European and world cultural heritage both in Slovakia and abroad, building upon, above all, the folk art traditions of Hungarians living in the Slovak Republic, but also the nations and nationalities of Central Europe.

In the context of its mission and scope of activities, it performs the following tasks:

- cultivation of both existing and revived folk traditions of Hungarians living in the Slovak Republic, nations and nationalities of the Carpathian basin and their integration into existing cultures in the context of maintaining continuity;
- on the basis of these traditions, production of dance and theatre performances, scenic performances of folklore traditions, using primarily its own capacity;
- provision of opportunities for presentation to all major folk art ensembles and ensembles in other genres on its own stage;
- professional creative and artistic assistance for the needs of both the professional and amateur scenes, support for edification activities;

²⁸ See Annex 1: Activities of self-governing regions in the area of support for national minorities.

²⁹ <http://www.ifjuszivek.sk/sk>

- maintaining of the relations and cooperation between the folklore movement and the third sector, representation before decision-making bodies at the local, regional and national levels.

The dance theatre offers three main types of productions:

- ISDT's own performances;
- performances of the Pozsony Dance Ensemble;
- guest performances by other artistic ensembles and cultural events organised by other organisations in the ISDT's theatre.

ISDT's own performances 2014 again included highly-acclaimed performances on both domestic and foreign stages with a repertoire consisting of three shows. The popular shows from recent years - Tance z Bratislavy [Dances from Bratislava] and Vyvlastenie [Expropriation] remained in the repertoire due to demand from promoters and the theatre introduced a new show in the autumn called Kukučie vajíčko [The Cuckoo's Egg]. In 2014, the ensemble performed 48 times, 43 times in Slovakia and 5 times abroad. ISDT's performed to audiences totalling in excess of 10 000 in 2014.

The Pozsony Dance Ensemble is the ISDT's youth ensemble, whose members comprise students of the ethnography class at Bratislava's Hungarian Gymnasium and Primary School and talented young dancers from the Bratislava area. In 2014, the ensemble gave 13 solo performances seen by more than 2 100 people.

The ISDT's theatre staged several cultural events in 2014. Guest performances were given by theatres, dance ensembles, music groups, as well as solo artists.

Its artistic personnel also engaged in teaching and artistic activities outside the ISDT and participated in 637 workshops, 36 choreographies and 148 performances in 2014.

Alexander Duchnovič Theatre in Prešov³⁰

The Alexander Duchnovič Theatre (hereinafter the "ADT") is a professional, cultural and artistic institution in the field of theatre activities under the administration of the Prešov self-governing region.

The role of the theatre is to cultivate and disseminate cultural activities for persons belonging to the Ruthenian and Ukrainian national minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

In 2014, the Alexander Duchnovič Theatre prepared 4 premieres of theatre productions, 3 of which were in Ruthenian and one in Ukrainian. Its repertoire comprises 11 productions in Ruthenian, 3 productions in Ukrainian and 4 fairy-tales for children and youth.

In the course of 2014, the ADT toured as per demand from municipalities, in particular in the north-eastern region of Slovakia, with the aim of disseminating and preserving the language and culture of the national minorities.

³⁰ <http://www.divadlo.sk/>

Dukla Artistic Folk Ensemble³¹

The Dukla Artistic Folk Ensemble (hereinafter the “DAFE”) is a partly publicly-funded organisation under the administration of the Prešov self-governing region. As a professional artistic ensemble, it undertakes public and community activities.

This folk art ensemble’s main activity are vocal and dance productions, creation and presentation of folklore programmes comprising vocal, dance and music productions on stages at home and abroad, with a particular focus on the development of the cultural life of Ruthenians and Ukrainians living in the Slovak Republic.

In the course of 2014, the DAFE gave approximately 80 to 90 performances on stages both at home and abroad, most of which were targeted at the Ruthenian or Ukrainian national minorities. In December, the ensemble premiered a new programme called *Návraty* [Returns]. The events and performances of the Dukla Artistic Folk Ensemble were seen by 52 000 visitors.

Jókai’s Theatre in Komárno³²

Jókai’s Theatre in Komárno is an organisation under the administration of the Nitra self-governing region which focuses in particular on the development of the cultural life of the Hungarian minority.

In terms of repertoire, the theatre concentrates on genre, thematic and expressive variety. Its effort is to create a repertoire that would suit both urban and rural audiences. In 2014, the theatre performed nine reprise productions and premiered five new productions.

The audiences of Jókai’s Theatre in Komárno totalled 54 744 in 2014, as follows:

- performances of the theatre’s own productions: 152 performances, 47 808 spectators;
- performances by guest theatres: 24 performances, 6 249 spectators;
- film screenings in the Kotva Cinema Club: 18 screenings, 615 spectators.

Romathan Theatre in Košice³³

Romathan Theatre in Košice is a budget-funded organisation under the administration of the Košice self-governing region and it continued to undertake its cultural, artistic, social and educational roles.

Children and youth remained Romathan Theatre’s focus in 2014. It uses specific means to make artistic and educational impact on Roma youth and children, thus preparing an experienced and well-oriented adult audience for the future, which can be demonstrated by the frequency of shows and number of titles dedicated to this prospective audience group.

In 2014, Romathan Theatre premiered three productions on its own stage and gave a total of 126 performances, of which 4 were abroad.

³¹ <http://www.puls-slovakia.sk/>

³² <http://www.jokai.sk/>

³³ <http://www.romathan.sk/sk/>

Romathan Theatre's performances were seen by 13 528 spectators, of which 3 900 were abroad.

Thália Theatre in Košice³⁴

Thália Theatre in Košice is a partly publicly-funded organisation under the administration of the Košice self-governing region focusing especially on the development of the cultural life of the Hungarian national minority. The theatre is financing its activities from State budget contributions and its own revenues.

In 2014, Thália Theatre gave 131 solo performances, of which 26 were abroad, while the premises of Thália Theatre and the Márai Studio staged several cultural events of other organisations, guest theatres, dance ensembles and music groups totalling 43 events. The Xth Thália Festival presented 9 theatre groups and dance ensembles from Slovakia and abroad on the theatre's stage.

In 2014, Thália Theatre premiered eight productions on its stage and its performance were seen by audiences totalling 39 477.

3.3 Facilitating television and radio broadcasting for national minorities

The public radio and television broadcasting service is provided by **Radio and Television of Slovakia** (hereinafter "RTVS") established as a public, national, independent, informational, cultural and educational institution. In accordance with § 5(1g) of Act No 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on amendments to certain laws, as amended (hereinafter the "RTVS Act"), RTVS broadcasts programming, balanced in terms of content and regional coverage, in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic with broadcasting time corresponding to the ethnic composition of the population. At the same time, one of the public broadcaster's programming services must be designed to provide programming, balanced in terms of content and regional coverage, in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic. Radio broadcasts for national minorities living in the Slovak Republic are provided by **Rádio Patria**, a channel of Slovak Radio. The national and ethnic minority broadcasting editorial team in Košice produces broadcasts in Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma, Czech, Polish and German.

The authority responsible for guaranteeing freedom and pluralism of the media is the **Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission**. The status and operation of the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission is governed by Act No 308/2000 Coll. on broadcasting and retransmission and on amendment to Act No 195/2000 Coll. on telecommunications, as amended. Under § 4(1) of the Act, the Council's mission is to safeguard public interests in the exercise of the right to information, freedom of expression and right of access to cultural values and education and implement State regulation in the area of broadcasting, retransmission and provision of on-demand audiovisual media services. The members of the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission may include a representative of a national minority.

³⁴ <http://www.thaliaszinhaz.sk/new/>

RTVS national minority broadcasting

The operating conditions and budget of the **National Minority Broadcasting Centre** remained unchanged from the previous year. A stable standard situation is maintained in television broadcasting under the given conditions, while in radio broadcasting minor but important changes have been achieved despite budgetary restrictions.

RTVS radio broadcasting

Besides minor changes, Hungarian broadcasting has had a stable programming structure since 2012. It broadcasts 84 hours a week. It is a standard full-format streaming radio, which also competes for listeners in prime time hours. It has a stable listenership, which slightly grew in the preceding year, despite the fact that only medium wave frequencies are available to RTVS in the territory where the majority of Hungarian audiences live. Although the institution is regularly criticised for this situation by Hungarian associations and societies, RTVS is unable to expand the available FM frequencies for its broadcasts – this is an area where the State's role is played by the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission.

Long-term under-funding of public broadcasting has resulted in problems with the financing of more expensive formats, such as literary-dramatic or more in-depth journalistic programming. Nevertheless, despite the limited possibilities, the team produces and broadcasts such programming. The national minority broadcasting team in Košice broadcasts 16 hours per week in six languages and prepares informational streams for prime time broadcasts on Radio Regina, which is a significant step forward compared to previous years, positively received by persons belonging to national minorities and listeners. Informational formats have been improved.

The human and financial capacity to introduce programming in Croatian, Bulgarian and Serbian has yet to be sourced. RTVS has resolved these issues in the 2015 budget and these broadcasts will be gradually introduced during the year.

RTVS television broadcasting

The programming structure introduced in 2012 continues to be followed in television broadcasting and the content and formats have remained virtually unchanged. This comprises the daily 7-minute *Správy-Hírek* news programme in Hungarian, weekly 26-minute Hungarian and Roma thematic shows, biweekly 26-minute Ukrainian or Ruthenian thematic shows, and a weekly thematic show for smaller national minorities on a rotating basis. The *Dvojka* programming service broadcasts 10-minute news programmes in multiple minority languages - the programmes are broadcast in at least three languages every week. The current situation still does not correspond to the requirements of § 5(1)g) of the RTVS Act as regards the proportional distribution of broadcasting time. The solution lies in changing *Dvojka*'s programming and is tied to the institution's general problems related to financing and broadcasting.

The National Minority Broadcasting Centre is addressing the requirements of § 5 of the RTVS Act in gradual steps. Despite the fact that funding remained unchanged, RTVS was able to renew some programmes, introduce new and interesting formats and work efficiently with resources, while being inventive and creative – especially in radio broadcasting. The national minority broadcasting team have long been demonstrating that they are able to manage effectively public resources as well as the resources provided under the Contract with the State, and it is ready to restore its minority formats in the event of changes in the financing of public service broadcasting.

3.4 Support and development of the museums of national minorities

The **Slovak National Museum** (hereinafter the “SNM”) – an organisation under the administration of the MC SR, is the most significant national museum collection, documentation, science and research, methodology and presentation institution. The SNM ensures comprehensive museum documentation of the development of Slovakia’s society and culture, including the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups that lived and are living in the Slovak Republic. These activities are carried out on the basis of surveys and scientific research, in accordance with the focus and specialisation of the SNM, as defined in Act No 206/2009 Coll. on museums and galleries, on the protection of items of culture value and on amendment to Slovak National Council Act No 372/1990 Coll. on offences, as amended, and Act No 523/2004 Coll. on public administration budgetary rules and on amendments to certain laws, as amended, as amended by Act No 38/2014 Coll. (hereinafter “Act No 206/2009 Coll.”), and in the SNM’s deed of foundation.

The development of material and spiritual culture of national minorities is documented by the following organisational units of the SNM:

- **Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava,**
- **Museum of Carpathian German Culture in Bratislava,**
- **Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava,**
- **Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník,**
- **Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia in Martin,**
- **Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia in Martin,**
- **Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov,**
- **Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava.**

The activities of the national minority museums within the SNM are coordinated by the Commission for Museum Documentation of the Cultures of Ethnic Minorities. The museums are implementing the long-term project **Museums and Ethnic Groups**, which resulted in many significant and successful scientific-research projects in recent years. These included joint exhibitions and expert and scientific conferences. The national minority museums publish many valuable **publications** and irregular **periodicals**. Acta Judaica Slovaca and the periodical publication Judaica Slovaca (since 1993) are published by the Museum of Jewish Culture. The museum is also working on a long-term project of a multi-volume encyclopaedia of Jewish religious communities. The Museum of Carpathian German Culture has its own periodical publication Acta Carpatho-Germanica (it was not published in 2014 due to lack of funding) and the Acta Museologica Hungarica yearbook is published by the Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia to present its scientific-research activities. The Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník has its own non-periodical publication Vedecký zborník [Science Almanac]. Monographs and almanacs on the history of the various minorities (Historická a sociokultúrna realita Rusínov na Slovensku [Historical and Socio-Cultural Reality of Ruthenians in Slovakia] (2009), Slovenskí Chorváti [Slovak Croats] (2001), Česi na Slovensku [Czechs in Slovakia] (2000), etc.), other non-periodical scientific publications and catalogues, as well as special publications intended for kids and schoolchildren, were published. Minority museums work together with a variety of Slovak and foreign institutions, such as national museums, science academies and higher education institutions. They organise major events, exhibitions and scientific conferences. In accordance with the concept for minority museums, research and presentation activities are coordinated in cooperation with other museum institutions engaged in the area of minorities, as well as other organisations and institutions active in this area.

Activities of national minority museums in 2014

In 2014, minority museums implemented the Plan of Key Tasks. **Scientific-research activities** of museums are covered in the Concept for the SNM's Scientific-Research Activities. The topic of minorities is addressed, in particular, through the comprehensive institutional project Ethno-Cultural Development in Slovakia in the Central European Context with Emphasis on the Role of National and Ethnic Minorities in Shaping the Socio-Cultural Environment in Slovakia – Inter-ethnic Contexts of the National Culture and the Culture of Ethnic Minorities and the Overlaps between them. In December 2013, the new partial scientific-research project Everyday and Festive Clothing, implemented under the sponsorship of the Museum of Carpathian German Culture, was approved for all minority museums. The Museum of Ukrainian Culture and the Museum of the Culture of Ruthenians in Slovakia implemented the partial scientific-research project Ethnicity of Folk Culture in North-Eastern Slovakia from the Perspective of Museum Collections. In 2014, national and ethnic minority museums also participated in the national project Digital Museum implemented under the OPIS (Operational Programme Information Society). In March 2014, the Museum of Hungarian Culture opened the remaining part of the exhibition in the restored Imre Madacha Manor House in Dolná Strehová.

National and ethnic minority museums organised many activities in the context of **commemorating important anniversaries** in 2014: The Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia organised a national documentation and exhibition project Family Stories from the First World War. The Museum of Carpathian German Culture prepared a contest for Carpathian German youth for the 2014-2018 period involving collection of materials and publishing of photos, letters, maps, items and documents depicting WW1 events and the life in Carpathian German families. The Museum of Jewish Culture co-organised the exhibition Slovak Teachers in the Fight Against Fascism (The School and Teachers in Slovakia, 1939-1945) in cooperation with the Museum of Education and Pedagogy in Bratislava. On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP), the Museum of Ukrainian Culture organised debates with historians for primary and secondary schools in Svidník on the topic of the Carpatho-Dukla Offensive – direct military and material assistance for the SNP.

All museums continued their **publishing activities** focusing, as a matter of priority, on the publication of almanacs presenting mainly the scientific-research and expert activities of the museums. In addition to permanent exhibitions, new exhibitions installed annually, and research, publishing and methodological activities, all museums organised dozens of different cultural and educational programmes, such as lectures and debates, as well as a variety of specialised cultural events combined with live performances (music, literature, dance, etc.).

EUR 1 506 190 was allocated for the activities of the 8 national minority museums in 2014.

