

REPORT

ON THE USE OF NATIONAL MINORITY LANGUAGES
IN THE TERRITORY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
FOR THE PERIOD 2017–2018

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
2018

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Introduction

The Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the ‘Office of the Government’) presents its fourth *Report on the Use of National Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic* (hereinafter also the ‘Report’) in accordance with § 7a(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended (hereinafter also ‘Act No 184/1999 Coll.’). Pursuant to the above Act, the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter also the ‘Government Council’) takes a position on the Report before it is submitted. In order to collect information needed to prepare the Report, the Office of the Government is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation concerning the use of national minority languages in the areas of their competence.

This Report, drawn up by the Office of the Government in cooperation with the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter also the ‘Office of the Plenipotentiary’), provides up-to-date information on the use of national minority languages for the period 2017–2018. Continuing from the preceding reports, the Report maps out the national legislative framework for the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic and sums up the process and results of the implementation of the international legal framework for the use of minority languages, together with recent developments in relation to the institutional framework for the use of national minority languages in Slovakia.

A substantial portion of the Report presents information about progress of implementation of the obligations under Act No 184/1999 Coll. relating to the use of national minority languages by local state administration authorities, local self-government authorities and legal entities established by local self-government authorities (hereinafter also ‘public authorities’) in the municipalities defined by Act No 184/1999 Coll. The information was provided by the obliged entities within the meaning of § 7a(3) of the Act, according to which the Office of the Government is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation concerning the use of national minority languages in the areas of their competence.

The ambition of the fourth report is to provide a structured and comprehensive picture of the current situation regarding the use of national minority languages in Slovakia. To this end, an extensive questionnaire survey was conducted by the Office of the Government through the Office of the Plenipotentiary. The purpose of the survey was to collect data relating to the relevant areas of the use of national minority languages within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll. for the period 2017–2018 (until 1 July 2018).

Compared with the surveys conducted when preparing the preceding reports in 2014 and 2016, the scope of the questionnaire survey has been optimised. Based on experience from the preceding surveys, where possible, the survey was slightly reduced, including with

a view to reducing the administrative burden on the obliged entities. At the same time, further obliged entities were identified, together with additional obligations of the entities that were already being monitored. The basic criterion when formulating the questionnaire was to ensure that the data continue to be as comparable as possible so that the development trends in this area can be assessed.

Data collection took place between August and October 2018. A total of 773 respondents were contacted (638 municipalities, 6 self-governing regions, 89 state administration authorities, 27 district directorates of the Police Force and 6 district directorates of the Fire and Rescue Service, 6 organisational units – military units – of the Slovak Armed Forces of Slovak Republic, and 1 organisational unit – a correctional institution – of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps). Of the total number of respondents, 760 submitted their replies, which represents a **total return rate of 98 %**.

On 7 August 2018, the questionnaire survey was sent out to all municipalities included in the list provided in the Annex to Government Regulation 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 (hereinafter also ‘Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll.’). These comprised a total of 638 municipalities, of which 507 were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 56 with a Ruthenian, 50 with a Roma, 6 with a Ukrainian and 1 municipality with a German minority population, as well as 18 municipalities with populations belonging to two national minorities (11 with both Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities, 5 with both Hungarian and Roma minorities, 1 with both Ukrainian and Roma minorities and 1 with both a Ruthenian and a Roma minority population). In order to achieve as high a return rate as possible, the municipalities were repeatedly requested to submit their completed questionnaires, thanks to which we achieved the best ever return rate – as much as **98 %**.

The questionnaire focused on analysing data in 6 thematic areas relating to the use of national minority languages under the competence of local self-government authorities as defined in Act No 184/1999 Coll. The municipalities were presented with a total of 71 questions on 6 topics: signs in minority languages, official contact, bilingual documents, sessions of local self-government bodies, provision of information to the public and final questions.

For the second time, the survey included the use of national minority languages by legal entities established by local self-government authorities (municipalities and self-governing regions). With a view to the fact that no list of such legal entities existed, when preparing the questionnaire survey, the Office of the Plenipotentiary approached all relevant municipalities and 6 self-governing regions (the Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Banská Bystrica, Košice and Prešov regions) where these municipalities are located with a request for cooperation in the collection of data relating to these entities. In this context, data for 65 legal entities established by local self-government authorities were processed (55 legal entities established by a municipality and 10 legal entities established by a self-governing region). The legal entities were presented with a total of 55 questions relating to 6 monitored topics.

In order to provide a comprehensive picture of the use of national minority languages, the survey also mapped out the use of national minority languages by state administration authorities. A total of 89 state administration authorities and their organisational units (branches, contact points, offices or stations) were contacted, of which 85 were state administration authorities in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and 4 were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population. Namely, 14 district offices, 27 labour, social affairs and family offices (hereinafter also the 'LSAFOs'), 16 tax offices, 13 customs offices, 8 regional veterinary and food administrations (hereinafter also 'RVFAs'), 6 regional public health authorities (hereinafter also 'RPHAs') and 5 state archives were contacted. The state administration authorities were presented with a total of 52 questions on 6 topics. Customs offices received a total of 54 questions. All 89 entities provided their responses, which means that the questionnaire return rate was **100 %**. The survey also focused on the use of national minority languages by officers of the Police Force and the Fire and Rescue Service (hereinafter also 'F&RS'). Completed questionnaires were submitted by a total of 6 district directorates of the Fire and Rescue Service that were contacted. For the first time, the survey also examined the question of the use of national minority languages by members of the Slovak Armed Forces and officers of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps (hereinafter also the 'JGPWC'). A total of 6 military units of the armed forces and one correctional institution were approached and submitted their completed questionnaires.

The reason for such a broadly conceived report is the need for a comprehensive analysis of the current situation so that, in accordance with the priorities of the Slovak Government, conditions are created in ethnically-mixed areas for aligning the practice with Act No 184/1999 Coll. In this spirit, the Report not only presents comprehensive data on the situation regarding the use of national minority languages in Slovakia, but also, based on an analysis of the data, identifies those areas where deficiencies exist in practical application. This is a basic prerequisite for further positive developments in this area.

1. National legislative and institutional framework for the use of national minority languages

The details of the legislation relating to the use of national minority languages were mostly provided in the preceding reports covering the periods of 2012, 2013–2014 and 2015–2016. The constitutional framework for the protection of the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups in Slovakia remained unchanged in the period under review. The basic legal pillar is contained in the Slovak Constitution, namely under Article 34, which, *inter alia*, guarantees their right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, the right to receive education in their language and the right to use their language in official contact. The legislative framework for using national minority languages is complemented by a whole range of other legislation of general application as envisaged in the Constitution. The rules for using other languages, including national minority languages, in relation to the state language, are governed by Act No 270/1995 Coll., on the state language of the Slovak Republic, as amended (hereinafter also referred to as ‘Act No 270/1995 Coll.’).

The rules for using national minority languages in official contact and in other areas are governed by Act No 184/1999 Coll., which follows from international treaties binding on the Slovak Republic and special laws. This Act constitutes the *lex specialis* referred to in Act No 270/1995 Coll. Within the meaning of this Act, minority languages include Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Romani, Ruthenian and Ukrainian. Act No 184/1999 Coll. is territorially applicable exclusively to the municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. The legislation implementing Act No 184/1999 Coll. includes: Regulation No 535/2011 of the Government of the Slovak Republic of 19 December 2011 implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended (hereinafter ‘Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll.’) and Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll.

With regard to the period under review, attention needs to be focused on the following recent legislative and non-legislative documents, which have considerable implications in terms of the use of national minority languages. One of the key document of a non-legislative nature in the recent period was the Government’s Manifesto for its 2016–2020 term (hereinafter the ‘Manifesto’), which, compared with the preceding manifestos, defined a much larger scope of measures aimed at protecting the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities, including the use of national minority languages. In particular, the Slovak Government undertook to create, on the basis of an analysis, conditions for aligning the practices in ethnically mixed areas with Act No 184/1999 Coll., as amended.

In the area of the language rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the Slovak Government also undertook to align Act No 513/2009 Coll., on railways and on amendments to certain acts, with Act No 184/1999 Coll. with regard to the signs displaying the names of railway stations and stops in ethnically mixed areas. In relation to this commitment, railway station name signs in national minority languages started to be installed in the relevant municipalities in early 2017. The signs were gradually installed in accordance with an instruction from the transport and construction minister issued on 20 December 2016

tasking the general manager of the Railways of the Slovak Republic with ensuring the installation of railway station name signs in national minority languages with effect from 1 January 2017. The signs have been installed at all of the 55 railway stations.

In this context, we should note that the Ministry of Transport and Construction recently drafted an amendment to Act No 513/2009 Coll., on railways, as amended, which proposes that a point (h) be added in § 34(6) which reads as follows: ‘ensure the installation of name signs in national minority languages at railway stations and railway stops used for regular passenger transport in the municipalities referred to in special legislation^{12a}); the name signs in national minority languages at railway stations and railway stops shall be installed at the expense of the infrastructure manager.’ This amendment has undergone the inter-ministerial consultation exercise.

In connection with the implementation of the priorities under the Government’s Manifesto, a number of legislative changes were adopted in the education sector. In June 2017, a draft act amending Act No 597/2003 Coll., on the financing of primary and secondary schools and school facilities, as amended, and amending certain acts, was adopted. According to § 4aa(5) of the act: ‘The legal representative of a pupil belonging to a national minority shall be entitled to reimbursement of the costs of travel to the nearest school using the relevant minority language as the language of instruction if there is no primary school or primary school with a kindergarten using the relevant national minority as the language of instruction in the municipality or school district where the pupil belonging to a national minority permanently resides. The travel costs shall be reimbursed by the school using the national minority as the language of instruction at an amount equal to the cheapest student fare in regular bus transport’.

At its 13 December 2017 session, the Government approved a new version of Regulation No 630/2008 Coll. of the Government of the Slovak Republic laying down the details of the breakdown of state budget allocations for schools and school facilities, which modifies the salary and operational cost normatives for primary schools where pupils learn a national minority language or receive instruction in a national minority language. The new version of the regulation increased the salary normative and the per-pupil normative for educational and training processes in primary schools, which is now 113 % for schools with a language of instruction other than Slovak. At the same time, a new per-pupil normative was introduced for pupils learning a national minority language according to the framework curriculum for primary schools teaching a minority language (i.e. pupils learning it as a compulsory subject), which is 104 % and applies to schools teaching Ruthenian, Romani, Ukrainian, Russian, German and Croatian.

As regards traffic signs, at the proposal of the Office of the Plenipotentiary, legislative provisions relating to national minority languages were incorporated into Decree No 9/2009 Coll. of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the ‘MI SR’) implementing the Act on Road Traffic and Amendments to Certain Acts. Specifically, the following § 8(23) was added: ‘Text on traffic signs and traffic installations shall be in the state language; other languages may be used in accordance with special legislation and an

international treaty binding on the Slovak Republic'. This refers to the provisions of § 2(1) and § 4(1), (2) and (6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. These provisions relate to the indication of the municipality name on municipality entry/exit signs and information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic, which should be displayed in the minority language along with the state language. Equally, any public information signs and notices on streets and along roads may be provided in the minority language. An annex to the Decree also provides a new design of municipality entry/exit traffic signs IS 37a and 37b in a national minority language. Annex 1 provides a graphical representation of the new design of the traffic signs. The gradual replacement of these traffic signs started in early 2018. The relevant amendment has been in force since 1 February 2018.

Closely related to the use of national minority languages in official contact is the initiative of the Government Plenipotentiary for National Minorities (hereinafter also the 'Plenipotentiary') relating to language training for civil servants. In this context, a proposal to amend Decree No 126/2017 Coll. of the Office of the Government laying down the details of training civil servants, was adopted. Among other things, this Decree lays down that language competence training focusing on maintaining or improving the level of command of the state language and foreign language also applies to national minority languages, namely for the group of civil servants performing civil service in the municipalities defined in special legislation. For the purposes of the Decree, the special legislation means Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll.

In connection with the amendment to Act No 369/1990 Coll., on municipalities, as amended, relating to the provisions on merging municipalities, at the Plenipotentiary's proposal, § 2aa(3) was incorporated into the Act in the interest of protecting regional or minority languages. According to the last sentence of this paragraph, with effect from 1 April 2018: 'When taking the procedure under the first and third sentence, district offices in regional capitals shall take into account the legitimate interests and needs of the population of the dysfunctional municipality, especially respect for the regional language or minority language, so that this annexation does not create obstacles to promoting that regional language or minority language'. The reason for adopting these provisions was the need to take into account, based on the commitments arising from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the ethnic composition of the municipality to be annexed to a neighbouring municipality.

The most significant legislative amendment in the period under review, going in line with implementation of the priorities under the Government's Manifesto, was the approval of Act No 138/2017 Coll. on the Fund to Support Minority Cultures, as amended¹ (hereinafter 'Fund Act No 138/2017 Coll. '), which established the Fund to Support Minority Cultures (hereinafter the 'Fund') at the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the 'MC SR').² According to § 15 of this Act, the Fund also provides funding to support projects relating to promoting the development of the use of national minority languages. In this

¹ See: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2017/138/20180901>

² Act No 138/2017 Coll. was approved on 10 May 2017 with effect from 1 July 2017, with the exception of certain provisions, which entered into force on 1 January 2018.

context, the Office of the Government concluded a delimitation protocol with the MC SR laying down the details of the transfer of rights and obligations, budget, administration of state property and rights and obligations arising from civil service employment relations. The competence relating to promoting the culture of national minorities defined by laws and other acts of general application was transferred from the Office of the Government to the MC SR.

