



Report

on the Situation and
Rights of Persons
Belonging to National
Minorities 2013

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

Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

2014

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Introduction

The Slovak Republic is committed to the ideas of intercultural and interethnic dialogue and to building understanding between majority society and persons belonging to individual national minorities and ethnic groups. The process of building multicultural society based on such ideas is complex and long-running, and requires a cross-cutting approach. One of the key areas in this context is the preservation, development and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and implementation of systemic measures aimed to improve the situation of persons belonging to national minorities; it falls under the purview of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Government Plenipotentiary”) as an advisory body to the Government of the Slovak Republic. Among the Plenipotentiary’s key tasks are the monitoring, analysis and evaluation of the respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities on the part of State administration authorities, self-governing bodies and other competent bodies, and submission to the Government of the Slovak Republic of annual reports on the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “report”).

In 2013, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Office of the Government Plenipotentiary”) prepared the first report for 2012. This report was discussed by the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups of the Council of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the “CNMEG” – Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups) and approved by its Resolution No. 26 on 27 September 2013. The Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Report by Resolution No. 605 on 16 October 2013.

The first report of the Government Plenipotentiary on the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities provided a comprehensive picture of the situation of national minorities within the social, economic and political context of the Slovak Republic, and of the respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, international conventions and national legislation. The Report was compiled on the basis of available data and information collected by the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary.

Because this was the first such nationwide report, it gave a more detailed picture especially of the socioeconomic situation of national minorities, drawing mainly on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, in particular those from the 2011 population and housing census. Similarly detailed were sections relating to public governance participation of persons belonging to national minorities, culture of national minorities, use of the languages of national minorities, as well as upbringing and education of persons belonging to national minorities.

The present Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities 2013 has a similar structure as the previous one; it focuses mainly on updating data, information and evaluations, and draws attention to the areas where a change occurred in comparison with the previous year. When justified and called for by the context, the content of the Report relates also to the pre- and post-2013 periods.

The Report has five parts. Part One deals with national and international commitments of the Slovak Republic in the area of the situation and rights of national minorities; it maps out monitoring processes under control mechanisms for particular commitments and provides an overview of the most substantial legislative changes in this area in 2013.

The part addressing the Participation in Public Governance by Persons Belonging to National Minorities reports on recent developments in this area, particularly in the light of

modifications of individual participatory mechanisms and results of their application in the period under review.

Part Three contains information on promoting the preservation, expression, protection and development of identity and cultural values of persons belonging to national minorities, with special emphasis on the process of creating new transparent rules for allocation of funds under the grant programme Culture of National Minorities.

The section on upbringing and education of persons belonging to national minorities gives a comprehensive and detailed picture of all aspects of upbringing and education in connection with this target group; compared with the previous report, it gives a more detailed and concrete treatment of the theme.

The content of the last part concerning the Use of the Languages of National Minorities dwells mainly on application practice because no legislative change has taken place in this area during the period under review.

The concluding part of the Report gives a summary of the most important findings of the Report with emphasis on the most substantial changes in the situation of and respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in 2013. Attached to this part are Annexes which present the data supplementing individual parts of the Report.

Part One – 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 situation, rights and protection of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic are provided for in Articles 12, 33 and 34 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

Article 34 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic stipulates that the citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups are guaranteed the right to their all-round development, in particular the right to cultivate their culture jointly with other persons belonging to their minority or group, the right to impart and receive information in their mother tongues, the right to associate in national minority associations, and the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. In addition to the right to learn the State language, the citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups are guaranteed, under conditions laid down by law, also:

- a) the right to education in their language,
- b) the right to use their language in official communications,
- c) the right to participate in the decisions concerning matters with relevance for national minorities and ethnic groups.

Constitutional provisions are further elaborated in more than 30 legal acts of the Slovak Republic,¹ which embody the concept of the protection of individual human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in relevant international treaties.

1.1.1 Legislation of the Slovak Republic

In 2013, several laws underwent amendments. The most important changes were introduced, in particular, by:

- amendment to Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and protection against discrimination, and on amending certain other laws, as amended, (the Antidiscrimination Act)²

In connection with temporary affirmative measures, negative definition of discrimination was introduced with effect from 1 April 2013. The amendment extended the right to adopt temporary affirmative measures to all public administration bodies and other legal persons in the aim of eliminating disadvantages arising by reason of racial or ethnic origin, belonging to a national minority or ethnic group, gender, age or disability, in order to ensure equal opportunities in practice.

The draft amended text was based on the amendment that had been initially submitted to and approved by the Government at its session on 24 October 2007 (Resolution No. 916/2007). The Resolution is also in compliance with the relevant Directive³ and, at the same time, implements the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women formulated in the concluding observations on the second, third and fourth periodic report of the Slovak Republic to the Convention on the Elimination of All

¹ See, e.g., the Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities 2012.

² Act No. 32/2013 Coll. amending Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and protection against discrimination, and on amending certain other laws, as amended (the Antidiscrimination Act), and amending Act No. 8/2008 Coll. on insurance and on amending certain other laws, as amended.

³ Council Directive No. 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services.

Forms of Discrimination against Women, discussed by the Committee at its 41st session in July 2008.

- amendment to Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on upbringing and education (the School Act) and on amending certain other laws⁴

The amendment inter alia increased the maximum number of pupils per class in primary schools and secondary schools; set the minimum number of pupils per class in primary and secondary schools; authorised school directors to complete up to maximum class size the number of pupils in the class to make up for pupils permitted to study abroad; abolished the use of language certificates as a substitute for school leaving examinations in foreign languages; harmonised the provisions of Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on the financing of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities, as amended, as regards the funding of the costs of textbooks, workbooks and learning texts, with Section 13 of the School Act; authorised school founders to approve, besides the number of admitted students, also the number of classes; and laid down the obligation to annually publish the methodology for allocating funds to school founders by means of conciliation procedure and to the founders of public kindergartens and public school facilities.

- amendment to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 270/1995 Coll. on the State language of the Slovak Republic, as amended⁵

Legal provisions governing the use of languages in radio and television broadcasting applicable to broadcasters were amended with effect from 1 January 2014, expanding the range of the existing exemptions from mandatory use of the State (Slovak) language in broadcasting through adding another exemption for broadcasters transmitting programmes in one or several official EU languages (other than Slovak) and wishing to provide their programme service to the citizens of other EU Member States established in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

As a result of this change, a new requirement was introduced for licence applications filed under special regulations;⁶ they have to contain information on the proposed language or languages in which the licence applicant wishes to broadcast. The Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission shall assess such applications also in the light of adequate availability of broadcasting services in the Slovak language in the relevant part of the territory. This will apply to regional and local broadcasting which, in terms of its character and focus, differs from nationwide broadcasting and usually pays attention mainly to information about the life of local communities.

- amendment to Act No. 301/2005 Coll. Code of Criminal Procedure, as amended⁷

The amended act transposes into the Slovak legislation, with effect from 1 February 2014, Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. The Directive aims to ensure the rights

⁴ Act No. 464/2013 Coll. amending Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on upbringing and education (the School Act) and on amending certain other laws, as amended, and amending certain other laws.

⁵ Act No. 373/2013 Coll. amending Act No. 308/2000 Coll. on broadcasting and retransmission and on amending Act No. 195/2000 Coll. on telecommunications, as amended, and amending certain other laws.

⁶ Act No. 308/2000 Coll. on broadcasting and retransmission and on amending Act No. 195/2000 Coll. on telecommunications, as amended, and Act No. 220/2007 Coll. on digital broadcasting of programme services and on provision of other content services through digital transmission and on amending certain other laws (the Digital Broadcasting Act), as amended.

⁷ Act No. 1/2014 Coll. on the organisation of public sports events and on amending certain other laws.

of suspected or accused persons to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings so as to guarantee their right to a fair trial. The Directive lays down common minimum rules to be applied in relation to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings under the European Convention on Human Rights and the related case law of the European Court of Human Rights, with the aim of strengthening mutual trust between the Member States.

1.1.2 Strategy and policy documents

The CNMEG and the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary participated in preparing the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic as Regards the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter referred to as the “minority-related part of the Strategy”) in accordance with Resolution No. 83 of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the “Government Council”), dated 4 September 2013, concerning information on the current state of preparation of the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Strategy”), whereby the Council approved the proposal for further action in the development of the Strategy and instructed Government Council committees to cooperate in further elaboration of the Strategy; it tasked the member of the Council and Plenipotentiary of the Government or the person performing the tasks of the Plenipotentiary under authorisation from the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic to create, within his/her competence, an expert working group comprising proportional numbers of representatives of public administration, non-governmental organisations and relevant specialists, for the purpose of drawing up and finalising the relevant part of the Strategy.

At its 11th meeting held on 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on the development of the Strategy by its Resolution No. 27, and recommended the CNMEG chairperson to create, based on nominations from CNMEG members, an expert working group under the competence of the Government Plenipotentiary, entrusted with the elaboration of the minority-related part of the Strategy (hereinafter referred to as the “working group”).

In keeping with the Resolution, a working group for the development of the minority-related part of the Strategy was established within the CNMEG on 15 November 2013 for the period from December 2013 to April 2014. The composition of the working group and its work procedures are defined in its Principles of Activity. In conformity with the conclusions of the Coordination Group for the Development of the Strategy, the working group proportionally represents NGOs, relevant specialists and public administration. It consists of six representatives of national minorities, experts on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and representatives of public administration.

In line with its work plan, the working group prepared an initial document which it presented at two workshops held on 19 February and 25 February 2014 in Košice and Bratislava, respectively. Workshops were attended by over 80 participants coming from among CNMEG members, members of the Government Council, members of the Coordination Group on strategy development, representatives of cultural institutions working in the field of culture of national minorities, representatives of self-governing regional authorities in charge of culture, and persons interested in the subject.

The aim of the workshops was to launch a dedicated discussion on current issues in the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, and to create a platform for presenting comments and recommendations to the

initial document concerning the minority-related part of the Strategy, drawn up by the working group.

An invitation was extended at the workshops to experts and to the general public to send their comments and suggestions concerning the draft text by 12 March 2014. A total of 184 comments and suggestions were received from the various sectors, CNMEG members and experts in the field. A large portion of comments from citizens (over 170) was sent by e-mail or by post, with attachments containing identical content. Overall, the comments referred mainly to the need to enact comprehensive legislation on the rights and status of persons belonging to national minorities, and on the financing of minority cultures.

The working group considered all comments, i.e. those it received within the deadline or at a later date, and took them into account in the preparation of the final version of the text, in particular its final part concerning the priorities and tasks for the future.

The working group presented the CNMEG at its 12th session the initial document on the minority-related part of the Strategy; after it has duly considered possible comments or suggestions from CNMEG members, it will be submitted to the Strategy Development Coordination Group.

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

The Slovak Republic is a party to all key documents on human rights adopted within the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as the “UN”) and the Council of Europe with relevance for the protection of the rights of national minorities and/or protection of regional or minority languages. The Slovak Republic conducts a dialogue with relevant monitoring mechanisms at the international level. In 2013, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary cooperated with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic in preparing the fifth monitoring cycle of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the fourth periodic report on the application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic, the situation report on human rights in the Slovak Republic for the second Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council, and participated in the preparation of the 12th meeting of the Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Affairs and the 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture.

1.2.1 International treaties

1.2.1.1. Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

As a party to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Framework Convention”), the Slovak Republic has an obligation to submit regular five-year reports on legislative and other measures taken to meet its commitments under the Framework Convention. This obligation is laid down in Article 25 of the Framework Convention. Within the fourth monitoring cycle, the Slovak Republic was to submit such report to the Secretary General by the beginning of February 2014.

The Slovak Republic started the preparations for the fourth monitoring cycle on the implementation of the Framework Convention in 2013 by drawing up and submitting its Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention (hereinafter referred to as the “Implementation Report”). The Implementation Report was prepared by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic drawing on background materials from individual State administration authorities in accordance with the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (hereinafter referred to as the “Committee of Ministers”) and guidelines for national reports. With a view to strengthening the participatory character of preparing the Report and to further promoting a dialogue with civil

society, and in accordance with the Statute of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter referred to as the “Statute of the Committee”), the Committee discussed the Report at its 12th meeting on 12 November 2013; it was subsequently discussed by the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the “Government Council”) at its 11th meeting on 20 November 2013. The Report, approved by Government Resolution No. 718/2013 on 18 December 2013, was submitted within the required deadline to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The Report gives information about the developments in the field of the protection of national minorities at the national level since 2009, with emphasis on the implementation of recommendations from the previous monitoring cycle. The Report is structured in accordance with the guidelines of the Committee of Ministers concerning periodic reports in the fourth monitoring cycle. It contains general information on the developments in the field of legislation and social practice in the preceding period; in a separate section, it responds to the main recommendations of the Committee of Ministers from the previous monitoring cycle and, in its final section, informs about the measures taken to implement the commitments under individual articles of the Framework Convention. Attached to the Report are Annexes that provide supplementary information to the data presented in the Report.⁸

1.2.1.2 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

On 30 January 2013, the Committee of Ministers adopted a recommendation on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as the “Language Charter”) by the Slovak Republic, thus concluding the third monitoring cycle for the Slovak Republic.

The monitoring takes place in three-year cycles. It consists of the submission of the implementation report by the State party and a visit by the Committee of Experts in the country under review, which serve as a basis for the evaluation report on the application of the Charter in that country. On the basis of the report, the Committee of Ministers adopts country-specific recommendations, thus concluding the monitoring process.

In the third monitoring cycle on the level of application of the Language Charter in Slovakia, the Committee of Ministers addressed Slovakia the following six recommendations:

1. review the requirement that minority language speakers should represent at least 20% of the municipal population for the undertakings in the field of administration to be operational;
2. continue efforts to provide for the teaching of all minority languages at all appropriate levels and inform parents about its availability;
3. improve teacher-training and set up a body in charge of monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in minority language education;
4. support and promote, as far as possible, the provision of public service television and radio in all minority languages;
5. continue measures to abolish the practice of unjustified enrolment of Roma children in schools for children with special needs and start to introduce Romani-language education for Roma children on a large scale;

⁸ As a next step in the monitoring process, a delegation of the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention will visit Slovakia; its visit is expected in the second half of 2014. The Advisory Committee will use all available data to prepare an evaluation report for the Committee of Ministers; the Slovak Republic will have the opportunity to present its observations on the report. The monitoring will be formally concluded with the adoption of a resolution by the Committee of Ministers, which will include recommendations for improving the implementation of the Framework Convention. After formal conclusion of the monitoring, it is customary to hold a so-called follow-up seminar at the national level as a form of continued dialogue with the Advisory Committee.

6. raise awareness and promote tolerance in the Slovak society at large vis-à-vis the regional or minority languages and the cultures they represent.

In accordance with the Statute of the Committee, the Report on the Progress and Outcomes of the Third Monitoring Cycle on the Level of Application of the Language Charter in the Slovak Republic was discussed by the CNMEG on 22 May 2013 and, subsequently, by the Government Council on 29 May 2013. The Government approved the Report on the Progress and Outcomes of the Third Monitoring Cycle by Resolution No. 446/2013 on 21 August 2013.

In its Resolution No. 446/2013, the Government instructed relevant members of the Government, Government plenipotentiaries and the Director General of Radio and Television to become familiar with the outcomes of the third monitoring cycle on the level of application of the Language Charter in the Slovak Republic and with the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, to consider their implementation, and to inform the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs about any measures taken during the preparation of the next State report.⁹

The next periodic report of the Slovak Republic is to be submitted 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 reviews by the UN Human Rights Council

The preparation of the Slovak Republic for evaluation in the second round of universal periodic review by the UN Human Rights Council started in April 2013. The situation report for the needs of the review was approved by Government Resolution No. 613/2013 on 16 October 2013 and was submitted to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Office of the Government Plenipotentiary also participated in drawing up the situation report. The review of the Slovak Republic took place before the UN Human Rights in Geneva on 3 February 2014.¹⁰

1.2.2.2 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

The delegation of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) visited the Slovak Republic between 4 and 8 November 2013. The visit was part of the fifth round of country-by-country monitoring during which the ECRI evaluates individual Member States of the Council of Europe and submits situation reports on the progress achieved in the implementation of specific recommendations on combating racism and intolerance and their concomitants. In the fifth monitoring round, evaluation focused on four thematic areas, common to all Member States of the Council of Europe: legislation, expressions of racial hatred, violence and integration policies. With regard to the Slovak Republic, the ECRI delegation focused *inter alia* on the following specific issues: the status of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights as the “anti-discrimination” body (the Equality Body), provision of resources for the horizontal priority of marginalised Roma communities, and the fight against segregation of Roma children in education. Among the participants of the

⁹ As part of the continued dialogue with the Committee of Experts, it has become a practice to organise a so-called roundtable on the application of the Language Charter after formal conclusion of monitoring.

¹⁰ The review report on the Slovak Republic, that will also include recommendations, will be considered by the relevant authorities of the Slovak Republic during 2014.

roundtable meeting with ECRI delegation held during its visit to Slovakia on 7 November 2013 was also a representative of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary.¹¹

1.2.2.3 Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Issues

Bilateral cooperation with Hungary takes place under the Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation signed on 19 March 1995. Twelve mixed expert committees were created under the Treaty:

- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Issues;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Culture and Media;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Education, Science, Sports and Youth;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Economic Cooperation;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Transport, Telecommunications and Their Infrastructure;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Health, Health Insurance and Social Welfare;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Cooperation in Areas within the Competence of the Ministry for the Interior;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for European and Euroatlantic Integration and/or Other Foreign Policy Issues;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Nature Protection and Environment;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Agriculture, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Issues,
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Military and Other Security Policy Issues;
- Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Cross-Border Cooperation.

The 12th meeting of the **Mixed Slovak-Hungarian Commission for Minority Issues** was held in Bratislava on 11 December 2013. The discussions were chaired by co-chairs of Commission delegations – Ambassador Miroslav Mojžita for the Slovak side and Secretary of State for National Policy Zsuzsanna Répás for the Hungarian side. The delegation for the Slovak side also included a representative of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary and CNMEG Secretary.

Members of the Commission discussed the state of implementation of previous recommendations aimed at improving the situation of persons belonging to national minorities in the two countries and noted that almost all recommendations are being fulfilled on both sides.

In the discussions, the Hungarian side raised several issues that the representatives of the Hungarian national minority consider to be topical at present. They include, in particular, the amended act on upbringing and education and the ensuing streamlining of the school network, representation and the voting rights of the representatives of the Hungarian national minority at the CNMEG, and the result of the referendum in the municipality of Tešedíkovo. The discussion at the meeting and the meeting in general confirmed that there are several outstanding issues. For these reasons, the meeting was adjourned and the two sides agreed to meet in 2014 to continue in the discussions.

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

Bilateral cooperation with Ukraine is carried out under the 1993 Treaty on Good Neighbourliness, Friendly Relations and Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and

¹¹ Information obtained during the visit will serve as the basis for the elaboration of the fifth ECRI report on Slovakia. The ECRI report will be prepared in the framework of a confidential dialogue with State authorities.

Ukraine. An Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture was created on the basis of the Treaty.

The 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture was held in Prešov on 24 and 25 October 2013. The delegation for the Slovak side also included a representative of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary and CNMEG Secretary.