SNM - Museum of Jewish Culture

The Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava (hereinafter the “MJC”) is a specialised scientific-research, documentation and methodological museum unit focusing on the

exploration of the history and development of material and spiritual culture of the Jews in Slovakia.³⁵

The MJC organised events on the occasion of the Remembrance Event to Commemorate the Victims of the Holocaust and the First Transport of Young Jewish Women and Girls from Poprad. On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the escape of Wetzler and Vrba from the Auschwitz concentration camp, the museum provided its expert opinions to several periodicals and advised on the preparation of the film entitled “V tichu” [In Silence] about the fate of Jewish artists during the Second World War and the premiere of the film on the lives of Eva Kohnová and Robi Muller (16.07.2014). The MJC provided expert advice and consultations on the “Encyklopédia spravodlivých” [Encyclopaedia of the Righteous] series broadcast on Slovak Radio during 2014. Other interesting projects included activities, such as Aaron Grunhut – the rescuer of the Jews, fighter for human rights and Bratislava’s patriot and the Slovak Teachers in Resistance and in the Slovak National Uprising project. The MJC also participated in the project “Story of an Object. 1914.” organised by the Union of Museums in Slovakia.

The MJC’s personnel also engaged in educational activities, primarily in the MJC’s premises, but also in schools and at specialised conferences. The lecturing activities related to education, but also to increasing awareness of the Jewish culture and the MJC’s activities (e.g. the moderated discussion Hľadanie koreňov [Finding the Roots]). The MJC also organised the Memorial Day for the Victims of the Holocaust and Racial Violence in Bratislava and gave 201 lectures to 5 991 attendants through informal education activities.

In 2014, the MJC organised the following exhibitions: Jews in Bohemia and Moravia, Jews in Slovakia 1. General overview Zlomený narcis [Broken Daffodil] – Portraits The Museum of Jewish Culture Presents itself, Jamim Mikedem – Days of the Past, The Power of the Civil Society – The Fate of the Jews in Bulgaria in 1940-1944, Nezabudni [Don’t Forget] – Igi Brezo FDCs of the State of Israel, Artists in the Museum, Jews in Slovakia 2, Jewish literature 1. Some of the exhibitions were installed in several exhibition premises and localities.

MJC’s activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions: 5 displays and 12 exhibitions/10 963 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 14 scientific-research projects;
- publishing activities: 7 titles;
- cultural-educational activities/number of visitors: 21 events/3 070 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 44.

SNM - Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia

The SNM – Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia (hereinafter the “MHCS”) is a specialised scientific-research, documentation and methodological museum unit dedicated to the exploration of the history and development of material and spiritual culture of Hungarians in Slovakia. The museum also has branches: the Memorial House of Kálmán Mikszáth in Sklabiná (Sklabiná, 188) and the Imre Madách Manor House in Dolná Strehová.³⁶

³⁵ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-zidovskej-kultury-uvodna-stranka>

³⁶ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-kultury-madarov-na-slovensku-uvodna-stranka>

In terms of further development of its activities, acquisition and exhibition activities remain a priority and the MHCS's key objective is to purchase and receive donations of as many collection items as possible in order to be able to expand and restore the permanent exhibitions in Bratislava, Dolná Strehová and Sklabiná. Another priority of the museum is the subsequent processing of the collections in the CEMUZ central register.

In the area of the MHCS's exhibition activities, the key priority was the opening of the second part of the new permanent exhibition in the restored manor house of the Madách family. The Sándor Petöfi Literary Museum of Budapest also took part in completing the second part of the exhibition. In 2014, the MHCS launched documentation and exhibition project on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War entitled: "To My Nations. First World War Stories".

In the context of its cultural and educational activities, the MHCS organised 3 discussions entitled Museum Salon (with a total of 104 attendants), 3 book presentations (115 attendants), a commemorative event in K. Mikszáth's Memorial House in Sklabiná (56 visitors), as well as other activities in the K. Mikszáth Memorial House (613 visitors) and the manor house of the Madách family (830 visitors) – exhibition presentations and educational programmes related to the exhibition on the First World War (413 visitors). The MHCS also participated in the Night of the Museums event (visitors totalled 910). The museum organised the following exhibitions in 2014: *Tvorit' je dobré* [It is Great to Create], Zsuzsa Lorincz, *Krehká krása* [Fragile Beauty], *Poklady Novohradu* [Novohrad's Treasures], *Literary Figures Working in the District of Veľký Krtíš*, *Jemné rozdiely* [Soft Differences], István Dúdor, *Fotofo, Mojim národom* [To my Nations], Kornél Divald.

MHCS's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 3 displays and 13 exhibitions/12 436 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 5 scientific-research projects;
- publishing activities: 4 titles;
- cultural and educational activities: 39 events/2 385 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 1 187.

SNM – Museum of Carpathian German Culture

The Museum of Carpathian German Culture (hereinafter the "MCGC") focuses on the collation, protection, processing and presentation of artefacts documenting the material and spiritual culture of Carpathian Germans. The MCGC has its branches in Nitrianske Pravno and in Handlová in the Meeting Houses of the Carpathian German Association, which hold permanent exhibitions dedicated to the history and culture of the Hauerland. The MCGC includes a documentation and information centre specialising in the topic of the history and culture of Carpathian Germans. It is centred around a library comprising periodic and non-periodic literature published in Slovakia and abroad. The MCGC is the most comprehensively equipped institution in Slovakia in this respect.³⁷

³⁷ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-kultury-karpatskych-nemcov-uvodna-stranka>

At the time it was established, the MCGC had no collections. The collections cover all areas of the life of Carpathian Germans: parts of clothing, textiles, home and trade crafts, industrial products, works of art, sacral objects and the press. The MCGC's library is used by students and specialised experts from both Slovakia and abroad. The MCGC has its own edition *Acta Carpatho-Germanica*. Twenty volumes have been published in this edition to date. The unfavourable financial situation made it impossible to publish new volumes of *Acta Carpatho-Germanica*. The MCGC published a number of catalogues for its own exhibitions, one monograph and promotional materials on the history and culture of Carpathian Germans. In its scientific-research activities, the MCGC focuses on the topic of the historical and ethno-cultural development of Carpathian Germans.

In 2014, the MCGC continued projects and presentation activities started in the previous year. The museum's activities are affected by increasing costs and the institution finds it difficult to adapt to this situation in the performance of its roles. The German house from Turček in the Museum of the Slovak Village in Martin was completed and opened to the public. In 2014, the MCGC commemorated the 20th anniversary of its establishment. On this occasion, it organised a cultural and social event and co-organised a conference on the history of the old part of Bratislava's Podhradie.

In 2014, the MCGC organised the following exhibitions: *Premeny Zuckermantla* [Transformations of the Zuckermantel], *German Press in Slovakia*, *History and Culture of Carpathian Germans in Slovakia*, *Helmut Bistika/Eabtaal*, *History and Culture of Carpathian Germans*, *Dedičstvo* [Heritage], *German Newspapers in Slovakia*.

MCGC's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 3 displays and 7 exhibitions/5 742 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 3 scientific-research projects;
- publishing activities: 3 titles;
- cultural and educational activities: 9 events/640 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 12.

SNM - Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov

The Slovak National Museum – Museum of Ruthenian Culture (hereinafter the “MRC”) in Prešov is a unique museum of national scope, the youngest within the SNM's structures. It is a documentary, scientific-research and methodological unit specialising in the history and culture of the Ruthenians living in Slovakia. It focuses on the acquisition, protection, scientific and technical processing of, and provision of public access to, museum collections. These collections showcase the development of the material and spiritual culture of the Ruthenians in the Slovak Republic and all over the world.³⁸

On 31 December 2013, the MRC opened to the public part of the premises on the 1st floor of the museum building, where the permanent exhibition *History of the Ruthenians in Slovakia* has been installed. Newly acquired artefacts continue to be added to this exhibition.

³⁸ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-rusinskej-kultury-uvodna-stranka>

The exhibition will be open to the public until the commencement of renovation work on the MRC's building in Prešov.

In connection with the implementation of the scientific-research project Ethnicity of the Folk Culture in North-Eastern Slovakia, the MRC personnel prepared scripts for exhibitions and displays in participating museums as well as publications on this topic (in accordance with the proposed project outcomes) in the period under review.

During the period under review, the MRC published the methodological photo-documentary guidebook *Crafts in the Life of Ruthenians*, which was created on the basis of implementation of activities that were part of the creative workshops related to the project *School in the Museum* (financed through a contribution from Poštová banka) and opening of the exhibition of the same name.

In order to increase the standard of the museum's activities, in 2014 the MRC in Prešov organised cultural and educational activities for the museum's friends and partners (in collaboration with the A. Duchnovič Ruthenian Culture and Education Society, the Ruthenian Language Summer School at the Ruthenian Language and Culture Institute of University of Prešov in Prešov, the Carpatho-Rusyn Society of Pittsburgh, the Association of Ruthenian Intelligentsia in Slovakia, and the State Archive of the MI SR in Prešov).

Due to the fact that a comprehensive reconstruction of the museum building is necessary, since 2012, every year the MRC has been annually applying for funding to finance the development of planning documentation for the reconstruction, which is essential for its continued existence. A grant application was again submitted through the SNM to the MC SR as Priority Project No 1 for 2015.

The museum organised the following exhibitions in 2014: *History of Ruthenians in Slovakia*, *Embroidery in the Tradition of Ruthenians*, *Slovak Athletes in Olympic and Paralympic Games*, *Crafts in the Life of Ruthenians*, *Chronicles and Commemorative Books – 3rd edition*, *Pictures of Ruthenian Artists*, *Christmas in Ruthenian Families*.

MRC's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 7 exhibitions/1 416 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 2 scientific-research projects;
- publishing activities: 1 title;
- cultural and educational activities: 10 events/246 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 47.

SNM - Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník

The key mission of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture (hereinafter the "MUC") is to document and present the basic stages of the cultural, historical, political and social development of the Ukrainians in Slovakia from the earliest times to the present day. The MUC offers 3 permanent exhibitions to its visitors: a cultural and historical exhibition (since 1974), an open-air history museum (since 1983), and an artistic and historical exhibition - the Dezider Milly Gallery (since 1986).³⁹

³⁹ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-ukrajinskej-kultury-uvodna-stranka>

The MUC's most prominent issue is the unfinished entry building to the open-air museum on the history of the ethnicity.

In the area of publishing activities, the MUC published small prints, namely, an invitation and poster for the exhibition Easter Eggs 2014 and posters for the exhibitions Stanislav Stankoci – Malá domov [Back Pass] and First World War – Battles in the Carpathians in 1914–1915.

The museum provides expert and methodological assistance in the preparation of scientific publications and projects relating to research into Ukrainian culture to dozens of researchers and scientific institutions.

The museum organised the following exhibitions in 2014: Od narodenia po dospelosť [From Birth to Adulthood], Easter Eggs 2014, Gastronomic Exhibition, Stanislav Stankoci – Malá domov [Back Pass], Posters for Cultural Festivities of the Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Slovakia, First World War – Battles in the Carpathians 1914-1915.

MUC's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 3 displays and 6 exhibitions/21 701 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 13 scientific-research projects;
- publishing activities: 1 title;
- cultural and educational activities: 44 events/4 972 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 270.

SNM – Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia (hereinafter the “MRCS”) is a specialised unit of the SNM in Martin. The basic area of the museum's activities is the sourcing, processing and protection of collection holdings and presentation of Roma culture.⁴⁰

The year-round permanent exhibition Romano drom/Roma's Path plays an important role in terms of promoting Roma culture and language. One of the long-term, cyclic activities is the Te prindžaras amen – Let's Get to Know Each Other event (since 2002).

The museum's successful projects include two travelling panel exhibitions – the Story of the Children of the Wind (the pilot exhibition for the museum's permanent exhibition) and the Gallery of Roma Personalities (2010), which are regularly reprised in cooperation with a variety of cultural, educational and community institutions.

The subject of the MRCS's scientific-research activities in the period in question was the Historical and Ethnographic Study of Exhibition Groups, Settlements and Buildings in the Slovak Village Museum focused on the restoration of the selected traditional Roma dwelling in the Turiec region.

The MRCS's educational activities were linked to selected cultural and historical aspects of the life of Roma in Slovakia, in certain historical periods.

Further cultural and promotional activities related to the traditional culture and history of the Roma in Slovakia. In 2014, a new form of presentation of the museum's activities,

⁴⁰ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-kultury-romov-na-slovensku-uvodna-stranka>

culture and history of Roma was introduced via Facebook – Romani Studies. The museum organised the following exhibitions in 2014: Zrkadlenie duše [Mirroring of the Soul], Nové v múzeu [New in the Museum] – partial exhibition, Život bez rámu [Frameless Life], Príbeh detí vetra [Story of the Children of the Wind], Podarilo sa [Our Successes].

MRCŠ's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 1 display and 5 exhibitions/3 772 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 1 scientific-research project;
- publishing activities: 0 titles;
- cultural and educational activities: 22 events/893 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 22.

SNM - Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia

The SNM – Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia (hereinafter the “MCzCS”) was established in 1999 in accordance with the Statute of the SNM to acquire, preserve, process and present material documentation of the culture of the Czech minority in Slovakia and to study the Czech phenomenon in Slovakia. It is a specialised documentation and scientific-research museum unit of national scope, which is profiling itself as an institution placing emphasis on acquisition, methodological, expert, cultural and educational activities. The MCzCS is located in its own building in Martin, which comprises a permanent exhibition, as well as showrooms and office and archive spaces.⁴¹

The museum's basic long-term activity is the development, processing, protection and presentation of collection holdings. In 2014, the institution continued to digitise its collection holdings.

The MCzCS organised the following exhibitions in 2014: Praha stovežatá [the Hundred-spired Prague], Jan Hus, 1415 and Six Hundred Years Later, S batohom cez hory [With a Backpack through the Mountains], Číročistý romantik [A Totally Pure Romantic] (Jaroslav Vodrážka 1894-1984), New in the Museum – a partial exhibition.

MCzCS's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 1 display and 5 exhibitions/890 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 1 scientific-research project;
- publishing activities: 0 titles;
- cultural and educational activities: 13 events/530 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 112.

SNM - Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia

The SNM – Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia (hereinafter the “MČrCS”) is a specialised museum of national scope. The MČrCS is a documentation, scientific-research and methodological museum unit focusing on the history and culture of the Croatian minority

⁴¹ <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-kultury-cechov-na-slovensku-uvodna-stranka>

since its arrival in Slovakia to the present day. The MCrCS's mission is the targeted acquisition, preservation, processing and provision of access to museum collections and holdings documenting the roots, history and culture of the Croats living in Slovakia or in other countries – in particular the Burgenland Croats.⁴²

The MCrCS has 2 permanent exhibitions: History and Culture of the Croats in Slovakia and 4000 Years of Settlement in Devínska Nová Ves.

The MCrCS has provided expert and methodological assistance to students working on their theses (seminar, bachelor, diploma) and provided help to amateur collectors of Croatian folk culture artefacts.

The museum organised the following exhibitions in 2014: Hrvatski Božić, Svet ako ho vidíme my [The World as We See it], Designs by FA STU Students, Creative Works of Children at the DNV Elementary School of Art, Šijeme pre radost': Deti šijú deťom [We Sew for Pleasure: Children Sew for Children], Chorvátske nápisy [Croatian Inscriptions], FotoFórum 2014, Velikáni chorvátskej literatúry [The Greats of Croatian Literature], Ethnographer Antonín Václavík.

MCrCS's activities in the course of 2014:

- number of displays and exhibitions in 2014/number of visitors: 2 displays and 10 exhibitions/738 visitors;
- scientific-research activities: 0 scientific-research projects (expert and methodological activities);
- publishing activities: 0 titles;
- cultural and educational activities: 18 events/491 visitors;
- new collection items in 2014: 47.