In connection with these changes, on 18 October 2017 the Slovak Government adopted Amendment No 4 to the Statute of the Plenipotentiary through Resolution No 489/2017 and, on 31 October 2018, Amendment No 2 to the Organisational Rules of the Office of the Plenipotentiary, which is divided into the secretariat of the Office of the Plenipotentiary and the National Minority Status and Rights Department effective from 1 January 2018. In addition, the amendment changed the periodicity of the reports on the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities presented by the Plenipotentiary to the Government from annual to biannual. At the same time, according to the amendment, the Plenipotentiary may, within the scope of his or her competence, present proposals in the context of drafting legislative and non-legislative measures relating to the use of national minority languages.

Another important document of a non-legislative nature relating to the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including language rights, is the Action Plan to Protect the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for the 2016-2020 period³ (hereinafter the ‘Action Plan’) approved by the Government at its 26 October 2016 session through Resolution No 492/2016. This plan was gradually implemented during the period under review, including operational objective 4: *Improving the conditions for the practical use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups.*⁴ One of the results of the implementation of this objective is the fact that, on the basis of cooperation between the Office of the Plenipotentiary and the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the ‘MJ SR’), a new section – *Legislation in national minority languages*⁵ – was made publicly available on the SLOV-LEX information portal in October 2018; in this context, certain legislative acts are being translated into selected national minority languages and gradually published⁶. The translations are available in Hungarian, Romani, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and German. The published legislative acts that have been translated into minority languages are for information purposes only. The legally binding content of the Collection of Laws is available in the Electronic Collection of Laws as well as in an official printed version.⁷

³ See: http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/6765_akcny-plan-ochrany-prav-osob-patriacich-k-narodnostnym-mensinam-a-etnickym-skupinam-na-roky-2016-%E2%80%93-2020.pdf

⁴ For further details, see subchapter 1.2.1 Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic – provision of expert and methodological assistance with regard to the use of national minority languages, page 11.

⁵ See: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy-v-jazyku-narodnostnych-mensin>

⁶ Minority languages may be used in official contact in municipalities in which citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority account for at least 20 % of the population. Within the meaning of Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., which provides a list of these municipalities, this right applies to the following national minorities: Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Roma and German.

⁷ For further details, see subchapter 1.2.1 Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic – provision of expert and methodological assistance with regard to the use of national minority languages, page 11.

1.2 Institutional framework for the use of national minority languages

There were no significant changes in the period under review with regard to the institutional framework for protecting national minority languages. In respect of the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll., citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority may also contact institutions providing assistance in field area of human rights, such as the **Public Defender of Rights** or, when objecting to unequal treatment, the **Slovak National Centre for Human Rights** (hereinafter the ‘SNCHR’).

The **Public Defender of Rights** deals with the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and legal entities in relation to the conduct, decision-making or inaction of public authorities, if their conduct, decision-making or inaction is at variance with the legal order or the principles of a democratic state and the rule of law. Anyone who believes that, contrary to the legal order or principles of the democratic state and the rule of law, his or her fundamental rights and freedoms have been violated in relation to the conduct, decision-making or inaction of a public authority may have a recourse to the Public Defender of Rights. In dealings with the Public Defender of Rights, individuals are allowed to use their mother tongue and the costs of interpretation are borne by the state. The Public Defender of Rights also submits an annual activity report to the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the ‘Parliament’) presenting his or her findings regarding the observance of fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and legal entities by public authorities and proposals and recommendations to remedy the identified shortcomings. If the Public Defender of Rights discovers facts indicating a serious infringement of a fundamental right or freedom concerning a larger number of persons, the defender may present an extraordinary report to the Parliament.

During the period under review, the Public Defender of Rights dealt with one complaint relating to the right of citizens belonging to national minorities to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue and the right to use their language in official contact. The complainants objected that the application of the new framework curricula for primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction as approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Research (hereinafter the ‘MESRS SR’) discriminates against pupils attending primary schools using a minority language as the language of instruction. After examining this complaint, the Public Defender of Rights came to the conclusion that fundamental rights were not violated.

The SNCHR did not receive any complaints and did not conduct any monitoring or research with regard to the application of the principle of equal treatment under Act No 365/2004 Coll., on equal treatment in certain areas, protection against discrimination and on amendments to certain acts (Anti-discrimination Act).

1.2.1 Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic – provision of expert and methodological assistance and administrative proceedings regarding the use of national minority languages

Within the meaning of § 7a(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., the Office of the Government provides expert and methodological assistance to public authorities and organisational units of security forces and rescue services with regard to the implementation of this Act. To this end, the Office of the Government set up an Expert Committee on the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. (hereinafter the ‘expert committee’), which is a permanent advisory body to the General Secretary of the Civil Service Office at the Office of the Government.

During the period under review, the expert committee dealt with a complaint from a civic association dated 20 February 2017, in which the civic association requested investigation into the alleged restriction and violation of the rights of Slovak citizens belonging to the Hungarian minority guaranteed by law in municipalities, to which the association had sent a request inviting the municipalities to inform the public in Hungarian. In connection with assessing the merits of this complaint, a request dated 15 June 2017 was addressed to the members of the expert committee at the initiative of the expert committee’s chairperson for an opinion as to whether a civic association is entitled to request a public authority to provide a reply in a national minority language in addition to a reply in the state language pursuant to § 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. On the basis of the opinions of its members, the expert committee concluded that the provisions in question only apply to citizens of the Slovak Republic, i.e. to individuals, therefore, the municipalities which replied to the civic association in Slovak or did not reply at all did not breach Act No 184/1999 Coll. as the provisions of § 2(3) do not apply to legal entities.

In the context of its activities, the expert committee also deal with the Methodological Guidelines for Act No 184/1999 Coll. formulated by the Office of the Plenipotentiary. By authority of the chairperson of the expert committee, the committee received a request to approve/reject the guidelines using the per rollam procedure. Since the guidelines met the conditions for approval, the document in question was approved by the expert committee.

The Office of the Government also handles administrative offences relating to the use of national minority languages. In 2017, the secretariat of the Head of the Civil Service Office (currently the Secretariat of the General Secretary of the Civil Service Office at the Office of the Government – hereinafter the ‘SGSCSO’) received 5 complaints from individuals concerning suspected breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. and 7 complaints from public authorities and legal entities concerning suspected breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. In 2018, it received 4 complaints from individuals and one complaint from a legal entity concerning suspected breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. In the 2015–2016 period, the Office of the Government received two complaints from individuals and two collective complaints from legal entities.

In 2017 and 2018, the Office of the Government continued to work with the Office of the Plenipotentiary to resolve a collective complaint from 2016 submitted by a legal entity and bringing attention to 117 cases of breaches of § 4(6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. The Act was allegedly breached in relation to electricity production installations located in the municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. where information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic was not displayed in publicly accessible places in the minority language along with the state language. The shortcomings found were eliminated in respect of more than 110 electricity production installations during this period. The Office of the Government continues to work with the Office of the Plenipotentiary to resolve this complaint.

1.2.2 Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities – cooperation in the provision of expert and methodological assistance in relation to the use of national minority languages

Within the meaning of the statute of the Plenipotentiary, the Plenipotentiary's roles include the preservation, development and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and implementation of systemic measures to improve their status. At the same time, according to Amendment No 4 to the statute, the Plenipotentiary may, within the scope of his or her competence, present proposals in the context of drafting legislative and non-legislative measures relating to the use of national minority languages.

In accordance with the Organisational Rules of the Office of the Government, the Office of the Plenipotentiary has been set up to secure the activities of the Plenipotentiary; the office is divided into the secretariat of the Office of the Plenipotentiary and the National Minority Status and Rights Department. The Office of the Plenipotentiary cooperates with the Office of the Government in the field of the use of national minority languages and works with the SGSCSO when handling complaints filed under Act No 184/1999 Coll. and providing expert and methodological assistance to public authorities and organisational units of security forces and rescue services, as well as when drafting the biannual reports on the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic.

In the course of 2017 and 2018, the Plenipotentiary continuously provided expert and methodological assistance to more than 30 entities, namely public authorities, individuals and legal entities, including businesses. The largest number of requests for expert and methodological assistance from public authorities related to the method of indicating the names of municipalities and authorities in national minority languages and indicating and announcing public transport stations and stops in national minority languages. Individuals also received expert and methodological assistance for the Plenipotentiary during the period under review. In this context, the largest number of requests for opinion or methodological guidance related to bilingual civil registrar documents, namely birth and marriage certificates.

In 2017, the Office of the Plenipotentiary cooperated with the Office of the Government to address a total of 12 linguistic inquiries, of which 5 were from individuals and 7 were from state administration authorities and legal entities. In 2018, the Office of the

Plenipotentiary assisted the Office of the Government to address a total of 5 linguistic inquiries, of which 4 were from individuals and one was from a legal entity. At the same time, during this period it continued to deal with the collective complaint from 2016, which comprised 117 individual complaints.⁸

In addition to the provision of expert and methodological assistance and participation in the handling of inquiries from individuals and legal entities, the Office of the Plenipotentiary also assisted the Office of the Government in providing access to information relating to the use of national minority languages within the meaning of Act No 211/2000 Coll., on free access to information and on amendments to certain acts (Freedom of Information Act), as amended (hereinafter also ‘Act No 211/2000 Coll.’). It provides its assistance in the case of 4 requests for the provision of access to information in 2017 and 3 requests in 2018.

In addition, in connection with the findings from the *Report on the Use of National Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic for the period 2015-2016*, the Plenipotentiary took steps aimed at eliminating the shortcomings and implemented activities aimed at establishing cooperation and interaction with several relevant ministries. At his own initiative, the Plenipotentiary visited several municipalities where persons belonging to national minorities reside. The purpose of these visits was to monitor the practical application and use of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Through Resolution No 15/2017 adopted by the Government on 11 January 2017 in relation to the *Report on the Use of National Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic for the period 2015-2016*, the Head of the Office of the Government and the Plenipotentiary were assigned the following tasks under points B1 – B3:

- by 30 June 2017, prepare methodological guidelines in relation to Act No 184/1999 Coll.;
- by 30 June 2017, set up an inter-ministerial working group to prepare an analysis of legislation of general application related to the language rights of persons belonging to national minorities in Slovakia;
- by 31 December 2017, in cooperation with the Association of Towns and Villages of Slovakia (hereinafter also the ‘ATVS’), prepare an analysis to identify the needs for system-level training for the staff of local state administration authorities, local self-government authorities and staff of legal entities established by local self-government authorities on the rights and obligations arising from Act No 184/1999 Coll.

In connection with the implementation of the above resolution, the Office of the Plenipotentiary, in cooperation with the SGSCSO, prepared draft methodological guidelines in relation to Act No 184/1999 Coll. The draft methodological guidelines were also reviewed and approved by the expert committee.

⁸ For further details, please see: Subchapter 1.2.1 Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic – provision of expert and methodological assistance and administrative proceedings regarding the use of national minority languages, p. 10.

In the context of implementing point B2 of the above resolution and the action plan under Government Resolution No 492/2016, the Plenipotentiary implemented activities falling within the scope of two of the total of seven operational objectives under the Action Plan, namely:

- ensuring a comprehensive approach to drafting legislation on the rights and status of national minorities and ethnic groups;
- improving the conditions for the practical use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups⁹.

In connection with the implementation of the first operational objective relating to ensuring a comprehensive approach to drafting legislation governing the rights and status of national minorities, the Plenipotentiary set up a working group in 2017 and an informal working group consisting of legal experts. During the period under review, both groups continuously worked to analyse the legislative status quo and seek possible solutions to bring the scope of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities guaranteed by the Slovak Constitution and Slovakia's international commitments into line with the legislation in force. The Plenipotentiary's intention was to also engage constitutional lawyers and Slovak experts from the Council of Europe in the process of drafting legislation.

In the context of implementing the 4th operational objective of the Action Plan, in early 2018 the Plenipotentiary set up the Advisory Group to align practices with the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages (hereinafter the 'advisory group') in the interest of streamlining the provision of expert and methodological assistance and ensuring the availability of translations of key Slovak legislation, model official forms and unified technical terminology. The advisory group has five language subgroups for Hungarian, Romani, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and German and its members include legal and linguistic experts. The key role of the advisory group is to prepare supporting documents for ensuring unified technical terminology in national minority languages, supporting documents for the informational language versions of the relevant legislative documents, official and other forms, and supporting documents for methodological materials relating to the use of national minority languages.

In 2018, the advisory group completed the first phase of preparation of technical terminology and translations of selected legislative acts, namely: Notice No 160/1998 Coll. of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic – Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter also the 'Convention'); Notice No 588/2001 Coll. of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic – European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter also the 'Charter'); Constitution of the Slovak Republic, Act No 462/1992 Coll.; Act No 184/1999 Coll.; Government Regulation No 534/2011 Coll. amending Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll.; Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll. implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll.; Act

⁹ See: 2016-2020 Action Plan to Protect the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups: https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/6765_akcny-plan-ochrany-prav-osob-patriacich-k-narodnostnym-mensinam-a-etnickym-skupinam-na-roky-2016-%E2%80%93-2020.pdf

No 270/1995 on the state language of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also ‘Act No 270/1995 Coll.’); Act No 138/2017 Coll. on the Fund to Support Minority Cultures.

In cooperation with the MJ SR, which took care of the technical side of preparing the translations for publication, the translations were made available on the SLOV-LEX legal and information portal in October 2018. The legislation in national minority languages is provided for information purposes only and is not legally binding in respect of the equivalents in the state language. In the forthcoming period, the subgroups will continue this activity by preparing and making available further national legislation in national minority languages. At the same time, four specialised glossaries are available to Slovak citizens on the website of the Office of the Plenipotentiary – Slovak-Hungarian, Slovak-Romano, Slovak-Ruthenian and Slovak-Ukrainian¹⁰. The advisory group also worked with the Office of the Plenipotentiary to provide expert and methodological assistance by ensuring translations of the additional texts used for selected traffic signs and warning signs and information notices intended for the public.