Commission members discussed the evaluation of the fulfilment of the previous recommendations under the Protocol from the 11th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture, and noted that most tasks were fulfilled. Commission members positively acknowledged the enlarging cooperation between State administration authorities, self-government bodies and citizens' associations of the two countries, development of joint research projects, activities of the Centre of Slovak Culture in Uzhgorod and of the Centre of Ukrainian Culture in Prešov, expanding cooperation in the field of mass media in the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. At the conclusion of the meeting, chairpersons of both parties of the Commission endorsed the work of the Commission in the past year and signed the Protocol from the 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture.

The Report on the Progress and Outcomes of the 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture was approved by the Government on 19 March 2014. Through assignment B.1 of its Resolution No. 136/2014, the Government instructed the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic, the Chairman of the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad and the Government Plenipotentiary to become familiar with the conclusions and recommendations of the 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Slovak-Ukrainian Commission for National Minorities, Education and Culture and to support, within their competencies and possibilities, implementation of the proposed recommendations and to review their fulfilment on an on-going basis.

Part Two – Participation in public governance by persons belonging to national minorities

2.1. Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities

The Government Plenipotentiary or the person tasked with the duties of the Government Plenipotentiary carries out his/her responsibilities as defined in the Statute aimed at safeguarding, strengthening and promoting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and implements systemic measures to improve the situation of persons belonging to national minorities.

By Resolution No. 302 dated 12 June 2013 the Government recalled László A. Nagy from the office of the Government Plenipotentiary at his own request filed on 5 June 2013. With a view to ensuring the continuity in the execution of duties of the Government Plenipotentiary until the appointment of a new Plenipotentiary, by its **Resolution No. 415/2013** dated 14 August 2013, the Government approved Addendum No. 2 to the Statute of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “the Statute of the Government Plenipotentiary”) and Addendum No. 2 to the Statute of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality. Pursuant to Addendum No. 2 to the Statute of the Government Plenipotentiary, until such time as the vacant position of the Government Plenipotentiary has been filled, the Plenipotentiary’s office shall be performed by a person authorised thereto by the Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, to whom all other provisions of the Statute of the Government Plenipotentiary shall apply by analogy. Addendum No. 2 to the Statute of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality defines the mandate of the member of the Government Council to whom the provisions of the Statute of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality shall apply by analogy, and who will also perform the duties of the chairperson of the CNMEG.

In keeping with the aforesaid Government Resolution, the Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic authorised on 19 August 2013 Mária Jedličková to perform the duties of the Government Plenipotentiary, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic appointed her as member of the Government Council.

The fulfilment of the responsibilities of the Government Plenipotentiary is supported by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities which belongs to the organisational structure of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic. The employees of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary are professionals specialised in issues related to individual national minorities.

In an effort at a consistent application of the participatory principle and with a view to generating new ideas for further cooperation, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary held meetings in 2013 with the representatives of all national minorities. A number of ideas and initiatives that emerged from these meetings were subsequently put on the agenda of CNMEG sessions. In order to examine the present-day situation of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Slovak Republic and to chart the prospects for their further development, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary organised a conference on “National Minorities in the Light of History and of the Present” in September 2013 under the auspices of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico. The conference was held in the Thalia Theatre in Košice and was attended, besides the representatives of national minority societies and associations, also by the representatives of several ministries and diplomatic missions in the Slovak Republic.

The Office of the Government Plenipotentiary, which also performs the role of the CNMEG secretariat, supported proper functioning of the CNMEG also in 2013. Through its working group composed of the representatives of non-governmental organisations, experts in the field and representatives of public administration, it cooperated in the development of the strategy on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups. The plenipotentiary's office organised two specialised workshops on this topic held at the end of February 2014 in Bratislava and in Košice.

Among the main activities of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary is improving the effectiveness of the provision of grants for promoting the culture of national minorities. In November 2013, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary published a call for grant applications (hereinafter referred to as the "call") under the grant programme the Culture of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the "CNM programme") for 2014. New allocation rules adopted for the grant programme were endorsed by most representatives of national minorities at the CNMEG (see Part 3.6 Promoting the Culture of Persons Belonging to National Minorities 2013) and were adhered to by the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

2.2 Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality

The Government Council is a standing expert, advisory, coordinating and consultative body of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, political and civil rights, the 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, children's rights and respect for the best interests of the child, the rights of persons with disabilities and of senior citizens, and for the promotion of the principle of equal treatment, equal opportunities and gender equality.

The Government Council adopts opinions on the fulfilment of Slovakia's international commitments in the field of human rights, in particular commitments taken under international conventions and their optional protocols ratified by the Slovak Republic, and under treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms to which the Slovak Republic is a party. It discusses draft reports on the implementation of international conventions ratified by the Slovak Republic and treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms to which the Slovak Republic is a party.

One of the members of the Government Council is the Government Plenipotentiary who is also the chairperson of the CNMEG.

2.3 Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups at the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality

The CNMEG is a standing body of the Government Council for issues relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and persons belonging to them with respect to application of the Language Charter and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The CNMEG also performs the role of a consultative body on issues related to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in those matters that affect national minorities and ethnic groups within the meaning of Article 34 para 2(c) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

In its area of competence, the CNMEG submits suggestions to the Government Council aimed at strengthening respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; participates in drawing up reports under control mechanisms of international treaties on human rights and rights of persons belonging to national minorities; and prepares

annual evaluation reports on the promotion of the culture of national minorities, on the state of minority education and on the use of minority languages, submitted for Government approval.

The CNMEG comprises representatives of 13 national minorities (Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Czech, Ukrainian, German, Polish, Moravian, Russian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Serbian and Jewish).

In 2013, the CNMEG was convened 5 times (29 January 2013; 18 March 2013; 22 May 2013; 27 September 2013; 12 November 2013) and adopted a total of 18 resolutions (resolutions 19 to 36). All resolutions and minutes from CNMEG sessions are published on the website of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary.

By **Resolution No. 19**, dated 29 January 2013, the CNMEG approved the reallocation of funds for 2013 under the grant system of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic – support for the culture of national minorities for 2013, which it recommended to the Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval. The Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the proposal.

By **Resolution No. 20**, dated 29 January 2013, the CNMEG approved the work plan of the CNMEG for 2013.

By **Resolution No. 21**, dated 18 March 2013, the CNMEG approved with comments the Report of the Committee on the Promotion of Culture of National Minorities, Minority School System and Use of Languages of National Minorities 2012 pursuant to Article 3(f) to (h) of the CNMEG Statute, and instructed the vice-chairman of the Committee to submit evaluation reports for deliberations by the Council. By its Resolution No. 74 of 29 May 2013 on the submitted reports, the Council recommended relevant sectors to become familiar with the content of evaluation reports by the date of the 11th session of the Council and to submit their comments to the Council through the intermediary of the CNMEG. Relevant sectors submitted their comments on evaluation reports in accordance with Resolution No. 74 of the Council. The CNMEG took note of these opinions at its 10th session held on 27 September 2013. The vice-chair of the CNMEG subsequently re-submitted evaluation reports together with the comments from relevant sectors to the 11th session of the Government Council, which adopted them by unanimity by Resolution No. 90.

By **Resolution No. 22**, dated 22 May 2013, the CNMG took note of information on the legislative intent of the recast of civil law of procedure, and expressed support for the opinion on recodification of civil law of procedure submitted by the Committee Secretariat.

By **Resolution No. 23**, dated 22 May 2013, the CNMEG took note of the report on the progress and outcomes of the third monitoring cycle on the level of application of the Language Charter the Slovak Republic and recommended the Government Council to recommend the report to the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval. The Government Council approved the report by Resolution No. 76 at its 10th session. The Government of the Slovak Republic approved the report by Resolution No. 446/2013 dated 21 August 2013.

By **Resolution No. 24**, dated 22 May 2013, the CNMEG recommended the Government Council to recommend the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Education”):

- to return history textbooks for the first and the second years of gymnasia with Hungarian language of instruction to the list of textbooks, and to open a competition for writing a textbook for the third year of gymnasia with Hungarian language of instruction;
- to involve specialists from among persons belonging to national minorities in the process of preparing and approving textbooks and translations of textbooks and in the process of drawing up publishing plans of textbooks for schools using minority languages of instruction and schools teaching the languages of national minorities;
- tasked the Government Council to cooperate with the Ministry of Education and with the National Institute for Education with a view to ensuring the participation of specialists – persons belonging to national minorities in the process of preparing and approving textbooks and translations of textbooks and in the process of drawing up publishing plans of textbooks for schools using minority languages of instruction and schools teaching the languages of national minorities;

By **Resolution No. 25**, dated 22 May 2013, the CNMEG took note of an informative report on the state of national minority broadcasts by the Radio and Television of Slovakia (hereinafter referred to as the “RTVS”); in its opinion on the report it emphasised the importance of ensuring compliance with Section 5 para 1(g) of the Act on Radio and Television of Slovakia¹² which stipulates that one of the key tasks of the RTVS is to broadcast balanced programmes, as regards their subjects and territorial coverage, in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the territory of the Slovak Republic and to ensure that broadcast time allocation corresponds to the national minority and ethnic structure of population of the Slovak Republic. In order to secure the production and broadcasting of programmes for national minorities and ethnic groups, the RTVS created independent departments within the Slovak Radio and the Slovak Television. At the same time, the CNMEG instructed the CNMEG chairperson to submit the Resolution to the Government Council for approval. The Government Council approved the opinion by Resolution No. 80 at its 10th session.

By **Resolution No. 26**, dated 27 September 2013, the CNMEG discussed and approved the Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities 2012 within the meaning of Article 4(1) point 1 of the Statute of the Plenipotentiary. The Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Report by Resolution No. 605/2013 on 16 October 2013. This was the first report giving a comprehensive picture of the situation of persons belonging to national minorities within the social, economic and political context of the Slovak Republic, and of the respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, international conventions and national legislation.

By **Resolution No. 27**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on the preparation of the Nationwide Strategy on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic and instructed the chairperson of the CNMEG to create, on the basis of nominations by CNMEG members, an expert working group for the minority-related part of the Strategy (hereinafter referred to as the “working group”) under the competence of the Government Plenipotentiary. On the basis of the Resolution, a working group for drawing up the minority-related part of the Strategy was created within the CNMEG

¹² Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on amending certain other laws, as amended.

on 15 November 2013 in the period from December 2013 to April 2014. The composition of the working group and its work procedures are defined in its Principles of Activity.

By **Resolution No. 28**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information concerning suggestions and proposals related to amendment to Act 308/1993 Coll. on the Creation of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, as amended, that were submitted to the Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic. In accordance with the CNMEG Resolution, the CNMEG chairperson submitted suggestions and comments from members of the Committee.

By **Resolution No. 29**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on the situation and activities of national minority theatres and artistic ensembles and on legislative proposals in this area.

By **Resolution No. 30**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of the conclusions reached by the ad hoc working group and approved the rules for allocation of funds under the grant programme of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic – the CNM programme. In addition, the CNMEG instructed the CNMEG chairperson to inform the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic about the draft rules for allocation of funds under the CNM programme. These allocation rules were incorporated into the Guideline No. 4/2014 of 12 February 2014 on allocation of grants under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic issued by the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.¹³

By **Resolution No. 31**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG approved draft addendum No. 4 to the CNMEG Statute amending the rules of procedure by allocating one vote to each national minority and ethnic group irrespective of the number of its representatives. The change was initiated by a CNMEG member and was voted by ten of the thirteen national minorities. By its Resolution No. 91 the Government Council approved Addendum 4 to the CNMEG Statute at its 11th session on 20 November 2013.

By **Resolution No. 32**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on the current state of the CNM 2013 programme and of the call for grant applications under the CNM 2014 programme.

By **Resolution No. 33**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on the draft structure of evaluation reports of the Committee pursuant to Article 3(f) to (h) of the Statute of the Committee on the Promotion of Culture of National Minorities, State of Minority School System and Use of the Languages of National Minorities 2013, and recommended the CNMEG chairperson to create a CNMEG working group composed of the representatives of individual national minorities and selected representatives of public administration with a view to drawing up these evaluation reports for the year 2013. In accordance with the Resolution, an ad-hoc working group for elaboration of CNMEG evaluation reports for 2013 was created within the CNMEG.

By **Resolution No. 34**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information about the CNMEG representatives in Government Council committees and in other inter-ministerial working groups; approved a new nomination for the Committee on

¹³ More details on the rules for allocation of funds under the CNM programme are given in Part Three of this report.

Research, Education and Instruction in Human Rights and Development Education (hereinafter referred to as the “Education Committee”) and instructed the CNMEG chairperson to initiate the representation of the CNMEG also within the Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance (hereinafter referred to as the “CRAX”). In keeping with the Resolution, the CNMEG chairperson requested the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and chairperson of CRAX to amend the Statute of the CRAX so to enable also a representative of CNMEG to sit on the Committee. The CRAX approved the proposal to amend the CRAX Statute by Resolution No. 19 and to include a CNMEG representative among the permanent members of the CRAX, and a representative of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities among its members with a standing invitation. The change of the CRAX Statute was approved also at the 13th session of the Council on 9 April 2014.

By **Resolution No. 35**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of information on national minority broadcasting of the RTVS in 2013.

By **Resolution No. 36**, dated 12 November 2013, the CNMEG took note of the Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic and recommended the Government Council to approve the Report and recommend it for approval to the Government of the Slovak Republic. The Government Council took note of the Report by Resolution No. 89 at its 11th session. The Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Report by Resolution No. 718/2013 on 18 October 2013.

In 2013, the CNMEG pursued activities in line with the Statute of the Committee and its approved work plan for 2013; by implementing adopted resolutions, it was actively engaged in improving the quality of life of persons belonging to national minorities in the Slovak Republic.

2.4 Participation in regional governance by persons belonging to national minorities

Participation by persons belonging to national minorities in public governance is closely related to the possibility of their participation in the executive branch of government. Given the fact that 2013 was the year of regional elections, the Report reflects also this area of participation.

Pursuant to Section 24 of Act No. 303/2001 Coll. on elections to the bodies of self-governing regions and on amending the Code of Civil Procedure, as amended, municipalities are obliged to publish communications concerning the time and place of elections and election procedure not only in the State language, but also in the languages of the national minorities.

The most recent elections to the bodies of self-governing regions were held on 9 and 23 November 2013. The exact ethnic composition of candidates for the positions of chairmen of self-governing regions and for seats in regional self-governing bodies is not available. Certain conclusions can be drawn from the outcomes of elections as regards the results obtained by the political parties that explicitly represent the interests of national minorities.

Table 1: Results obtained by political parties explicitly representing the interests of national minorities in the 2013 elections to the bodies of self-governing regions¹⁴

Political party	Number of elected chairmen of self-governing regions	Number of elected chairmen of self-governing regions in coalition with another party/other parties	Number of elected members of regional councils	Number of elected members of regional councils in coalition with another party/other parties
Most-Híd	0	2	4	95
The Party of the Hungarian Community – Magyar Közösség Pártja	0	2	34	34

It should be emphasised that, as regards the results of elections to the bodies of the Banská Bystrica self-governing region, they raised concern among a certain part of Slovak society. The Government Council responded to them by adopting Resolution No. 95 on 18 December 2013, whereby it issued a Statement by Members of the Government Council on the Outcome of Election of the Chairman of the Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region. In this statement, the Government Council expressed *inter alia* its concern over the election of Marián Kotleba, a candidate of the People’s Party – Our Slovakia, as Chairman of the Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region, and recalled that Marián Kotleba has systematically built his political capital on employing rough anti-Roma, anti-Jewish and homophobic rhetoric and on open admiration for the representatives of inhuman policy of the wartime Slovak State.

Part Three – Promoting preservation, expression, protection and the development of identity and cultural values of the members of national minorities

3.1 Support provided within the network of cultural centres and libraries

According to Section 2, para 2, letter b) of Act No. 61/2000 Coll. on public education and cultural activities, these activities also include the deepening of relations with the State, with the cultural identity of a nation, national minorities and of ethnic groups and enhanced care of the environment.

The National Culture Centre with a nationwide competence is a state subsidised organisation answerable to its founder, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. It operates as a sectoral expert and methodology centre for cultural and educational activities, whereby it focuses on the preservation and development of local and regional culture. It also pursues activities in research and analyses, documentation and promotion of culture and organises informal education in the area concerned. Mandated by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, The National Culture Centre also invites nationwide contests and shows of amateur culture and arts activity which are open to all the citizens of the Slovak Republic irrespective of their nationality or ethnicity.

In 2013, the members of national minorities took part in the contests of amateur culture and arts activity as follows:

¹⁴ Source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/osk/osk2013/>.

- nationwide competition show of children's folklore ensembles and the 38th edition of the children's folklore festival Pod likavským hradom ("Under the Likava Castle"),
- nationwide competition and show of folk music, singers and instrumentalists (children) Vidiečanova Habovka 2013,
- nationwide competition and show of folk dance solo performers with international participation Šaffova ostroha 2013,
- Gemer-Malohont region folklore festival at Klenovec entitled Klenovská Rontouka,
- 44th edition of Mládež spieva (Singing Youth), which is a nationwide competition and show of children's choirs dedicated to the memory of the Slovak composer Zdenko Mikula,
- Folklore festival Východná,
- Art competition Coloriskeri luna (Colourful World),
- Nationwide competition and show of amateur photography Amfo and Cinema.

The fact that there are communities with persons belonging to a national minority or an ethnic group is reflected in the public library stock according to Section 14, para 3 of Act No. 183/2000 Coll. on libraries, on amending Act of the Slovak National Council No. 27/1987 Coll. on the state care of monuments and historic sites and on amending Act 68/1997 Coll. on Matica Slovenská, as amended.

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is the founder of the following libraries:

- 1) The Slovak National Library according to Section 6 of Act No. 183/2000 Coll. on libraries. It is a scientific, cultural, information and educational institution serving the citizens of Slovakia and foreign users. It gathers and makes accessible collections of books, as well as literary archival and literary museum collections.
It co-ordinates the development of the Library System of the Slovak Republic and is the leading institution ensuring the modernisation of its library and information services as well as the services of its partner libraries, whereby it co-operates with national and international institutions.
- 2) University Library in Bratislava as a universal state scientific library. In 2013, it fulfilled several tasks in connection with the policies and situation of the national minorities in the SR, especially by facilitating access to information, by running educational programmes and cultural events organised in-house.
It expands its library stock by translations from the languages of national minorities into Slovak, it facilitates access to the periodicals databases and to data sources in electronic format and an on-line access to printed media. It also houses periodicals in minority languages, such as Hungarian, Czech, German, and Ruthenian.
- 3) The State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica is a universal scientific library. In 2013, it expanded its stock by documents on national minorities, it made accessible non-periodical publications in the languages of national minorities in print or electronic format; it also facilitated access to periodical publications in minority languages published by national minorities or written in the language of a national minority. Periodical publications are available in Hungarian, German, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish and Roma languages.
- 4) The State Scientific Library in Košice attaches greatest importance to working with nationalities and ethnic groups also due to the fact that in the territory of Košice and Eastern Slovakia there lives a mixture of different nationalities. In its stocks, the library holds the most recent documents of especially Hungarian and Czech origin and also documents on Roma-related issues.