⁴² <http://www.snm.sk/?muzeum-kultury-chorvatov-na-slovensku-uvodna-stranka>

Table 2: Overview of the financing of the SNM’s organisational units – 8 specialised, so-called national minority museums, in 2013-2014⁴³

Museum	2013	2014
Museum of Carpathian German Culture	EUR 105 033	EUR 109 943
Museum of Jewish Culture	EUR 450 380	EUR 510 783
Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	EUR 350 593	EUR 287 974
Museum of Ukrainian Culture	EUR 302 132	EUR 343 628
Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia	EUR 61 591	EUR 66 044
Museum of Roma Culture	EUR 32 516	EUR 40 373
Museum of Czech Culture	EUR 34 001	EUR 37 241
Museum of Ruthenian Culture	EUR 100 902	EUR 110 204
Total	EUR 1 437 148	EUR 1 506 190

3.5 Periodical and non-periodical publications of national minorities

Under § 1(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended, minority languages include Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian. As of 31 December 2014, the **List of Periodical Press Titles**, maintained by the MC SR, included 45 titles published in Hungarian, 3 titles published in Polish, 3 titles in Ruthenian, 2 titles in Ukrainian, 8 titles in Czech, 5 in German, and 1 title published in Croatian.

In addition, as of 31 December 2014, the List of Periodical Press Titles included 61 titles published in Slovak and Hungarian, 35 titles in Slovak and Czech, 2 titles published in Slovak and Ruthenian, 1 in Slovak and Bulgarian, and 5 titles in Slovak and Roma.

Periodical and non-periodical publications of national minorities are published with support from the CNM programme (see 3.6).

⁴³ Note: the amounts represent funds allocated from the State budget – the Culture Chapter as of 31 December 2014 for operating expenses, capital expenditure and priority projects in total.

3.6 Promotion of the culture of persons belonging to national minorities through the Culture of National Minorities 2014 grant programme

The CNM, which falls under the competence of the Plenipotentiary, is a financial instrument to ensure the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities, education and training on the rights of national minorities, and inter-ethnic and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding between the majority community and national minorities and ethnic groups. The purpose, conditions, scope and method of provisions the grants under the competence of the Government are set out in Act No 524/2010 Coll. on the provision of grants under the competence of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, as amended (hereinafter the “Grants Act”).

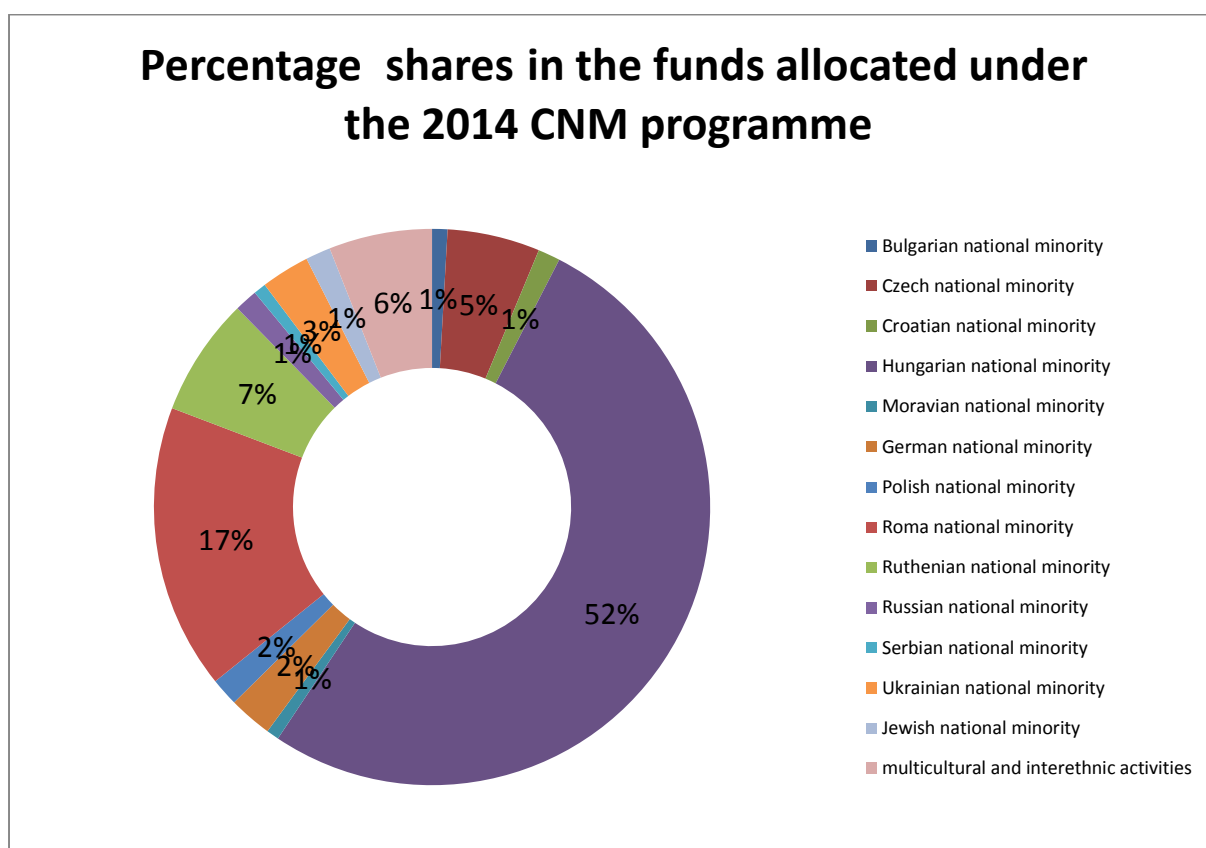
EUR 3 829 250 was allocated in the State budget for the promotion of the culture of national minorities in the 2014. The method of redistribution of the funds among the various national minorities is based on the rules for the allocation funds under the CNM programme, which takes into account multiple criteria when calculating the amounts to be allocated to the individual national minorities with the aim of transparent and equitable distribution of funding. The rules for the distribution of funding were drawn up and approved by the Committee.⁴⁴

Table 3: Funds allocated in 2014

national minorities	funds provided based on the 2014 allocation (in EUR)
Bulgarian national minority	34 215
Czech national minority	206 023
Croatian national minority	49 375
Hungarian national minority	1 983 057
Moravian national minority	27 908
German national minority	96 604
Polish national minority	62 060
Roma national minority	634 109
Ruthenian national minority	263 482
Russian national minority	51 270
Serbian national minority	27 703
Ukrainian national minority	108 142
Jewish national minority	55 547
multicultural and inter-ethnic activities	229 755
Total:	3 829 250

⁴⁴ See page 29 of the 2013 and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities for details on the method of distribution of the funds

Chart 1: Percentage shares in the funds allocated under the 2014 CNM programme



In accordance with § 8(1)c) of the Grants Act, the Office of the Government published a Call for Grant Applications under the 2014 Culture of National Minorities programme (hereinafter the “Call for Applications”) on 29 November 2013 and the final deadline for applications was set at 31 2014.

As stated in the Call for Applications, the CNM 2014 programme was newly divided into sub-programmes and priorities (see Annex 2: Breakdown of the CNM 2014 programme).

In connection with the Call for Applications, the Office of the Plenipotentiary held information workshops in six cities in the Slovak Republic between 13 December 2013 and 10 January 2014. The aim of the seminars was to inform prospective applicants about the submission of grant applications and the terms of the Call for Applications and the procedure for electronic registration of applications.

Table 4: Overview of the cities where information seminars were held

Place	Date	Number of participants
Banská Bystrica - City Council	13.12.2013	16
Bratislava - Office of the Government	17.12.2013	68
Komárno - Officers’ Pavilion	18.12.2013	66
Košice - Thália Theatre	18.12.2013	54
Rimavská Sobota - Municipal Culture Centre	09.01.2014	43
Prešov - A. Duchnovič Theatre	10.01.2014	47

The applicants were to submit only one grant application which could comprise several projects included under one or more sub-programmes. In the first phase of review, the grant applications were checked for formal compliance. They were examined for completeness within the meaning of the Grants Act and the call for applications.

Complete projects or projects that were supplemented within the deadline set in the request for elimination of the shortcomings found were forwarded for assessment to the Project Evaluation Boards under the Culture of National Minorities 2014 programme (hereinafter the “evaluation boards”).

In accordance with the call for applications and other binding rules, 15 evaluation boards were set up, one for each national minority, while two evaluation boards were set up for the Hungarian national minority – one board for the so-called written culture and one for the so-called live culture. In addition, a separate board was set up for multicultural and inter-ethnic activities. The evaluation boards were set up in accordance with Decree N 21 Coll. of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic of 24 January 2011 laying down the details of the composition, decision-making and organisation of work and the procedure to be taken by the board when evaluating grant applications and the criteria for the evaluation of grant applications under the competence of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, as amended by Decree No 281/2012 Coll. The members of the boards are mostly persons belonging to national minorities, but also representatives of regions and experts on the individual cultural areas.

The process of evaluation of CNM projects follows the relevant legislative and non-legislative regulations⁴⁵ governing the process of submission and formal review of grant applications, the evaluation of individual projects, as well as the whole process of concluding contracts with successful applicants, including the statements of expenditure for the grants.

The role of the evaluation boards is to examine the projects in technical terms, according to the criteria provided in the call for applications and in legislation of general application. They evaluate the effectiveness of the use of the grants and where the amounts requested are justifiable and proportionate. The boards evaluate individual projects without identification of the applicant and propose whether a project should receive support or not and how much funding should be provided. The boards evaluate each project individually, on the basis of scores. Seven criteria are evaluated: the relevance of the project’s objectives and goals, its quality and uniqueness, tradition and continuity, cultural and social importance, the project’s specific contribution to the preservation and development of minority cultures, its target groups and feasibility of the budget. Each criterion consists of a scale of five indicators for the given criterion. The purposefulness and eligibility of the use of previous grants is also examined, including compliance with the deadline for the submission of statements of expenditure.

While in previous years, the organisations did not receive grants until the end of the summer, the process was simplified and speeded up in 2014 and payments under the first grant contracts were made much earlier than in previous years. The payment of grants by the Office of the Government to promote the culture of national minorities started as early as in March in 2014. EUR 1 479 996 were paid in the first half of the year, followed by EUR

⁴⁵ See the website of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for National Minorities: <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/legislativa-svrsnm/> and <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/vyzva-i/>

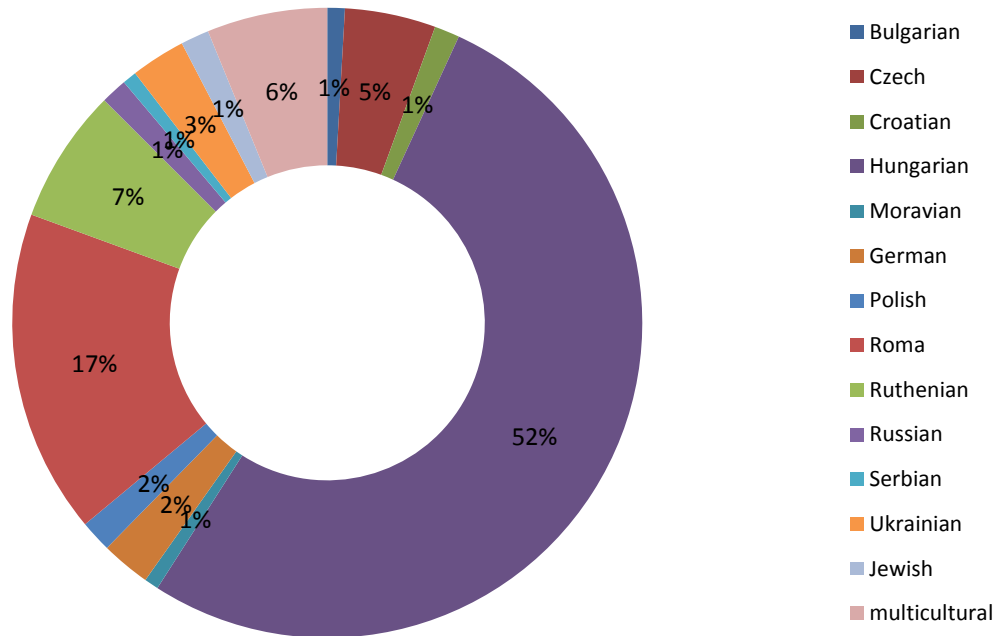
3 011 372 paid in early September 2014. The availability of funding is the basic requirement in order for the culture and languages of national minorities living in the Slovak Republic to be promoted, therefore, the ambition of the Office of the Plenipotentiary in 2014 was to disburse the funding as soon as possible, which helped in the development of a number of organisations. This enabled the implementation of activities so that the culture and languages of national minorities living in the Slovak Republic can develop as best as possible.

Table 5: An overview of the number of projects supported under the 1st call for applications by minority

National minority	Number of supported projects	Grant amount
Hungarian	737	EUR 1 883 057
Roma	157	EUR 580 800
Czech	33	EUR 141 244
Ruthenian	130	EUR 263 482
Ukrainian	22	EUR 107 139
German	13	EUR 96 604
Polish	17	EUR 62 060
Moravian	4	EUR 20 150
Croatian	8	EUR 49 375
Russian	20	EUR 51 270
Bulgarian	10	EUR 34 215
Jewish	18	EUR 55 547
Serbian	7	EUR 27 703
multicultural and inter-ethnic activities	70	EUR 229 755
Total	1 246	EUR 3 602 401

Chart 2: Percentage shares in grant payments provided under the 2014 CNM programme

Percentage shares in grant payments provided under the 2014 CNM programme



1 246 projects totalling EUR 3 602 401 were recommended for support by the evaluation boards under the 1st call for applications.

Due to the fact that the allocated funds were not used up, the 2nd call for grant applications for 2014 was published on 18 June 2014. The deadline for applications was 19 August 2014. The funds available for this call for applications amounted to EUR 240 420. The call was published for those national minorities that had not used up the funding allocated for 2014 in the 1st call for applications, namely, the Czech national minority - EUR 64 780, the Hungarian minority - EUR 108 573 (EUR 100 000 for sub-programme 1.1 and EUR 8 573 for sub-programmes 1.2 - 2.3), the Moravian minority - EUR 7 758, the Roma minority - EUR 53 309 and EUR 6 000 for multicultural and inter-ethnic activities.

The boards recommended for support 54 grant applications totalling EUR 212 500. With a view to the quality of the submitted projects, the board for the Czech national minority recommend that the funding available for the promotion of the culture of the Czech national minority not be used up in full.

A total of 1 947 projects were submitted under the two calls for applications of the 2014 CNM programme. Of these:

- 80 were not evaluated or were excluded (74 projects were incomplete, 2 projects were delivered after the deadline, 2 projects were submitted by ineligible organisations and 2 projects were implemented in other than the relevant fiscal year);
- 567 projects were evaluated, but not supported;

- 39 projects were evaluated and approved, but not implemented (in 16 cases due to the applicant's failure to enter into the contract and in 23 cases the applicants returned the grant provided);
- 1 261 projects were evaluated, approved and completed.