During the period in question, the Plenipotentiary cooperated with the ATVS and the DataCentrum for computerisation of local self-government authorities (hereinafter the ‘DEUS’) as regards the use of national minority languages when providing electronic public administration services to the broad public. This was the objective of launching the Municipality Data Centre¹¹ project, which provides local self-government authorities and citizens with services under the eSlužby [eServices] system. Bilingual forms, submissions and decisions related to the services most frequently used by citizens were made available to the public in the period under review. Further language versions will be made available in the forthcoming period.

The Plenipotentiary also initiated and organised an international workshop in this field entitled ‘New challenges in the protection of national minority languages’, which was held under the auspices of Justice Minister Gábor Gál on 26 October 2018 in Bratislava. The key topics of the event included the return to the spirit of the Convention and the Charter when seeking a new impetus for improving the mechanism of application of the language rights of national minorities; identification of the conditions and limits for the application of language rights of national minorities in different European countries and in Slovakia; finding new instruments for the application of the language rights of national minorities and new challenges and trends in the light of the impact of the dynamic social changes associated with the development of IT in this field. The event, which was opened by MJ SR State Secretary Edit Pfundtner, saw contributions from Kimmo Granqvist from the Centre of Baltic and Eastern European Studies of the Södertörn University in Sweden, major representatives of minority self-governments from abroad and experts from the scientific and academic community as well as the education sector in Slovakia. The aforementioned Municipality Data Centre project with the eSlužby system was also presented at the workshop.

¹⁰ See: <http://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/odborne-terminologicke-slovniky-v-jazykoch-narodnostnych-mensin/>

¹¹ See: <https://www.dcom.sk>

1.2.3 Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups

The Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter also the ‘Committee’) is a standing expert body of the Government Council for issues relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and persons belonging to minorities and for the implementation of the Charter within the meaning of Article 7(4) of the Language Charter and Article 15 of the Convention.

According to Article 7(4) of the Charter, in determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties should take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages. In accordance with the above, the Committee plays the role of a control body in respect of the application of the Charter in Slovakia. The Committee’s scope of competence includes participation in the drafting of reports under the control mechanisms of international treaties on human rights and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, in particular the Convention and the Charter.

At the Committee’s XXVIIIth session on 9 February 2018, its members discussed and approved through Resolution No 116 the draft new wording of the Committee’s statute. The key changes compared to the original statute relate to the creation of a two-chamber system, extension of voting rights to all members of both chambers, modification of the method of adopting representative opinions, identification of a group of members with a standing invitation, modification of the annual periodicity of evaluation reports to biannual, and extension of the term of office of the Committee's members from three to four years.

This means that the Committee now consists of two chambers. One chamber comprises Committee members representing national minorities, the second chamber consists of members representing central government authorities. Members of both chambers have a right to vote. The members of the chamber representing national minorities are representatives of national minorities and ethnic groups appointed and removed by the Committee’s chairperson on the basis of the results of the vote at the voting session. The number of the Committee’s members representing national minorities has not changed and includes representatives of the following national minorities and ethnic groups: 5 representatives for the Hungarian minority, 4 for the Roma minority, 2 for the Czech minority, 2 for the Ruthenian minority, 2 for the Ukrainian minority, 1 for the German minority, 1 for the Polish minority, 1 for the Moravian minority, 1 for the Russian minority, 1 for the Bulgarian minority, 1 for the Croatian minority, 1 for the Jewish minority and 1 representative of the Serbian minority.

The members of the chamber representing central government authorities are representatives of central government authorities, namely:

- the Plenipotentiary of the Government for Roma Communities,
- the Plenipotentiary of the Government for the Development of Civil Society,

- the Director General of the International Law, Consular and Crisis Management Section of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the ‘MFEA SR’),
- the Director General of the Minority and Inclusive Education Section of the MESRS SR,
- the Director General of the Public Administration Section of the MI SR,
- the Director General of the Cultural Heritage Section of the MC SR,
- the Director General of the Social and Family Policy Section of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the ‘MLSAF SR’),
- the Head of the Human Rights Department of the MJ SR.

The members with a standing invitation, who are appointed and removed by the Committee’s chairperson, are:

- the Public Defender of Rights,
- a representative of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and National Minorities,
- the deputy chairperson of the Government Council,
- the director of the Fund to Support Minority Cultures,
- the Executive Director of the SNCHR,
- a representative of Radio and Television of Slovakia,
- two experts whose work demonstrably relates to the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities and who engage in publication, analytical, educational or other similar activities,
- a representative of the ATVS,
- a representative the Union of Towns and Cities of Slovakia,
- a representative of the Association of Self-governing Regions SK8.

The two expert members of the Committee are appointed by the Committee’s chairperson on the basis of nominations from organisations and institutions operating in the field of the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities and these should be persons whose work demonstrably relates to the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities and who engage in publication, analytical, educational or other similar activities.

In line with the statute currently in force, the Committee draws up biannual evaluation reports on the promotion of the cultures of national minorities, the state of national minority education and the use of national minority languages (hereinafter ‘evaluation reports’). The Committee approved the evaluation reports for 2016 through Resolution No 115 of 20 November 2017 and instructed the chairperson of the Committee to present the reports for approval by the Government Council. The reports were approved by the Government Council through its Resolution No 192 of 14 December 2017¹². Next year, the Committee will draw up evaluation reports covering the 2017–2018 period.

¹² See: <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk//spravy-a-koncepcne-materialy/>

In relation to language topics, in the period under review, the Committee discussed and took note through Resolution No 118 of 24 May 2018 of the Information on the Preparation of the Document '*Fifth report on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic*'. In this Resolution, the Committee also took note of the fact that the report would be presented at a Government Council session once it has been finalised. The document was submitted at a Government session after it was discussed by the Committee and the Government Council. The Government Council took note of the report through its Resolution No 200/2018 of 28 June 2018. Further details are provided under Chapter 2.1 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

2. International legal framework for the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic

The Slovak Republic is a party to several international treaties concerning the preservation and development of the use of national minority languages, in particular the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. In accordance with the Plenipotentiary's statute, the Plenipotentiary participates in the preparation of reports on the implementation of international treaties relating to the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities that are binding on the Slovak Republic.

The Charter is a multilateral international treaty of a cultural nature aimed at creating conditions for preserving and developing regional or minority languages. For Slovakia, the treaty entered into force on 1 January 2002. Activities related to the process of monitoring the Charter in Slovakia fall under the responsibility of the MFEA SR. The advisory body for the implementation of the Charter within the meaning of Article 7(4) of the Charter is the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, which is a standing expert body of the Government Council. As a party to the Charter, the Slovak Republic fulfils the required obligations and, at three-yearly intervals, presents its implementation reports assessed by the independent Committee of Experts.

The Slovak Republic is also a party to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force for Slovakia on 1 February 1998. The Convention is a legally binding multilateral instrument devoted to the protection of national minorities in general and aimed at specifying the legal principles which the State Parties undertake to respect in order to ensure the protection of national minorities¹³. Activities related to the process of monitoring the Convention in the Slovak Republic fall under the responsibility of the MFEA SR. The Committee is the advisory body for the implementation of the Convention within the meaning of Article 15 of the Convention. As a State Party to the Framework Convention, the Slovak Republic presents, at regular five-yearly intervals, reports on implementation of the Convention.

Attention to the issue of language rights is also paid by one of the institutions of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (hereinafter also the 'OSCE') – the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (hereinafter also the 'OSCE High Commissioner'). Within the scope of his mandate, the OSCE High Commissioner identifies and seeks timely solutions to ethnic tensions that may threaten peace, stability and friendly relations between OSCE participating States. The OSCE High Commissioner has developed a set non-binding thematic recommendations and guidelines in relation to national minorities and the individual countries, which may be used at the discretion of each state. These recommendations are intended not only for the governments in each state, but also for the national minorities themselves.

¹³ See: Explanatory report to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The present report provides information about recent developments with regard to the implementation of and compliance with these commitments in the context of the monitoring processes and information about the activities of the OSCE High Commissioner in this field during the period under review.

2.1 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Charter applies to eleven minority languages in Slovakia: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Romani, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian and Ukrainian.¹⁴ Part III of the Charter applies to nine minority languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Romani, Ruthenian and Ukrainian, which are divided into three groups according to the provisions chosen: 1) Hungarian; 2) Ukrainian; Ruthenian; 3) other languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, German, Polish and Romani. Russian and Serbian have been recognised as minority languages in the Slovak Republic within the meaning of Part II of the Charter.

The fourth cycle of monitoring of Slovakia's compliance with the commitments under the Charter was completed with recommendations from the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (hereinafter the 'Committee of Ministers') on 27 April 2016, which were based on the fourth report from the Charter's Committee of Experts (hereinafter the 'Committee of Experts') and the Slovak Republic's opinion on the report. The general conclusion of the Committee of Experts in the fourth report was that, taking into account the very diverse situation of the minority languages and the fact that some have a very weak and/or dispersed territorial presence, the application of Part III undertakings under the Charter remains particularly difficult in some cases. According to the Committee of Experts, the situation of all minority languages, despite a certain number of fulfilled undertakings, remains vulnerable.

In order to inform the public about the course and results of the fourth cycle of monitoring of the standard of implementation of the Language Charter in Slovakia, the Report on the Course and Results of the Fourth Cycle of Monitoring of the Standard of Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Slovak Republic¹⁵ was approved through Government Resolution No 7/2017 of 11 January 2017. The resolution tasked the involved parties with analysing the recommendations from the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers. In this context, the Plenipotentiary reviewed the results of the fourth cycle of monitoring and the recommendations from the Committee of Ministers, examined the possibilities for implementing these recommendations and submitted a document to support the preparation of the fifth implementation report, in which he informed the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs about the adopted measures with a deadline on 30 June 2017. The members of the Committee and the Council were also familiarised with the submitted document.

¹⁴ The Parties to the Language Charter may, within certain limitations, choose which provisions of the Language Charter will apply to the respective regional or minority language spoken in their territories.

¹⁵ See: <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26158>

The 5th cycle of monitoring of the standard of implementation of the Charter is currently underway, in the context of which Slovakia prepared its Fifth Periodical Report on the Implementation of the Charter in the Slovak Republic. This report was approved through Government Resolution No 352 of 22 August 2018¹⁶ and contains updated and comprehensive information on the status and situation of regional or minority languages in Slovakia. The report focuses above all on presenting the current situation and developments in legislation and social practices in relation to the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages. Through its Resolution No 352/2018, the Government tasked the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs to present the report to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe by 31 August 2018. The report was presented to the Council of Europe in August 2018, thereby fulfilling the task under the Government Resolution.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of opening the Charter for signature by the Parties, on 14 November 2017 the Plenipotentiary took part in the anniversary conference in Budapest entitled ‘Protection of identity through language rights’. The conference was organised by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Budapest in cooperation with the Council of Europe. The purpose of the conference was to raise awareness of the Charter, give support for its objectives and underline that providing language rights to persons belonging to national minorities is a prerequisite for building a democratic and culturally diverse Europe.

2.2 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

The fourth cycle of monitoring of Slovakia’s compliance with the commitments arising from the Convention was completed by adopting the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of 13 April 2016, which was based on the opinion of the Advisory Committee and the Slovak Republic’s comments on the opinion.¹⁷

In relation to language legislation, the Advisory Committee appreciated that significant steps, including legislative amendments, had been taken in respect of adopting more comprehensive legislation on minority languages to facilitate an appropriate balance between legitimate promotion of the use of the state language and the right to use minority languages in order to make it possible to find such a balance. At the same time, the Committee called for more flexibility in the implementation of the legislation and closer consultations maintained with representatives of minorities.¹⁸ ‘The Advisory Committee also called on Slovak authorities to intensify their efforts to ensure that a sufficient number of municipal employees is adequately trained and able to respond to requests in minority languages, in particular in Romani, and that the use of minority languages is actively encouraged in official communication where applicable.’¹⁹ ‘The Advisory Committee welcomed the fact that the amendment to Act No 270/1995 Coll. of 2011 abolished the requirement to provide full

¹⁶ See: <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=27661>

¹⁷ See: <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26157>

¹⁸ <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26157>

Fourth opinion on the Slovak Republic adopted on 3 December 2014, Annex 1, p. 1.

¹⁹ <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26157>

Fourth opinion on the Slovak Republic adopted on 3 December 2014, Annex 1, p. 20.

translations into the state language of cultural print matters, such as catalogues or programmes of cultural events organised in national minority languages. The Committee regretted, however, that the use of minority languages in related publications and advertisements still creates tension in some localities, mainly in southern Slovakia, and considers that government and minority representatives should engage in a constructive dialogue to find flexible and pragmatic solutions to the diverging interests of minority and majority populations within the established legal framework.’²⁰

In order to provide information about the course and results of the fourth cycle of monitoring of the standard of implementation of the Charter in Slovakia, the Report on the Course and Results of the Fourth Cycle of Monitoring of the Standard of Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities²¹ was approved through Government Resolution No 6/2017 of 11 January 2017. The resolution tasked the involved parties with analysing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Committee of Ministers. In this context, the Plenipotentiary reviewed the results of the fourth cycle of monitoring and the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, examined the possibilities for implementing these recommendations and submitted a document to support for the preparation of the fifth implementation report, in which he informed the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs about the adopted measures with a deadline on 30 June 2018. The members of the Committee and the Government Council were also familiarised with the document.