In 2013, the library purchased 2,076 non-periodical publications in the Czech, Hungarian, German, and Russian languages. Of period publications, it purchased 55 titles in Hungarian, German, and Russian languages.

The State Scientific Library in Košice also operates a unique specialised database in Slovakia entitled ROMANO, which is dedicated to the Roma community. It is based on periodical print records and papers from various collections of papers.

The State Scientific Library in Prešov implements a project Documentation and Information Centre of Roma Culture. Its mission is to pool comprehensive information on Roma culture, history, language, traditions and other areas of the life of Roma community.

3.2 Facilitation of the operation of professional nationality theatres and artistic ensembles

The theatrical activity of national minorities is primarily spelled out in Act No. 384/1997 Coll. on theatrical activity, as amended. The said legislative act lays down the competence of state bodies and self-governing bodies in theatrical activity. Section 3, para 3 of the quoted act stipulates that a self-governing region may incept, found or abolish professional theatres as legal entities, promote selected strands of theatrical activities through earmarked funding, promote cultural activities of national minorities in its territory and facilitate the activity of minority cultural institutions, promote the operation of professional nationality theatres, the good management of the funds used by theatres and artistic ensembles founded by a self-governing region. It works closely with the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic on expert issues.

In accordance with the above legislative act nationality theatres are under the jurisdiction of the self-governing regions as follows:

- Divadlo Alexandra Duchnoviča (Alexander Dukhnovich Theatre) in Prešov, Prešov Self-governing Region,
- Poddukelský ľudový umelecký súbor (Dukla Artistic Folk Ensemble), Prešov Self-governing Region,
- Jókaiho divadlo (Jókai Theatre) in Komárno, Nitra Self-governing Region,
- Divadlo Romathan (Romathan Theatre) in Košice, Košice Self-governing Region,
- Divadlo Thália (Thalia Theatre) in Košice, Košice Self-governing Region.

Ifjú Szivek Dance Theatre based in Bratislava is under the umbrella of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.¹⁵

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, pursuant to its tasks and responsibilities and on the basis of the 2013 Plan of the Legislative Tasks of the Government of the Slovak Republic prepared, produced and presented a draft law on theatrical activity and musical activity and on the amendment of certain laws. The Government of the Slovak Republic, at its session on 11 December 2013, and by Resolution No. 701 passed a draft law on theatrical and musical activities and on the amendment of certain laws. The Government draft law was presented to the Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for further deliberations.¹⁶

¹⁵ Refer to Annexes 1: Overview of the activity of professional nationality theatres and artistic ensembles and 2 The activities of self-governing regions in promoting national minorities.

¹⁶ The National Council of the Slovak Republic, by its Resolution No. 1076, of 25 March 2014, following the deliberations of the above government draft law in the second and third readings passed the government draft law on theatrical activity and musical activity and on amending certain laws, in the wording of adopted amending proposals. According to Article 102, para 1, letter f) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic the said law was signed by Ivan Gašparovič, the President of the Slovak Republic.

3.3 Facilitation of television and radio broadcasting for national minorities

Television and radio broadcasting in the languages of national minorities is primarily enshrined in Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television Slovakia, as amended (Section 5, letters b and g).

The Centre for Nationality Broadcasting operating under budgeting and technical conditions identical to those of the other sections of Radio and Television Slovakia is tasked with the production and broadcasting of programmes for national minorities. The dramaturgy and the editorial aspects of programmes are within the responsibility of the members of the respective national minority.

In 2013, Radio and Television Slovakia (RTVS) focused on the enhancement of the structure of broadcasting in the languages of national minorities. The programme structure remained the same as in 2012, however, the contents of broadcast programmes changed.

As regards radio broadcasting, the broadcasting of Radio Patria in the Hungarian language migrated to an all-day on-line broadcasting. This broadcasting of Radio Patria in Košice boosted the broadcasting in Ruthenian and Ukrainian languages. In addition to its information dissemination role, the Roma daily on-line format which appeals to Roma listeners also acquired new service functions. Following the agreement between Radio and Television Slovakia and the Orthodox Church, Radio Regina broadcasts Orthodox services in the native language.

As for the television broadcasting of RTVS, there have been no major changes taking place in channel Dvojka (TWO) programmes. There have been qualitative changes in the Hírek news reporting format. The viewing figures of this programme have also gone up thanks to changing its broadcasting schedule. In addition to regular programmes, regional and thematic documentaries in Hungarian, German, Roma and Ruthenian languages have been produced. This may be illustrated by a documentary dedicated to Krásna Hôrka castle and the events following the burning down of the castle or within the Roma magazine cycle a TV series dedicated to human trafficking having a particular impact on the Roma community.

In total, Radio and Television Slovakia broadcast 5,263 hours of radio nationality programmes and 205 hours of television programmes.

3.4 Facilitation and development of the museums of national minorities

A comprehensive museum documentation on the culture development in Slovakia including the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups that have been living in the territory of the Slovak Republic is within the responsibility of the Slovak National Museum which falls under the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic in accordance with Act No. 206/2009 Coll. on museums and galleries and on protecting the items of cultural value and on amending Act of the Slovak National Council No. 372/1990 Coll. on offences, as amended.

The documentation on the development of material and spiritual culture of national minorities housed by the Slovak National Museum falls under the responsibility of its respective organisational units which focus on the acquisition, protection, scientific processing and making available of museum collections.

- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Carpathian German Culture in Slovakia
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia

- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník
- The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Jewish Culture¹⁷

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia

The main mission of this museum is museum documentation and the presentation of the culture of the Czech community in Slovakia. The museum is a component part of the Slovak National Museum and Museum in Martin as its organisational part. Either by purchases or donations, The Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia expanded its collections by 19 artefacts within its 2013 acquisition activity. One exhibition was held within the premises of this museum and one exhibition was set up outside its seat.

In 2013, the museum was visited by 431 visitors, of which 144 were non-paying visitors.

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia

Its mission is consistent acquisition, protection, scientific and expert processing and making accessible various museum evidence of the history and culture of the Croatians living in Slovakia and other countries.

In 2013, the museum expanded its collections by 32 new collection items within its acquisition activity. In addition to the permanent exhibition set up in the museum premises, there have been ten more exhibitions housed in the seat of the museum and one exhibition outside its seat, in the Slovak National Museum - in the exhibition premises of Ľudovít Štúr Museum in Modra.

Overall, 50 cultural and educational events were organised with 669 visitors attending.

In 2013, there were 864 visitors coming to the museum, of which 604 were non-paying ones.

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Carpathian German Culture in Slovakia

The main focus of The Museum of Carpathian German Culture is on the collation, protection, expert processing and presentation of the artefacts of material and spiritual culture of Carpathian Germans. The museum is seated in Bratislava, its sub-branches are located in Nitrianske Pravno, in the House of the Carpathian German Association, and in Handlová. The museum also houses a documentary and information centre with an extensive library.

In 2013, the museum purchased two new collection items within its acquisition activity. The museum premises housed one permanent exhibition and five exhibitions were set up outside its seat, in the towns of Kežmarok, Levoča, and Košice.

In total, the museum organised 47 cultural and educational events, with 1,244 visitors attending.

In 2013, The Museum of Carpathian German Culture and its sub-branches in Handlová and Nitrianske Pravno were visited by 4,792 visitors, of which 4,792 were non-paying visitors.

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia

The museum's mission is consistent acquisition, protection, scientific and expert processing and making accessible museum collections and stock evidencing the history and the development of material and spiritual culture of the Hungarian ethnic group in Slovakia. The museum is based in Bratislava and it also operates branches in Dolná Strehová and Sklabiná.

Within its 2013 acquisition activity, the museum expanded its collections by 100 artefacts thanks to purchases or donations. The museum seat housed five exhibitions and five more were set up in Komárno, Příbelce, Levoča, Veľký Krtíš and in Veľké Zlievce.

The Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia is active in a comprehensive scientific and research activity and it has published six publications. The museum organised 22

¹⁷ Refer to Annex 3, Overview of the activities of national minority museums

roundtable discussions, lectures and other cultural and educational activities attended by 1,614 visitors.

In 2013, there were 6,632 visitors coming to the museum, of which 4,838 were non-paying visitors.

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov

This is the most recent museum with a nationwide competence which operates as a documentation, scientific and research and methodology workplace specialising in the history and culture of the Ruthenian ethnic group in Slovakia.

Within its 2013 acquisition activity, the museum purchased 21 new collection items. On 31 December 2013, one part of its newly refurbished premises housing a permanent exhibition was opened to the general public.

In 2013, there were 148 visitors coming to the museum and no entry fee was charged.

The Slovak National Museum - The Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia

The Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia is a documentation, scientific and research museum workplace which, in line with the museum's focus, puts special emphasis on acquisition, methodology and expert and cultural and educational activities. Since 2008, it has been operating in its own premises, in a mansion at Blažovce and in the premises of the Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Slovak Village in Martin.

Within its 2013 acquisition activity, the museum purchased and was donated 38 collection items. The museum holds one permanent exhibition and two other exhibitions are set up in Žilina and Trebišov.

The museum organised twelve cultural and educational activities.

In 2013, the museum was visited by 14,700 visitors, of which 2,774 were non-paying visitors..

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník

The role of this oldest nationality institution is to keep the documentation on the fundamental stages of cultural, historical, political and social development of the Ukrainians living in Slovakia.

Within its 2013 acquisition activity, the museum purchased and was donated 3,247 collection items. The museum set up four exhibitions in its premises and one exhibition was housed in The Museum of Crafts in Krosno. The museum is noted for its extensive scientific and research activity.

As for cultural and educational activities, there were 238 events organised which were attended by 7,512 visitors. The events included roundtable discussions, lectures, specialised activities and other cultural and educational events.

In 2013, there were 20,851 visitors coming to the museum, of which 13,509 were non-paying visitors.

The Slovak National Museum – The Museum of Jewish Culture

The museum focuses on the presentation of spiritual and material culture and holocaust documentation in Slovakia. The museum also manages exhibitions in the exhibition premises of the synagogues in Žilina, Prešov, and Nitra.

Within its 2013 acquisition activity, the museum either purchased or was donated 110 collection items. The museum premises accommodated eight exhibitions and three were held outside the museum premises.

In total, the museum organised 258 events attended by 9,999 visitors. The museum is also noted for its extensive scientific and educational as well as publishing activity.

In 2013, the museum premises and its branches were visited by 8,167 visitors, of which 1,422 were non-paying visitors.

3.5 The publishing of periodical and non-periodical publications of national minorities

The publishing of periodical and non-periodical publications in the languages of national minorities is laid down in Section 2, para 8 of Act No. 212/1997 Coll. on the deposit copies of periodical publications, non-periodical publications and audiovisual copies, as amended.

The records of periodicals are kept by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. At 31 December 2013, 167 titles were reported.

Table. 2 The number of periodical titles, by languages

Language	No. of periodical titles
Czech	4
Croatian	1
Hungarian	43
German	7
Polish	3
Romani	3
Ruthenian	3
Ukrainian	2
Slovak/Bulgarian	1
Slovak/Czech	31
Slovak/Hungarian	64
Slovak/Romani	3
Slovak/Ruthenian	2
Total	167

The publishing activity of the members of national minorities is recorded by KULT 4-01 annual statistical survey on non-periodical publications of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. The current 2013 data have not yet been published, since the electronic data capture forms will only be made available in late May 2014.

3.6 Promoting the culture of the members of national minorities under the 2013 Culture of National Minorities grant programme

Among the most significant tools of direct support for culture and national minority languages as well as for upbringing and education towards the rights of national minorities is the CNM grant programme which is implemented under the auspices of the Slovak Government Plenipotentiary.

The purpose, conditions, scope and the method of grant allocation which are under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic are spelled out in Act No. 524/2010 on grants, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “The Act on Grants”).

The subsidies under the Culture of National Minorities programme are allocated in accordance with Section 2, para 1, letters a), b), and e) of the Act on Grants with the aim to promote the following areas:

- preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities
- upbringing and education towards the rights of national minorities
- interethnic and intercultural dialogue and the spirit of understanding between the persons belonging to the majority society and the members of national minorities and ethnic groups.

In 2013, a total of 4,250,000 EUR were allocated for the Culture of National Minorities grant programme. Following the proposal of the then Government Plenipotentiary László A. Nagy, the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (CNMEG) in its Resolution No. 19, of 29 January 2013, adopted the allocation of funds to individual national minorities for 2013.¹⁸

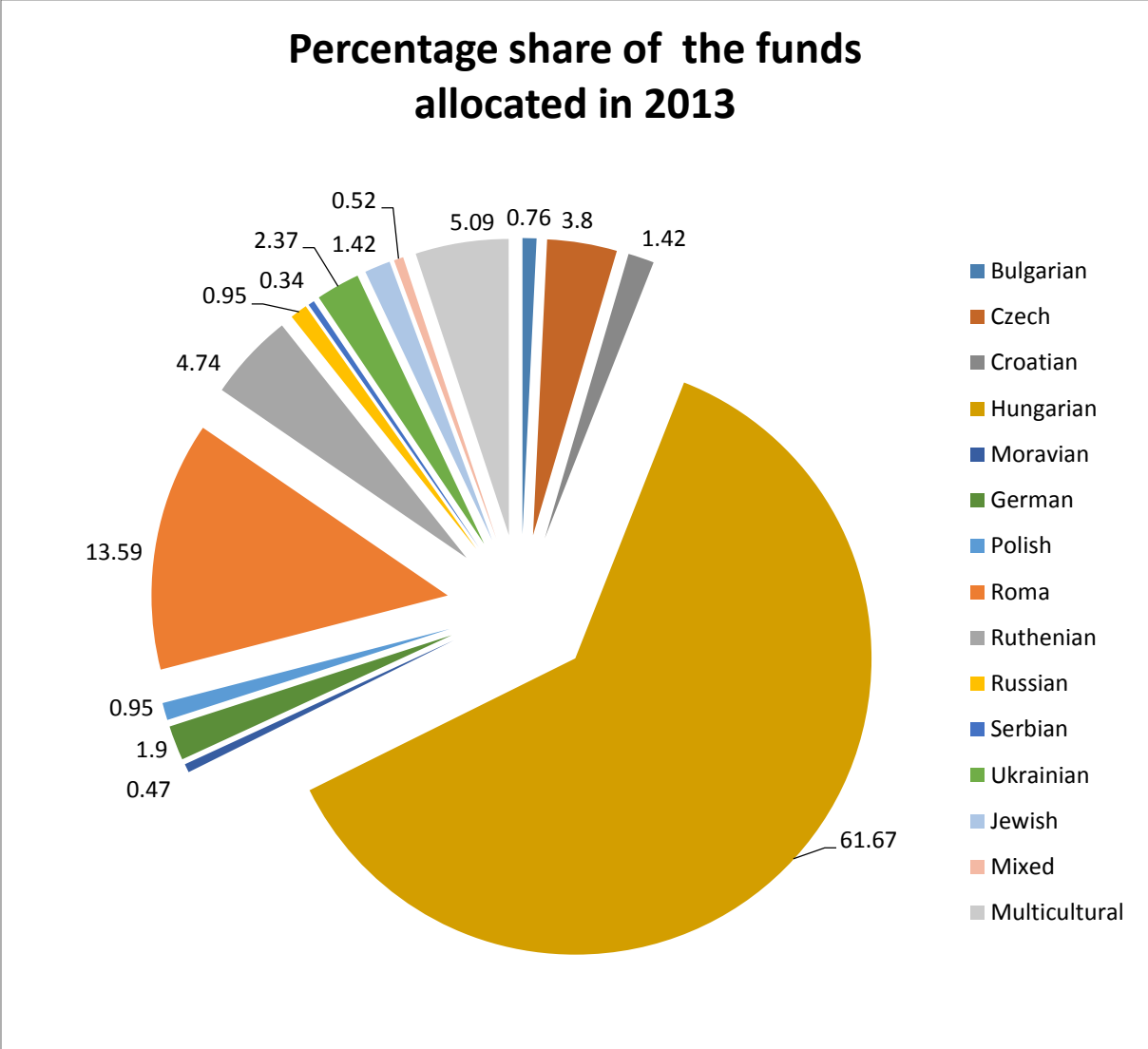
Table 3: The allocation of funds in 2013

National minorities	The distribution of funds, 2013 allocation /in EUR/
Bulgarian national minority	32,000
Czech national minority	160,000
Croatian national minority	60,000
Hungarian national minority	2,600,000
Moravian national minority	20,000
German national minority	80,000
Polish national minority	40,000
Roma national minority	588,000
Ruthenian national minority	200,000
Russian national minority	40,000
Serbian national minority	20,000
Ukrainian national minority	100,000
Jewish national minority	60,000
Total:	4,000,000
multicultural and interethnic activity	250,000
Grand total:	4,250,000

¹⁸ Resolution No. 19 of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups is available on the website of the Government Office Plenipotentiary: http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/att/10303_subor.pdf

The discussions on the principles of funds allocation indicated a need for a conceptual solution of the distribution of funds for supporting individual national minorities. The setting up of an ad-hoc working group of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups was proposed, which would be mandated with this file.

Graph 1 Percentage share of the funds allocated in 2013



On 19 November 2012, the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, pursuant to Section 8, para 1, letter c) of the Act on Grants, published its first call for grant applications for the year 2013, and the deadline for the submission of grant applications was 19 January 2013.

The 2013 CNM programme was broken down to sub-programmes as follows:

- 1.1 Live Culture Sub-programme
- 1.2 Periodical Print Sub-programme
- 1.3 Non-periodical Print Sub-programme
- 1.4 Electronic Media and Multimedia Sub-programme
- 1.5 Multicultural and Interethnic Activities Sub-programme

Between 3 and 19 December 2012, the staff of the Government Office Plenipotentiary ran a series of methodology and information workshops concerning the published call for grant applications in the towns and communities of: Banská Bystrica, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava, Košice Prešov, Bratislava, Dunajská Streda and Komárno. The aim of these workshops was to provide information to the general public on the conditions of the call, its specificities, and on the modifications of the electronic registration of applicants and of applications.

Submitted grant applications underwent several levels of scrutiny. In the first stage, the completeness of applications was reviewed and in accordance with the law, the stipulated attachments to the application could have been supplemented with missing information within a set deadline.

The technical part of projects, their concept quality and processing, were evaluated by committees set up under Decree No. 21 Coll. of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, of 24 January 2011, laying down the details on the committee set-up, decision-making, work flow and on the procedure applied to the evaluation of grant applications and on the criteria applied to the evaluation of grant applications under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. In accordance with the call for grant applications 15 committees were set up, a separate one for each national minority, whereby two committees were set up for the Hungarian national minority (one for live culture and the other one for periodical and non-periodical publications) and a committee on the Multicultural and Multiethnic Activities sub-programme. The committees held their sessions between 5 March and 24 April 2013.