Chart 3: Number of supported and unsupported projects under 2014 CNM programme

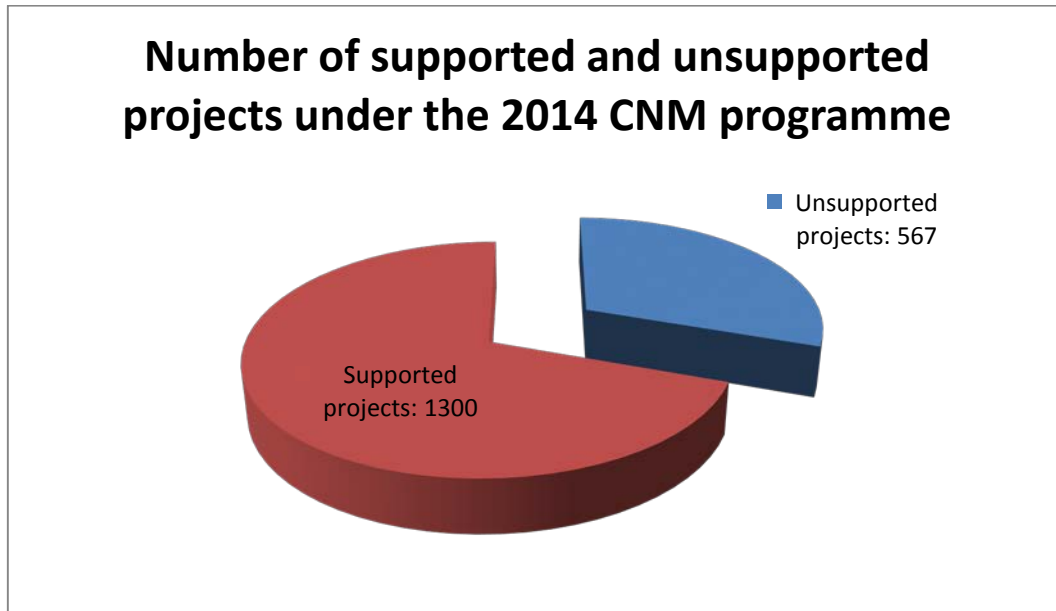
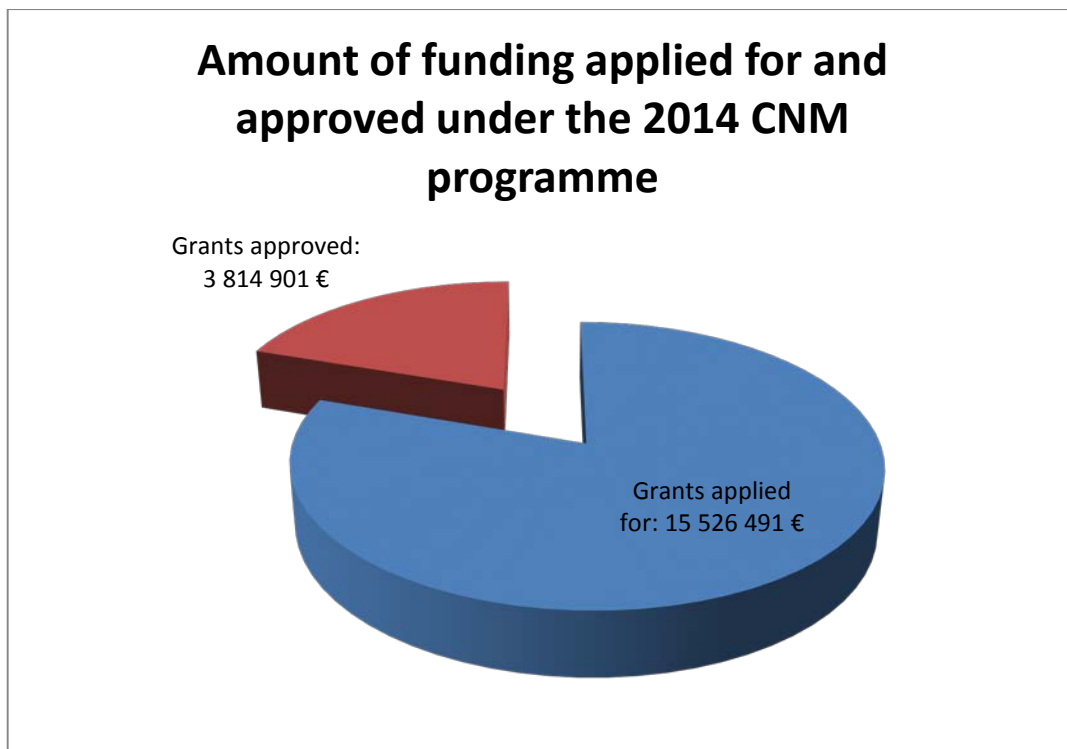


Chart 4: Amount of funding applied for and approved under the 2014 CNM programme



Selected statistical indicators reported on the basis of the electronic grant system for the 2014 CNM programme⁴⁶

In 2014, the CNM electronic system was further improved to streamline communication with applicants and speed up the grant payment process. In an effort to provide the public with as accurate information as possible, the system was regularly updated with the aim of, among other things, providing as much information as possible to assist in evaluating the use of the CNM funding.

In the text below, we describe some of the selected indicators, such as eligible applicants, applicants by scope of competence, priorities, etc., generated on the basis of the CNM 2014 electronic system.

The scope of applicants eligible for the CNM programme is defined under § 3(1) of the Grants Act. In terms of legal personality, the following applicants sought⁴⁷ grants under the 2014 CNM programme:

- 1 234 (66.1 %) civic associations,
- 277 (14.84 %) municipalities,
- 9 (0.48 %) natural persons or legal persons authorised to carry on business activities.

The least represented group of applicants were international organisations registered in the Slovak Republic: 4 (0.21 %) of the total number of applicants.

No higher territorial units applied for grants under the 2014 CNM programme.

In 2014, grants were sought by a variety of parties from all 8 self-governing regions.⁴⁸ The greatest number of applicants were from:

- Nitra self-governing region - 389 applicants (20.84 %),
- Trnava self-governing region - 366 applicants (19.6 %),
- Košice self-governing region - 350 applicants (18.75 %).

Only 12 applicants from the Trenčín self-governing region submitted grant applications under the 2014 CNM programme, which accounts for only 0.64 % of the total number of applicants.

The 2014 CNM programme was divided into 3 sub-programmes and 15 priorities.⁴⁹ The highest number of supported projects were in the following areas:

- promotion of cultural activities and artistic creation - 462 applicants (35.54 %),
- activities of theatres and folk art ensembles and activities of cultural and church institutions - 183 applicants (14.08 %),
- educational projects - 165 applicants (12.69 %).

The smallest number of supported projects were in the area of promoting the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance towards minority languages and cultures in the system of education and the mass media and in the area of promoting exchange programmes, study visits, joint training events, and knowledge and art competitions for children and youth from

⁴⁶ An electronic grant system is used for the processing of projects under the CNM programme, which, among other things, provides for the possibility of simple statistical reports.

⁴⁷ See Annex 3: Selected 2014 CNM programme data

⁴⁸ See Annex 3: Selected 2014 CNM programme data

⁴⁹ Ibidem

different ethnic and language groups. 4 projects received support in each of these areas, accounting for 0.31 % of the total number of projects.



Source: archives of the Office of the Government

Part IV - Education and training for persons belonging to national minorities

In the Slovak Republic, the right of national minorities to education and training is guaranteed by the Constitution and detailed in other legislation. Persons belonging to national minorities are provided education and training in schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education or teaching a minority language. Education attained in these schools is equivalent to that attained in schools using Slovak as the language of instruction.

The process of education and training in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction or teaching a minority language is carried out in accordance with the national educational programme for the different levels of education.

Institutional oversight of the process of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities is carried out by the MESRS SR, which is the central government authority for the area of kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and higher education institutions, school facilities, lifelong learning, science and technology and State care of youth and sports. Several fully and partly publicly funded organisations, carrying out specific tasks in this area, are under the administration of the Ministry.

4.1 Legislative and policy documents

Under § 34(2)a) of the Constitution, **citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups are guaranteed, in addition to the right to master the State language, the right to education in their own language under the conditions laid down by law.** The said conditions are laid down in Act No 245/2008 Coll. on education and training (the Schools Act) and on amendments to certain laws, as amended (hereinafter the “Schools Act”). In addition to the right to master the State language, the Schools Act provides children and pupils belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups with the right to education and training in their own language.

Other laws governing the relevant area include, in particular, Act No 596/2003 Coll. on State administration in the school system and school self-government and on amendments to certain laws, as amended (hereinafter the “Act on State Administration in the School System and School Self-government”), Act No 597/2003 Coll. on the financing of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities, as amended (hereinafter the “Act on the Financing of Schools”), and Act No 317/2009 Coll. on teachers and specialised staff and on amendments to certain laws, as amended (hereinafter the “Act on Teachers and Specialised Staff”).

In 2014, legislative amendments to the Schools Act and the Act on the Financing of Schools entered into force.⁵⁰ The amendment to the Schools Act established the minimum number of pupils in primary and secondary schools effective from 1 September 2015. According to the said act, the minimum number of pupils in an elementary school class is as follows:

- eight pupils in a zero grade class;
- six pupils in a zero grade class in an incomplete primary school;
- 12 pupils in a class with pupils from two grades of the first stage of primary school;
- 11 pupils in a first grade class;

⁵⁰ Amendment: 464/2013 Coll.

- 13 pupils in second to fourth grade classes;
- 15 pupils in fifth to ninth grade classes.

Where in the territory of a municipality there is a primary school, in which education and training is provided in the State language and, at the same time, in the language of a national minority, or where in the territory of a municipality there is a primary school, in which education and training is provided in the State language and, at the same time, a primary school under the same administrator in which education and training is provided in the language of a national minority, the minimum number of pupils in a class may be reduced by two.

An exception from the cases referred to above is reduced accessibility of schools to pupils - there is no other primary school using the minority language as the language of instruction within a radius of 6 km from the place of residence of the pupil, more than 80 % of the total number of pupils in the school are from socially disadvantaged backgrounds or other cases worthy of special consideration.

In 2014, the Government's draft **act on vocational education and training** and on amendments to certain laws was in the legislative process and was passed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 12 March 2015 effective from 1 April 2015. The aim of the new act is to allow for a smooth transition of graduates of secondary vocational schools to the labour market and reduce the risk of unemployment of young graduates.

In connection with the upcoming legislative changes, at its XVth session the Committee, through Resolution No 59, took note with comments of the Information on Progress in the Preparation of Amendments to the Legislation on Education and Training, Financing of Schools and School Facilities, Vocational Training, Teachers and Specialised Staff and tasked the Chairperson of the Committee to request that the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport extend the working group on the act on the financing of schools and school facilities set up at the Ministry to include new members nominated by members of the Committee who are engaged in the issue of national minority education. In his reply addressed to Plenipotentiary and Chairperson of the Committee Mária Jedličková, the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sports accepted the Committee's request to extend the working group for the preparation of the act on the financing of schools and school facilities to include one representative of the Committee. In view of the fact that the members of the Committee were unable to come to an agreement on one candidate and sent the names of three nominees to the Committee's Secretariat, in order to reach a consensus and in accordance with its rules of procedure, the Committee's delegate was elected by a secret ballot at the XVth session of the Committee. In the secret ballot, Ing. Attila Fodor was elected by the Committee as its delegate on the MESRS SR's working group for the preparation of the act on the financing of schools and school facilities.

The central policy document in the field of education and training of persons belonging to national minorities in the 2007-2013 period was the **Concept of Education and Training for National Minorities** approved through Government Resolution No 1100/2007.⁵¹ The objectives of the Concept included:

- improvement of the existing education and training process in primary and secondary schools attended by national minorities;

⁵¹ <http://www.minedu.sk/koncepcia-vychovy-a-vzdelavania-narodnostnych-mensin/>

- improvement of the education and training process with the aim of developing communication skills and habits in both the mother tongue and the State language; elimination of memorising, increased motivation of pupils to learn and develop their creativity and autonomy, and taking up of the concept of lifelong learning;
- development of inter-cultural competences – acceptance of ethnic, language, cultural and religious differences;
- improvement of the standard, effectiveness, efficiency and innovativeness of education in schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education or teaching a minority language, elimination of the uniformisation of teaching;
- preparation of the starting points for the creation of the State educational and school educational programmes;
- innovation of the methodology for learning Slovak language in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools using a minority language as the language of education and instruction;
- improvement of further training for teachers in the areas of information technology, command of foreign languages (especially 1st to 4th grade teachers) and Slovak language, in conjunction with Slovak literature;
- improvement of methodological assistance to teachers of Slovak language and literature, Slovak language and Slovak literature working in primary and secondary schools attended by national minorities.

The above concept set out proposals for 12 measures, 10 of which had a deadline in the 2007-2013 period and two were of a permanent nature.

With a view to the fact that the Report on the State of the School System in Slovakia was expected to represent a draft medium-term comprehensive strategy for the school system in the Slovak Republic for the 2013-2020 period,⁵² the MESRS SR did not adopt a new Concept of Education and Training for persons belonging to national minorities. The MESRS SR drew up the report on the basis of Resolution No 374 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 13 December 2012. Public consultation on the report was conducted and completed on 30 June 2013. After incorporating the comments from the public, the MESRS SR submitted the report for the interdepartmental consultation exercise on 23 September 2013. The report was not the subject of a Government session in 2014. The MESRS SR plans to revise, update and submit the report at a Government session in 2015.

4.2 Institutional framework

State oversight of the standard of pedagogical management, standard of education and training and material and technical conditions, including practical training in schools and school facilities, practical training centres and educational establishments, is performed by the **State School Inspection** (hereinafter the “SSI”). One of the roles of the SSI is to monitor and assess the state and standard of education and training, conditions and management in schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of instruction and education.

The mission of the **National Institute for Education** (hereinafter the “NIE”) is to perform tasks in the areas of pedagogical research, especially applied research, expert and methodological management of schools and school facilities, preparation of pedagogical documents and further training of teachers, as well as monitoring and analysis of the results of education and training. In the area of education and training for persons belonging to national

⁵² <https://www.minedu.sk/sprava-o-stave-skolstva-na-slovensku/>

minorities, it prepares support documents and recommendations addressing this area, in particular with regard to the Roma national minority.

Another institution operating in the field of education is the **Methodology and Pedagogy Centre** (hereinafter the “MPC”), whose work is focused on methodological activities and further training for teachers and non-educational staff. In addition, the MPC has been designated by the MESRS SR as the lead expert organisation with national competence for the Roma issue and further training for teachers in schools in ethnically mixed areas (Hungarian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian).

The key role of the **State Vocational Education Institute** (hereinafter the “SVEI”) is to perform tasks related to improving the system of vocational education and training, as well as the transfer of experience and good practices into the education and training process in schools, publishing activities and textbook policy and reading and financial literacy of students of secondary vocational schools. The members of working groups for the development of normative standards include representatives of schools using a minority language as the language of instruction.

In the context of informal education, **IUVENTA - the Slovak Youth Institute** operates as an institution whose portfolio comprises several instruments that are aimed at, among other things, promoting and developing activities with young people belonging to national minorities or developing the competences of youth workers actively working with this youth group (see 4.8 Informal Education).

Other bodies engaged in the area of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities include the **Council of the Minister for National Minority Schools** (hereinafter the “Council of the Minister”) established as an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sports for this area, as well as for the implementation of the Language Charter within the meaning of Article 7(4a) and Article 8 of the Charter⁵³. The members of the Council of the Minister include representatives of the Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German and Roma minorities. Representatives of the MPC, NIE and the Plenipotentiary are also invited to attend the Council’s sessions. The scope of competence of the Council of the Minister covers the preparation of proposals aimed at ensuring and implementing the rights of national minorities to education in their mother tongue or instruction of their mother tongue in accordance with Article 8 of the Language Charter and improving the standard of instruction of Slovak language and preparation of written positions on legislation of general application relating to education and training for national minorities. The Council held no sessions in 2014.