As part of the dialogue on the results of monitoring of the implementation of the Convention, the Plenipotentiary, in cooperation with the Convention’s Secretariat, organised an international Follow-up Seminar on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in Slovakia on 4 and 5 December 2017 in Bratislava. During the two-day event, members of the Advisory Committee and representatives of central government authorities, national minorities and experts from the academic and scientific community dealing with the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities discussed the importance of promoting tolerance, mutual respect and inter-cultural dialogue; the issue of education and training for persons belonging to national minorities; the protection and development of the culture and languages of persons belonging to national minorities and the scope of application of the Convention.

The 5th cycle of monitoring of the standard of implementation of the Convention is currently underway, in the context of which the Office of the Plenipotentiary prepared and forwarded to the MFEA SR supporting documents for the Fifth Report on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the Slovak Republic.

²⁰ <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26157>

Fourth opinion on the Slovak Republic adopted on 3 December 2014, Annex 1, pp. 13–14.

²¹ See: <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26157>

2.3 High Commissioner of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on national minorities

On 26 February 2018, the Plenipotentiary received OSCE High Commissioner on national minorities Lambert Zannier in Bratislava. The OSCE High Commissioner visited Bratislava as part of a follow-up visit that was made by previous OSCE High Commissioner on national minorities Astrid Thors in 2016 and to establish personal contacts with Slovak representatives responsible for policies relating to national minorities. They discussed topics such as the current situation of national minorities in Slovakia with special regard to the current status and competence of the Plenipotentiary, the access of persons belonging to national minorities to education and public services, the application of the language rights of persons belonging to national minorities and participation of persons belonging to national minorities in matters that concern them. Both parties discussed a broad range of questions relating to the implementation of the Action Plan, preparation of the Slovak Republic's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2019, and the possibilities for mutual cooperation in the context of the chairmanship.

As part of Austria's OSCE chairmanship, an international conference was held on 14 November 2017 in Graz with the aim of presenting OSCE's new 'Graz recommendations' on national minorities' access to justice²². The conference was organised by the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on national minorities in cooperation with the Institute of Public Law of the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz. The conference was also attended by a representative of the Office of the Plenipotentiary. At the Conference, OSCE High Commissioner Lamberto Zannier presented the aforementioned Graz recommendations, which provide frameworks that serve for creating policies focused on reducing tensions and the potential of inter-ethnic conflicts on the basis of respecting international standards. The possibility for persons belonging to national minorities to communicate in their minority language in preparatory judicial proceedings with judicial institutions and national human rights institutions was emphasised as one of the prerequisites for national minorities to have access to justice.

As part of Italy's OSCE chairmanship, a conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Bolzano recommendations on national minorities in inter-state relations was held in Udine in 2018. The objective of the conference, which was attended by the Plenipotentiary, was to reflect on the effects of the Bolzano recommendations and analyse the lessons learned from the implementation of the recommendations, as well as to identify new challenges in connection with implementing them. The annual conference subtitled 'New Challenges and Lessons Learned' was opened by OSCE High Commissioner Lamberto Zannier. At the conference, the Plenipotentiary underlined and appreciated the importance of adopting the Bolzano recommendations on national minorities in inter-state relations, however, at the same time, he noted that the document itself can guarantee effective protection of the rights of national minorities only in conjunction with the implementation of the other OSCE

²² See: <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/graz-recommendations?download=true>

recommendations relating to national minorities, in particular the Lund and Hague, but also the Ljubljana, Graz and Oslo recommendations relating to the language rights of national minorities.

3. Situation regarding the use of national minority languages by public administration entities – results of the questionnaire survey

3.1 Local self-government (municipalities)

Questionnaire return rate

According to Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., there are a total of 656 municipalities where at least 20 % of the population are citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority. This group includes 18 municipalities with populations belonging to two national minorities, which are mentioned in the list twice (11 Ukrainian-Ruthenian municipalities, 5 Hungarian-Roma municipalities, 1 Ukrainian-Roma municipality and 1 Ruthenian-Roma municipality). It follows from the above that the actual number of municipalities where at least 20 % of the population are citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority is 638.

Thus, in the context of the questionnaire survey conducted in August and September, the Office of the Plenipotentiary approached a total of 638 municipalities and the Office should have received a total of 656 questionnaires. The municipalities sent back 643 questionnaires, which represents a 98 % return rate. This was the highest rate achieved so far as the return rate was 92 % in 2016, 85 % in 2014 and 89 % in 2012. The absolute numbers and percentages are shown in Table 1. The data are broken down into individual national minorities and municipalities with populations belonging to two national minorities are included twice. As the table suggests, 643 questionnaires were processed as part of this survey, which represents 100 % in the tables for the individual areas.

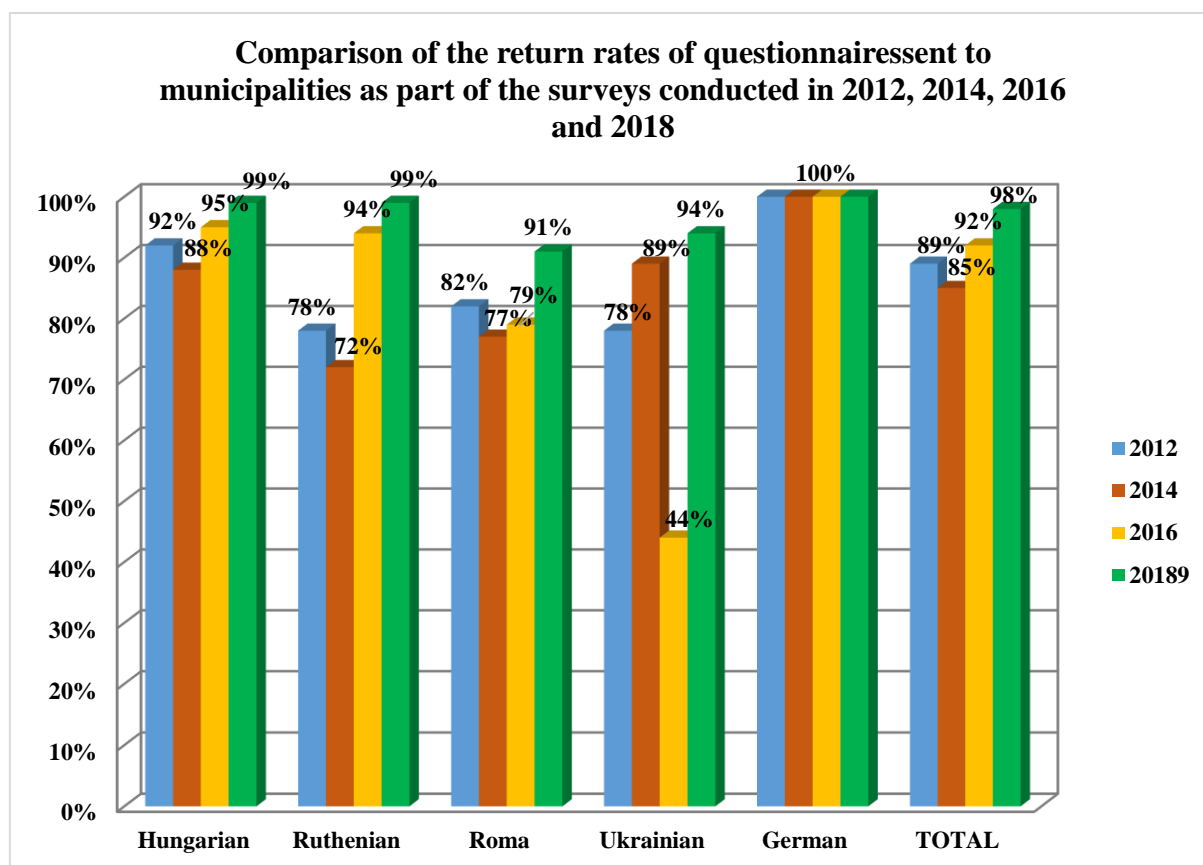
Data from 13 municipalities are absent from the survey. Of this number, two municipalities sent the questionnaire back after the deadline and no questionnaire replies were received from 11 municipalities. In this context, it should be noted that according to § 7b(1)(g) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, public authorities, in this case municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., which fail to provide written documentation referred to in § 7a(3), according to which the Office of the Government is entitled to request public authorities to provide information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in the areas of their competence, commit an administrative offence in the field of the use of national minority languages.

The questionnaire was used to collect data in 6 thematic areas relating to the use of national minority languages under the competence of local self-government authorities as defined in Act No 184/1999 Coll. Based on experience from the preceding surveys, the scope of the survey was optimised and slightly reduced compared with the surveys from 2014 and 2016, including with a view to reducing the administrative burden on the obliged entities. The basic criterion when formulating the questionnaire, which was based on the questionnaire used in 2016, was to ensure that the data continue to be as comparable as possible so that the development trends in this area can be assessed. The municipalities received a total of 71 questions on 6 topics in the following order: signs in minority languages (questions 1–12),

official contact (questions 13–31), bilingual documents (questions 32–50), sessions of local self-government authorities (questions 51–55), provision of information to the public (questions 56–65) and final questions (questions 66–71). The questionnaire for municipalities is provided in Annex 1.

Table 1: Comparison of the return rates of questionnaires sent to municipalities as part of the surveys conducted in 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018

| | 2012 | | 2014 | | 2016 | | 2018 | |
|------------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Hungarian | 470 | 92 % | 450 | 88 % | 486 | 95 % | 506 | 99 % |
| Ruthenian | 53 | 78 % | 49 | 72 % | 64 | 94 % | 67 | 99 % |
| Roma | 47 | 82 % | 44 | 77 % | 45 | 79 % | 52 | 91 % |
| Ukrainian | 14 | 78 % | 16 | 89 % | 8 | 44 % | 17 | 94 % |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 | 100 % |
| TOTAL | 585 | 89 % | 560 | 85 % | 604 | 92 % | 643 | 98 % |



3.1.1 Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–12)

In the first part of the questionnaire, the municipalities were requested to indicate the name of the municipality in the state language and in the language of the relevant national minority – 574 (89 %) municipalities indicated a name conforming to Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., 43 (7 %) municipalities did not indicate a name conforming to the Regulation and 26 (4 %) municipalities did not respond. This means that compared with the results from the preceding surveys the situation has improved both overall and in respect of each national minority in this respect.

Table 2: Name of municipality in the national minority language [§ 4(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

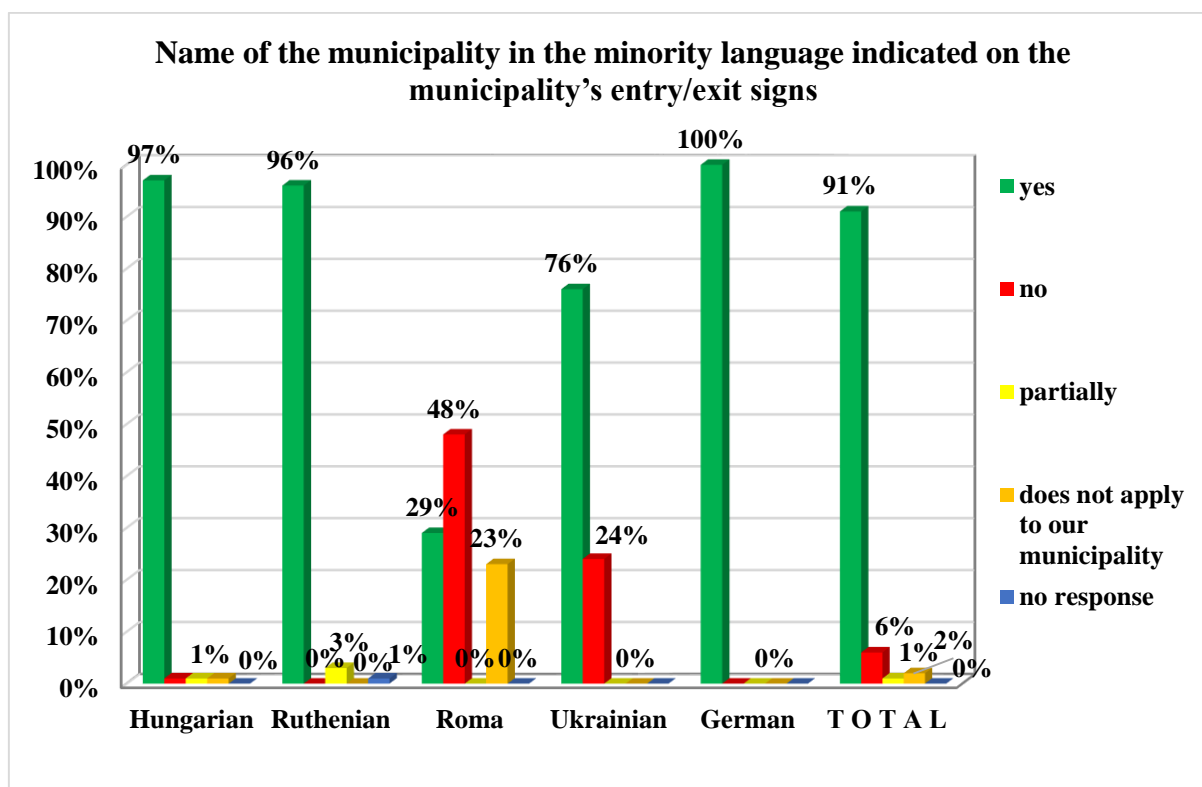
| | the name conforms to the Government Regulation | % share | the name does not conform to the Government Regulation | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|--|--------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 482 | 95 % | 15 | 3 % | 9 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 42 | 63 % | 18 | 27 % | 7 | 10 % | 67 |
| Roma | 45 | 87 % | 0 | 0 % | 7 | 13 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 10 | 59 % | 4 | 23 % | 3 | 18 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 580 | 90 % | 37 | 6 % | 26 | 4 % | 643 |

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., all municipalities listed in Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. are required to indicate the name of the municipality in the minority language on the municipality entry/exit signs, except for municipalities whose name in the national minority language is identical to that in the state language. In such a case, the relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. do not apply. According to Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., the names of 9 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (Baka, Virt, Bajka, Zalaba, Nána, Pozba, Bátka, Rad and Kalonda) and all municipalities with a Roma minority population are identical with those in the state language. The name of the municipality in the minority language was indicated on the municipality's entry/exit signs in 5 of the listed Hungarian municipalities and 15 Roma municipalities. Two Hungarian municipalities and 25 Roma municipalities did not respond whether they used such signs; two Hungarian and 12 Roma municipalities responded that this question did not apply to them. One Hungarian municipality (Hurbanova Ves) responded that this question did not apply to it despite the fact that the name of the municipality is not identical to that in the state language.