The process of the CNM programme evaluation adheres to applicable legal provisions¹⁹ laying down the details on the committee set-up, decision-making, work flow and on the procedure applied to the evaluation of grant applications and on the criteria applied to the evaluation of grant applications. The members of technical committees reviewed the applications in accordance with the unified methodology for the evaluation of grant applications. Each grant application was evaluated on an individual basis and the committees took account of the quality, originality and of the tradition of the submitted project, the transparency and completeness of the project concept, its budget feasibility, technical and organisational guarantees of the project preparation and implementation, of the cultural and social significance of the project for the development of the culture of a national minority concerned and for the target group, expediency of and eligibility for the use of the grant in the previous period including compliance with the date for closing the books.

Grant applications were anonymised throughout the entire evaluation process.

Within the first call the committees made a recommendation to support 1,297 projects in a total amount of 4,155,230 EUR.

Due to the fact that not all allocated funds had been drawn, on 27 June 2013, the second call for grant applications for 2013 was launched. The amount of available funds in this call was 94,770 EUR. The call was published for those national minorities that failed to draw the funds allocated for 2013, i.e. for the Czech national minority in an amount of 4,670 EUR, the Hungarian national minority in an amount of 30,000 EUR (only for sub-programme 1.1 Live Culture), the Moravian national minority in an amount of 14,000 EUR, and for the Roma national minority in an amount of 46,100 EUR. The deadline for submission of applications was 27 August 2013.

The committees made a recommendation to support 49 grant applications in a total amount of 88,989 EUR. Considering the quality of the projects submitted, the committee on

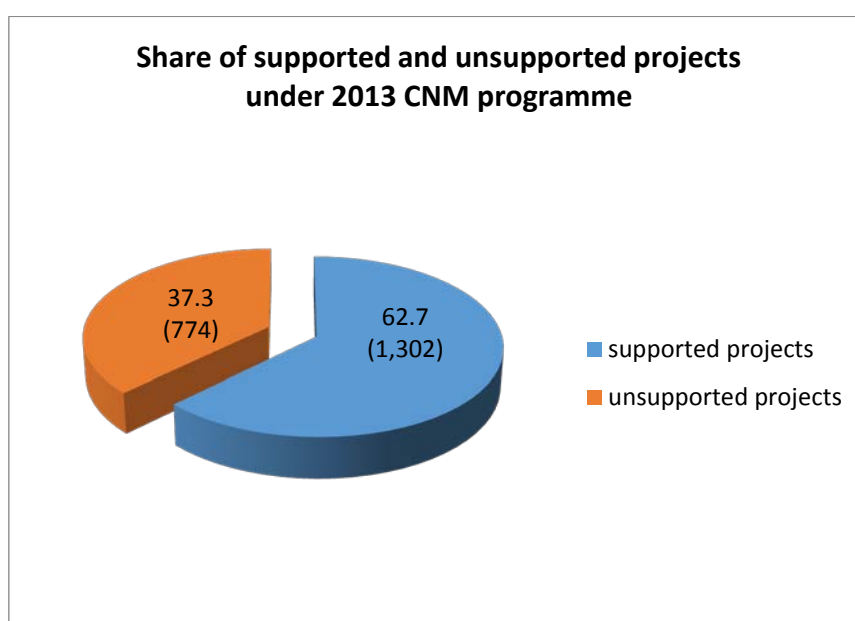
¹⁹ Ref. to the websites of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities: <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/kultura-narodnostnych-mensin-2013/>

Moravian national minority did not recommend the drawing of the full amount of available funds earmarked for the Moravian national minority.

Within both the calls for the 2013 CNM programme, 2,076 projects were submitted. Of this number:

- 49 were not evaluated and were disqualified (25 projects were found incomplete, 5 projects were rejected due to duplicity, 19 were submitted after the cut-off date);
- 725 projects were evaluated but not supported;
- 44 grant applications were evaluated, approved but not implemented (26 of them due to the failure to conclude a contract and grant amounts were returned by 18 applicants);
- 1,258 grant applications were evaluated, approved and implemented.

Graph 2 Share of supported and unsupported projects under 2013 CNM programme



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Selected statistical indicators processed on the basis of an electronic grants management system for 2013 CNM programme²¹

The scope of eligible applicants for the CNM programme is laid down in Section 3, para 1 of Act on Grants. Within the 2013 CNM programme, the following entities applied for grants - their breakdown is by legal personality:²²

- 1,245 civil associations (60 %),
- 289 municipalities (13.9 %),

²⁰ Within 2013 CNM programme, 2,076 projects within both the calls were submitted, of which 1,302 were supported (1,258 were evaluated, approved and implemented and 44 were evaluated, approved and not implemented) and 774 were not supported (725 evaluated and not supported and 49 not evaluated and disqualified);

²¹ The CNM programme is processed using an electronic grants management system which, inter alia, allows for basic statistical processing.

²² Ref. to Annex 4 Selected data by the applicant's legal personality

- 101 legal entities entitled to conduct business activities (4.9 %).

The least represented applicant group were self-governing regions, where only one entity submitted a grant application, which accounted for only 0.05 % of the total number of applicants.

In 2013, various entities from all eight self-governing regions applied for grants.²³ The most numerous were applicants with statutory seats in the:

- Trnava Self-Governing Region - 451 applicants (21.8 %),
- Nitra Self-Governing Region - 419 applicants (20.3 %),
- Košice Self-Governing Region – 384 applicants (18.6 %).

Only 19 entities with their statutory seats in the Trenčín Self-Governing Region applied for a grant within 2013 CNM programme, which accounts for 0.5 % of the total number of applicants.

The 2013 CNM grant programme was divided into 5 sub-programmes and 32 strands.²⁴ The highest number of supported projects were in the following areas:

- 217 folklore festivals, shows and activities (16.7 %)
- 201 festivals and shows (music, dance, song, 15.4 %)
- 110 theatrical activities and cultural and educational camps (8.5 %)

Only one project received support in the area of cultural supplements to religious periodicals, which is as little as 0.08 % of the total number of projects submitted.

An ad-hoc working group set up under the CNMEG Resolution No. 15/2012 on drafting new transparent rules for the allocation of funds under the CNM programme.

The CNMEG at its sixth session on 6 December 2012 adopted Resolution No. 15 instructing the CNMEG chairperson “to set up an ad-hoc working group by the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups to draft new transparent rules for the allocation of funds from the grant system under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic – support for the culture of national minorities.”

The topic was on the agenda of the seventh session of the CNMEG, which took place on 29 January 2013, and it was re-addressed at the eight session of the CNMEG on 18 March 2013.

The then acting CNMEG chairperson László A. Nagy set up a temporary task force (hereinafter referred to as “ad-hoc working group”) in accordance with Article 7 of the CNMEG Statute, for the period between 1 April 2013 and 30 October 2013. The ad-hoc working group was tasked with analysing the current situation, defining the general issue of the allocation of funds under the grant system - support for the culture of national minorities – and with summarising main shortcomings, defining the basic and specific points of departure for the process of fund allocation and with suggesting solutions and developing an efficient system of measures.

The ad-hoc working group was created on 29 April 2012 and it was composed of the representatives of Czech, German, Hungarian, Polish, Roma, and Ruthenian national minorities. In this set-up the ad-hoc working group met twice. Following the 10th session of the CNMEG, the ad-hoc working group was enlarged as at 23 October 2013 so that each national minority would be represented. The enlarged ad-hoc working group held two more meetings. The activity of the ad-hoc working group was terminated on 31 October 2013.

²³ Ref. to Annex 5 Selected data by the applicant’s statutory seat

²⁴ Ref. to annexes 6 Breakdown of 2013 CNM programme and 7 Selected data by various strands of 2013 CNM programme

At its 4th session on 30 October 2013, based on a consensual decision, the ad-hoc working group adopted a compromise draft of new rules for the allocation of funds under the CNM programme which took account of several criteria in the calculation of the amounts allocated to individual national minorities with the aim to ensure transparent and fair distribution of funds.

The ad-hoc working group agreed to set the fixed amount at 8 % of the total amount allocated which would remain the same for each national minority, however, no less than 25,000 EUR. The amount of allocation under the Multicultural and Multiethnic Activities sub-programme according to Section 2, para 1, letter e) of the Act on Grants would be expressed in percentage and set at 6 % of the total allocation.

The variable amount is to be distributed among the individual national minorities based on the following criteria:

- C1 – the number of the members of a national minority declaring themselves to belong to a given national minority (refer to the Table Population of the Slovak Republic by nationality based on the current population and housing census), with an assigned weight of 45 %,
- C2 – the existence of a home country (the members of the ad-hoc working group agreed on the non-existence of a home country of the Roma and of the Ruthenian national minorities), with an assigned weight of 5 %,
- C3 – the number of the members of a national minority for whom the language of a national minority is deemed their mother tongue (refer to the Table Population of the Slovak Republic by mother tongue based on the current population and housing census), with an assigned weight of 50%.

The calculation of the amount of funds for a national minority also takes account of the difference in the amount of funds allocated to a national minority in the previous three years which shall not be lower than the minimum coefficient and not higher than the maximum coefficient set by threshold values in a mathematical model.

The method of the allocation of funds under the CNM programme for the next period is set by a mathematical model for the calculation of funds to be allocated to the respective national minority, which is found in Annex 8²⁵.

The conclusions of the ad-hoc working group were presented to the CNMEG at its 11th session, on 12 November 2013. The CNMEG, by its Resolution 30, adopted draft rules for the allocation of funds under the Culture of National Minorities programme. The mathematical model for the calculation of funds allocated to a national minority is laid down in Guideline No. 4/2014 on the allocation of grants under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, issued by the Head of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.²⁶

²⁵ Refer to Annex 8 Mathematical model for the calculation of funds allocated to a national minority

²⁶ On 12 February 2014, Guideline No. 4/2014 of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic on the allocation of grants under the competence of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic entered into effect. Among others, it lays down the rules governing the allocation of funds under the CNM grant programme of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. The document is available on the website of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic:

http://www.vlada.gov.sk/data/files/4564_smernica_vuv-4_2014.pdf

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

4.1 Opportunities for education in minority languages

Education and training for national minorities in their mother tongue and the teaching of the mother tongue, including the institutional framework comprising schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education and instruction and those teaching a minority language is an equal and integral part of the education and training system the Slovak Republic.

The state policy in this area is governed by the relevant legislation of the Slovak Republic. The Ministry of Education is the central government authority in the field of education and, among other things, develops concepts, issues generally applicable regulations, administers the network of schools and school facilities, provides funding, issues national educational programmes and approves textbooks, specialised learning texts and teaching materials.

In order to perform its roles, the Ministry of Education sets up budgetary or contributory organisations. In addition to schools and school facilities, there are also other institutions, associations and foundations, professional organisations and NGO staff that participate and assist in education and training.

Education and training for persons belonging to national minorities is governed by several laws and regulations in the Slovak Republic.²⁷ Some of them were amended in 2013. Changes in the area of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities related, in particular, to the five laws below:

1. Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on education and training (the Schools Act) and on amendment to certain laws.
Amendment: 125/2013 Coll.
Amendment: 464/2013 Coll.
2. Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on state administration in the school system and school self-government and on amendments to certain laws as amended.
Amendment: 312/2013 Coll.
Amendment: 464/2013 Coll.
3. Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on the financing of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities as amended.
Amendment: 81/2013 Coll.
Amendment: 464/2013 Coll.
4. Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on teachers and specialised staff and on amendments to certain laws, as amended.
Amendment: 312/2013 Coll.
5. Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on vocational education and training and on amendments to certain laws, as amended.
Amendment: 96/2013 Coll.
Amendment: 464/2013 Coll.

The existing legislation allows children belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups to receive institutional education in all types and categories of schools and school facilities, from pre-primary to higher education.

State control of the standard of pedagogical management is performed by the State School Inspection through school inspectors. In order to ensure professional control of the education and training process, under § 13a(3) of Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on state administration in the school system and school self-government and on amendments to certain

²⁷ See: 2012 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities

laws, as amended by Act No. 245/2008 Coll., in relation to the performance of their duties, school inspectors must have good command of the language of the relevant national minority. Suggestions and recommendations for schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education and instruction resulting from inspection activities are contained in the State School Inspection Report²⁸ on the State and Standard of Education and Training in Schools and School Facilities in the Slovak Republic in the school year of 2012/2013.

The network of schools and school facilities also includes schools and school facilities teaching minority languages.

A. Kindergartens:

As of 15 September 2013, a total of 2 872 kindergartens were included in the network of schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic, of which 355 (12.36 %) were pre-school facilities using a language of instruction other than Slovak, namely Hungarian, Ukrainian, German and French; there were also Slovak-English bilingual facilities and facilities using Bulgarian or Ruthenian as language of instruction.²⁹

Table 4: Number of kindergartens in the Slovak Republic by language of education as of 15 September 2013

language of education	number of kindergartens
Slovak-Hungarian	75
Slovak-Ukrainian	1
Ruthenian/Slovak-Ruthenian	2
Hungarian	266
Ukrainian	6
German	1
other	4

30

The maximum number of children per classroom in a kindergarten is defined by the Schools Act as follows: 20 in classrooms for three- to four-year-old children, 21 in classrooms for four- to five-year-old children, 22 in classrooms for five- to six-year-old children, and 21 in classrooms for three- to six-year-old children.

Effective from 1 September 2013, directors of kindergartens may admit a maximum of three children per classroom in excess of the set limit.

As of 15 September 2013, education in kindergartens was provided by a total of 14 841 teachers, including directors. Education in kindergartens using Hungarian, Ukrainian, German, Ruthenian, English, French and Bulgarian as the language of education was provided by a total of 1 022 teachers in the school year of 2013/2014.

A total of 136 teacher's assistants were working in kindergartens in the Slovak Republic, this number, however, does not satisfy the real needs of pre-school facilities.

Pre-primary education for children from marginalised Roma communities is the subject of part 4.2 Possibilities for further training for teachers and specialised staff in

²⁸The document is available on the website of the State School Inspection at:

<http://www.ssiba.sk/Default.aspx?text=g&id=2&lang=sk>

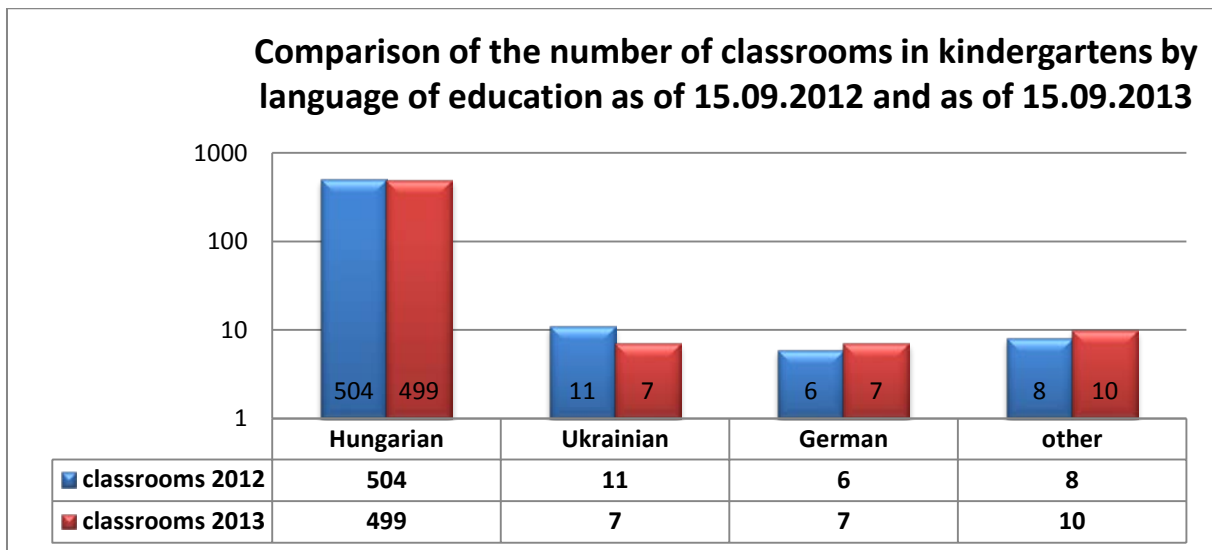
²⁹The list of schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of instruction/education is available on the website of the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education at:

<http://www.uips.sk/registre/vyber-skol-podla-kriterii>

³⁰ Source: IIPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

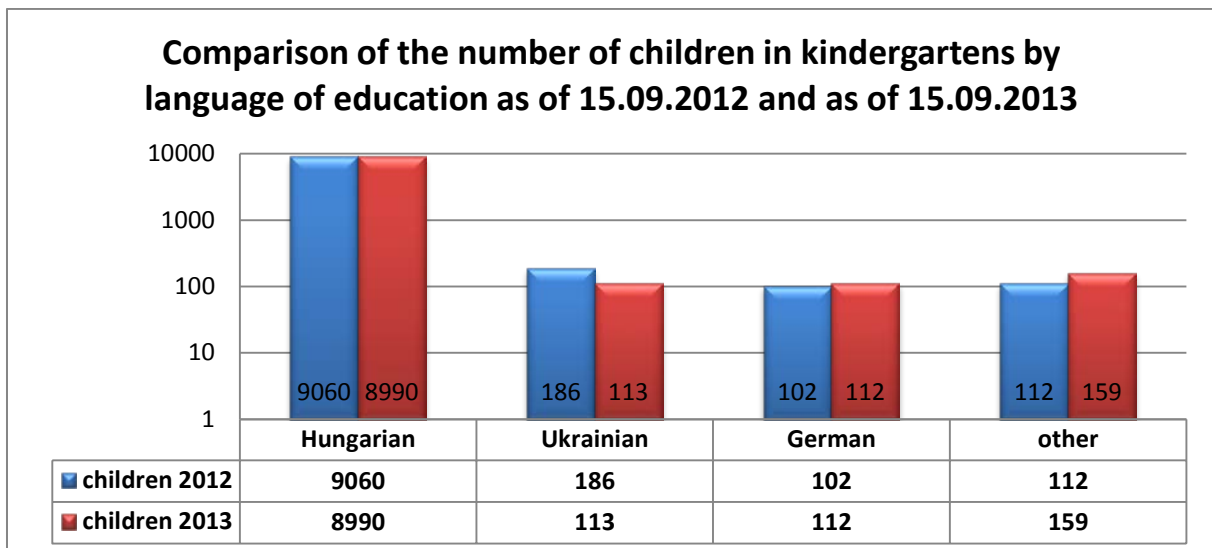
minority languages.

Chart 3 Comparison of the number of classes in kindergartens by language of education as of 15 September 2012 and as of 15 September 2013



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Chart 4 Comparison of the number of children in kindergartens by language of education as of 15 September 2012 and as of 15 September 2013



32

B. Primary schools

The democratic right of parents to choose the language of instruction for their children is applied and adhered to in the school system in respect of education of children belonging to national minorities. The choice of school is at the discretion of the parent or guardian of the child.

In the school year of 2013/2014, there are a total of 2 312 primary schools included in the network of schools and school facilities (there were 2 177 schools in the school year of

³¹ Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

³² Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

2012/2013), of which 2 140 are public schools, 125 are church schools and 47 are private schools.