The **Council** is one of the advisory bodies for the area of the implementation of the Language Charter referred to in Article 7(4) of the Charter and for issues relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and persons belonging to them (see 2.2.2).

⁵³ Under Article 7(4), the Language Charter states that in determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages. Article 8 of the Language Charter focuses on the area of education.

4.3 Opportunities for education in minority languages

Education and training for persons belonging to national minorities is provided in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and school facilities using Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German and Roma as the language of instruction or teaching these languages. As of 15 September 2014, the network of schools and school facilities comprised the following schools and school facilities teaching minority languages⁵⁴:

A. Kindergartens

As of 15 September 2014, a total of 2 896 kindergartens were included in the network of schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic (state, private and church), of which 353 (12.19 %) were using a language of instruction other than Slovak, namely Hungarian, Ukrainian, German and others.

Table 6: Number of kindergartens in the Slovak Republic by language of education

language of education	number of kindergartens
Slovak-Hungarian	73
Hungarian	266
Ukrainian	7
German	1
other	6
TOTAL	353

B. Primary schools

In the 2014/2015 school year, there were a total of 2 133 primary schools included in the network of schools and school facilities (2 312 in the 2013/2014 school year), of which 1 971 were state schools, 115 were church schools and 47 were private schools with a total of 21 469 classes.

Hungarian, Ukrainian or other languages were used as the language of instruction in a total of 271 primary school and 1 905 classes as of 15 September 2014.

Table 7: Number of primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction as of 15 September 2014

language of instruction	number of primary schools
Slovak-Hungarian	27
Slovak-Ukrainian	1
Hungarian	234
Ukrainian	3
other	6
TOTAL	271

⁵⁴ The list of schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of instruction/education is available on the website: <http://www.uips.sk/registre/vyber-skol-podla-kriterii>

In primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, there were:

- a total of 1 780 classes in public schools attended by a total of 28 009 pupils, of which 916 were 0 to 4th grade classes with 13 662 pupils and 864 were 5th to 9th grade classes with a total of 14 347 pupils;
- a total of 88 classes in church schools attended by 1 257 pupils, of which 41 were 0 to 4th grade classes with 576 pupils and 47 were 5th to 9th grade classes with 681 pupils;

In primary schools using Ukrainian as the language of instruction, there were:

- a total of 19 classes in public schools attended by 212 pupils, of which 9 were 0 to 4th grade classes with 115 pupils and 10 were 5th to 9th grade classes with 97 pupils;

In primary schools using German as the language of instruction, there were:

- a total of 4 classes in public schools attended by 38 pupils, all of which were 0 to 4th grade classes, i.e. there were no classes in the 5th to 9th grades;
- a total of 6 classes in private schools attended by 103 pupils, all of which were 0 to 4th grade classes, i.e. there were no classes in the 5th to 9th grades;

As regards primary schools using Ruthenian as the language of instruction, there was:

- 1 class in a public school attended by 13 pupils, which was a 0 to 4th grade class, i.e. there were no classes in the 5th to 9th grades;

In primary schools using Bulgarian as the language of instruction, there were:

- 7 classes in private schools attended by 58 pupils, of which 4 were 0 to 4th grade classes with 39 pupils and 3 were 5th to 9th grade classes with 19 pupils.⁵⁵

C. Secondary schools

In the 2014/2015 school year, there were a total of 454 secondary schools included in the network of schools and school facilities (of which 348 were public, 86 were private and 20 were church schools). Of the above number of secondary vocational schools, **41 were secondary vocational schools using a language of instruction other than Slovak** and 10 were bilingual secondary vocational schools.

At the same time, there were 244 gymnasias (of which 52 were bilingual). Of the above number of gymnasias, **30 were gymnasias using a language of instruction other than Slovak.**

Table 8: Number of secondary vocational schools by language of instruction as of 15 September 2014

language of instruction	number of secondary vocational schools
Slovak-Hungarian	32
Hungarian	9
TOTAL	41

⁵⁵ See: IIPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

Table 9: Number of bilingual secondary vocational schools by language of instruction as of 15 September 2014

language of instruction	number of secondary vocational schools
English	8
German	2
TOTAL	10

Table 10: Number of gymnasia by language of instruction as of 15 September 2014

language of instruction	number of gymnasia
Slovak-Hungarian	7
Hungarian	19
Ukrainian	1
other	3
TOTAL	30

Table 11: Number of bilingual gymnasia by language of instruction as of 15 September 2014

language of instruction	number of bilingual gymnasia
English	34
French	4
German	5
Russian	1
Spanish	7
Italian	1
TOTAL	52

According to the Report on the State and Standard of Education and Training in Schools and School facilities in the 2013/2014 School Year drawn up by the SSI, 1 716 inspections were conducted, of which 214 were inspections in 20 kindergartens and 22 primary schools using a language of instruction other than Slovak. Ongoing deficiencies with an impact on the standard of the process of education and training were found in the secondary and primary schools inspected, for example – the curricula for some subjects had not been or had been drawn up improperly and with many content errors; the framework curricula were not followed. A poor level of systematic control of the education and training process by school management, with emphasis on analysis of results and adoption of measures, continued to be a problem in all types of schools. Action to correct deficiencies was not taken by school managements. The utilisation of the expert and pedagogical potential of advisory bodies for improving the educational process also continued to be infrequent. On the contrary, a significantly positive aspect of the teaching process was the development of pupils' work habits and skills, as well as the verbal motivational evaluation encouraging individuals to actively participate in the process of learning. The effort to develop evaluation and self-reflection skills also appeared to be infrequent.⁵⁶

⁵⁶http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/velka_sprava/sprava_13_14.pdf

D. Higher education

Higher education is governed by Act No 131/2002 Coll. on higher education and on amendments to certain laws, as amended. We distinguish between public, state, private and foreign higher education institutions. In the academic year of 2014/2015, higher education was provided at 36 higher education institutions, of which 20 were public, 3 were state and 13 were private higher education institutions.

Higher education is also provided in several minority languages, in particular by the higher education institutions below⁵⁷:

- J. Selye University;
- Comenius University in Bratislava;
- University of Prešov in Prešov;
- Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava;
- Catholic University in Ružomberok;
- Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra;
- Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

Programme of “Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion”

The programme of **“Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion”** – supported from the EEA financial mechanism, is a programme designed to create human and professional resources for quality inter-cultural education programmes using the Roma language in a broader scope and to support for primary and secondary schools interested in developing inclusive education.

The programme is administered by the Office of the Government and its objective is to strengthen social and economic cohesion at national, regional and local levels, with a focus on the specific needs of the Roma. The programme is composed of several components: the creation of an accredited programme of innovative education for the teaching staff of primary schools to increase their inter-cultural competence in the process of education for Roma pupils; small grants to support Roma inclusion and inter-cultural projects in primary and secondary schools. The call for grant applications was published in August 2013 and concluded in October 2013. The programme is currently being implemented. The deadline for completion of the supported projects is January 2016.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ http://www.cvtisr.sk/buxus/generate_page.php?page_id=9573

⁵⁸ <http://www.eeagrants.sk/vyhlasenie-vyzvy-pre-program-sk04-miestne-a-regionalne-iniciativy-na-znizenie-narodnych-nerovnosti-a-podporu-socialnej-inkluzie/>

4.4 Opportunities for teachers and specialised staff for further training in minority languages

The area of further training for teachers and specialised staff is governed by the **act on teachers and specialised staff**.

The development of teachers and specialised staff within the career system is implemented through continuous learning, creative activities related to the performance of educational or expert activities and self-learning.

Continuous education may be provided by:

- schools or school facilities defined in special legislation,
- higher education institutions,
- organisations set up by the Ministry to ensure the implementation of continuous training tasks,
- educational organisations or central government authorities as defined in special legislation,
- the church, religious societies or other legal persons whose scope of activities includes training.

Opportunities for continuous training for teachers and specialised staff in **national minority languages** also exist and there are programmes aimed at the methodology of instruction of minority languages and other areas related to education and training for children and pupils belonging to national minorities.

According to the data available on the MESRS SR's website, there were 1 452 accredited continuous training programmes as of 25 March 2015.⁵⁹

The existing accredited programmes for schools with a language of instruction other than Slovak are:

- "Improvement of communication competence in the subject of Slovak language and Slovak literature in primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Preparation of didactic tests for general education subjects with Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Implementation of the extension curriculum for art classes in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Practising communication skills in Slovak language classes at the first stage of primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Improvement of communication competence in the teaching of Slovak language for teachers at the first stage of primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Development of pupils' reading literacy in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";
- "Development of communication skills in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction";

⁵⁹<https://www.minedu.sk/akreditacia-programov-doplnujuceho-pedagogickeho-studia-a-programov-kontinualneho-vzdelavania/>

- “Development of reading literacy in primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction”;
- “Creation and application of didactic games and learning aids at the first stage of primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction”;
- “Methods and forms of utilising historical realia in the teaching of Ruthenian language and literature”;
- “Ruthenian realia and the possibilities for including them in primary school curricula”;
- “Ruthenian language and teaching of Ruthenian in primary and secondary schools”;
- “Development of communication competence in Ukrainian language classes”;
- “Development of communication competence using texts of different styles in Ukrainian language classes”.

The **MPC** has been designated by the MESRS SR to act, in the context of its activities, as the lead expert organisation with national competence for the Roma issue and further training for teachers in schools in ethnically mixed areas (Hungarian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian). The MPC has 3 regional offices, in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Prešov, and 6 field offices, in Trnava, Nitra, Komárno, Trenčín, Žilina and Košice, as well as a further 6 project offices in Bratislava and Prešov.⁶⁰

In accordance with the 2014 Plan of Key Tasks, the MPC implemented the following tasks:

- implementation of the national project Training for Teaching Staff Towards Inclusion of Marginalised Roma Communities;
- implementation of the national project Inclusive Model of Education at the Pre-primary Level of the School System;
- creation and implementation of Continuous Training Programmes for Teachers of Slovak Language and Literature in Schools Using a Minority Language of Instruction;
- expert and methodological assistance for the inclusive model of education and training at the Plavecký Štvrtok primary school;
- consideration for the specific needs and conditions of the Roma national minority, with emphasis on effective educational, informational, documentation and advisory services, in particular for teachers and specialised staff working in schools and school facilities with a high representation of children and pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds;
- collection and processing of data on school results, conduct, attendance, nutrition, children’s school clubs, interest groups and transition to secondary schools of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, with an emphasis on examination of the impact of teacher assistants on the individual areas of the educational process in comparison with previous surveys;
- preparation of recommendations, a methodological material or an educational programme for teachers working with pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds from marginalised Roma communities (hereinafter “MRC”). Methodological activities involving the entire school staff (educational programmes taking into account the specific circumstances of a given school, optional subjects in the school educational programme).

The MPC is implementing a number of national projects focusing on persons belonging to national minorities.

⁶⁰ <http://www.mpc-edu.sk/o-nas>

National project on MRC

Since October 2011, the MPC has been implementing the national project “**Training for teaching staff towards inclusion of marginalised Roma communities**”, which is co-financed from the European Social Fund under the operational programme Education and is designed for those primary schools in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice self-governing regions, in which at least 20 % of pupils come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The project will continue until October 2015.

The national project is coordinated and implemented by the head project office in Prešov, which also houses a regional project office, and by the regional project office in Banská Bystrica. The main activities under the project include training for teachers and specialised staff, support for the all-day education system and technical support for activities under the national project.⁶¹

National project on MRC II

Since February 2013, the MPC has been implementing the national project “**Inclusive model of education at the pre-primary level of the school system**”, which is aimed at improving the professional competence of teachers and specialised staff participating in education of children from MRC, thereby promoting their social inclusion at the pre-primary level of the school system. The project is designed for kindergartens in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice regions. The project is implemented in selected kindergartens attended by children from MRC or are located in a municipality in which members of MRC live.⁶²

National PRINED project

The purpose of the “**National Inclusive Education Project**” (PRINED) is to provide strong support for inclusive environment in kindergartens and primary schools with the aim of preventing unfounded placement of pupils in the system of special education. Acceleration programmes aimed at stimulating Roma children should improve the diagnostic process in kindergartens. The creation of inclusive teams in primary schools by training to acquire the professional competence necessary for the satisfaction and development of the specific educational needs of pupils from MRC will support inclusion in the context of primary schools.⁶³

National PCG project

The national project “**Professional and Career Development of Teachers**” (PCG) has been implemented by the MPC since October 2009 with the aim of creating an effective system of further training for teachers and specialised staff from schools and school facilities, with an emphasis on the development of key competences.⁶⁴

⁶¹ <http://web.eduk.sk/>

⁶² <http://www.npmrk2.sk/>

⁶³ <http://www.prined.sk/>

⁶⁴ <http://www.mpc-edu.sk/projekty/profesijny-a-karierovy-rast-pedagogickych-zamestnancov>

4.5 Specific aspects of education and training for children belonging to national minorities in schools and school facilities

The special aspects of the social and educational needs of children belonging to national minorities include, in particular, the specific approach to teaching certain subjects, measures to eliminate language barriers and the provision of quality textbooks, instructional texts and teaching aids used in schools. In 2014, the NIE implemented a number of projects in the area of pedagogical documents, research projects and provision of material and didactic resources for existing textbooks.

Within the meaning of the Schools Act, in 2014 the NIE innovated the **Framework Curriculum** (hereinafter the “FC”) and the **National Educational Programme** (hereinafter the “NEP”).

In December 2014, **FC for schools using a minority language of instruction and FC for schools teaching a minority language were finalised** and forwarded to the MESRS SR for approval. The FC for primary schools was approved on 06.02.2004 as part of the NEP for primary schools effective from 01.09.2015. The FC for primary schools are available on the websites of the NIE and the MESRS SR. Comments on the FC for gymnasia with 4-year and 8-year educational programmes were provided by the Association of Headmasters of Schools with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction, selected secondary schools and pedagogical faculties of universities and, after incorporating the comments, the FC were discussed by subject committees. After approval, the FC for gymnasia were forwarded for approval by the MESRS SR.

Innovation of pedagogical documents for the area of Language and Communication for Primary Education and Lower Secondary Education – comments and proposals relating to the documents for Hungarian language and literature (hereinafter the “HLL”) and Slovak language and Slovak literature (hereinafter the “SLSL”) were discussed by subject committees and recommended for approval by the MESRS SR; the documents for higher secondary education were forwarded for comments to the Association of Headmasters of Schools with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction, selected secondary schools and pedagogical faculties of universities. After incorporating the comments, the documents were discussed by subject committees and, after approval, forwarded for approval by the MESRS SR. Experienced active teachers and representatives of larger schools participated in the development of the documents. In the educational area of Language and Communication - the general and specific objectives for the individual stages of education were reviewed and performance and content standards were identified for the subjects of SLSL and HLL. The documents for primary schools defined performance and content standards for the individual grades; performance and content standards for secondary schools were defined for a four-year phase. The documents were innovated in cooperation with the teacher community, taking into account the binding documents of the European Union and the conclusions and recommendations of the SSI and the National Institute of Certified Measurements of Education (hereinafter the “NICME”).