Nevertheless, overall the survey results in this area showed that the number of municipalities which complied with the obligation to indicate the name of the municipality in the national minority language on the traffic signs had increased. In the case of the Hungarian national minority, the number of such municipalities rose from 447 to 487 (the number of partially compliant municipalities from 13 to 7), in the case of the Ruthenian national minority the number of such municipalities remained at 64 (partially from 0 to 2) and the number rose from 11 to 15, from 5 to 13 and from 0 to 1 in the case of the Roma, Ukrainian and German national minorities respectively.

Table 3: Name of the municipality in the minority language indicated on the municipality's entry/exit signs [§ 4(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 487 | 97 % | 7 | 1 % | 7 | 1 % | 3 | 1 % | 2 | 0 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 64 | 96 % | 2 | 3 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 15 | 29 % | 0 | 0 % | 25 | 48 % | 12 | 23 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 13 | 76 % | 0 | 0 % | 4 | 24 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 580 | 91 % | 9 | 1 % | 36 | 6 % | 15 | 2 % | 3 | 0 % | 643 |



The present questionnaire survey for the first time examined the indication of information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens in the national minority language in the form of additional text notices on traffic signs within the meaning of Implementing Decree No 9/2009 Coll. of the Ministry of the Interior implementing the act on road traffic and on amendments to certain acts, as amended. According to the survey results, 75 (12 %) municipalities provided such information using additional text notices on traffic signs; 63 (10 %) municipalities did so partially.

Table 4: Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens also provided in the national minority language in the form of additional text notices on traffic signs [§ 4(6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|-----|---------|---------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 70 | 14 % | 62 | 12 % | 143 | 28 % | 222 | 44 % | 9 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 4 | 6 % | 1 | 1 % | 23 | 35 % | 38 | 57 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 30 | 58 % | 21 | 40 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 7 | 41 % | 9 | 53 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 75 | 11 % | 63 | 10 % | 203 | 32 % | 291 | 45 % | 11 | 2 % | 643 |

The number of municipalities which indicated the municipality name in the national minority language on railway and bus station name signs below the name in the state language doubled compared to the preceding survey (it rose from 65 to 127 or from 11 % to 20 % expressed in percent). Such signs were used in 123 municipalities with a Hungarian, three

municipalities with a Ruthenian and one municipality with a Roma minority population. These signs were partially²³ used in 43 (7 %) municipalities; two years ago, there were 32 such municipalities. None of the municipalities with a Ukrainian or German minority population used such signs. This possibility and the obligation to indicate the name of the municipality in the minority language on the municipality's entry/exit signs did not apply to municipalities whose name in the national minority language is identical to that in the state language. For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that 277 (43 %) responded that this question did not apply to them and 1 % of municipalities did not respond.

Table 5: Name of the municipality in the minority language displayed below the name in the state language on railway or bus station name signs [§ 4(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 123 | 25 % | 42 | 8 % | 148 | 29 % | 186 | 37 % | 7 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 3 | 5 % | 1 | 1 % | 12 | 18 % | 51 | 76 % | 0 | 0 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 0 | 0 % | 23 | 44 % | 28 | 54 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 6 | 35 % | 11 | 65 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 127 | 20 % | 43 | 7 % | 189 | 29 % | 277 | 43 % | 7 | 1 % | 643 |

In 164 (26 %) municipalities, of which 159 were municipalities with a Hungarian, 4 municipalities with a Ruthenian and one municipality with a Roma minority population, the same font size was used on these signs. In 23 (4 %) municipalities with a Hungarian national minority, a smaller font size was used.

Table 6: Method of indication of the municipality name in the minority language displayed below the name in the state language on railway or bus station name signs [§ 4(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | same font size | % share | smaller font size | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 159 | 31 % | 23 | 4 % | 328 | 65 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 4 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 63 | 94 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 164 | 25 % | 23 | 3 % | 460 | 72 % | 643 |

The obligation to indicate the name of the public authority²⁴ on buildings in both the state language and the minority language was fulfilled by 554 (86 %) municipalities.

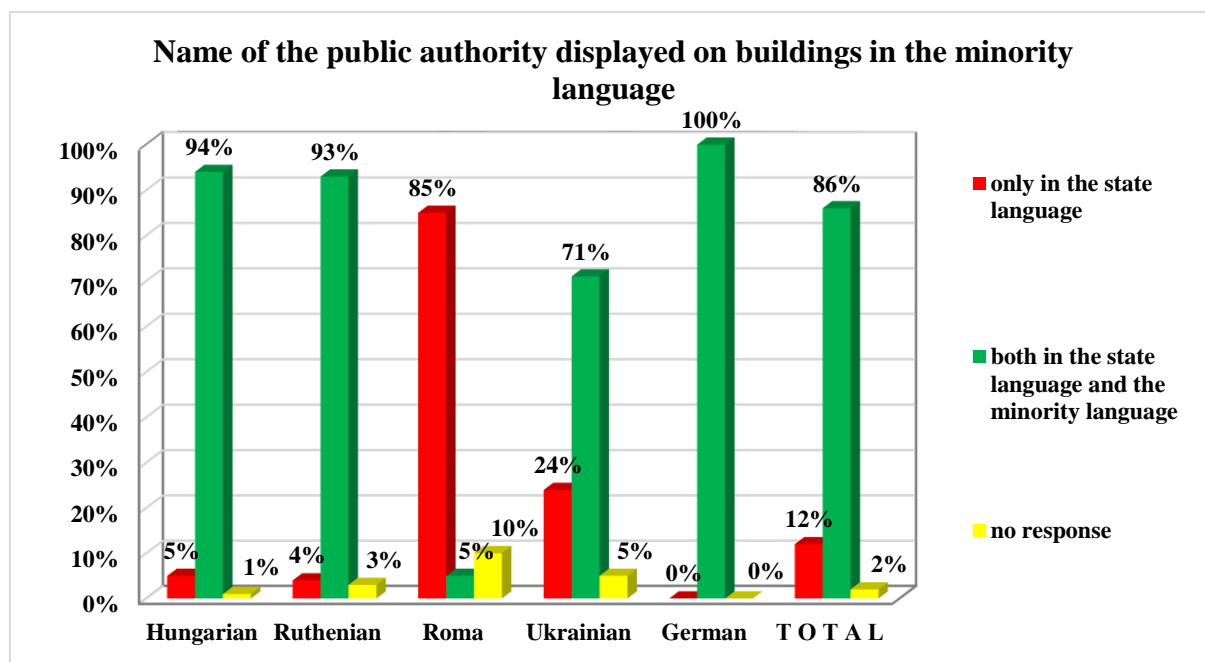
²³ Respondents were allowed to mark the answer 'partially' for some of the questions in the questionnaire. This answer was chosen by those respondents who had fulfilled a statutory obligation or used a statutory option in some cases, but not to the full extent.

²⁴ According to § 2(6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., 'signs displaying the name of the public authority placed on buildings in municipalities referred to in paragraph (1) shall also be provided in the minority language.' However, the Act fails to define more closely to which public authorities these provisions apply. According to § 10(1) of Act No 369/1990 Coll., on municipalities, as amended, municipal bodies include the municipal council and the mayor, however, the Act does not define whether the municipal office is considered to be a self-government body of a municipality. Nevertheless, given the fact that most municipal self-government bodies (mayor, municipal council, facultative bodies, etc.) generally do not have their own buildings and use the municipal office building, in practice the Act is taken to apply to municipal office buildings.

A comparison with the results from the previous survey shows that the number of municipalities where the obligation to provide such signs is fulfilled has increased for each national minority (from 440 to 476 in the case of the Hungarian minority, from 61 to 62 in the case of the Ruthenian minority and from 1 to 3 and 5 to 12 in the case of the Roma and Ukrainian minorities respectively; the only municipality with a German minority population continued to use such signs).

Table 7: Name of the public authority displayed on buildings in the minority language [§ 4(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | only in the state language | % share | both in the state language and the minority language | % share | no response | % share | total |
|-----------|----------------------------|---------|--|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 23 | 5 % | 476 | 94 % | 7 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 3 | 4 % | 62 | 93 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 44 | 85 % | 3 | 5 % | 5 | 10 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 4 | 24 % | 12 | 71 % | 1 | 5 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 74 | 12 % | 554 | 86 % | 15 | 2 % | 643 |



In 477 (74 %) municipalities, the same font size was used on the signs, 73 (11 %) municipalities used a smaller font size.

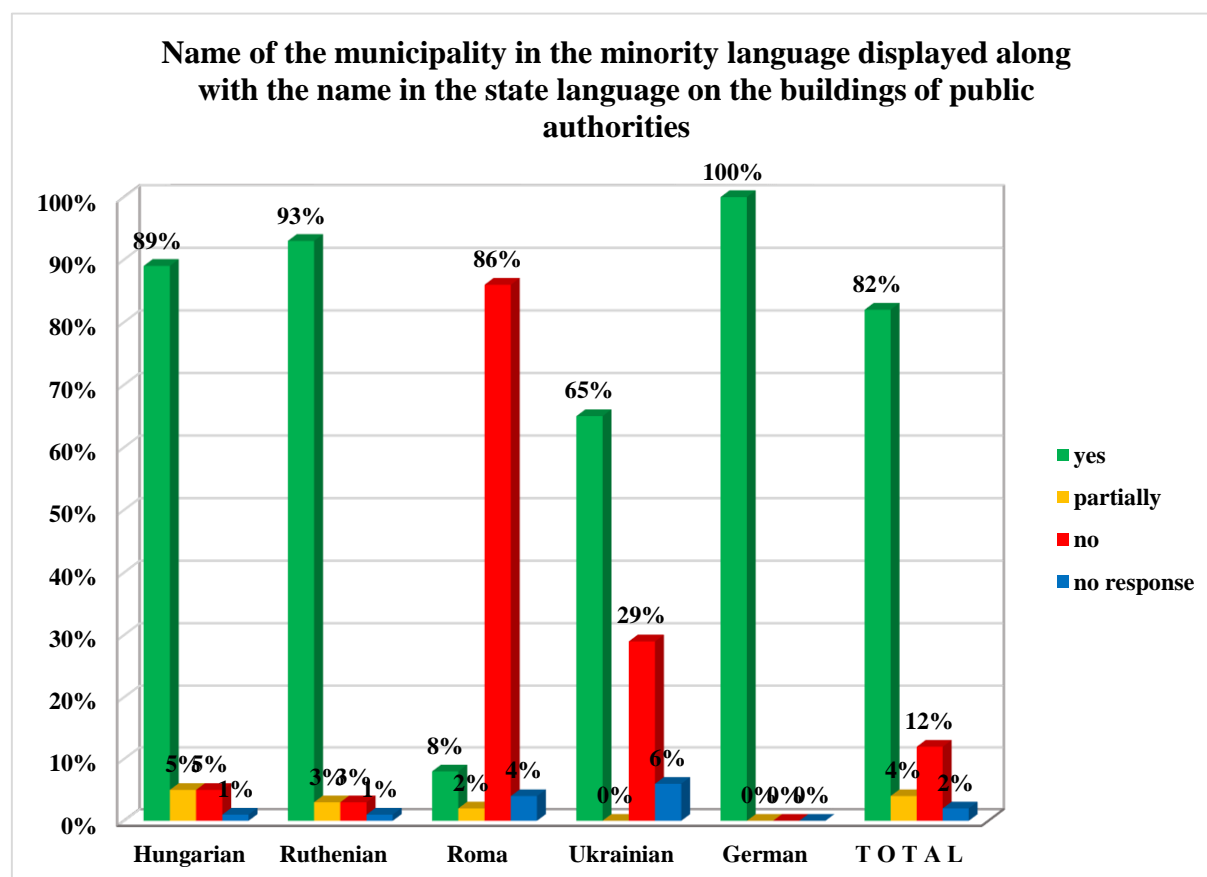
Table 8: Method of indication of the name of the public authority in the minority language displayed on buildings along with the equivalent in the state language

| | same font size | % share | smaller font size | % share | no response | % share | total |
|-----------|----------------|---------|-------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 411 | 81 % | 61 | 12 % | 34 | 7 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 53 | 80 % | 7 | 10 % | 7 | 10 % | 67 |
| Roma | 4 | 8 % | 0 | 0 % | 48 | 92 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 9 | 52 % | 4 | 24 % | 4 | 24 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 477 | 74 % | 73 | 11 % | 93 | 15 % | 643 |

The obligation to display the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of public authorities does not apply to municipalities whose name in the national minority language is identical to that in the state language. Such signs are used in 4 municipalities with a Roma minority population and partially in one municipality with a Roma minority population; out of the 9 such municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 7 used such signs. A comparison with the results from the previous survey shows that compliance with this obligation improved for each national minority (from 362 to 452 in the case of the Hungarian minority, from 61 to 62 in the case of the Ruthenian minority and from 5 to 11 in the case of the Ukrainian minority; just like previously, the only municipality with a German minority population continued to use such signs).