Table 5: Number of primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction as of 15 September 2013

language of instruction	number of primary schools
Slovak-Hungarian	26
Hungarian	237
Ruthenian/Slovak-Ruthenian	2
Ukrainian/Slovak-Ukrainian	5
German/German-Slovak	4
other	6

33

In primary schools, there were a total of 1 921 classrooms using Hungarian, Ukrainian, German, Ruthenian or Bulgarian as the language of instruction as of 15 September 2013. Classrooms by language of instruction:

Hungarian:

- in public schools, there were a total of 1 797 classrooms attended by a total of 28 496 pupils, of which 919 were 1st to 4th grade classrooms with 13 649 pupils and 878 were 5th to 9th grade classrooms with a total of 14 847 pupils;
- in church schools, there were a total of 84 classrooms attended by 1 219 pupils, of which 38 were 1st to 4th grade classrooms with 553 pupils and 46 were 5th to 9th grade classrooms with 666 pupils.

Ukrainian:

- in public schools, there were a total of 23 classrooms attended by 265 pupils, of which 9 were 1st to 4th grade classrooms with 117 pupils and 14 were 5th to 9th grade classrooms with 148 pupils,

German:

- in public schools, there were a total of 3 classrooms attended by 33 pupils, all of which were 1st to 4th grade classrooms, i.e. there were no classrooms in the 5th to 9th grade;
- in private schools, there were a total of 5 classrooms attended by 94 pupils, all of which were 1st to 4th grade classrooms.³⁴

Education in primary schools using Hungarian, Ukrainian, German, Ruthenian or Bulgarian as the language of instruction was provided by a total of 2 982 qualified teachers as of 15 September 2013 (school year of 2013/2014).

C. Secondary schools

From 1 January 2013, the number of 1st grade classrooms in secondary schools financed from the state budget is determined, within their territorial jurisdiction, by the self-governing regions through a generally applicable regulation, in accordance with the regional strategy of education and training in secondary schools. Students are admitted at the

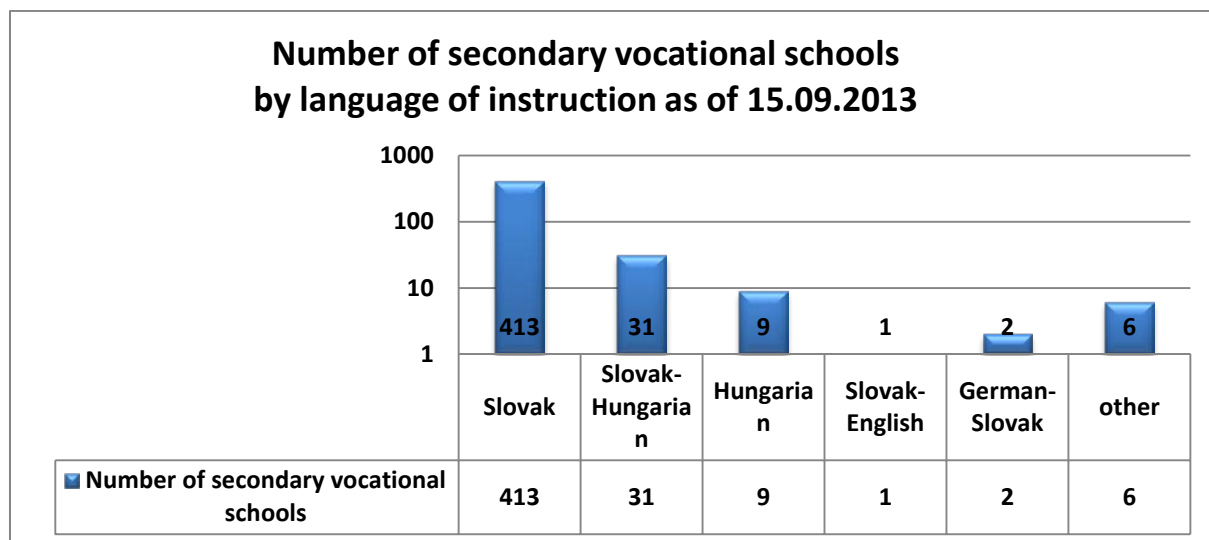
³³ Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

³⁴ Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

discretion of the headmaster of the secondary school. Effective from 1 January 2014, an amendment to the Schools Act changed the lowest possible number of students in a secondary school classroom and, in particular cases, the founder of a secondary vocational school may allow an even smaller number of students in a classroom.

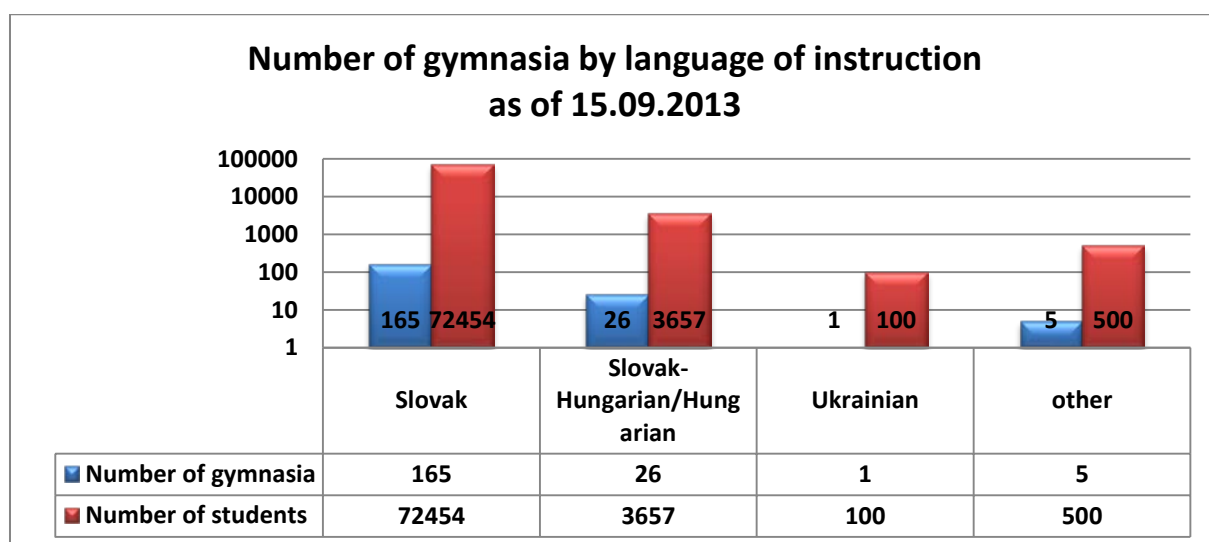
There were 1 770 teachers in secondary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, 8 in schools using Ukrainian, 17 in schools using German, 138 in schools using English and 18 teachers in schools using Bulgarian as the language of instruction, totalling 1 951 teachers.

Chart 5 Number of secondary vocational schools by language of instruction as of 15 September 2013



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Chart 6 Number of gymnasia by language of instruction as of 15 September 2013

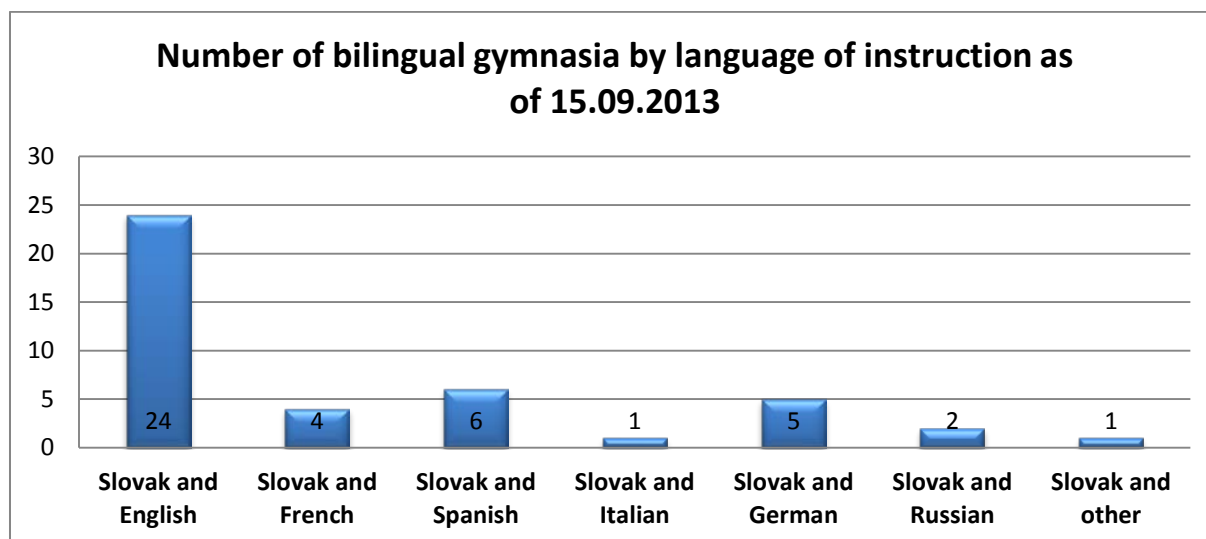


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³⁵ Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

³⁶ Source: IPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

Chart 7 Number of bilingual gymnasia by language of instruction as of 15 September 2013



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D. Higher education

Higher education in the Slovak Republic is governed by Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on higher education and on amendments to certain laws (Higher Education Act), as amended.

Higher education institutions have the exclusive right to provide higher education in the Slovak Republic. Transformation of higher education has been underway since 2002. The two-tier system has been replaced with a three-tiered system of higher education and a credit system was introduced in accordance with the principles of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

Within the higher education system, we distinguish between public, state and private higher education institutions; with foreign higher education institutions forming a special group. Study programmes may take the form of full-time or distance learning.

Anyone who meets the basic admission criteria may study at a higher education institution. A number of higher education institutions provide the possibility to study in a minority language or study a minority language, and training of teachers in minority languages for the needs of primary and secondary education is also provided.³⁸

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

The European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism are contributions from donor countries, namely Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, to several Member States of the European Union. The contribution to the Slovak Republic, distributed among nine programmes, exceeded EUR 80 million in the 2009-2014 period. One of the programmes is a programme called “Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and promote social inclusion” (hereinafter referred to as the “EEA and NFM programme”), which closely relates to education and training for persons belonging to the Roma minority and to the Roma language.

The EEA and NFM programme consists of 3 parts:

³⁷ Source: IIPE - Statistical Yearbooks available at <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka>

³⁸ Detailed information is available in the document Report on the State of the Education Sector in Slovakia - Annex 2, which is available on the website of the Ministry of Education at: <http://www.minedu.sk/data/att/5253.pdf>

1. Open call - small grants to support Roma inclusion and intercultural projects by primary and secondary schools.
2. Pre-defined project: Creation of an accredited programme of innovative education for teaching staff of primary schools to increase their intercultural competence in the educational process of Roma pupils.

The Programme Decision (Annex 1 to the Programme Agreement between the Financial Mechanism Committee established by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the Office of Government of the Slovak Republic as the “National Focal Point” representing Slovakia for the financing of the EEA and NFM programme) defines the objectives, outputs, outcomes, indicators and purpose of the EEA and NFM programme.³⁹

Basic information about progress of the individual parts of the EEA and NFM programme:

- a) Open call - small grants to support Roma inclusion and intercultural projects by primary and secondary schools:
 - the call for grant applications was published on 20 August 2013 and concluded on 31 October 2013;
 - eligible applicants included primary and secondary schools or, where these do not have their own legal personality, their founders;
 - the minimum and maximum grant amounts that the applicants could apply for were EUR 5 000 and EUR 40 000, respectively;
 - 35 grant applications were received, one of which failed to pass administrative verification and one failed to pass applicant eligibility verification, which means that 33 applications were forwarded for expert review;
 - the applications have undergone administrative and applicant eligibility verification, they will be ranked and then discussed by the selection committee;
 - contracts with successful applicants will be signed during April and May 2014 and, subsequently, the projects will be implemented.
- b) Pre-defined project: Creation of an accredited programme of innovative education for teaching staff of primary schools to increase their intercultural competence in the educational process of Roma pupils
 - the beneficiary is the National Institute for Education;
 - the total project cost is estimated at EUR 322 000;
 - the project contract was signed on 13 November 2013 and processes needed in order to implement the project are underway.

4.2 Possibilities for further training for teachers and specialised staff in minority languages

Continuous training for teachers and specialised staff is governed, above all, by Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on teachers and specialised staff and on amendments to certain laws, as amended. The training is provided by schools and school facilities, organisations established by the Ministry of Education or other ministries, higher education institutions, the church or religious societies, or other legal persons subject to satisfaction of the conditions laid down by law.

One such organisation in the field of training is the **Methodology and Pedagogy Centre** (hereinafter referred to as the “MPC”), which, under § 14(2)c) of Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on state administration in the school system and school self-government and on amendments to certain laws, as amended, is an organisation centrally administered by the

³⁹See the website of the Central Register of Contracts at:
<http://www.crz.gov.sk/index.php?ID=700140&l=sk>

Ministry of Education. The methodology and pedagogy centres carry out methodological activities as the expert lead organisation, among others, in the area of further training for teachers in schools in ethnically mixed areas (Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Roma).

Its specific role in promoting professional development and continuous training for teachers and specialised staff in schools and school facilities using Hungarian as the language of instruction is played by the **MPC Field Office in Komárno** established on 1 April 2011. The MPC Field Office in Komárno is currently staffed by 12 employees.

The key tasks and activities performed by the Field Office in Komárno include:

- linguistic, technical and methodological assessment of textbooks and learning materials and their translations into Hungarian as the language of instruction (workbooks, work sheets, methodical handbooks, auxiliary textbooks, readers, etc.), technical support and advisory activities in the area of designing creative workshops for authors of textbooks and learning materials,
- support for continuous training for teachers and specialised staff in terms of content and organisation, in accordance with Act No. 317/2009 Coll., including attestations of teachers and specialised staff on the basis of the MPC Statutes,
- continuous training programmes implemented through the national project Training for Kindergarten Teachers as Part of the Education Reform, continuous training programmes implemented through the national project Professional and Career Development of Teachers, and continuous training programmes implemented through the national project Activation Methods in Education,
- maintenance and cooperation with regard to Slovakia-Hungarian and Hungarian-Slovak pedagogical terminology, as well as a terminological glossary,
- provision of technical and methodological assistance to teachers and specialised staff both within and outside of the region, including schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education and instruction,
- provision of methodological guidance on the teaching of the Slovak language in national minority schools to ensure that persons belonging to national minorities obtain adequate conversational skills in the State language.

In 2013, the Komárno Field Office worked closely with the Union of Hungarian Teachers in Slovakia to organise a summer university, as well as to organise professional conferences and seminars for schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction. Its key tasks also included the organisation of professional seminars on the methodology of teaching Slovak language and literature in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, organisation of training, and preparation of publications on training activities, which have also been published in Hungarian, in particular for schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction.

With regard to improving the command of Slovak in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, by the end of 2013, the Komárno Field Office had accredited the continuous training programmes below for teachers in primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction focusing on strengthening the communication competence in the teaching of Slovak:

1. For teachers in the second stage of primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, a refresher training programme of 40 hours has been accredited under the name of Strengthening of Communication Competence in the Subject of Slovak

Language and Slovak Literature in Primary Schools Using Hungarian as the Language of Instruction. A total of 174 teachers have completed this programme.

2. The MPC also has an accredited innovation training programme of 90 hours entitled Strengthening of Communication Competence in the Teaching of the Slovak Language for Teachers at the First Stage of Primary Schools Using Hungarian as the Language of Instruction. Due to a low number of registered applicants, this programme was not opened in 2013.

Training activities will continue in 2014 under both of the continuous training programmes.

In addition to these programmes, the MPC Field Office in Komárno has accredited further continuous training programmes for schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction. These are refresher training programmes: Development of reading literacy in primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction; Preparation of didactic tests for general education subjects using Hungarian as the language of instruction; Implementation of the expanding curriculum for art classes in 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. A total of 280 teachers were enrolled in these programmes and these training activities will continue in 2014.

From 1 April 2011, there are a further three teachers in charge of continuous training for schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, two in the regional office in Banská Bystrica and one in the Field Office in Košice.

In the context of continuous training in the Košice region, in 2013, the **MPC Field Office in Košice** organised training programmes in Hungarian attended by 183 teachers. These were:

1. Digital technology to improve the efficiency of instruction using interactive whiteboards in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction (6 groups opened, 4 groups completed),
2. Interactive whiteboard in the educational process (1 group opened and completed),
3. Development of graphomotorics using art activities (4 groups opened and completed),
4. Establishing and fostering a positive climate in the classroom (2 groups opened, 1 completed),
5. Project teaching in the educational process (1 group opened and completed).

Further training was provided under the programme Management of Schools and School Facilities in the Mother Tongue for teachers in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction.

The Košice Field Office is planning to open further programmes in Hungarian in 2014.

MPC regional office in Prešov

This Methodology and Pedagogy Centre provides training through ROCEPO - the Prešov Roma Educational Centre, which is an integral part of the Prešov MPC.

The Prešov MPC provides training for teachers, in particular in the area of the Roma, Ukrainian and Ruthenian languages.

The Prešov MPC has an accredited 90-hour innovative training programme Roma Language in Education. The programme's target group includes teachers, educators, teacher's assistants and practical training teachers and the curriculum covers basic knowledge of the Roma language and Roma culture and history. The programme increases their professional

competence in language teaching and communication and its purpose is the comprehensive understanding of the subject of Roma language and its origin and development.

In the area of promoting professional development and continuous training of teachers and specialised staff in schools and school facilities for work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities, two national projects are being implemented by the methodology and pedagogy centre providing training not only to teachers and specialised staff, but also to parents of children from marginalised Roma communities. An all-day education system is also implemented in selected schools.

The national project “Training for teaching staff towards inclusion of marginalised Roma communities” (hereinafter referred to as the “MRC I”), which is co-financed from the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme Education, is designed for those primary schools in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice self-governing region in which at least 20 % of pupils come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

The aim of the project is to improve the educational levels of persons from marginalised Roma communities by training teachers and specialised staff and thus create the necessary competences for their further training and successful adaptation to the needs of the labour market.

The specific objective of the project is to improve the professional competence of teachers and specialised staff participating in education of pupils from marginalised Roma communities.

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.

List of accredited MRC I training programs:

- Multicultural training in inclusive education;
- Teacher’s assistants in the inclusive school and their work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Inclusion of pupils from marginalised Roma communities through the development of their communication skills;
- Cooperation in the educational process between families from marginalised Roma communities and the school;
- Current approaches and innovations in the teaching of pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Cooperation of specialised staff with the families of pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Teacher - the creator of learning resources for pupils from marginalised Roma communities;
- Information and communication technology in the all-day education system.⁴⁰

The national project “Inclusive model of education at the pre-primary level of the school system” (hereinafter referred to as the “MRC II”) is designed for those kindergartens in the Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice regions in which at least 8 % of children come from marginalised Roma communities or which are located in an area/municipality where members of these communities live.

⁴⁰ See also the website <http://web.eduk.sk/>

The objective of the project is to improve the professional competence of teachers and specialised staff participating in education of children coming from marginalised Roma communities and thus promote their social inclusion at the pre-primary level of the school system.

The philosophy of the MRC II project is to place in kindergartens as many children from marginalised Roma communities as possible and, through active education of their parents, improve their readiness for entry into the primary level of education.