In order to raise the profile of the innovated NEPs and educational standards, articles were published in the *Katedra* journal intended, above all, for teachers working in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction (hereinafter “HLP”).⁶⁵

Since no tenders for **textbooks** were organised in 2014, some textbooks and workbooks were reissued and further teaching materials were published to accompany the existing textbooks. These were reissues for the subjects of Slovak language and Slovak literature for schools with Hungarian as the language of instruction, Hungarian language and literature, Ukrainian language and literature and Ruthenian language and literature. In the context of research on textbooks, two articles were published in conference proceedings.⁶⁶

In the area of **educational activities**, the NIE organised a series of professional events in 2014 (round table, course, methodological day, conference, seminar, scientific symposium and others) focusing on the provision of advice and consultation to teachers at the primary stage of education and MLL and SLSL teachers at the lower and upper stages of education; lecturing and publishing activities on the topic of teaching SLSL and MLL; teacher training and measuring the standard of education.

4.6 Support for improving the standard of Slovak language teaching for persons belonging to national minorities

In 2014, the NIE monitored **the standard of teaching of Slovak language and Slovak literature in primary schools and secondary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction**. As part of a research project, the NIE continued to process questionnaires identifying the personnel, material and technical conditions for teaching Slovak language and Slovak literature (hereinafter the “SLSL”) in primary and secondary schools using HLI at the primary and lower and higher secondary stage of education. The data collected are currently being evaluated and analysed. Monitoring of the educational process is planned in cooperation with members of the NIE’s SLSL Subject Committee and students of the Department of Slovak Language and Literature and the Department of Pre-school and Elementary Education at the Faculty of Education of J. Selye University in Komárno. The findings from the questionnaire survey and from the monitoring of the educational process will be continuously evaluated and incorporated into pedagogical documents for the subject of Slovak language and Slovak literature. A partial report based on the project was drawn up for

⁶⁵ Tímárová, L.: *Néhány gondolat a magyar nyelv és irodalom művelődési programjának kapcsán*. (A Few Ideas Related to the Educational Standard for HLL.) *Katedra* monthly, volume XXI, no. 6, February 2014, pp. 16 –17, ISSN 1335-6445;

Tímárová, L.: *A szövegértés megjelenése a magyar nyelv és irodalom művelődési programjában*. (Reading Literacy in the Educational Standard for HLL.) *Katedra* monthly, volume XXI, no. 8, April 2014, pp. 12 –13, ISSN 1335-6445;

Simon, Sz.: *K pravopisným zručnostiam žiakov základných a stredných škôl s vyučovacím jazykom maďarským na Slovensku* [On Orthographic Skills of Pupils and Students of Primary and Secondary Schools Using Hungarian as the Language of Instruction in Slovakia]. In: *Jazyk a literatúra* [Language and Literature]. vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 3 – 17.

ISSN 1339-7184. Available at: http://www.statpedu.sk/files/documents/jazyk-a-literatura/2_cislo.pdf.

⁶⁶ Ledneczká, Gy.: *Nyelvtankönyvek összehasonlító elemzése az alapiskola alsó tagozatában*. (Analysis and Comparison of Hungarian Language Textbooks at the 1st Stage of Primary Schools) In: *Tanulmányok a tankönyvkutatás feladatiról, módszereiről*. Conference proceedings. Bratislava: Terra 2014, pp. 205 – 219, ISBN 978-80-8098-136-5

Ledneczká, Gy.: *Alsó tagozatos olvasókönyvek összehasonlító vizsgálata*. (Comparison of Reading Textbooks at the 1st Stage of Primary Schools) In: *Tanulmányok a tankönyvkutatás feladatiról, módszereiről*. Conference proceedings. Bratislava: Terra 2014, pp. 69 – 80, ISBN 978-80-8098-136-5

the MESRS SR and the findings were presented at the international scientific conference entitled “Education and Science at the Start of the 21st Century” held in September 2014 in Komárno. The presentation was published in the electronic proceedings of the conference.⁶⁷

Based on a qualitative analysis, the NIE is currently working on the **draft concept for teaching Slovak language and Slovak literature for all stages of education**. Before the end of 2014, a comparative analysis of national educational programmes for languages of instruction and foreign languages in selected EU countries was performed. At the same time, a working version of a partial draft of the concept for the primary stage of education was created, however, it has yet to undergo the consultation exercise.

In the context of its research activities, the NIE also analysed the **feasibility of changes in teaching of Slovak language and Slovak literature in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction**. This document concludes that in order to achieve the desired results, it is necessary to take measures in the area of preparation and further training of teachers, creation of documents, material and didactic aids, specialised literature, material, technical and organisational conditions of teaching and, last but not least, conduct a national research project. In accordance with the conclusions of the meeting of MESRS SR’s leadership on 24.11.2011, a proposal for measures was drawn up for faculties of education concerning the training of primary education teachers and SLL teachers on the methodology of teaching SLSL. In this context, a partial report was drawn up for the MESRS SR.

The NIE is also an organiser of several **competitions** for pupils and students from primary and secondary schools using HLI, such as “**Poznaj slovenskú reč [Know the Slovak Tongue]**”, “**Pekná maďarská reč [Beautiful Hungarian Tongue]**” or “**Prečo mám rád slovenčinu, prečo mám rád Slovensko [Why I Like Slovak Language, Why I like Slovakia]**”. The objective of the contests is to develop pupils’ communication skills and habits so that they obtain high-quality language competence and reading literacy and develop a positive attitude towards Slovak language.⁶⁸

Operational programme Human Resources

In the new programming period 2014-2020, the MESRS SR has taken on and performs the role of the intermediate body under the managing authority for the operational programme Human Resources (hereinafter the “OP HR”) for the area of education, while the managing authority for OP HR is the MLSAF SR. The MESRS SR Agency for EU Structural Funds under the operational programme Education is not planning to publish any further calls for applications, nevertheless, it continues to implement demand-driven projects under the programming period 2007-2013. The publication of calls for grant applications under the OP HR and the provision of detailed information on the OP falls under the competence of the MESRS SR or its managing authority. The OP HR is a common programming document of the MLSAF SR, MESRS SR and MI SR for the provision of assistance from European Structural and Investment Funds in the programming period 2014-2020 in the area focusing

⁶⁷ Döményová, A. – Halászová, A. 2014. Selected data from the National Institute for Education’s research project - Monitoring of the Standard of Teaching of Slovak language in Primary Schools and Secondary Schools Using Hungarian as the Language of Instruction. Presentation in the proceedings from the international scientific conference of J. Selye University – 2014 “Education and Science at the Start of the 21st Century”, Theological Sciences and Humanities Section, 16-17 September 2014.

⁶⁸ <http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/Sutaze/Poznaj-slovensku-rec.alej>.
<http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/Sutaze/Pekna-madarska-rec.alej>.
<http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/Sutaze/Preco-mam-rad-slovencinu-preco-mam-rad-Slovensko.alej>.

on promoting education, employment, social inclusion and vulnerable groups in the labour market. Further information on the approved OP HR can be found on the MESRS SR's website.⁶⁹ Besides the MESRS SR, which is the competent authority for this area, the various interventions in the field of education will also be implemented through priority axis 5, in particular within the scope of specific objective 5.1.1. under the competence of the MI SR as the intermediate body and the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities as the administrator for selected measures, e.g. in the area of pre-primary education.

4.7 Equipment of schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of instruction or teaching a minority language

Schools are administered by their founders, who also provide the material and technical equipment for conducting the process of education and training, together with the didactic technology used in this process. Descriptions of material and technical conditions form part of the school educational programme, while the SSI, being an authority of state administration in the school system, oversees the standard of **material and technical conditions**. For the needs of schools, it has published the evaluation criteria applicable to the 2014/2015 school year, which were approved by the Chief School Inspector.⁷⁰

In accordance with Act No 596/2003 Coll., the MESRS SR has issued Regulation No 10/2011 laying down the procedure and rules for the selection and approval of textbooks, workbooks, learning texts (hereinafter "textbooks") in print, digital and other appropriate forms for kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, schools of art, and language schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic. The Regulation defines the roles of the MESRS SR, NIE and SVEI in the process of selection and approval of textbooks. The selection of suppliers of textbooks for the MESRS SR is subject to procedures laid down in special legislation.

In compliance with its statute, the **SVEI** operates as a pedagogical, advisory, training, research and development, information, coordination and management organisation for the entire network of secondary vocational schools in the Slovak Republic. The main mission of the institution comprises:

- expert and methodological management of secondary vocational education;
- development and innovation of national educational programmes, development of educational projects with foreign participation and provision for the development of textbooks and teaching resources;
- provision of expert, methodological, training and consulting activities in addressing the issues of secondary vocational education and occupational training within the entire network of secondary vocational schools and school facilities and in the context of lifelong learning, including further training of teachers and specialised staff of schools and school facilities;

⁶⁹ <http://www.isrra.sk/informacie/aktuality/1230-na-operacny-program-vzdelavanie-nadviaze-operacny-program-ludske-zdroje.html>.

⁷⁰ <http://www.ssiba.sk/Default.aspx?text=g&id=36&lang=sk>

- provision of the methodological, expert and technical framework for student contests promoting specialised theoretical and practical skills of students of secondary vocational schools and developing their talents and gifts.⁷¹

The MESRS SR supplied schools with approved textbooks for free, based on their orders. Textbooks for schools using a minority language of instruction were provided by the Ministry in accordance with the **publishing plan**, depending on orders from the individual schools. Primary schools and secondary schools rented textbooks, learning texts and workbooks for compulsory teaching subjects to their pupils and students for free. The updated textbook publishing plan approved for the 2014/15 school year is available on the website of the MESRS SR.⁷²

4.8 Informal education

A partly publicly-funded organisation of the MESRS SR **IUVENTA - the Slovak Youth Institute**, operates in the area of informal education and working with the youth.

In 2014, IUVENTA implemented a number of projects and educational and other support activities, conducted studies and released a number of publications focusing on the promotion and development of activities with young people belonging to national minorities or developing the competence of youth workers actively working with this youth group. These projects include:

Support for projects under the Erasmus+ EU programme

Erasmus+ programme: Youth in Action is a grant programme of the European Union set up especially for young people. It promotes their mobility, informal learning, development of key competences, inter-cultural dialogue and social inclusion of young people who lack opportunities.

The projects supported in 2014 (with an implementation period extending to 2015) focusing on national minorities are:

- Building bridges

The project is implemented in cooperation with German and Polish organisations. During the 12-month project, three young volunteers will perform activities in Roma communities in the towns of Liptovský Mikuláš and Jelšava. Their work comprises activities in the Roma centre for preschool children and local schools, where they will present their countries in an informal manner. Activities will also take place at the local level, with the local community, in a foreign language. The added value of this project is the development of cross-border cooperation in the Liptov region.

- Shake It Up!

This European Voluntary Service project sends a Spanish volunteer to a Hungarian-Roma community. The volunteer's work will comprise activities in the local orphanage and a café run by a civic association. The volunteer will be in charge of public relations and

⁷¹ <http://www.siov.sk/koncepcne-a-koordinacne-cinnosti/9406s>

⁷² [Updated textbook publishing and distribution plan approved for the 2014/15 school year](#)

workshops on painting, dancing or foreign languages. Hence, the added value of the project is the strong inclusive dimension not only for the community, but also for the volunteer herself who is inclined towards social and educational work.

-If a Woman Says NO!

The project entitled If a Woman Says No! engages young Roma males from disadvantaged backgrounds in a 7-day youth exchange organised together with organisations from the Czech Republic and Hungary. The objective is to draw attention to the persistent negative stereotypes - the status of women in the Roma family (denial of the right to work, violence) through primary and secondary prevention and informal learning activities. The specific activities include, in particular, workshops and lectures with experts on the topics of violence and abuse.

- RoMancipate Yourself

A European Voluntary Service project engaging 4 young Roma from France, Romania, Italy and Hungary. The volunteers will prepare and implement cultural activities and leisure activities for children and youth in a community centre, promote volunteering and the organisation's activities and contribute to the dissemination of information about opportunities for Roma youth in Slovakia.

- Community building using local media in Gemer region

The project engages two volunteers from France and Turkey who, during their 12-month volunteering activities, will be in charge of an information portal intended, in particular, for Hungarian and Roma minority communities who lack sufficient access to information and are in an adverse social situation.

- Journalist in Action

38 young people, mostly Roma from Slovakia, Romania, Spain and Poland, will take part in this Youth Exchange project. The role of these young people will be to use activities to demonstrate that Roma can do other things besides music and dancing. The aim of the project is to publish a magazine presenting the competences they acquired during the exchange – photography, writing and article composition and work with the camera and microphone. Last but not least, the purpose will be to encourage a positive relationship of the majority community to minorities.

- Time to renew

The European Voluntary Service project “Time to renew” engages a volunteer from Malta in the activities of a local centre in a Slovak-Hungarian-Roma community. The role of the volunteer during her 12-month stay will be to motivate and encourage local youth towards learning and guide them towards a healthy lifestyle. The volunteer will also take part on organising indoor and outdoor activities for children and local youth.

- Communication is my future

Roma from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary will take part in the Youth Exchange project “Communication is my future”. The project aims to support the development of young people's communication skills and allow young Roma to learn about the world behind the gates of their community. The project also focuses on the promotion of tolerance and understanding between young people and overcoming the fear of the unknown.

Educational activities:

- Workshops for non-Roma substitute families (adoptive parents, foster parents and professional families) who are looking after or adopting a Roma child or children. The workshops were targeted at making use of informal education for working with substitute families and strengthening parents' skills for working with "otherness" (how to deal with the prejudices of persons surrounding the families, how to prepare children for accepting their otherness in the family, how to create and develop support groups, how to work with models and stories of successful Roma).
- Teacher training on dealing with prejudice and promotion of tolerance between Roma and non-Roma pupils.
- Workshops for primary school teachers on how to promote the participation of Roma youth in schools.
- Teacher training "Teach for Slovakia" on working with families of Roma parents.

Other support activities

- Support training in personality development for Roma children during the Divé maky [Wild Poppies] summer academy. A total of 40 hours of workshops focusing on self-reflection of the participants of the Wild Poppies programme in the context of the project, individual development and evaluation of the programme's benefits. The fellowship programme Wild Poppies is implemented by the Divé maky civic association to support talented Roma children and youth.
- Expert support for fine-tuning and improving mentoring programmes for the development of work with Roma youth.
- Expert support for the introduction of the Teach for Slovakia programme in the area of informal education on working with Roma youth.

Human rights OLYMPICS (HRO)

The main theme was "Human Rights in Slovakia after Twenty Years – from Where and Where to?" One of the reasons for choosing this theme was the preparation of the Strategy under the responsibility of the MFEA SR.

The competition was preceded by the traditional October training for human rights multipliers in 8 regions of the Slovak Republic, organised in partnership with the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights Education at the Comenius University in Bratislava, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, diplomatic representations in the Slovak Republic, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Slovakia and with support from the MFEA SR grant programme "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms".

Two **publications** were prepared for the HRO, the *Human Rights Dictionary* and *Selected Texts on Human Rights*, which have been distributed to teachers.

Publications in 2014

- *Mládež v akcii: Šanca na zmenu aj pre mládež v rómskych komunitách*⁷³
- *Youth in Action: A Chance for Change Embracing the Young People of Roma Communities*⁷⁴

⁷³ <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Publikacie/Inkluzia/Mladez-v-akcii-Sanca-na-zmenu-aj-pre-mladez-v-romskych-komunitach.alej>

- Human Rights Olympics Chronicle⁷⁵

National ESF projects

As regards the number of persons receiving training, who identify themselves as individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds or person from marginalised groups, the data provided by these persons themselves are used as a basis in the context of the **National Praktik Project**. In the case of the National KomPrax Project, these data are not monitored.