Table 9: Name of the municipality in the minority language displayed along with the name in the state language on the buildings of public authorities [§ 4(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 452 | 89 % | 25 | 5 % | 23 | 5 % | 6 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 62 | 93 % | 2 | 3 % | 2 | 3 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 4 | 8 % | 1 | 2 % | 45 | 86 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 11 | 65 % | 0 | 0 % | 5 | 29 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 530 | 82 % | 28 | 4 % | 75 | 12 % | 10 | 2 % | 643 |

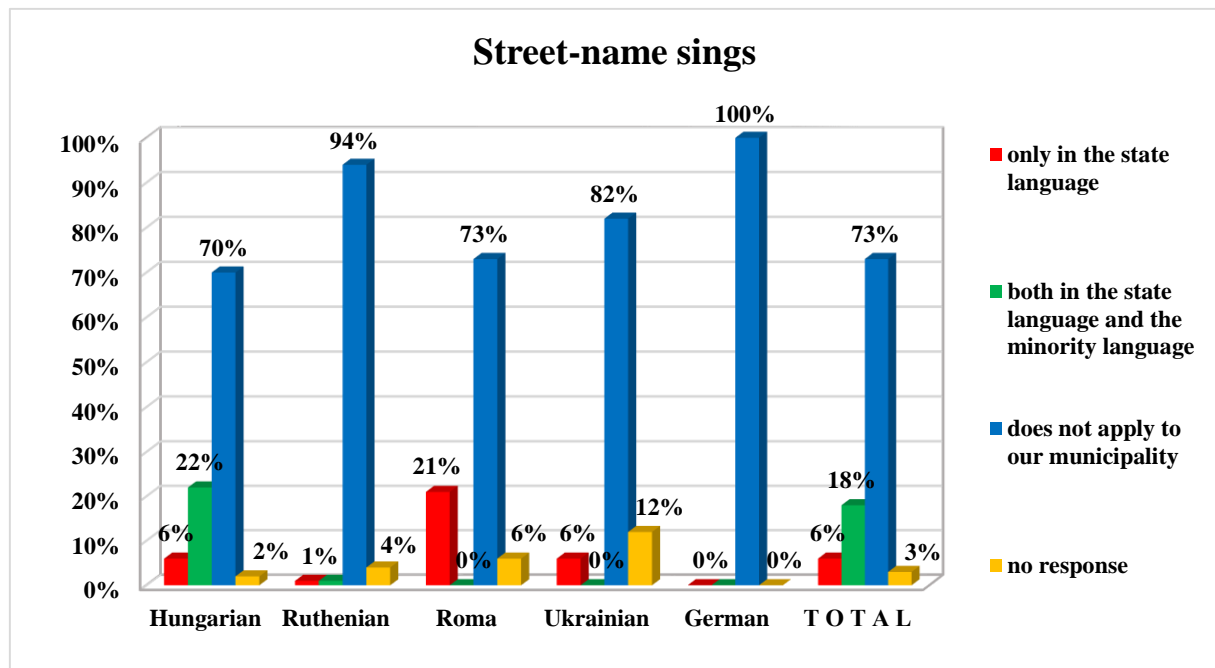


According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. may, within their territories, use street names and other local place-names

in national minority languages. The survey results revealed that bilingual street-name signs were used in 115 (18 %) municipalities and bilingual local place-name signs in 31 (5 %) municipalities, which indicates a certain increase compared to the results from the previous survey. From among the 115 municipalities using bilingual street-name signs, 114 were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population; one was a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. 41 (6 %) municipalities only use street-name signs in the state language. No municipalities with a Ukrainian, Roma or German minority population use bilingual street-name signs. For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that 479 (75 %) municipalities responded that streets did not have names in their municipality.

Table 10: Street-name signs in the minority language [§ 4(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | only in the state language | % share | both in the state language and the minority language | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|----------------------------|---------|--|---------|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 28 | 6 % | 114 | 22 % | 353 | 70 % | 11 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 1 | 1 % | 63 | 94 % | 2 | 4 % | 67 |
| Roma | 11 | 21 % | 0 | 0 % | 38 | 73 % | 3 | 6 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 14 | 82 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 41 | 6 % | 115 | 18 % | 469 | 73 % | 18 | 3 % | 643 |



Compared to the data from the previous survey, the number of municipalities using local place-name signs in national minority languages doubled overall from 31 to 62 (from 30 to 60 in the case of the Hungarian minority, there continued to be one such municipality with a Ruthenian minority and, in the case of the Ukrainian minority, the number increased from 0 to 1). No municipalities with a Roma or German minority population used bilingual

local place-name signs. 58 municipalities used only local place-name signs in the state language.

Table 11: Local place-name signs in the minority language [§ 4(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | only in the state language | % share | both in the state language and the minority language | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 40 | 8 % | 60 | 12 % | 385 | 76 % | 21 | 4 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 6 | 9 % | 1 | 1 % | 58 | 87 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 10 | 19 % | 0 | 0 % | 38 | 73 % | 4 | 8 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 2 | 12 % | 1 | 6 % | 12 | 70 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 58 | 9 % | 62 | 10 % | 494 | 77 % | 29 | 4 % | 643 |

3.1.2 Official contact (questions 13–31)

The questionnaire survey again collected data on municipalities' compliance with the obligations relating to the use of national minority languages in official contact, which comprise several subareas. The survey results revealed that of the total of more than 7 000 municipal employees, more than 4 500 had a command of the relevant national minority languages, which is a significant number. Currently, 87 % of the staff in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population have a command of Hungarian (73 % could speak and write and 14 % could speak Hungarian). In municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, 85 % of the staff of these municipalities had a command of Ruthenian (25 % could speak and write and 60 % could speak Ruthenian). 27 % of the staff in municipalities with a Roma minority population had a command of Romani (18 % could speak and write and 9 % could speak Romani). In municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population, 53 % of the staff had a command of Ukrainian (30 % could speak and write and 23 % could speak Ukrainian). None of the municipal staff in the municipality with a German national minority had a command German.

A comparison with the results from the previous survey shows that the situation in respect of the Hungarian national minority did not change significantly, in the case of the Ruthenian minority the number of municipal staff with a command of the minority language decreased from 92 % to 85 % and in the case of the Ukrainian minority this number fell from 67 % to 53 %. In the case of the Roma national minority, this number increased significantly from 10 % to 27 %. Spoken and written command of national minority languages also decreased for the Ruthenian (from 35 % to 25 %) and Ukrainian minorities (46 % to 30 %). If we compare this with the data from 2012 provided in the 2015–2016 report, the situation in this respect is stabilised in the case of the Hungarian national minority, however, the number of municipal staff who have a command of the national minority language is clearly and continuously decreasing in the case of the Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities. The downward trend was successfully stopped for the Roma minority, in fact, this number is now increasing.

Table 12: Number and proportion of staff who have a command of the minority language

| | total number | spoken and | % share | spoken | % share | total | % share |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Hungarian | 5 910 | 4 400 | 73 % | 786 | 14 % | 5 186 | 87 % |
| Ruthenian | 210 | 52 | 25 % | 126 | 60 % | 178 | 85 % |
| Roma | 872 | 152 | 18 % | 81 | 8 % | 233 | 27 % |
| Ukrainian | 53 | 16 | 30 % | 12 | 23 % | 28 | 53 % |
| German | 2 | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % |
| TOTAL | 7 047 | 4 620 | 66 % | 1 005 | 14 % | 5 625 | 80 % |

According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., the municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. are required to create conditions for using minority languages. The method of providing for these conditions is left to their discretion. At present, 584 (91 %) municipalities create conditions for exercising the right to communicate orally and in writing in a minority language by means of the municipality's own staff, 12 (2 %) municipalities use interpreting or translation services and 25 (4 %) municipalities provided for this possibility in another manner: one municipality with a Ukrainian minority population, by making it possible to communicate in Ruthenian, two municipalities individually, in oral contact. Based on the information provided in the questionnaires, citizens in 10 municipalities do not have a command of the minority language and are not interested in communicating in this language,²⁵ in 12 municipalities, the conditions for using national minority languages have not been created because, according to the responses, the minority population in these municipalities has both spoken and written command of the state language.²⁶

Table 13: Method of using minority languages in official contact

| | municipal employees | % share | interpreting or translation services | % share | by other means | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 492 | 97 % | 7 | 1 % | 4 | 1 % | 8 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 59 | 88 % | 1 | 1 % | 2 | 3 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 24 | 46 % | 1 | 2 % | 14 | 27 % | 28 | 54 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 9 | 53 % | 2 | 12 % | 5 | 29 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 584 | 91 % | 12 | 2 % | 25 | 4 % | 40 | 6 % | 643 |

According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., municipalities may reserve a time slot for handling administrative affairs in minority languages. The survey results showed that 64 (10 %) municipalities had reserved such a time slot (two years ago, it was 47 municipalities). These include 51 municipalities with a Hungarian (37 municipalities two years ago), 10 municipalities with a Ruthenian (9 municipalities two years ago), two municipalities with a Ukrainian and one municipality with a German minority population (two years ago, there were no municipalities with a Ukrainian or German minority population to have reserved such a time slot). No municipalities with a Roma national minority reserved

²⁵ These were the following municipalities: Žbince, Kačanov, Nižný Komárnik, Stráne pod Tatrami, Zborov, Rakytník, Dulovo (Roma national minority), Parihuzovce (Ruthenian national minority), Nižná Jedľová, Parihuzovce (Ukrainian national minority).

²⁶ These were the following municipalities: Rudňany, Arnutovce, Blatné Remety, Ostrovany, Rokycany, Spur Slivník, Toporec (Roma national minority), Potôčky (Ruthenian national minority), Chmeľová, Nižný Mirošov (Ukrainian national minority), Slizké, Hviezdoslavov (Hungarian national minority).

a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language (two years ago, there was one municipality that had reserved such a time slot).

Table 14: Time slot reserved for handling administrative affairs in the minority language [§ 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 51 | 10 % | 448 | 89 % | 6 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 10 | 15 % | 56 | 84 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 2 | 12 % | 14 | 82 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 64 | 10 % | 570 | 89 % | 9 | 1 % | 643 |

According to § 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., public authorities are required to make available at a visible place at their seat information about the possibilities for using the language of the relevant national minority orally and in writing in official contact. It follows from the provisions of § 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. that every public authority in the municipalities referred to in § 2(2) of the Act is required to create conditions for exercising the right to use minority languages in official contact for the minority or minorities that meet the conditions under § 2(1) of the Act in that municipality. While in 2016, this information was made available to the residents in this manner in 269 (42 %) municipalities, in 2018, it was available in 384 (60 %) municipalities, which is an 18 % increase. The proportion of municipalities with a Hungarian minority that fulfilled this obligation was 65 % (332 municipalities); the obligation was also fulfilled by 35 municipalities (52 %) with a Ruthenian minority population, 7 municipalities (13 %) with a Roma minority population and 9 municipalities (53 %) with a Ukrainian minority population. The municipality with a German minority population also fulfilled this obligation. If we compare this with the data from 2012 provided in the 2015–2016 report, the number of municipalities complying with this obligation is continuously rising.

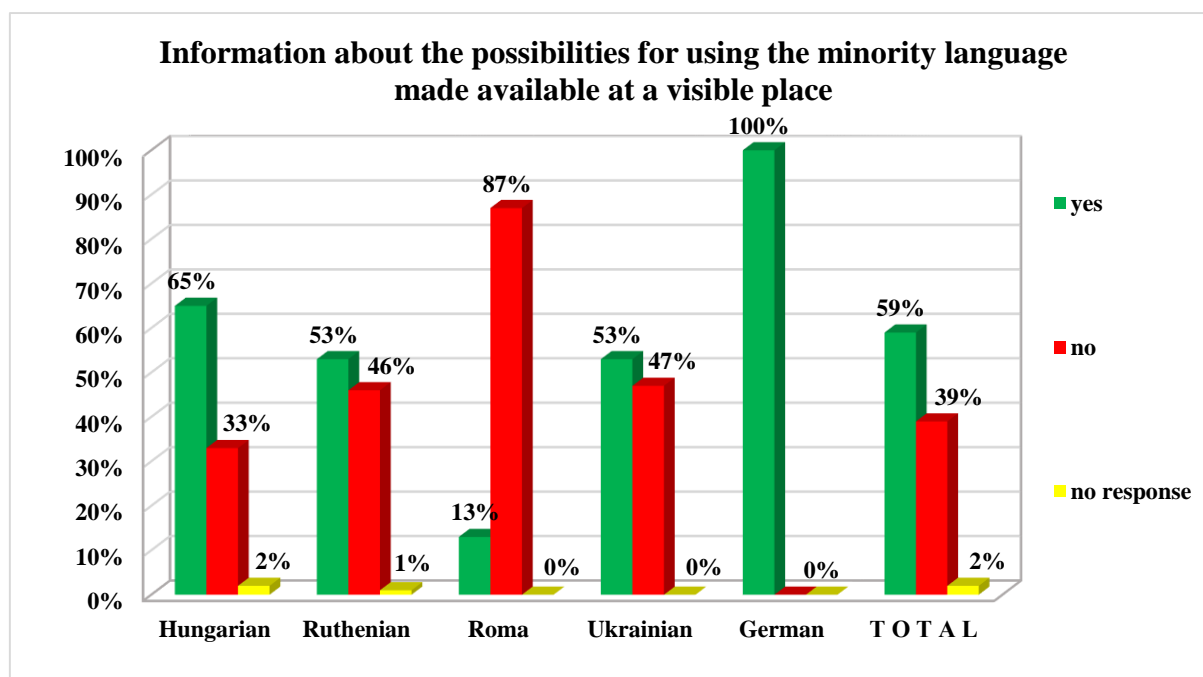


Table 15: Information about the possibilities for using the minority language orally and in writing in official contact made available at a visible place [§ 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 332 | 65 % | 165 | 33 % | 9 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 35 | 53 % | 31 | 46 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 7 | 13 % | 45 | 87 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 9 | 53 % | 8 | 47 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 384 | 59 % | 249 | 39 % | 10 | 2 % | 643 |

Act No 184/1999 Coll. does not specify the language, in which the information about the possibilities for using the language of the relevant national minority orally and in writing in official contact should be made available. The survey results showed that 275 (43 %) municipalities used the state language and 314 (49 %) municipalities used the minority language to fulfil this obligation. A more detailed analysis showed that 206 (32 %) municipalities made this information available in both the state language and the minority language. Since the respondents were allowed to mark both possibilities, the percentage sums in the table may exceed 100 % on some lines.