The main activities under the project are:

- Training for teachers and specialised staff
- Support for the inclusive model of education for the needs of the pre-primary level of the school system
- Technical support for activities under the national project

As of September 2013, 110 teacher's assistants were recruited as part of the project, as many as 80 % of whom now have command of the Roma language. Several activities were carried out under the MRC II project in 2014.⁴¹

The MRC II continuous training programmes on this issue were attended by 4 456 participants, 1 026 of whom completed the training with a certificate:

- a) Teacher's assistants in the inclusive school and their work with pupils from marginalised Roma communities,
- b) Cooperation in the educational process between families from marginalised Roma communities and the school,
- c) Multicultural training in inclusive education,
- d) Inclusion of pupils from marginalised Roma communities through the development of their communication skills,
- e) Current approaches and innovations in the teaching of pupils from marginalised Roma communities,
- f) Cooperation of specialised staff with the families of pupils from marginalised Roma communities,
- g) Information and communication technology in the all-day education system,
- h) Teacher - the creator of learning resources for pupils from marginalised Roma communities,
- i) Education and training for of Roma in religion/religious education classes.

The Prešov MPC has one member of staff in charge of training related to the Ukrainian language. In 2013, continuous training under the training programme Development of Communication Skills in Ukrainian Language Lessons was successfully completed by 7 teachers of Ukrainian. The training was provided as part of the project Professional and Career Development of the Teaching Staff.

In 2013, the Prešov MPC received and agreed cooperation with a delegation from the Transcarpathian Institute of Postgraduate Education. An official cooperation agreement is ready for signing.

⁴¹ See the website at <http://www.npmrk2.sk/zrealizovane-aktivity-podaktivity-np-mrk-2-aktualizacia-k-januaru-2014>

Several events were organised for national minority schools:

- an expert seminar on National Minority Schools in Slovakia and in Neighbouring Countries - headmasters of national minority schools and teachers of Ukrainian were invited; the outcome of the event was the publication of conference proceedings;
- the seminar Orest Zilynskyj and his Contribution to Slovak-Ukrainian Cultural Relations.

As part of implementation of the Ministry of Education's Vega project, two books for the Ukrainian language, which are intended for national minority schools and were co-authored by an external methodological expert, were published.⁴²

Training for teachers of the Ruthenian language was limited since there were three programmes with accreditation pending; information about the process of accreditation is not available to the institution. A further five continuous training programmes are in the process of development. It should be noted that there is a low number of Ruthenian language teachers, or teachers teaching Ruthenian, which causes problems in terms of enrolling a sufficient number of participants of training from the target group of the continuous training programmes. In the school year of 2013/2014, in the whole of Slovakia, only 7 students of Ruthenian nationality were enrolled in the first grade in schools using Ruthenian as the language of instruction. The most recent textbook was published in 2011 and the need for methodological materials for pre-primary education is arising.

MPC Field Office in Trnava

In connection with the introduction of electronic applications for continuous training, from September 2012, the MPC Field Office in Trnava started to keep records of the nationality of applicants for training related to national minorities. As of 31 March 2014, out of around 4 000 applications received, 271 had been from teachers and specialised staff who reported belonging to a national minority. Of these, 51 participants have completed training, 21 will complete training in April 2014, and the rest are gradually starting their training programmes. All of the applicants are of Hungarian nationality and they can enrol in any of the MPC's accredited training programmes. If the applicants so request, the Trnava Field Office can also provide the training in Hungarian.

In 2013, the MPC continued to provide training in minority languages and attestations to teachers and specialised staff, with the option of receiving training to prepare for attestation in minority languages. Internal MPC Regulation No. 8/2013 concerning attestations lays down the rules for writing attestation theses in minority languages and, in addition, the attestation itself may be conducted in a minority language. In 2013, a total of 214 teachers used this option in the context of preparatory training for attestation - 103 of whom sought the 1st attestation and 111 sought the 2nd attestation.

Committees were set up for applicants for attestation in Hungarian, in which conditions have been created for conducting attestations in the minority language. In accordance with the existing legislation, under § 51(2) and (6) of Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on teachers and specialised staff and on amendments to certain laws, if necessary, the general

⁴² 1. ČIŽMÁROVÁ, M. – JAŠKOVÁ, A.: Ukrajinsko-slovenská homonymia [Ukrainian-Slovak Homonymics]. Slovník ukrajinsko-slovenských medzijazykových homóným [A Dictionary of Ukrainian-Slovak interlingual homonyms]. Prešov, Faculty of Arts of the University of Prešov in Prešov, 2013. 274 p. ISBN 978-80-555-0759-0.

2. ČIŽMÁROVÁ, M. – BELEY, L.: Osobovi imena v ukrajinsko-slovackij mižmovnij komunikaciji: Ukrajinsko-slovackij ta slovacko-ukrajinskyj slovnyky osobovyh imen. Uzhgorod: Vydavnyctvo Gražda, 2013. 92 p. ISBN 978-966-176-098-0.

directorates of the MPC propose Hungarian-speaking chairs of attestation committees who subsequently exercise their mandate based on appointment by the Ministry of Education. Equally, within the meaning of § 51(4) and (5) of the above Act, with a view to the increasing number of minority language applicants, if necessary, the MPC hires external reviewers to prepare review assessments in Hungarian.

Continuous training programmes in national minority languages under the national project Professional and Career Development of Teachers continued to be implemented in 2013.

The eight continuous training programmes below were created for teachers in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction:

- a) Strengthening of communication competence in the subject of Slovak language and Slovak literature in primary schools,
- b) Preparation of didactic tests in general education subjects,
- c) Development of reading literacy in primary schools,
- d) Strengthening of communication competence in the teaching of Slovak language for teachers at the first stage of primary schools,
- e) Practising communication skills in Slovak language classes at the first stage of primary schools,
- f) Creation and application of didactic games and learning aids at the first stage of primary schools,
- g) Development of pupils' reading literacy in schools,
- h) Development of communication skills in schools.

There are two continuous training programmes in Ukrainian focusing on the development of communication competence:

- a) Development of communication competence using texts of different styles in Ukrainian language classes,
- b) Development of communication competence in Ukrainian language classes.

There are further regional and field offices of the MPC operating in the Slovak Republic, however, these do not primarily deal with further training for teachers and specialised staff working in schools and school facilities using a national minority language as the language of education/instruction.⁴³

4.3 Informal education

As regards informal education, IUVENTA - the Slovak Youth Institute, an institution under direct administration of the Ministry of Education, is active in working with the youth. The focus of its activities is work with the youth outside of the school and family environment and the youth policy, both in Slovakia and abroad. The objective of its activities is to implement the state policy on children and youth.

The institution's portfolio includes several instruments that are aimed at, among other things, promoting and developing activities with young people belonging to national minorities or developing the competence of youth workers actively working with this youth group. These are the following instruments:

1. Administration of the European Union's grant programme Youth in Action, which, besides grant activities, also includes an extensive training programme aimed at

⁴³Part 4.2 was prepared on the basis of data provided by General Directorate of the MPC and the individual regional and field offices of the MPC.

improving the quality of the programme and its impact. The activities and measures below were prepared under this instrument in 2013:

- a) a seminar on the possibilities and opportunities offered by the programme and increasing of the capacity for using them; a seminar in Hungarian entitled “Aj my [Us, too]” attended by 19 multipliers - youth workers and youth leaders (April, Veľký Meder),
 - b) KAMBEK - an evaluation meeting on projects of Roma participants in the programme during the Youth on the Move initiative, which was attended by 32 participants (May, Košice),
 - c) sharing of information and training materials of the National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme in Hungary, close cooperation and communication within the whole V4 cooperation,
 - d) two-phase seminar for organisations working with Roma youth focused on the promotion of volunteering in Roma communities; the seminar was conducted in collaboration with the Advanced Support Organisation KERIC and attended by 17 participants (October, Čadca),
 - e) print and distribution of the publication: A Chance for change for the youth in Roma communities.
2. Administration of Programmes of Financial Support for Activities for Children and Youth (ADAM) of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Under this programme, financial support of EUR 34 143 was provided to the Association of Scouts of Hungarian Nationality. The funds were intended for the development of systematic and targeted work with youth in line with the objectives of the state youth policy, i.e. participation, volunteering, protection of human rights, promotion of democracy, and others.
 3. The national ESF project KomPrax - Competence for Practice, which is aimed at enhancing the competence of young people through informal training on youth work. In 2013, training was also provided in Hungarian and attended by a total of 53 participants.
 4. Support for research in the field of youth - in 2013, two studies dealing with the issue of migrant youth were conducted. This concerns the study “Leisure time of young migrants” and the study “Specific Needs of Migrant Youth”.⁴⁴

This institution intends to continue to implement thematically similar training projects in 2014.⁴⁵

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

The Slovak Republic is a country with a relatively diverse ethnic structure of the population and the ethnic composition of the Slovak Republic’s population is also reflected in

⁴⁴ Source: IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute

⁴⁵ IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute will implement the following training projects in 2014:

- training on the youth for Roma leaders (KomPrax),
- training “Prevention of discrimination against youth entering the labour market” (KomPrax),
- training “Methods and techniques of working with disadvantaged youth” (KomPrax),
- training “Slovakia as an intercultural society” (KomPrax),
- training related to the youth at risk of radical extremism and
- nationalism (KomPrax).

Training to be provided in Hungarian:

- Support for young people in career choice (KomPrax)
- Čo ťa páli - uhas! [If it’s broke - fix it!] Promotion of active participation of the youth in public life (KomPrax).

the education and training process, in particular in relation to the provision of education and training in schools and school facilities in national minority languages.

The key documents relating to education and training for children belonging to national minorities in schools and school facilities include the Concept of Education and Training for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the “Education Concept”). The draft of the Education Concept was approved through Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 1100/2007 of 19 December 2007. The key objective of the Education Concept is the improvement of the education and training process in primary and secondary schools attended by national minorities; 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; development of intercultural competences; enhancement of the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and innovativeness of education and innovation of the methodology for learning the 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 the teaching staff and improvement of methodological assistance to Slovak language and literature teachers in schools attended by national minorities.

Based on the CNMEG’s plan of work for 2013, a report on the implementation of the measures arising from the conclusions of the Education Concept was included in the agenda of the 10th meeting of the CNMEG held on 27 September 2013.

In this report, the Ministry of Education stated that it was not working on a Concept of Education and Training for Persons Belonging to National Minorities since the Report on the State of the School System in Slovakia constitutes a draft comprehensive strategy for the school system in Slovakia. This report was drawn up by the Ministry of Education on the basis of Resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 374 of 13 December 2012. The Report on the State of the School System in Slovakia provides a description of facts characterising the current state of the Slovak school system and formulates medium-term strategic objectives for its future direction, including education and training for national minorities. It also includes a proposal of systemic steps to be taken to ensure further development of regional and higher education.

Each national minority is unique and each has specific educational and training needs which need to be taken into account in the education and training process. Specific educational and training needs lie, above all, in the specific approach to teaching certain subjects (language and literature of national minorities, history, national history and geography, nature classes, or music classes), in measures aimed at eliminating language barriers, in the need for the participation of teacher’s assistants in the education and training process, and in dealing with the effects of the disadvantaged backgrounds of Roma children and pupils who have received minimal or no training before entering compulsory schooling.

A separate topic of education and training for children belonging to national minorities is the provision of textbooks, learning texts and workbooks of sufficient variety and quality for use in schools. The textbooks, learning texts and workbooks used in the teaching of certain subjects in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction are direct translations of textbooks, learning texts and workbooks used in schools where the language of instruction is the State language.

The tasks below, relating to the issue of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities, are being implemented by the National Institute for Education in the area of pedagogical documents: 46

- Proposal to modify the framework curriculum for primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction;
- Revision of the National Educational Programme - innovation of pedagogical documents for the area of Language and Communication for Primary Education and Lower Secondary Education – documents for Hungarian language and literature and Slovak language and Slovak literature were published in 2013 on the website of the National Institute for Education for public consultation and, after evaluation and incorporation of the comments, the subject committees discussed and recommended them for approval. The documents concerning the teaching subjects of Ruthenian language and literature and Ukrainian language and literature have undergone public consultation. At present, the final stage of innovation of the pedagogical documents for the above teaching subjects for upper secondary education is taking place;
- Development of the National Educational Programme for history classes for lower secondary education and gymnasia using Hungarian as the language of instruction – as part of the innovation of national educational programmes, two specific national educational programmes, responding to the issues faced in the teaching of history and in the process of developing history textbooks for schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, are ready for approval. These issues were addressed by Slovak historians, teachers and Hungarian historians and teachers living in Slovakia at a meeting of the Central Subject Committee at the National Institute for Education. Three meetings have been held on this issue, in June 2013 and in March 2014. The subject committee draws attention to the counterproductive situation, which has existed for a long time, where pupils of Hungarian nationality are told the story of the Slovak nation translated into Hungarian, despite the fact that these pupils have a different historical consciousness, identity and historical culture;
- Development of the National Educational Programme for the study programmes in secondary vocational schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction - in 2012 and 2013, the National Institute for Education prepared pedagogical documents for Hungarian language and literature and Slovak language and Slovak literature for two-, three- and four-year programmes and the full secondary vocational education programme, effective from 1 September 2013;
- Development of the curricula for teaching subjects in special primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction - documents for Hungarian language and literature and Slovak language and Slovak literature have been prepared for the 9th grade of special primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, for pupils with mild and moderate mental disability, as well as documents Hungarian language and literature and Slovak language and Slovak literature for the 10th grade of special primary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction, for pupils with moderate mental disability;
- The target requirements for school leaving examination effective from the school year of 2013/2014 for the teaching subjects of Hungarian language and literature, Slovak language and Slovak literature, and Ukrainian language and literature, were revised 2012 and 2013 and the final version has been sent to the Ministry of Education for approval.

⁴⁶ Source: National Institute for Education

In 2014, the National Institute for Education will continue to revise the National Educational Programmes.⁴⁷

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

With the aim of improving the teaching of the Slovak language and literature in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction, in 2012, the Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for the Structural Funds of the European Union, being the Intermediate Body under the managing authority for the Operational Programme Education, published, among others, a call for grant applications for the Improvement of the Teaching of Slovak Language and Literature in Schools Using a Minority Language as the Language of Instruction Applying Foreign-Language Teaching Methods by Improving the Standard of Study Programmes in Higher Education Institutions.

The call focused on the development, innovation and/or implementation of study programmes aimed at training future Slovak language and literature teachers and future primary school teachers with regard to the teaching of Slovak language and literature applying foreign-language teaching methods in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction and on the development of new study materials for, and introduction of new teaching methods in, these study programmes. The activities under the call should support the implementation of Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 196/2010 of 17 March 2010 concerning the draft programme to improve the standard of teaching of the State language in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction.

After the applications were evaluated, grant contracts were awarded to the following applicants:

- Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice with a project entitled “Expansion of the study programme Slovak language and literature in a combination, at the Department of Slovak Studies, Slavonic Philology, and Communication of the Faculty of Arts, to include the teaching of the Slovak language as a foreign language (DiSaC)”, ITMS code 26110230102;
- Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava with a project entitled “Improvement of the standard of university training for future Slovak language and Slovak literature teachers in primary and secondary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction by applying methods used for the teaching of foreign languages, at the

⁴⁷ The National Institute for Education is also planning to carry out further tasks in 2014, related to the issue of teaching minority languages and the Slovak language and Slovak literature:

- Reference framework for subject-specific competences - the aim of the project is to create two types of frameworks (mother tongue, second language), which will set the standard of subject-specific competences after completing the various stages of education under the teaching subjects of Slovak language and literature, Hungarian language and literature, and Slovak language and Slovak literature, in accordance with the existing national educational programme;
- Language competencies developed across the curriculum – the aim of the project will be to develop a reference framework for language competences that are essential for learning in the selected languages, in accordance with the existing national educational programme;
- Monitoring of the development of the teaching of minority languages – the aim of this task will be to monitor the development of the teaching of minority languages in primary and secondary schools, namely Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German and Croatian languages. This task relates to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- Get to know them – national minorities in the Slovak Republic – the aim of this task will be to develop an informational and methodological document on the topic of multiculturalism for pupils. This task has arisen from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Faculty of Arts of the Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava”, ITMS project code 26110230098;

- Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra with a project entitled “Nitra model of improving the teaching of Slovak language and literature in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction by applying methods used for the teaching of foreign languages (with emphasis on schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction)”, ITMS code 26110230114.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava started to implement the project in October 2013. Due to the short period of implementation of the above project, it is not yet possible to evaluate the achievement of the objective of the call.⁴⁸The other beneficiaries - Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra - did not start to implement the above projects until 2014 (in compliance with the timetable under the grant contracts);

In accordance with Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 196 of 17 March 2010 – the Draft Programme to Improve the Standard of Teaching of the State Language in Schools Using a Minority Language as the Language of Instruction, the National Institute for Education, as part of a research project, continues to carry out a questionnaire survey to monitor the standard of teaching of Slovak language and Slovak literature in primary and secondary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction.

In December 2013, the collection of data from teachers of Slovak language and Slovak literature in lower stage secondary education, eight-year gymnasias and upper stage secondary education was completed. A qualitative analysis is currently being performed of the questionnaires for the headmasters of these schools - in order to identify the personnel resources and conditions for the teaching of Slovak language and Slovak literature in schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction - and for primary school teachers of Slovak language and Slovak literature.

The Ministry of Education also holds national competitions, competitions with international participation and international competitions in cooperation with other State administration authorities, self-government bodies, civic associations, guilds, or other legal persons. The teaching of the Slovak language is at the centre of attention in schools using a minority language as the language of instruction. The deepening of interest in the Slovak language is also promoted by **language competitions** - as regards country-wide competitions, in 2013, the Ministry of Education contributed financially, among others, to Slovak language and language-literary competitions for pupils of primary and secondary schools using Hungarian as the language of instruction: **Know the Slovak Tongue, Good Word**, as well as a competition entitled **Why I Like the Slovak Language, Why I like Slovakia** open to pupils from all types and categories of primary and secondary schools located in the Slovak Republic and for pupils from all types and categories of primary and secondary schools abroad, who are interested in the Slovak language and Slovakia.

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

An important condition for the implementation of the National Educational Programme is appropriate **material and technical equipment and premises for schools**,

⁴⁸ Source: Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for EU Structural Funds

regardless of the school's language of instruction or education. This concerns, in particular, classrooms and school grounds, including their equipment, as well as textbooks, teaching aids, information and communication technology and additional literature, which schools also use as material and technical aids. 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.

The equipment of schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education and instruction is comparable to other schools in the network of schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic.

One of the priority tasks of the State Vocational Education Institute for the 2013-2016 period is the development of normative standards for material and technical equipment and premises needed to ensure a comprehensive education and training process, monitoring of economic development, manufacturing technologies, new qualification requirements for occupations, and their implications for vocational education and training in secondary vocational schools. The normative standards are being developed by working groups of the State Vocational Education Institute set up to develop these normative standards. These working groups also comprise representatives of schools using a minority language as the language of instruction.⁴⁹

Under § 3 of Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on the financing of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities as amended, the funds for the **publication of textbooks**, which is centrally funded by the Ministry of Education, are budgeted in the budget chapter of the Ministry of Education. The funds for the publication of textbooks are distributed at the discretion of the Ministry of Education, in accordance with the editorial plan.