Under the National Praktik Project, **thematic training for youth workers and youth leaders** was provided in the course of 2014 on the following topics:

- Aj nás sa to týka [It Concerns us too] (global education, Košice region): 4 seminars/44 participants
- Svet je rôznorodý [The World is Diverse] (multiculturalism, Prešov region): 3 seminars/36 participants

The number of participants totalled 338 as of 31 December 2014.

Breakdown of participants by vulnerable groups, in accordance with national rules	
Migrants	5
Minorities	9

⁷⁴<https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Publikacie/Inkluzia/Youth-In-Action-A-Change-For-Change-Embracing-The-Young-People-Of-Roma-Communities.alej>

⁷⁵ <http://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Olympiady/Linky.alej>

Under the **National KomPrax Project**, specialised further **training** was provided on the relevant topics:

What to do about discrimination in the labour market?	NV02
Discrimination on the grounds of age: case studies on the types of discriminatory behaviour in the workplace. Working with information: Economic rights in the context of the Slovak legislation. Prevention and tackling discrimination in the context of project thinking. Development of project ideas reflecting youth discrimination issues in the economic area. The roles and key competences of multipliers of the equal treatment principle. Communication, presentation and argumentation skills as a tool for the enforcement of rights. Support during the implementation of projects. Implementation of project ideas and reflection on practical experience. Presentation of projects and feedback. Project evaluation and accounting. The overall social importance of the protection of human rights and the equal treatment principle. Usability of the acquired competences in working with youth.	
Working with disadvantaged youth	NV07
The mission and purpose of social work with youth. Humanism in social work. Social work methods and techniques. Phases of social work. Methods of working with individuals. Methods of working with groups and communities. Characteristics and objectives of the socio-therapeutic process. Socio-therapeutic interventions and procedures. Implementation of small projects to acquire and verify competences. Presentation of projects, self-reflection on learnt or verified competences. Implementation, monitoring and casuistry of work with youth. Sustainability of work with youth.	
Competitiveness and cooperation	NV15
Development of the life skills of cooperation and competition in working with youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Models and approaches used in work with youth, life skills. Identification of own emotions. Self-regulation – self-reflection, self-control. Cooperation between group members and practical group cooperation training. Competition – competitiveness as a means of personal development of an individual, in integration into the common good of the group and practical group competition training. Development of projects. Practical cooperation and competition training. Plan for the development of competences and cooperation for the common good and development of the local community. Reflection and evaluation of cooperation and competition in practice – evaluation of projects.	
Slovakia as an inter-cultural society	NV18
“Us” and “Them” – Cultural diversity of Slovakia and the inter-cultural dimension of today's Slovak society. Selected methods and forms of inter-cultural training (ICT). Organisational and content preparation for inter-cultural activities. Practical training (project implementation). Debriefing evaluation in ICT. Trends and opportunities for the development and promotion of ICT.	
Global education for youth	NV24
An introduction to the training and the topic of global education (GE). Global citizenship and global interdependence. Active citizenship – participation and bringing about change. Analysis of the needs and the practice and development plan. Creation of a project focusing on global education. Practical training on global education. Presentation, analysis and reflection of outcomes in the field. Plan of future development of the acquired competences and possibilities for participation.	

Working with youth at risk	NV29
Self-knowledge and confidence in one's own abilities (specialised and personality capabilities important for working with young people with specific needs). Low-threshold principles of work with young people with specific needs. Ethical and professional rules. Contact work and effective (encouraging) interview. Dealing with challenging situations. Effectiveness and impact of work with young people with specific needs. Work management.	
Training for Roma leaders	NV30
History and present of Roma. The current situation of Roma in Slovakia and proposals for solutions. Communication and resolution of conflicts. Self-esteem and its growth. The role of the leader and leadership. Project – project preparation, project management. Verification in practice (implementation of a small project). Project evaluation.	

The individual **training programmes** were created on the basis of studies, which were conducted in 2013 and outputs from which were published in the same year.

The following training sessions had been organised as of 31.12.2014:

Title	number of sessions	number of participants
What to do about discrimination in the labour market?	1	10
Working with disadvantaged youth	1	13
Competitiveness and cooperation	2	35
Slovakia as an inter-cultural society	2	38
Global education for youth	2	34
Working with youth at risk	2	34
Training for Roma leaders	2	36

Studies

In 2014, IUVENTA coordinated a team of experts working on a survey on school educational programmes in schools with a high representation of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, focusing on the principles of inclusive education.

Projects planned for 2015

Erasmus+

Preparation and implementation of the international seminar “TC for organisations working with Roma youth” (HU, CZ, HR, BG, EC) designed for organisations working with Roma youth. The objective of the seminar is to increase the number and quality of projects in which Roma youth are involved under the Erasmus+ programme and present to the target group the opportunities that the programme offers. The seminar will take place on 21–26 April 2015.

Preparation and implementation of an activity aimed at building partnerships between organisations working with Roma youth. The objective of the activity is to promote international cooperation between organisations facing language barriers. Therefore, the activity will be organised for regions close in terms of language – Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and will focus on Key Action 2 – Youth Initiatives.

Publications

Under the ESF National Praktik Project, publications are being prepared focusing on global education and multiculturalism.

KOMPASITO – in the course of 2014, work was carried out on a methodological guidebook for HR education for children of pre-school age and pupils in the 1st stage of primary schools. It is at the stage of graphic proofreading and will be released in electronic form and freely downloadable from the IUVENTA website in 2015.

Part V – The use of national minority languages

Under Article 34(1) and (2)b) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, citizens representing national minorities or ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic are guaranteed, under conditions set out by law, the **right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue and the right to use their language in official contact**. The legislative framework for the use of national minority languages is complemented by a whole range of other legislation of general application as envisaged in the Constitution.

Act No 270/1995 Coll. on the State language of the Slovak Republic, as amended (hereinafter the “**State Language Act**”), governs the use of the State language, which is the Slovak language in the Slovak Republic, as the basic means of communication and lays down the rules for the use of other languages in relation to the State language, including minority languages. This is the basic standard governing the use of languages in the Slovak Republic, which is the *lex specialis* in respect of the standards governing the use of minority languages.

Act No 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended (hereinafter the “**Act on the Use of National Minority Languages**”) governs the use of national minority languages by citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to national minorities and lays down the rules for using minority languages in official contact and in other areas, in municipalities where the proportion of the population belonging to a national minority reaches the threshold required by law. This Act defines nine languages as minority languages: **Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian**. This means that the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages concerns, in particular, the use of national minority languages in official contact, signs in minority languages, local referenda on changing the minority language name of a municipality, provision of information in minority languages, the powers of the Office of the Government in the area of the use of national minority languages and administrative offences in the area of the use of national minority languages. In certain other provisions, the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages refers to other existing legislation.



Source: ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTO BY THE SME DAILY – TIBOR SOMOGYI

The State Language Act and the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages were amended in 2011 in order to provide greater protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Slovak Republic so that compliance with the human rights principles enshrined in international conventions binding on the Slovak Republic is reinforced. In accordance with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, both laws reflect the legal status of the State language and minority languages and, in line with international principles, determine the rules for the use of these languages in the key areas of public communication in the Slovak Republic. The amendment to the State Language Act adopted in 2009 added several legal possibilities guaranteeing the application of minority languages in public situations.

The Act on the Use of National Minority Languages has territorially limited applicability since most of its provisions apply solely to the territory of municipalities listed in a Government regulation. An exception is the use of minority languages in oral communication with civil servants (subject to consent of the civil servant and persons involved in the proceedings) and the use of geographical indications in publications and other situations where minority languages are used.

The implementing regulation to the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages is **Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 535/2011** of 19 December 2011 implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended, which lays down the details of the provision of information on the possibilities for using national minority languages in official contact and the form of bilingual official documents.

Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 534/2011 Coll. of 19 December 2011 amending Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 221/1999 Coll. issuing the list of municipalities in which citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority account for at least 20 % of the population, established a new official list of names of municipalities in minority languages.

5.1 Application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended

Within the meaning of § 7a(1) of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages, the Office of the Government provides **expert and methodological assistance** to public authorities and organisational units of security and rescue forces in the implementation of this Act. To this end, an expert committee was set up at the Office of the Government, which is a permanent advisory body to the Head of the Civil Servants' Office. Members of the committee include representatives of the Office of the Government, the MC SR, the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MTCRD SR"), the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MF SR"), the MLSAF SR, the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MEn SR"), the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MH SR"), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MARD SR"), the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "GCCA SR") and the Association of Slovak Towns and Villages (hereinafter the "ASTV").

The committee's objective is to provide expert and methodological assistance to public authorities and organisational units of security and rescue forces in the implementation of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages and prepare positions on complaints filed under the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages.

Within the meaning of § 7a(1) of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages, through the Office of the Plenipotentiary, the Office of the Government also provides expert and methodological assistance to public authorities in the area of management of terminology in minority languages and preparation of specialised glossaries. These specialised glossaries are intended to simplify, facilitate and streamline the use of minority languages in official contact. They are designed, in particular, for civil servants using minority languages in day-to-day communication, as well as for interpreters and translators working with specialised texts from the area of public administration and citizens who need to use technical terminology in minority languages when attending to their matters. A terminology framework in the State language was created for the development of the glossaries, which was discussed with all the departments concerned and which represents a database of the most frequently used terms and phrases from selected areas of State administration and local self-government in the Slovak Republic.

The following have been made available on the website of the Office of the Plenipotentiary: Slovak-Hungarian glossary, Slovak-Roma glossary and Slovak-Ruthenian glossary. The glossaries were created by experts on the development of technical terminology in minority languages for the activities of public authorities. At present, the Office of the Plenipotentiary is preparing an update and proofreading of selected expressions (terms), together with the Ukrainian version of the glossary.

In accordance with § 7b of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages, **administrative offences** in the area of the use of national minority languages are dealt with by the Office of the Government. At the first-instance level, the Head of the Civil Servants' Office acts upon these matters on behalf of the Office of the Government and, at the second-instance level, they are dealt with by the Head of the Office of the Government. The expert committee also prepares recommendations for the Head of the Civil Servants' Office concerning complaints related to suspected infringements of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages. In 2014, the Office of the Government completed investigations into 29 cases of suspected infringements of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages (filed in 2013). The infringements of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages that were found have been rectified. In 2014, the Office of the Government received no complaints filed within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

In accordance with § 7a of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages, every two years the Office of the Government presents to the Government the **Report on the State of the Use of Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic** (hereinafter the "Language Report"). Prior to submission, the Council takes a position on the Language Report. In order to collect information for the preparation of the report, the Office of the Government is entitled to request public authorities to provide information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in the areas of their competence.

The Language Report covering the 2013-2014 period was discussed on 10 December 2014.⁷⁶ In the context of drafting the Language Report, the Office of the Government, through

⁷⁶ See: <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/jazyky-narodnostnych-mensin/>

the Office of the Plenipotentiary, conducted a questionnaire survey to collect up-to-date information as at 01.09.2014 concerning the relevant areas the use of national minority languages within the scope of competence of municipalities and self-governing regions as envisaged in the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages. The questionnaire was sent to all municipalities included in the list annexed to Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 534/2011 Coll. of 19 December 2011 amending Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 221/1999 Coll. issuing the list of municipalities in which citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority account for at least 20 % of the population. These comprise a total of 656 municipalities, of which 512 are municipalities with Hungarian minority, 68 with Ruthenian, 57 with Roma, 18 with Ukrainian and 1 municipality with German minority. For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that 17 municipalities have the threshold concentration of two national minorities (10 are municipalities with Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities, 5 with Hungarian and Roma minorities, 1 municipality with Ukrainian and Roma minorities and 1 municipality with Ruthenian and Roma minorities). The report summarises the national legislative framework for the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic, maps the process and results of the implementation of the international legal framework for the protection of minority languages in the Slovak Republic, as well as recent developments in the area of the institutional framework for the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic.

5.2 Language topics dealt with by the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups

Russian and Serbian languages

Through Resolutions No 17 and No 18 dated 6 December 2012, the Committee approved a proposal of the representative of the Serbian minority and a proposal of the representative of the Russian minority to include Serbian and Russian among minority languages used in the Slovak Republic under the Language Charter and instructed the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee to submit a draft resolution to the Council.

In March 2013, former Plenipotentiary László Nagy sent a letter to 10 ministries requesting their opinion on the matter of including Serbian and Russian among minority languages under the Language Charter. 2 of the ministries gave an unfavourable opinion: the MC SR and the MESRS SR. The MTCRD SR delivered a partly unfavourable opinion. 7 ministries had no objections: the MF SR, MA SR, MLSAF SR, MI SR, MH SR and the GCCA SR.

As a follow-up to the above, in 2014 the Office of the Plenipotentiary held a series of separate talks with the MFEA SR – the lead authority for the Language Charter, and the ministries which had given an unfavourable opinion (the MC SR and the MESRS SR). The subject of the talks was the possible level of commitments in relation to the relevant languages and their financial implications. In line with the conclusions of the talks, it was agreed that at the next meeting of the Committee the Secretariat of the Committee would present, under the item Miscellaneous, the ministries' preliminary positive opinions and that a working meeting would be held with representatives of the MFEA SR and with participation of the minorities concerned to specify the procedure for recognition of these languages as

minority languages in Slovakia within the meaning of the Language Charter. The preparatory process concerning the possibility of recognising Russian and Serbian as minority languages in Slovakia within the meaning of the Language Charter will continue in 2015.

Conclusion

The ambition of this Plenipotentiary's Report was to provide a brief and objective account of the position of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Slovak Republic with regard to the developments in this area over the period under review. Therefore, the attention of the present Plenipotentiary's Report, further to the 2013 report, is focused on those areas where changes occurred in the period under review and provides up-to-date data, information and evaluations concerning the key areas related to the position and rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the Slovak Republic.

In this context, the Plenipotentiary's Report pays attention to the process of preparation of the base document for the preparation of the part of the Strategy relating to the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, which was discussed and approved by the Government as part of the Strategy and its annexes. As a follow-up to this process, efforts will be concentrated on drawing up the action plan for national minorities in 2015.

A significant part of the Plenipotentiary's Report provides information on the ongoing dialogue with international monitoring mechanisms relevant to the area of the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities or protection of regional or minority languages over the period under review.

As regards the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public governance and mechanisms of co-decision on public matters, the report deals in detail especially with the processes within the Committee, which is an institutionalised consultative mechanism of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and a platform for their participation in addressing the matters that concern them.

The key areas in relation to the position and rights of persons belonging to national minorities include the areas of education and training, use of languages and promotion of the culture of national minorities. The Plenipotentiary's Report provides comprehensive information on these areas, with a focus on new programmes, projects and application practice.