Table 16: Language in which the information about the possibilities for using the minority language orally and in writing in official contact was made available

| | in the state language | % share | in the minority language | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 225 | 44 % | 288 | 57 % | 10 | 2 % | 332 |
| Ruthenian | 34 | 51 % | 20 | 30 % | 1 | 1 % | 35 |
| Roma | 7 | 13 % | 3 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 7 |
| Ukrainian | 8 | 47 % | 3 | 18 % | 0 | 0 % | 9 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 275 | 43 % | 314 | 49 % | 11 | 2 % | 384 |

Neither does Act No 184/1999 Coll. provide any details as to where this information should be made available, it only refers to a ‘visible place’. From among the municipalities that fulfilled this obligation, 244 made this information available mainly on their public announcements boards, 139 on information boards and 41 municipalities made it available on the Internet. In 10 municipalities, this information was made available on the entrance door, 9 municipalities provided it on office doors or in offices and 5 municipalities made it available in the municipal office building. Municipal PA systems and oral communication of this information were considered to be a visible place by 7 municipalities.

Another aspect of this topic is the actual possibility of using minority languages in official contact. During the period under review, written submissions in the minority language were received especially by municipalities with a Hungarian national minority. Written submissions (1 186 submissions) in a minority language were received by 111 (22 %) municipalities. This number is almost identical to that from 2016 (1 274 submission in 106 municipalities). In addition to municipalities with a Hungarian national minority, such submissions were received in one municipality with a Ruthenian (one submission) and one municipality with a Ukrainian (15 submissions) minority population. These were mostly requests and complaints relating to, in particular, housing, municipal property purchases and

leases, subsidies, certificates of permanent residence, requests for information on employment opportunities in the municipalities, local taxes and fees, building permits, but also neighbourly disputes. Municipalities with Roma and German minority populations did not receive any written submissions in national minority languages.

Table 17: Written submissions received from citizens in a minority language

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 111 | 22 % | 388 | 77 % | 7 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 64 | 96 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 52 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 16 | 94 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 113 | 18 % | 521 | 81 % | 9 | 1 % | 643 |

Municipalities are required to respond to submissions written in a minority language in both the state language and the minority language. Such responses were provided to citizens in 63 (10 %) municipalities (62 were municipalities with a Hungarian and one was a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) and partially in 24 (4 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population; 24 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population did not respond in the minority language. In this context, it should be noted that even though these numbers are slightly higher compared to the results from the previous survey, they are still significantly lower compared to the data from 2014.

Table 18: Written responses to written submissions provided in the minority language [§ 2(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 62 | 12 % | 24 | 5 % | 24 | 5 % | 396 | 78 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 66 | 99 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 | 100 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 63 | 10 % | 24 | 4 % | 24 | 4 % | 532 | 82 % | 643 |

Act No 184/1999 Coll. permits the use of minority languages in official records (in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records). According to the survey results, 20 (3 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population use the minority language, along with the state language, in their official records. 89 (14 %) municipalities partially use a minority language in their official records. These were mostly municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (83) and 5 municipalities with a Ruthenian and one municipality with a Ukrainian minority population. No municipalities with a Roma or German minority population used the minority language in their official records. According to information from the municipalities, they use national minority languages in particular in the population register, statistics, forms, responses to requests and in relation to the functioning of the municipal council (resolutions, minutes and invitations).

For comparison, two years ago, 21 municipalities used and 43 municipalities partially used a national minority language; however, according to the survey from 2012, 103 municipalities used and 43 municipalities partially used a national minority language in their official records. This shows a certain upturn in this field, which, however, is still below the 2012 figures.

Table 19: Use of minority languages in official records of municipal offices [§ 3(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 20 | 4 % | 83 | 16 % | 394 | 78 % | 9 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 5 | 7 % | 60 | 90 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 6 % | 16 | 94 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 20 | 3 % | 89 | 14 % | 522 | 81 % | 12 | 2 % | 643 |

In accordance with Act No 184/1999 Coll., municipalities may also keep their chronicles in minority languages. Municipalities are now using this possibility more widely than two years ago. 178 (35 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population kept their chronicles in both the state language²⁷ and the minority language and 49 (9 %) municipalities kept their chronicles partially in the minority language in addition to the state language. Two municipalities with Ruthenian and Ukrainian minority populations and one municipality with a Roma minority population also kept their chronicles in the minority language and 9 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population partially used the minority language. The only municipality with a German minority population did not keep its chronicle in the minority language.

Table 20: Municipal chronicles kept in the minority language [§ 3(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 178 | 35 % | 49 | 9 % | 119 | 24 % | 141 | 28 % | 19 | 4 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 2 | 3 % | 9 | 13 % | 36 | 54 % | 16 | 24 % | 4 | 6 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 0 | 0 % | 43 | 82 % | 6 | 12 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 2 | 11 % | 0 | 0 % | 10 | 59 % | 3 | 18 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 183 | 28 % | 58 | 9 % | 209 | 33 % | 166 | 26 % | 27 | 4 % | 643 |

The municipal police may, in addition to the state language, use a minority language in duty-related contact, as long as consent is given by the persons present. Municipal police operated in one municipality with a Ruthenian, 4 municipalities with a Roma and 46 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population. 73 % of municipal police officers had at least a spoken command of Hungarian (82 % two years ago) and 53 % had both a spoken and written command of Hungarian. In the municipalities with a Roma national minority, 10 out of 22 officers could communicate in Romani, of which 5 could both speak

²⁷ § 3 of Act No 270/1995 Coll.

and write in this language. In the municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, 5 municipal police officers had a spoken command of Ruthenian. No municipal police operated in municipalities with Ukrainian or German minority populations.

Table 21: Number and proportion of municipal police officers with a command of the minority language

| | total number | spoken and written | % share | spoken | % share | total | % share |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Hungarian | 367 | 194 | 53 % | 75 | 20 % | 269 | 73 % |
| Ruthenian | 5 | 0 | 0 % | 5 | 100 % | 5 | 100 % |
| Roma | 22 | 5 | 23 % | 5 | 23 % | 10 | 46 % |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % |
| German | 0 | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % |
| TOTAL | 394 | 199 | 51 % | 85 | 22 % | 284 | 72 % |

According to the current data, in 38 (8 %) municipalities, officers used Hungarian along with the state language while on duty (30 municipalities two years ago) and in 7 (1 %) municipalities, a minority language was partially used along with the state language (9 municipalities two years ago). In 17 (3 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, the persons present gave consent to the use of a minority language in duty-related contact with the municipal police, in 16 municipalities, this happened in some cases (two years ago, consent was given in 23 municipalities). Unlike in 2016, the minority language was now used in one municipality with a Ruthenian and one municipality with a Roma minority population; in one municipality with a Roma minority, the minority language was partially used, with consent from the persons present.

Table 22: Use of minority languages by the municipal police in duty-related contact [§ 7(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 38 | 8 % | 7 | 1 % | 1 | 0 % | 460 | 91 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 66 | 99 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 1 | 2 % | 2 | 4 % | 48 | 92 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 40 | 6 % | 8 | 1 % | 4 | 1 % | 592 | 92 % | 643 |

Table 23: Consent given by the persons present to the use of the minority language by the municipal police in duty-related contact [§ 7(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | in some cases | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 17 | 3 % | 11 | 2 % | 16 | 3 % | 462 | 92 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 66 | 99 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 2 | 4 % | 1 | 2 % | 48 | 92 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 19 | 3 % | 13 | 2 % | 17 | 3 % | 594 | 92 % | 643 |

In 37 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, municipal police officers used the minority language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic

belonging to a national minority; it was partially used in 9 municipalities. Romani was used in 3 municipalities and Ruthenian was used in one municipality when municipal police officers communicated with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority. This is a slight increase compared to the results from the preceding survey (41:38 and partially 6:9).

Table 24: Use of the national minority language by municipal police officers who have a command of the minority language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority [§ 7(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 37 | 7 % | 9 | 2 % | 1 | 0 % | 460 | 91 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 66 | 99 % | 67 |
| Roma | 3 | 5 % | 0 | 0 % | 2 | 3 % | 48 | 92 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 | 100 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 41 | 6 % | 9 | 1 % | 4 | 1 % | 592 | 92 % | 643 |

3.1.3 Bilingual documents (questions 32–50)

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., if so requested, the municipalities listed in Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. are required to provide citizens with the official forms issued under their authority in a bilingual format. However, municipalities are able to fulfil this obligation only if such forms are available to them. The results of the current survey indicate that 135 (21 %) municipalities provided all forms in a bilingual format (two years ago, it was 94 municipalities – 16 %) and 172 (26 %) municipalities provided some of the forms in a bilingual format (two years ago, 121 municipalities – 20 %). This suggests that the number of municipalities to which bilingual forms are available has increased for all national minorities. In 2014, such forms were provided by a total of 237 (44 %) municipalities. Bilingual forms are available, in particular, in areas such as the registrar's offices, population records, construction, local taxes and fees, the environment and social affairs. Part of the municipalities also provided bilingual forms in the context of elections.

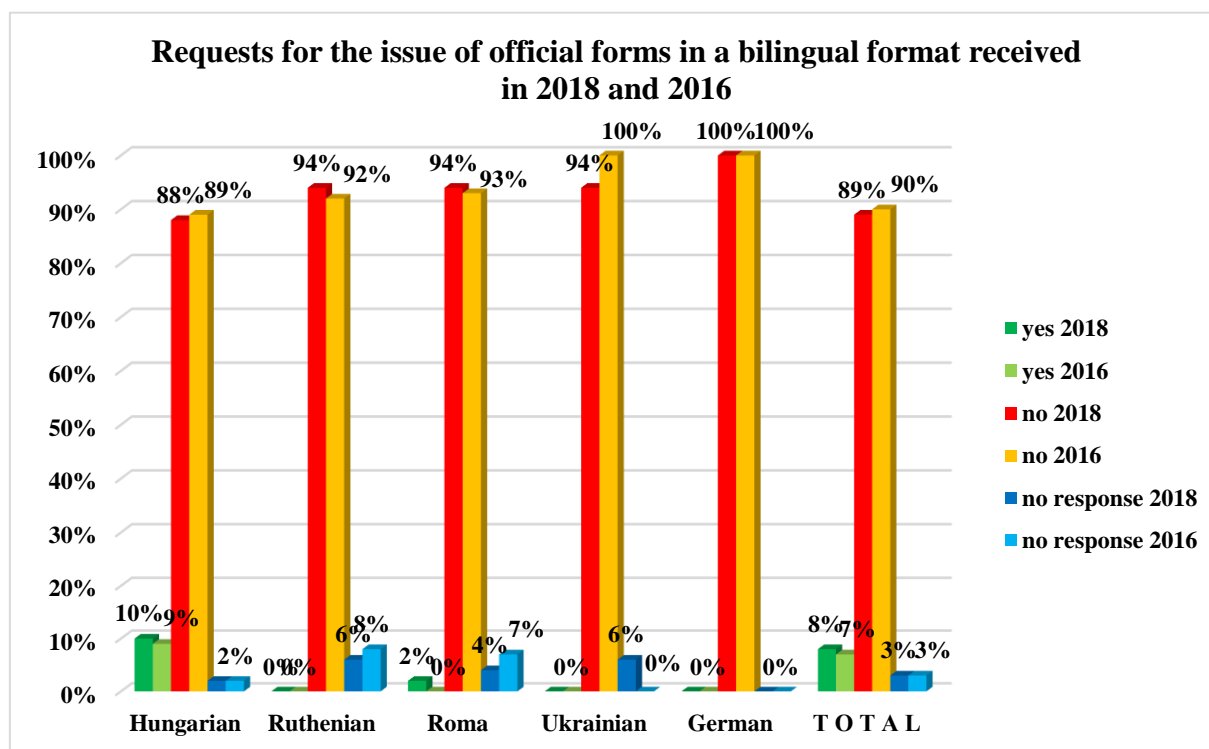
Table 25: Availability of official forms issued under the municipality's authority in a bilingual format [§ 2(7) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 124 | 24 % | 145 | 29 % | 222 | 44 % | 15 | 3 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 4 | 6 % | 20 | 30 % | 42 | 63 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 5 | 9 % | 4 | 8 % | 42 | 81 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 3 | 18 % | 13 | 76 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 135 | 21 % | 172 | 26 % | 319 | 50 % | 17 | 3 % | 643 |

In this context, it is important to mention that 52 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one municipality with a Roma minority population received requests for the issue of official forms in a bilingual format, however, only 47 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population fulfilled the obligation to issue such forms.

Table 26: Requests for the issue of official forms in a bilingual format, in both the state language and the minority language

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|-----------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 52 | 10 % | 442 | 88 % | 12 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 63 | 94 % | 4 | 6 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 49 | 94 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 16 | 94 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 53 | 8 % | 571 | 89 % | 19 | 3 % | 643 |



Requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were received by 63 (12 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (two years ago, it was 42 municipalities – 7 %). The number of municipalities whose residents filed such requests increased, however, the number of the requests has decreased. 583 such requests were filed in the period under review (699 requests two years ago), of which 349 were requests for various certificates, 186 were requests for statements, 32 were permit requests and 16 were requests for an opinion.