The funds allocated in the budget of the regional education section for the purchase and distribution of textbooks for 2013 totalled EUR 6.5 million. Schools ordered a total of more than 4.3 million textbooks (EUR 9.8 million in 2011 and EUR 8.5 million in 2012). According to information from the Ministry of Education, every year, schools' demand for textbooks several times exceeds the actual budgetary possibilities.

In 2012, 18.6% of the budget of the Ministry of Education for the acquisition of textbooks was used for schools using a minority language as the language of instruction, in 2013, the Ministry planned to use 30% of the total approved funds for the acquisition of new textbooks and reissues for schools using a minority language as the language of instruction.

The editorial plan for 2013 included the acquisition and distribution of textbooks for all categories and types of schools, including schools using a minority language as the language of instruction. Based on the ordering procedure for the school year of 2013/2014, a total of 550 titles of textbooks (reissues and stocks) were to be distributed to schools to replenish their stock of textbooks, of which 190 titles were for schools using Hungarian, 17 titles for schools using Ukrainian, and 23 titles for schools using Ruthenian as the language of instruction (230 titles in total). These were mostly language and literature textbooks and translations of textbooks into Hungarian. Language and literature textbooks for other national minorities are not available in the editorial portal.

⁴⁹ Source: State Vocational Education Institute

Considering that textbooks have a lifespan of approximately 4 to 5 years, schools also have stocks of other titles supplied to them in previous years. The creation and acquisition of new textbooks continued to be carried out through public procurement - tenders, in 2013. Given that public procurement tenders are also published in the relevant publication channels of the EU, foreign companies (publishing houses) have the information and a realistic opportunity to participate in tenders for the supply of textbooks.

In the area of the development of textbooks and informational and methodological materials issued for secondary vocational schools and conservatories using a minority language as the language of instruction, the State Vocational Education Institute works together with the Ministry of Education and authors and publishers 81 specialised textbooks for secondary vocational schools and conservatories using a minority language as the language of instruction have been published over the past five years.⁵⁰

According to the supporting documents from the National Institute for Education, no tenders for textbooks for the needs of primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction or teaching a minority language were held in 2013. Some textbooks and workbooks were reissued and further teaching materials were published as an addition to the existing textbooks.

With a view to the importance of education and training for children belonging to national minorities, in 2012 the Minister of Education set up the Council of the Minister for National Minority Schools. It is an advisory body to the Minister of Education for the area of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities and implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, within the meaning of its Article 7(4) and Article 8. The Government Plenipotentiary is a member of the Council. At its 1st session on 30 April 2013, the Council of the Minister for National Minority Schools discussed the issues related to the supply and distribution of textbooks for the needs of schools and school facilities using a minority language as the language of education and instruction. The meeting concluded that the situation with regard to the shortage of textbooks for national minority schools had improved in 2013. According to the Ministry's representatives, the remaining issues were the result of a significantly lower amount of funding, by up to 40%, available for the implementation of the editorial plan for 2013 compared to previous years. Textbooks for the 1st grade of primary schools and the 1st stage of primary schools, special primary schools and vocational schools were identified as the priority.

In line with the conclusions and tasks adopted at the meeting, the head of the National Institute for Education was assigned the tasks of convening a roundtable on the topic of history classes with experts, including from among national minorities, organising a special meeting on Hungarian textbooks and then gradually for other national minorities, and ensuring special meetings on the issue of textbooks for German schools, including the development of work sheets on history by the end of June 2013.

⁵⁰ Source: State Vocational Education Institute

Part Five – The use of national minority languages

Apart from the State language, several other languages are used in the Slovak Republic, some of which have the status of national minority languages. The legal framework for their protection is derived from the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and several international treaties.

The State language in the Slovak Republic is the Slovak language⁵¹, which is the basic means of communication between citizens of the Slovak Republic. Its status is governed by Act No. 270/1995 Coll. on the State language of the Slovak Republic as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “State Language Act”), which also lays down that the use of national minority languages is subject to special rules, unless this Act stipulates otherwise.

In terms of national legislation, Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Minority Languages Act”), plays an important role in this respect. This Act allows citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to national minorities to use a minority language and lays down the rules for using minority languages in official contact and in other areas, in municipalities where the proportion of population belonging to a national minority reaches the threshold required by law (geographically limited application). Under this Act, minority languages include Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

The legislative framework for the use of national minority languages is complemented by a whole range of regulations of general application as envisaged in the Constitution.⁵²

The CNMEG also comprises members representing national minorities whose language is not considered a minority language for the purposes of the Minority Languages Act. These are the Moravian, Russian, Serbian and Jewish minorities. At its 6th session held on 6 December 2012, the CNMEG approved resolutions 17/2012 and 18/2012, which call for the inclusion of Russian and Serbian among those minority languages to which the Language Charter would apply in the Slovak Republic. The Charter currently covers nine minority languages used in the Slovak Republic.

In connection with the implementation of resolutions 17 and 18, on 12 February 2013, a working meeting was organised with representatives of the Russian and Serbian minorities, at which further steps were discussed. Subsequently, in March 2013, a letter was sent to the relevant ministries requesting an opinion on the CNMEG’s proposal to include Russian and Serbian among national minority languages used in the Slovak Republic that are subject to the Language Charter. Most ministries had no objections to the presented proposal, two ministries replied with a negative opinion and two ministries recommended that the proposal be further elaborated.

Application of the Minority Languages Act

The obligation to provide expert and methodological assistance in the implementation of the Minority Languages Act was transferred to the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic as of 1 October 2012. Within the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, this role is performed by the secretariat of the Head of the Civil Servant’s Office at the Office

⁵¹ Article 6(1) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic

⁵² See for example the 2012 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities

of the Government of the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the Office of the Plenipotentiary.

In December 2012, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic set up an expert commission for the application of the Minority Languages Act, whose members comprise representatives of various ministries with responsibilities related to application of the Minority Languages Act by local state administration authorities, a representative of the Association of Slovak Towns and Villages, a representative of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, and representatives of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, or the Office of the Plenipotentiary.

Among other things, the expert commission prepares recommendations for the Head of the Civil Servants' Office at the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic concerning complaints related to infringements of the Minority Languages Act.

In line with the Act, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic provided methodological assistance to the Dunajská Streda District Office regarding the Hungarian names of the organisational units of district offices, which, under Act No. 180/2013 Coll. on the organisation of local state administration and on amendments to certain laws, replaced the former local offices on 1 October 2013. It also provided methodological assistance to the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic regarding the use of national minority languages in official communication and provided guidance to the interest association of legal entities 'Klaster pohraničných hradov' [Border Castles Cluster] on the issue of the use of castle names in a minority language.

Administrative offences in the area of the use of national minority languages are dealt with by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic. At the first-instance level, the Head of the Civil Servants' Office of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic acts upon these matters on behalf of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic and, at the second-instance level, they are dealt with by the Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic. In 2013, 39 complaints were received by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic under Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended, and under other regulations of general application.

Table 6: List of complaints filed under Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages as amended

List of complaints filed under Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages as amended				
year	number	reason for filing the complaint	outcome of the investigation	shortcomings found
2013	1.	A failure to issue a counterpart of a decision in a minority language, failure to allow oral and written communication in Hungarian, failure to advise on the possibility of oral and written communication in Hungarian, and failure to disclose important information	in the matter of the failure to issue a counterpart of a decision in a minority language, a breach of § 2(4) of the Act was identified and rectification of the shortcomings identified was	rectified

			requested (in the other cases, the objections were found to be unsubstantiated)	
	2.	Breaches of § 4(6) at the Želiezovce railway station	the complaint is being investigated	
	3.	Breaches of § 4(6) at the Orechová Potôň railway station	no infringements of the Act were found	
	4 to 37.	Breaches of § 4(6) at various service stations (34 complaints filed by the civic association ProCivis)	some of the complaints are being investigated	some of the service stations have rectified the shortcomings

There are great differences between the individual minority languages in terms of their status and situation. One group comprises languages that are taught in schools as part of instruction in the minority language in ethnically mixed areas. These are Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German and Czech. Other minority languages are not taught in the context of the compulsory schooling system - children and youth belonging to national minorities are taught these languages on a voluntary basis. This is usually organised by national minority associations, as part of extracurricular activities.

The actual use of the various languages in the public domain, outside of official contact, also varies. In particular, in religious ceremonies, some minority languages are used at the parish level even today, despite the fact that the legislation on the use of minority languages does not apply to these communities (parishes).

Especially for the Ruthenian and Croatian minorities, Christian traditions are an important part of their identity and their cultural heritage. If we look at minority languages in terms of their historical development and degree of standardisation, we can see two groups of languages. One comprises standardised literary languages used in the Slovak Republic as minority languages. Second group are ancient languages used nowadays only by these minorities in individual countries of Europe, where they are recognised as minority languages. Some of them (Ruthenian and Croatian) are old Slavic languages preserved in this form for centuries as a reference to the transition of these Old Slavic peoples from paganism to Christianity. Greater attention should be paid to the protection and preservation of these endangered languages in the future since it would not be possible to compensate for their disappearance by any of the modern Slavic standardised languages and their loss would be permanent and irreversible. As regards possibilities for increasing the protection and support for these languages, the special approach to the minority language of Lusatian Serbs in Germany could be used as an example. This language, receiving increased attention and protection, comes from the same group of Old Slavic languages. The Roma language is another minority language which is not used as an official language in any country. In this

case, however, given the current trends in the demographic structure of Roma, preservation of the language in Slovakia is temporarily ensured and there is no threat of disappearance of this language in the near future. Nevertheless, some members of this minority are of the opinion that the standardisation of the Roma language as taught in schools has not been fully embraced by the minority and regional dialects continue to be preferred.

Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 612 of 16 July 2013 concerning the Proposal of the Municipality of Tešedíkovo to Change the Name of the Municipality to Pered

In the second half of 2012, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic received a request of the municipality of Tešedíkovo to change the name of the municipality to Pered. The request to change the municipality's name was based on a valid local referendum declared by the municipal council for the purpose of restoring the original name of the municipality.

The name "Tešedíkovo" was given to the municipality of Pered in 1948 through Decree of the Commissioner of the Interior No. A-311/16-II/3-1948 of 11 June 1948. It is now a well-established name that the municipality has been using for 65 years and is part of the worldwide database of geographic data and maps.

The name "Pered" is currently maintained as the name of the municipality in Hungarian in the Annex to Government Ordinance 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, as amended. The possibility to use the name of the municipality in Hungarian ensures that the municipality can be identified in a minority language in compliance with Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of national minority languages, as amended.

The Permanent Sub-Committee on Nomenclature of the Terminological Committee of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "sub-committee") raised fundamental objections to changing the name of the municipality of Tešedíkovo to "Pered" and expressed its disagreement with the request as this would constitute a violation of § 1a(1) of Act No. 369/1990 Coll. on municipalities and § 3a of Act No. 270/1995 Coll. on the State language. Under § 1a(1), the Municipalities Act provides that the name of a municipality must be indicated in the State language and, under § 3 of Act No. 270/1995 Coll. on the State language, the names of municipalities and their parts must be indicated in the State language. Article 6 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic stipulates that the State language of the Slovak Republic is the Slovak language. The opinion of the Permanent Sub-committee was approved by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, which also recommended that the name of the municipality of Tešedíkovo should not be changed to Pered and noted that the official names of municipalities located within the territory of the Slovak Republic are given exclusively in the State language, while respecting the literary standards of the Slovak language.

The name of a municipality may only be changed by the Government of the Slovak Republic with the consent of the municipality, provided that the legal requirements have been met. According to § 1a(2) of the Municipalities Act, the name of a municipality may be changed by the Government of the Slovak Republic through an ordinance. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic is required to present a request for changing the name of a municipality to the Government of the Slovak Republic for decision. On the basis of the Municipalities Act, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic at its 16 October 2013 session the proposal to adopt a

resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic based on the proposal from the municipality of Tešedíkovo to change the name of the municipality to Pered. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic recommended that the Government of the Slovak Republic should not approve the proposal of the municipality of Tešedíkovo to change the name of the municipality to Pered. Through its Resolution No. 612/2013 of 16 October 2013 concerning the Proposal of the Municipality of Tešedíkovo to Change the Name of the Municipality to Pered, the Government of the Slovak Republic expressed its disagreement with the change of the name of the municipality of Tešedíkovo to Pered.

At CNMEG's 11th session held on 12 November 2013, CNMEG members representing the Hungarian minority submitted the "Opinion of the members of the committee representing the Hungarian minority on Government Resolution No. 612/2013" under the Miscellaneous item of the session's agenda. In this opinion, they proposed that the Committee should express its concern over Government Resolution No. 612/2013 on the grounds that many municipalities in Slovakia have names in a language other than Slovak or names of unclear origin and, despite this, are included in the codified form of the State language; therefore, they considered the Government's decision discriminatory. The CNMEG did not discuss the opinion in question as the members who submitted the opinion were not present.

This topic was also discussed by the Council of the Government at its 11th session on 20 November 2013, on the basis of a proposal from Kálmán Petőcz, a member of the Council. After discussion, he withdrew the document from the agenda of the Council's session.

Conclusion

Further to the 2012 report, the present 2013 Report on the Situation and Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities focuses on mapping the changes that have occurred in the area in the given area in the period in question (where necessary, it also covers changes before and after this period) and provides up-to-date data, information and evaluations concerning the key areas related to the situation and rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

One of the most significant changes in national legislation on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the recent period was the amendment to the Anti-Discrimination Act, in particular, in relation to temporary affirmative measures, as well as the amendment to the Schools Act relating to the maximum and minimum number of pupils in primary school and secondary school classrooms.

The report provides information about the preparation of the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic as Regards the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups. The objective of the strategy is the overall improvement of the conditions for the promotion and application of human rights in Slovakia in the given area.

A separate part of the report is dedicated to the ongoing intensive cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic in conducting dialogue with international monitoring mechanisms relevant to the area of the protection of rights of persons belonging to national minorities or the protection of regional or minority languages over the relevant period.

Another part of the report is dedicated to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public affairs and mechanisms of co-decision on matters relating to national minorities. The report pays special attention to the activities of the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, which serves as a platform for participation and a joint consultative body on national minorities. One of the results of these activities was the consensus reached in respect of the introduction of the rules for the allocation of funds under the CNM programme, which takes into account multiple criteria when calculating the amount of allocations for individual national minorities and currently appears to be a transparent and equitable system of distribution of funding to support the individual national minorities.

The document also covers the area of support for the culture of national minorities and education and training for persons belonging to national minorities, providing information with emphasis on programmes and projects seeking to improve these areas. In addition, the report provides information on the practical application of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages.

The ambition of this report is to give a brief and objective picture of the situation of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Slovak Republic with regard to the developments in this area over the period in question.

List of annexes

1. Overview of the activities of professional national minority theatres and ensembles
2. Activities of self-governing regions in the area of support for national minorities
3. Overview of the activities of national minority museums
4. Selected data by legal form of the applicant
5. Selected data by registered address of the applicant
6. Breakdown of the 2013 CNM programme
7. Selected data by areas of the 2013 CNM programme
8. Mathematical model for the calculation of allocations for national minorities

Annex 1

Overview of the activities of professional national minority theatres and ensembles

Founder	Name of organisation	Number of performances		Attendance	
		2012	2013	2012	2013
Office of the Government	Tanečné divadlo Ifjú Szivek [Ifjú Szivek Dance Theatre]	91	50	15 772	15 885
Nitra self-governing region	Jókaiho divadlo [Jókai's Theatre]	166	151	49 041	62 536
Košice self-governing region	Divadlo Thália Színház [Thália Színház Theatre]	103	112	23 755	31 520
	Divadlo Romathan [Romathan Theatre]	121	112	15 700	13 435
Prešov self-governing region	Divadlo Alexandra Duchnoviča [Alexander Duchnovič Theatre]	104	95	11 271	10 000
	Poddukelský umelecký ľudový súbor [Poddukelský Folk Art Ensemble]	n/a	84	56 935	60 000

Annex 2

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	Culture and education centres: Hontiansko-ipeľské, Veľký Gemersko-malohontské, Pohronské, Podpolianske Libraries: E. Štúr Regional Library , Novohradská Library, Hontiansko-novohradská Library, Matej Hrebenda Library Regional museums and galleries: Gemersko-malohontské museum, Novohradské museum and gallery, Horehronské museum.
Bratislava self-governing region	none developed	in 2012-2013 60 000 - for the Lost City	Various activities in cultural establishments whose founder is the Bratislava region The Bratislava region participated in the project Lost City - Jewish national minority Small Carpathian Museum in Pezinok, Astorka Festival, Bratislava Puppet Festival
Košice self-governing region	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nitra self-governing region	none developed	19 200	Various activities of civic associations, foundations, cultural establishments
Prešov self-governing region	none developed	13 100	n/a
Trenčín self-governing region	n/a	n/a	cooperation with the Carpathian German Association
Trnava self-governing region	none developed	9 583	Culture unites us – festival Exhibition of Hungarian artists International Day of the Roma Roma culture in historical photographs the civic association Cultural Association of National and Ethnic Minorities operates in the region
Žilina self-governing region	none developed	n/a	Žilina Forum of National Minorities, cooperation of the library with the Polonus civic association, Touches and Connections - theatre festival