List of annexes

1. Activities of self-governing regions in the area of support for national minorities
2. Breakdown of the 2014 CNM programme
3. Selected data on the 2014 CNM programme

Annex 1: Activities of self-governing regions in the area of support for national minorities

Self-governing region	Policy focusing on persons belonging to national minorities	Funds allocated for national minorities (in EUR)	Activities
Banská Bystrica self-governing region	none developed	n/a	Various activities in cultural institutions whose founder is the Banská Bystrica region: Culture and education centres: Hontiansko-ipeľské, Gemersko-malohontské, Pohronské, Podpolianske and Hontiansko-novohradské. Libraries: Ľ. Štúr Regional Library , Novohradská Library, Ján Kollár Library Hontiansko-novohradská Library, Matej Hrebenda Library. Regional museums and galleries: Gemersko-malohontské Museum, Novohradské Museum and Gallery, Horehronské Museum and Stredoslovenské Museum Na Rázcestí Puppet Theatre.
Bratislava self-governing region	none developed	in 2014 1 000 - for the Stratené mesto [Lost City] project	The Bratislava region participated in the project Lost City - Jewish national minority, the Odon Lechner architecture exhibition and the “Príbeh poľnej fľaše [Story of a Canteen Bottle]” exhibition. Various activities in cultural institutions whose founder is the Bratislava region, Small Carpathian Museum and Small Carpathian Library in Pezinok and the Astorka Festival.
Košice self-governing region	The Culture and Tourism Department has prepared a plan for the development of the Romathan Theatre – extension of its scope of activities to include edification activities by creating a two-unit national minority institution	n/a	The culture of national minorities is developed by six culture and education institutions whose founder is the Košice region. In excess of 120 events took place attended by 38 300 visitors.
Nitra self-governing region	n/a	19 050	Various activities of civic associations, foundations and cultural institutions of the Hungarian and the Roma minorities.
Prešov self-governing	n/a	n/a	Various activities in cultural institutions whose founder is the Prešov region: Culture

region			<p>and education centres: Vihorlatské, Podduklianske, Ľubovnianske, Hornozemplínske, Podtatranské and Hornošarišské.</p> <p>Libraries: Dávid Gutgesel District Library, Podtatranská Library, Podduklianska Library, Vihorlat Library, Ľubovňa Library, Hornozemplínska Library and P.O.Hviezdoslav Library.</p> <p>Jonáš Záborský Theatre – the theatre’s educational activities.</p> <p>Regional museums and galleries: Regional Museum, Vihorlat Museum, Vlastivedné Museum, Šariš Museum, Ľubovňa Museum, Podtatranské Museum, the Museum in Kežmarok, A. Warhol Museum and Šariš Gallery.</p> <p>Observatories: Prešov Observatory and Planetarium, Vihorlatská Observatory.</p>
Trenčín self-governing region	n/a	n/a	<p>Various activities in cultural establishments whose founder is the Trenčín region.</p> <p>Regional cultural centre in Prievidza – creative workshops for Roma children and cooperation with the Carpathian German Association.</p>
Trnava self-governing region	n/a	5 700	<p>Support for organisations of the Czech, Hungarian and Roma minorities under the Call for Applications in the context of the programme “Support for Cultural and Art Activities in 2014”.</p> <p>Various activities of 18 cultural establishments whose founder is the Trnava region.</p>
Žilina self-governing region	none developed	n/a	<p>Various activities in cultural establishments whose founder is the Žilina region:</p> <p>Culture and education centres: Žilina, Turiec and Orava cultural centres.</p> <p>Libraries: Regional Library, Kysuce Library, Turiec Library, G.F.Belopotocký Liptov Library and Anton Habovštiak Orava Library.</p> <p>Museums and galleries: Liptov Museum, Orava Gallery, Liptov Gallery and P.M.Bohúň Gallery.</p> <p>Theatres: Žilina Puppet Theatre, Slovak Chamber Theatre in Martin.</p>

Annex 2: Breakdown of the 2014 CNM programme

In accordance with the Call for Applications and its annexes, the 2014 CNM programme was divided into sub-programmes and priorities as follows:

1. preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities,

- 1.1. publishing activities, support for periodical and non-periodical press, audio and multimedia carriers and electronic content,
- 1.2. activities of theatres and folk art ensembles and activities of cultural and church institutions,
- 1.3. promotion of cultural activities and artistic creation,
- 1.4. research into the culture, life, history, language and identity of persons belonging to minorities,
- 1.5. educational projects,
- 1.6. interest and leisure activities,
- 1.7. foreign and international cultural activities.

2. education and training on the rights of national minorities

- 2.1. support for education and training for children and youth in the area of the rights of national minorities,
- 2.2. support for education and seminars on the rights of national minorities,
- 2.3. analytical, expert and publishing activities in the area of the rights of national minorities.

3. inter-ethnic and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding between the majority society and national minorities and ethnic groups.

- 3.1. promotion of mutual understanding and convergence between ethnic groups and between the majority society and minorities, as well as between the individual ethnic minorities,
- 3.2. projects focusing on the identification and recognition of common cultural, artistic and scientific values and traditions,
- 3.3. projects focusing on uncovering and exploring family, local and regional history, traditions, personalities and monuments in ethnically mixed environments,
- 3.4. promotion of the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance towards minority languages and cultures in the system of education and training and in the mass media,
- 3.5. promotion of exchange programmes, study visits, joint training events, and knowledge and art competitions for children and youth from different ethnic and language groups.

Annex 3: Selected data on the 2014 CNM programme

Chart 5: Number of supported projects by the applicant's legal form

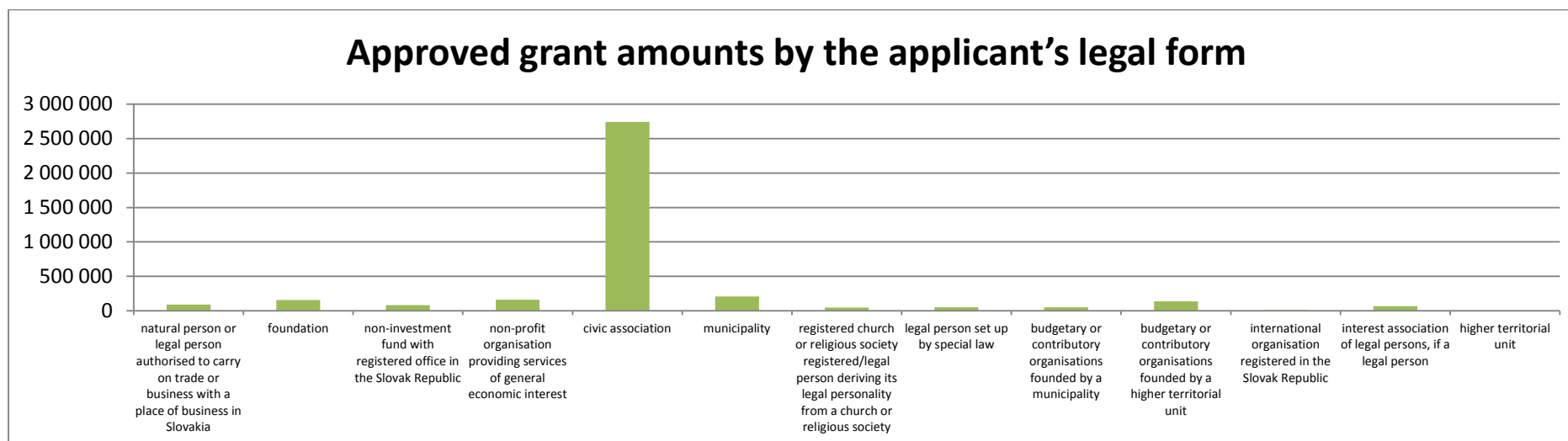
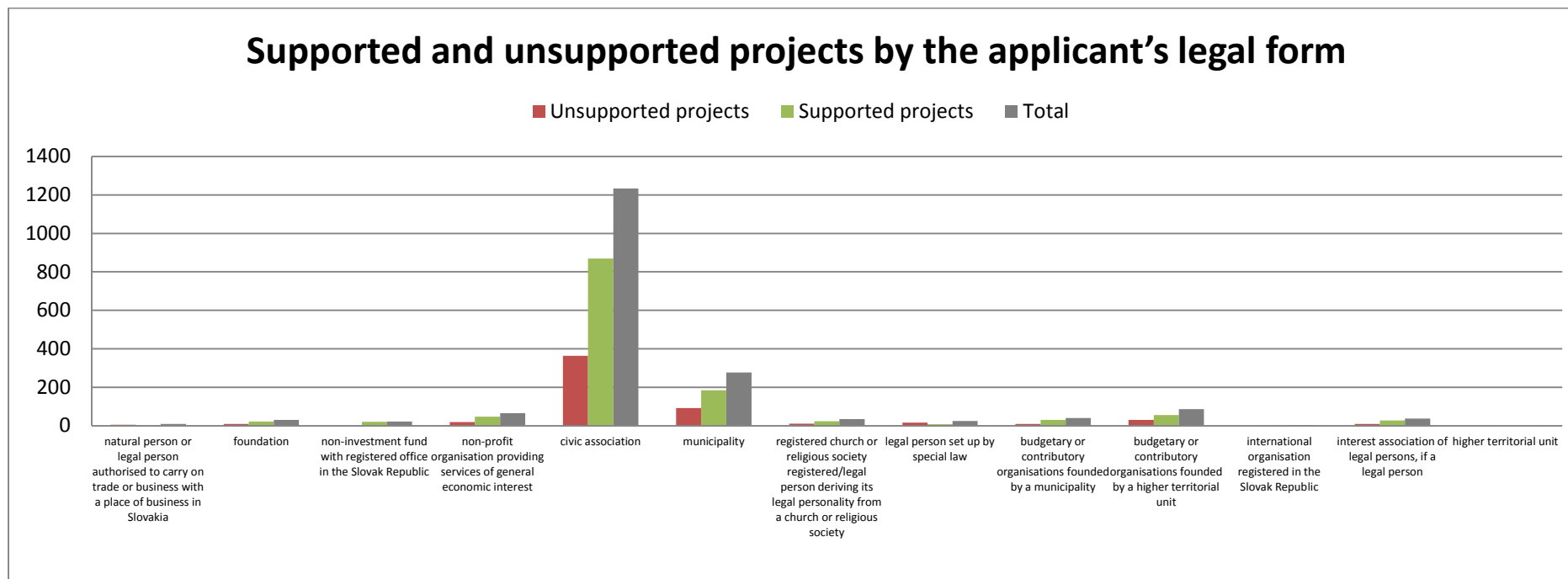


Chart 6: Number of supported projects by registered office of the applicant

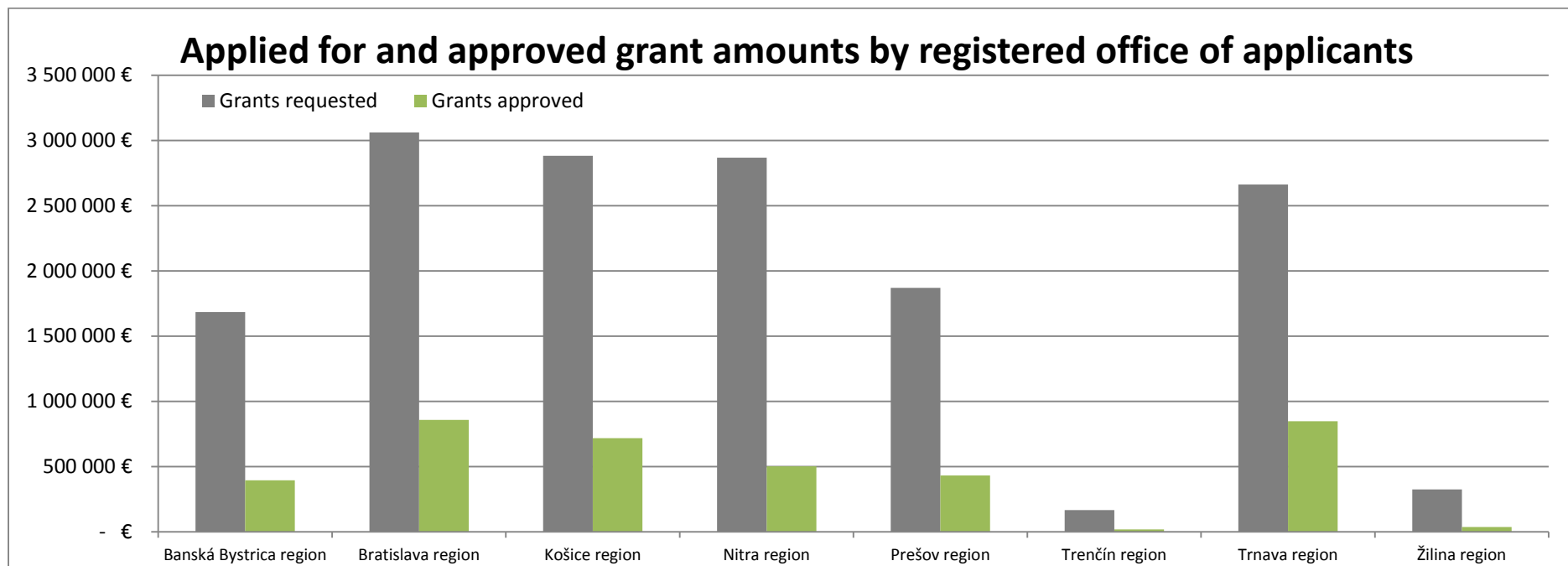
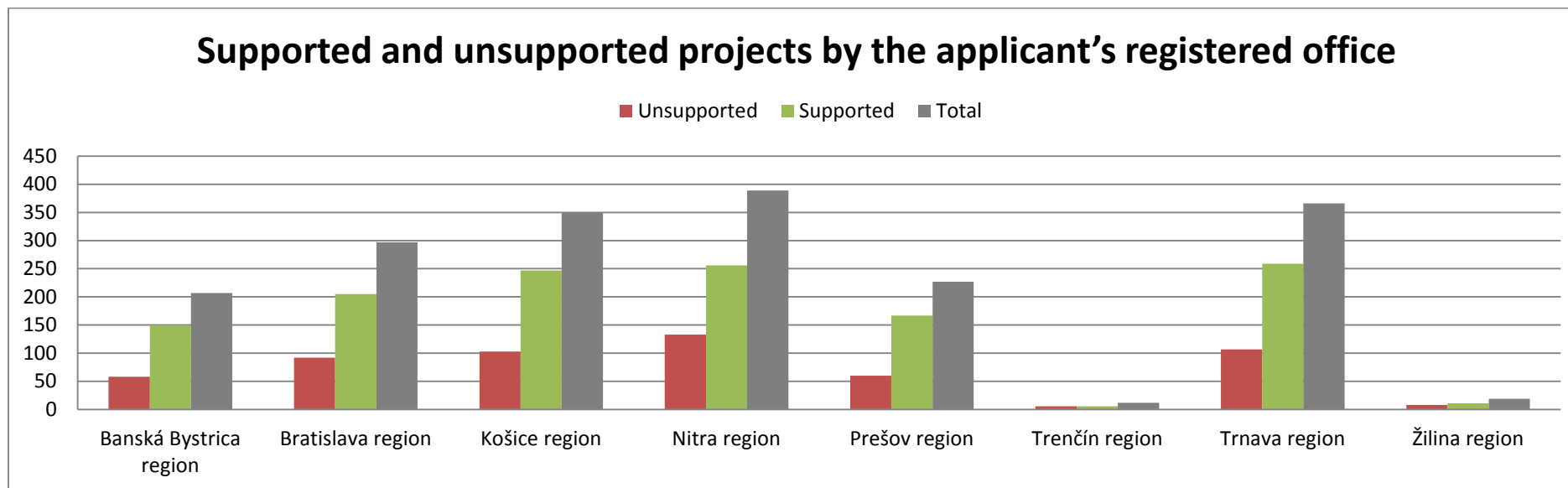


Chart 7: Number of supported projects by area