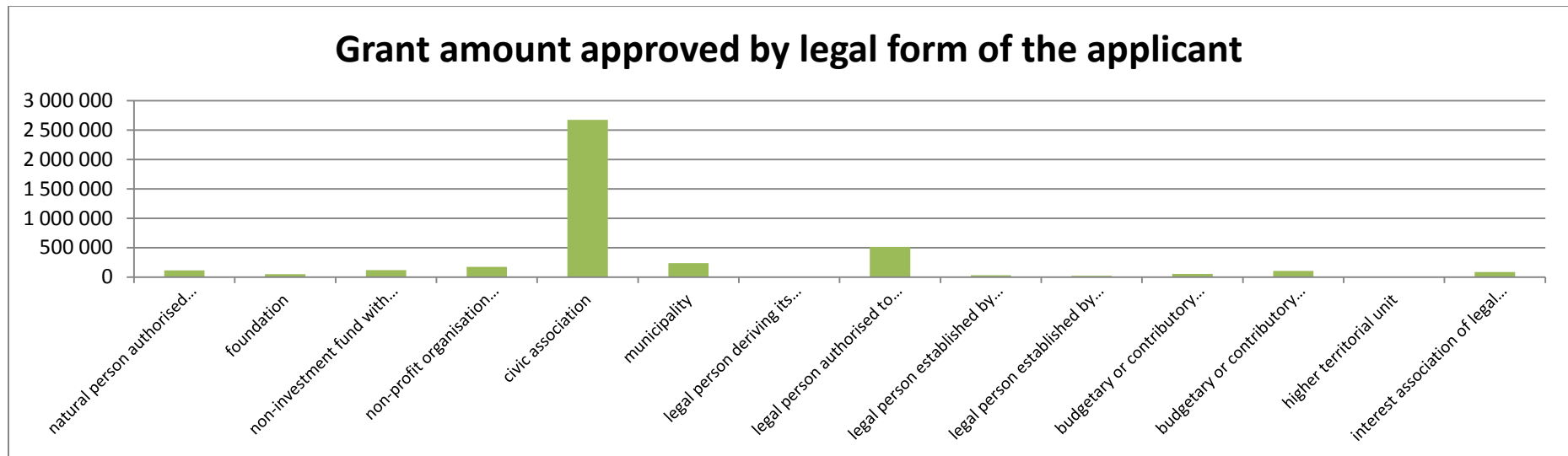
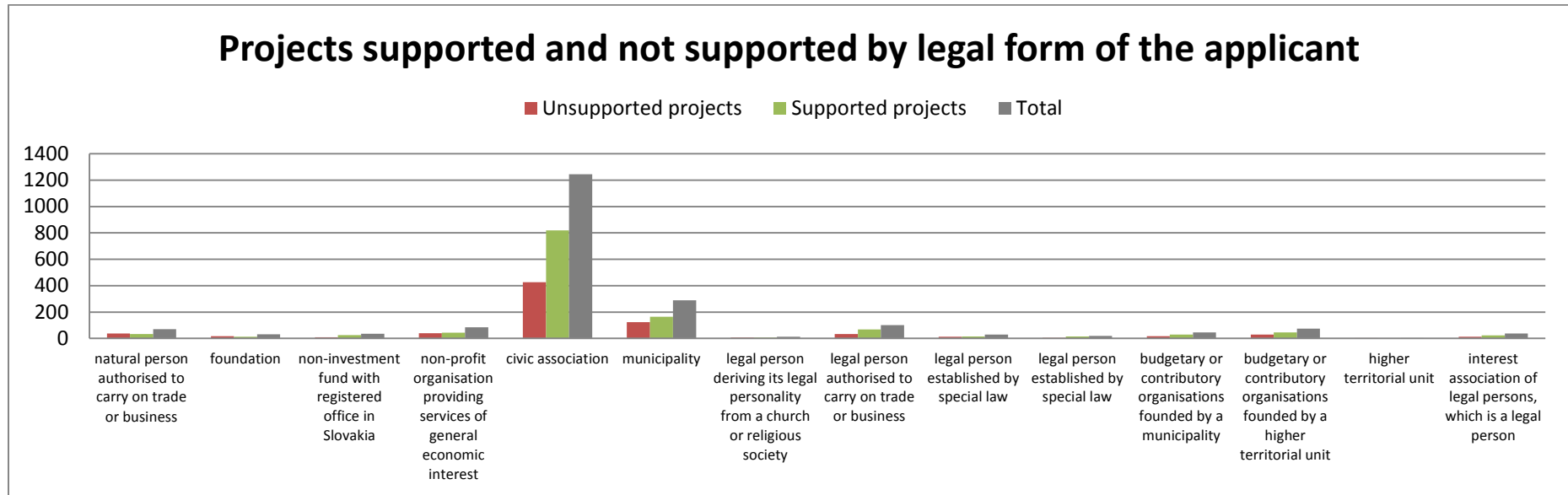
Annex 3

Overview of the activities of national minority museums

Museum name	Museum budget for 2013 in EUR	number of exhibitions		Number of items in collections	Science and research activities	Publications	Number of other activities	Number of visitors
		on site	off site					
Museum of the Culture of Croats in Slovakia	63 591	10	1	2 240	-	-	50	864
Museum of Carpathian German Culture	105 033	5	5	6 282	yes	-	22	1 614
Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia	348 593	5	5	1 643	yes	yes	22	6 632
Museum of the Culture of Czechs in Slovakia	34 001	1	1	140	-	-	2	431
Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov	100 902	1	-	200	-	-	-	148
Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia	32 516	1	2	887	-	-	12	14 700
Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník	302 132	4	1	72 059	yes	yes	238	20 851
Museum of Jewish Culture	435 380	8	3	5 231	yes	yes	258	8 167

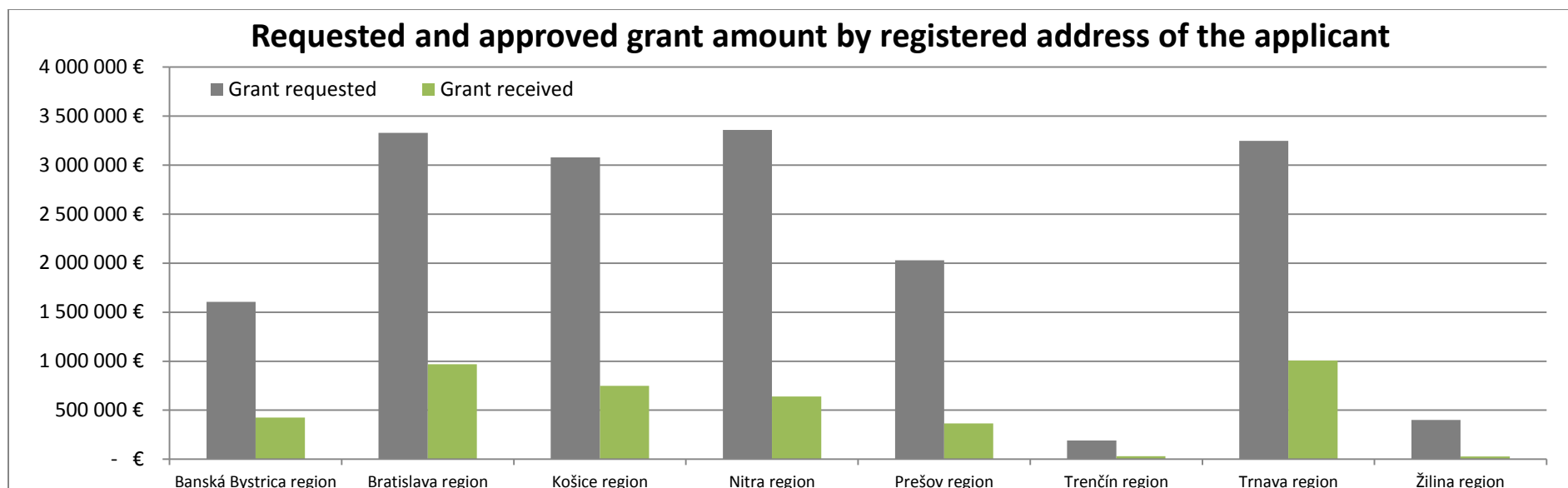
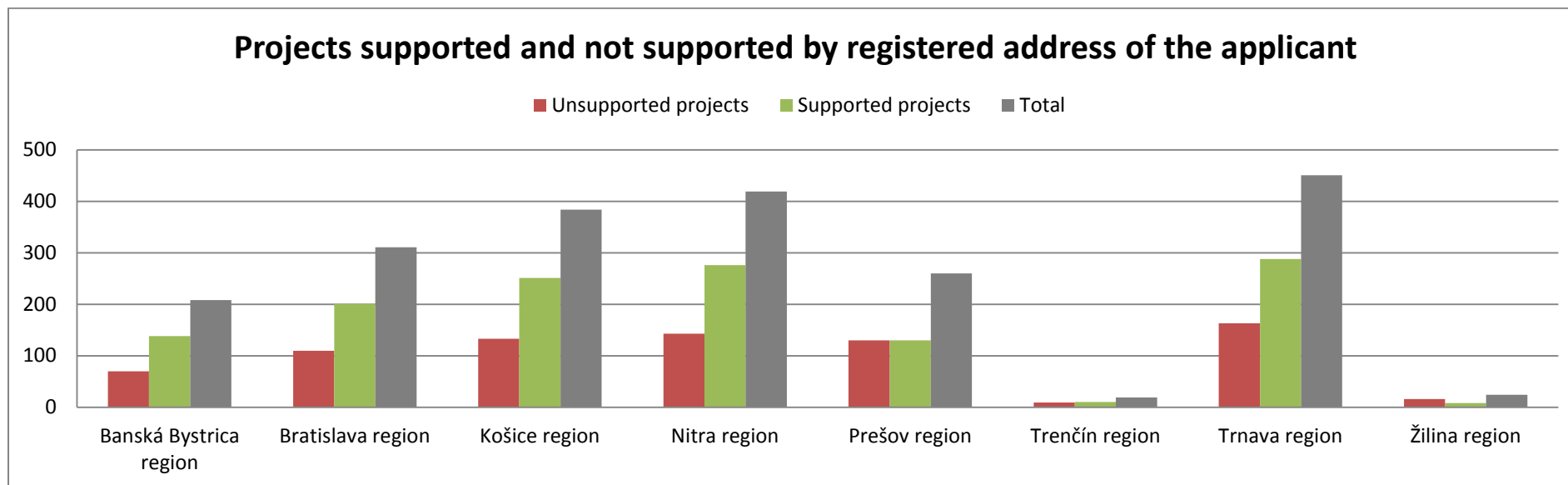
Annex 4

Selected data by legal form of the applicant



Annex 5

Selected data by registered address of the applicant



Annex 6

Breakdown of the programme into 5 sub-programmes and 32 areas:

1.1 sub-programme live culture

areas:

- 1.1.1 festivals and shows (music, dance, singing)
- 1.1.2 folklore festivals, shows and activities
- 1.1.3 creative art competitions
- 1.1.4 culture and education camps
- 1.1.5 creative art workshops
- 1.1.6 theatrical activities
- 1.1.7 exhibition activities
- 1.1.8 literary activities
- 1.1.9 training, conferences and seminars on culture
- 1.1.10 research activities

1.2 sub-programme periodic press

areas:

- 1.2.1 news and information periodicals
- 1.2.2 literary periodicals
- 1.2.3 children and youth periodicals
- 1.2.4 social science periodicals
- 1.2.5 culture and education periodicals
- 1.2.6 cultural supplements in religious periodicals

1.3 sub-programme non-periodic press

areas:

- 1.3.1 original works of national minority authors
- 1.3.2 literature for children and youth
- 1.3.3 translated literature (from languages of national minorities into Slovak and from Slovak into minority languages)
- 1.3.4 art monographs
- 1.3.5 art history literature
- 1.3.6 professional and social science literature
- 1.3.7 world literature translated into a minority language

1.4 sub-programme electronic media and multimedia carriers

areas:

- 1.4.1 website
- 1.4.2 national minority Internet radio
- 1.4.3 national minority TV broadcasting
- 1.4.4 CDs and DVDs
- 1.4.5 audiovisual production

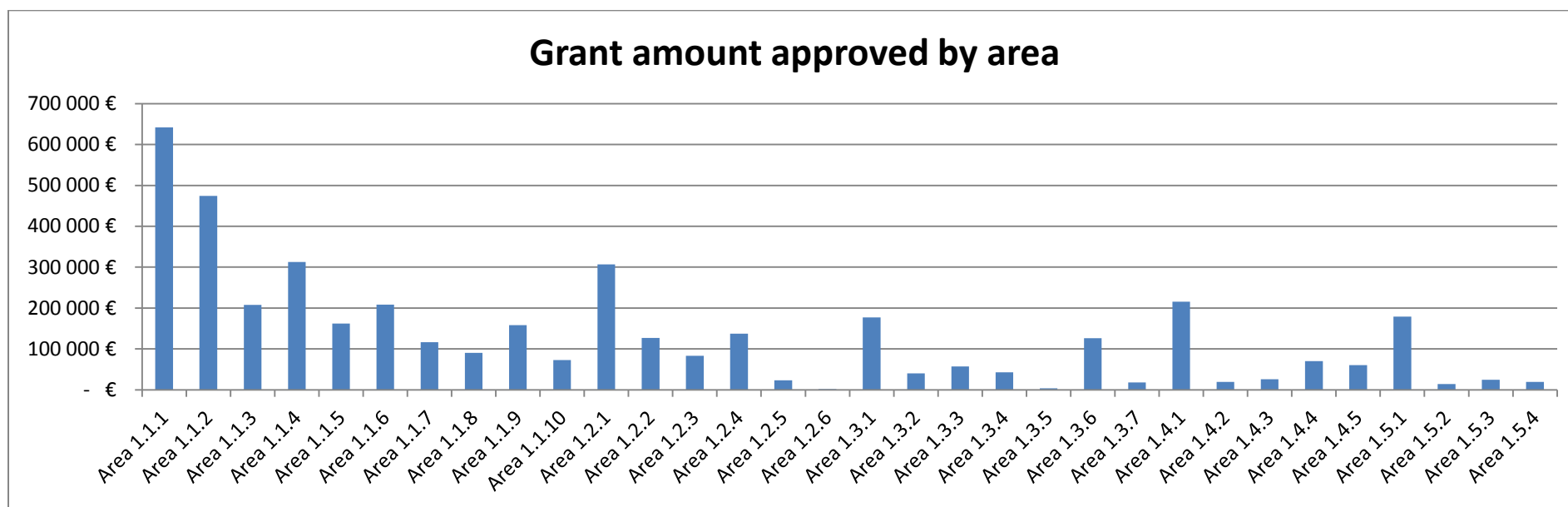
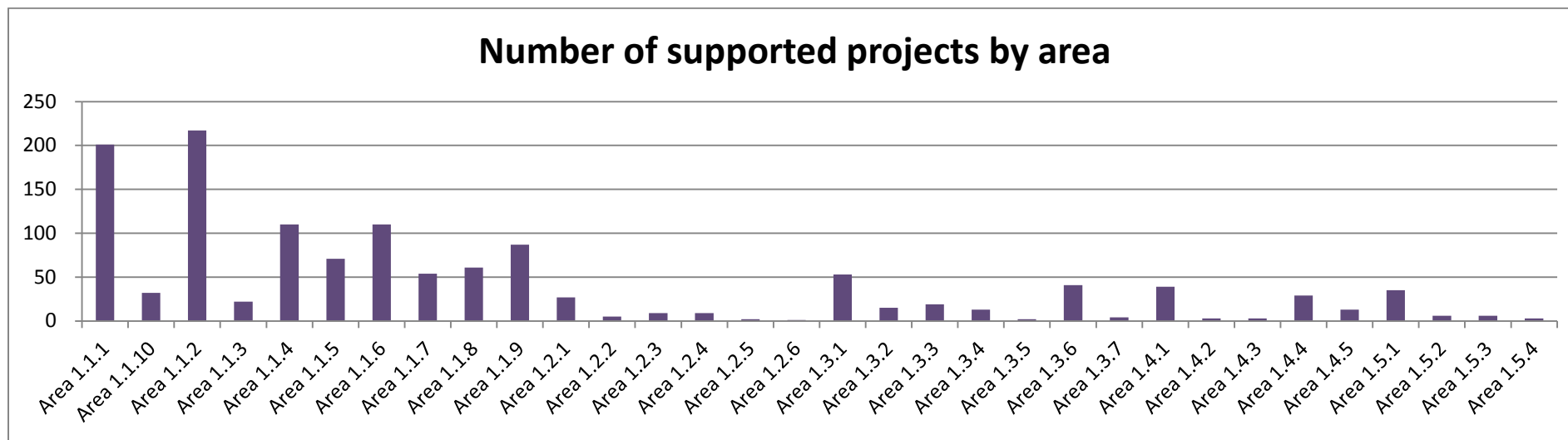
1.5 sub-programme multicultural and interethnic activities

areas:

- 1.5.1 multicultural and interethnic presentation activities
- 1.5.2 professional interethnic and multicultural seminars and conferences
- 1.5.3 multicultural and interethnic research
- 1.5.4 multicultural and interethnic press and websites

Annex 7

Selected data by areas of the 2013 Culture of National Minorities programme



Mathematical model for the calculation of allocations for national minorities

$$\text{€} = \text{FIX}_i + v_1 K_1 + v_2 K_2 + v_3 K_3 + \dots + v_n K_n$$

- € – allocations for a national minority;
- FIX_i – fixed component for the national minority;
- v_1 - v_n – the weight of the individual criteria, where $v_1 + v_2 + \dots + v_n = 1$;
- $K_1 - K_n$ – the individual criteria;
- K_1 – the number of persons belonging to the national minority from the most recent Census of Population and Housing, table Population by Nationality;
- K_2 – existence of the mother country;
- K_3 – the number of persons belonging to the national minority by mother tongue from the most recent Census of Population and Housing, table Population by Mother Tongue.

Criteria

FIX – fixed component

FIX = (BUDGET - BUDGETMULTIKUL) x 8%, but not less than n x EUR 25 000

FIX_i = FIX / n , but not less than EUR 25 000

- BUDGET – budget
- BUDGETMULTIKUL – multiculturalism budget, $\text{BUDGETMULTIKUL} = \text{BUDGET} \times 6\%$
- n – the number of national minorities

K₁ – the number of persons belonging to the national minority from the most recent Census of Population and Housing, table Population by Nationality

K₁ = BUDGETK₁ x (SUM_i ^ koefK₁ / SUMK₁T)

- BUDGETK₁ – budget excluding fixed funding and the multiculturalism contribution according to the weight of K₁
- SUM_i – the number of persons belonging to the national minority
- koefK₁ – the rate of reduction of funding with each person, $\text{koefK}_1 < 1$
- SUMK₁T – $(\text{SUM}_{i1} \wedge \text{koefK}_1) + (\text{SUM}_{i2} \wedge \text{koefK}_1) + \dots + (\text{SUM}_{in} \wedge \text{koefK}_1)$

K₂ – existence of the mother country

K₂ = BUDGETK₂ x (SUM_i ^ koefK₁ * koefK₂ / SUMK₂T)

BUDGETK₂ – budget excluding fixed funding and the multiculturalism contribution according to the weight of K₂

- SUM_i – the number of persons belonging to the national minority
- koefK₂ – parameter for non-existence of the mother country
- if the mother country exists - 33% of the funding, where no mother country exists - 100% of the funding
- SUMK₂T – $(\text{SUM}_{i1} \wedge \text{koefK}_1 * \text{koefK}_2) + (\text{SUM}_{i2} \wedge \text{koefK}_1 * \text{koefK}_2) + \dots + (\text{SUM}_{in} \wedge \text{koefK}_1 * \text{koefK}_2)$

K₃ – the number of persons belonging to the national minority by mother tongue from the most recent Census of Population and Housing, table Population by Mother Tongue

K₃ = BUDGETK₃ x (SUM_j ^ koefK₃ / SUMK₃T)

- BUDGETK₃ – budget excluding fixed funding and the multiculturalism contribution according to the weight of K₃
- SUM_j – the number of persons belonging to the national minority (by mother tongue)
- koefK₃ – the rate of reduction of funding with each person, $\text{koefK}_3 < 1$
- SUMK₃T – $(\text{SUM}_{i1} \wedge \text{koefK}_3) + (\text{SUM}_{i2} \wedge \text{koefK}_3) + \dots + (\text{SUM}_{in} \wedge \text{koefK}_3)$

Thresholds **$\text{koefmin} \times \text{€ period} < \text{€} < \text{koefmax} \times \text{€ period}$**

- **koefmin** – coefficient of the lower threshold, below which the allocation for a national minority may not fall
- **koefmax** – coefficient of the upper threshold, which the allocation for a national minority may not exceed
- **€ period** – the amount of the allocation for a national minority in the period in question

Constants

- $K1 = 0.75$
- $K2 = 0.33$
- $K3 = 0.75$
- $\text{koefmin} = 0.85$
- $\text{koefmax} = 1.30$
- $n = 13$
- $v1 = 0.45$
- $v2 = 0.05$
- $v3 = 0.50$