Bilingual public instruments were issued to residents in 55 (9 %) municipalities in the period under review (two years ago, it was 33 municipalities – 5 %) and 506 responses to such requests were drawn up (639 two years ago), of which 345 were responses to requests for certificates, 100 were responses to requests for statements, 16 were responses to requests for an opinion and 45 were responses to permit requests. No requests for the issue of bilingual permits, licences, certificates, opinions or statements were received by municipalities with Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma and German minority populations.

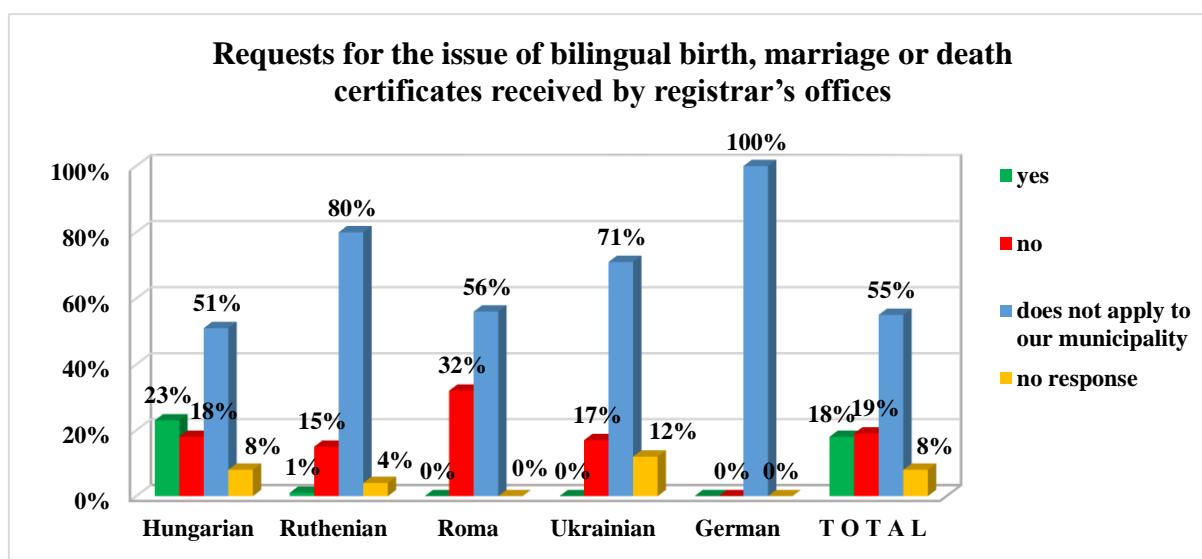
Table 27: Requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) received [§ 2(5) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 63 | 12 % | 429 | 85 % | 14 | 3 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 64 | 96 % | 3 | 4 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 50 | 96 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 63 | 10 % | 561 | 87 % | 19 | 3 % | 643 |

Requests for the issue of bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates were received by 117 (19 %) municipalities (113 municipalities two years ago), 116 of which were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one was a municipality with a Roma minority population. These bilingual documents were issued by 110 municipalities, including the one with a Ruthenian minority. Municipalities with a Hungarian minority population issued 1 114 birth certificates (1 337 two years ago), 543 marriage certificates (527 two years ago) and 426 death certificates (360 two years ago) in a bilingual format in the period under review. The municipality with a Ruthenian minority population issued 3 birth certificates and one marriage certificate in a bilingual format. Municipalities with Roma, Ukrainian and German minority populations did not receive any requests for the issue of bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates.

Table 28: Requests for the issue of bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates received [§ 2(5) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 116 | 23 % | 91 | 18 % | 256 | 51 % | 43 | 8 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 1 | 1 % | 10 | 15 % | 53 | 80 % | 3 | 4 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 32 % | 29 | 56 % | 6 | 12 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 3 | 17 % | 12 | 71 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 117 | 18 % | 121 | 19 % | 351 | 55 % | 54 | 8 % | 643 |



Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., if administrative proceedings have been initiated by a submission in the minority language or if so requested, decisions of public authorities in the proceedings are issued with a counterpart in the minority language in addition to the state language. In the period under review, 6 municipalities received 10 submissions in a national minority language initiating administrative proceedings (two years ago, it was 7 municipalities with 308 submissions). All of these were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population. Municipalities with Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma or German minority populations did not receive any submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings.

Table 29: Submission initiating administrative proceedings received in a national minority language [§ 2(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 6 | 1 % | 493 | 97 % | 7 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 65 | 97 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 52 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 16 | 94 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 1 % | 627 | 97 % | 10 | 2 % | 643 |

Requests for the issue of bilingual decisions were received by 7 municipalities (5 municipalities two years ago). 12 such requests were received during the period under review (310 requests two years ago). Municipalities with Ukrainian, Roma or German minority populations did not receive any requests for the issue of bilingual decisions.

Table 30: Requests for the issue of bilingual decisions received [§ 2(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 7 | 1 % | 449 | 89 % | 50 | 10 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 62 | 93 % | 5 | 7 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 52 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 7 | 1 % | 581 | 90 % | 55 | 9 % | 643 |

5 543 decisions were issued in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language by 11 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (two years ago, 3 municipalities issued 10 784 decisions). These decisions concerned local taxes and fees. Bilingual decisions were not issued by 3 municipalities which received requests for the issue of bilingual decisions and by 4 municipalities which received submissions initiating administrative proceedings in a minority language. 6 municipalities issued bilingual decisions even though they were not requested to issue bilingual decisions and did not receive submissions initiating administrative proceedings in a national minority language. In municipalities with Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma or German minority populations, no decisions in administrative proceedings were issued with counterparts in the minority language.

Table 31: Decisions in administrative proceedings issued with counterparts in a minority language [§ 2(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 11 | 2 % | 464 | 92 % | 31 | 6 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 62 | 93 % | 5 | 7 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 50 | 96 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 15 | 88 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 11 | 2 % | 592 | 92 % | 40 | 6 % | 643 |

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., the name of the municipality is to be indicated in the minority language along with the name of the municipality in the state language in decisions issued in a minority language. This obligation does not apply to municipalities whose name in the national minority language is identical to that in the state language, i.e. the municipalities with a Roma national minority and 9 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population; nevertheless, none of these municipalities received requests initiating administrative proceedings in a national minority language. This obligation was fulfilled by 37 municipalities with a Hungarian (32 municipalities two years ago), 3 municipalities with a Ruthenian (4 municipalities two years ago) and one municipality with a German minority population and partially fulfilled by 6 municipalities with a Hungarian (the same number as two years ago), one municipality with a Ruthenian and one municipality with a Ukrainian minority population.

Table 32: Name of the municipality indicated in the minority language along with the name in the state language in decisions issued in the minority language [§ 4(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | par- tia- lly | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|---------------------|---------|-----|---------|--|---------|----------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 37 | 7 % | 6 | 1 % | 100 | 20 % | 245 | 49 % | 118 | 23 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 3 | 5 % | 1 | 1 % | 21 | 32 % | 29 | 43 % | 13 | 19 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 18 | 35 % | 27 | 52 % | 7 | 13 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 6 % | 3 | 18 % | 8 | 47 % | 5 | 29 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 41 | 7 % | 8 | 1 % | 142 | 22 % | 309 | 48 % | 143 | 22 % | 643 |

3.1.4 Sessions of local self-government bodies (questions 51–55)

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., members of municipal councils have the right to use minority languages in municipal council sessions. The results of the present survey showed that the number of municipalities in which members of municipal councils used minority languages in municipal council sessions increased both overall and for each national minority: there were 339 such municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (311 municipalities two years ago), 39 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (34 municipalities two years ago), 6 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population (3 municipalities two years ago) and 3 municipalities with a Roma minority population (one municipality two years ago). In 122 (19 %) municipalities, council members used the

state language and partially the minority language (two years ago, it was 124 municipalities – 21 %).

Table 33: Minority languages used by council members at municipal council sessions [§ 3(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 339 | 67 % | 97 | 19 % | 62 | 12 % | 8 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 39 | 58 % | 18 | 27 % | 9 | 14 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 3 | 6 % | 3 | 6 % | 45 | 86 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 6 | 35 % | 4 | 24 % | 7 | 41 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 387 | 60 % | 122 | 19 % | 124 | 19 % | 10 | 2 % | 643 |

The survey results also showed that the number of municipalities in which mayors used minority languages in municipal council sessions also increased both overall and for each national minority: there were 343 such municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (306 municipalities two years ago), 37 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (33 municipalities two years ago), 5 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population (3 municipalities two years ago) and 3 municipalities with a Roma minority population (one municipality two years ago). 106 (16 %) municipalities used the state language and partially the minority language (two years ago, 115 municipalities – 19 %).

Table 34: Minority languages used by mayors at municipal council sessions [§ 3(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 343 | 68 % | 84 | 17 % | 72 | 14 % | 7 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 37 | 55 % | 16 | 24 % | 13 | 20 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 3 | 6 % | 2 | 4 % | 46 | 88 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 5 | 29 % | 4 | 24 % | 8 | 47 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 388 | 61 % | 106 | 16 % | 140 | 22 % | 9 | 1 % | 643 |

Sessions of municipal councils may also be held in a minority language, if consent is given by all persons present. The survey results revealed that, both overall and for each national minority, the number of municipalities in which sessions were held in a minority language increased, as did the number of municipalities where the members of municipal councils held sessions bilingually. In 127 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (99 municipalities two years ago), 15 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (13 municipalities two years ago) and 3 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population (2 municipalities two years ago), sessions were held in the minority language. In 246 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (also 246 municipalities two years ago), 37 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (36 municipalities two years ago), 6 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population (3 municipalities two years ago) and 4 municipalities with a Roma minority population (one municipality two years ago), sessions were held in both the state language and the national minority language.

The municipality with a German minority population did not use German at council sessions and the session were held in the state language.

Table 35: Language of the proceedings at municipal councils [(§ 3(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.)]

| | state language | % share | minority language | % share | both the state language and the minority language | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------|---------|---|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 127 | 25 % | 127 | 25 % | 246 | 49 % | 6 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 14 | 21 % | 15 | 22 % | 37 | 56 % | 1 | 1 % | 67 |
| Roma | 42 | 80 % | 0 | 0 % | 4 | 8 % | 6 | 12 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 8 | 47 % | 3 | 18 % | 6 | 35 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 192 | 29 % | 145 | 23 % | 293 | 46 % | 13 | 2 % | 643 |

Closely related to this is the question of the language, in which supporting documents for municipal council sessions are prepared. In 40 municipalities (6 %), these documents were also prepared in the national minority language (27 municipalities two years ago); of these 38 were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (26 municipalities two years ago) and two were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (one municipality two years ago). In 151 municipalities (23 %), these documents were partially prepared in the national minority language (108 municipalities two years ago); of these 147 were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (104 municipalities two years ago) and 4 were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (also 4 municipalities two years ago). No supporting documents were prepared for municipal council sessions in Romani, Ukrainian or German.

Table 36: Supporting documents for municipal council sessions prepared in the minority language [(§ 3(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.)]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 38 | 7 % | 147 | 29 % | 313 | 62 % | 8 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 2 | 3 % | 4 | 6 % | 59 | 88 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 40 | 6 % | 151 | 23 % | 441 | 69 % | 11 | 2 % | 643 |

According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., persons participating in municipal council sessions may use a minority language if consent is given by all members of the municipal council present and by the mayor of the municipality; interpreting is to be provided for by the municipality. According to the survey results, 17 (3 %) municipalities provided for interpreting by means of interpreting services (27 municipalities two years ago) and 363 (72 %) municipalities used another method (345 municipalities two years ago): 31 municipalities mostly used the staff of the municipal office (44 municipalities two years ago), 24 municipalities used the assistance of the mayor or a council member who provided interpretation (29 municipalities two years ago) and in 10 municipalities interpretation was provided by a municipal employee, the mayor or a council member. 226 (35 %)

municipalities reported that council members, the mayor and the participants had a command of the minority language (183 municipalities two years ago), 48 municipalities used both languages and 29 municipalities provided for interpretation themselves (5 municipalities two years ago). In 7 municipalities, no interpretation was provided at all (8 municipalities two years ago), 16 municipalities reported that this was not necessary as this was not requested and 7 municipalities used the state language only. One municipality reported that there was no need to ensure interpretation because the Roma population had a command of the language of the Hungarian national minority. In one municipality with a Hungarian national minority, this question is the subject of a vote by the council members. Two municipalities responded that this issue did not apply to them.

Table 37: Method of providing for the possibility of using minority languages in municipal council sessions [§ 3(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | by means of interpreting services | % share | by other means | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 17 | 3 % | 363 | 72 % | 126 | 25 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 2 | 3 % | 43 | 64 % | 22 | 33 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 24 | 46 % | 28 | 54 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 2 | 12 % | 13 | 76 % | 2 | 12 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 22 | 3 % | 443 | 69 % | 178 | 28 % | 643 |

3.1.5 Provision of information to the public (questions 56–65)

Requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language were received by 6 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (5 municipalities two years ago). 32 requests were received during the period under review (12 requests two years ago). Only two municipalities provided information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language; one municipality did so partially. Municipalities with Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma or German minority populations did not receive any requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language.

Table 38: Requests for the provisions of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language received in the period under review [§ 4(8) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 6 | 1 % | 492 | 97 % | 8 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 65 | 97 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 1 % | 626 | 97 % | 11 | 2 % | 643 |

Table 39: Provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language [§ 4(8) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 2 | 0 % | 1 | 0 % | 1 | 0 % | 2 | 0 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 0 % | 1 | 0 % | 1 | 0 % | 2 | 0 % | 643 |

Municipal legislation of general application was issued and published in both the state language and the minority language in 14 (3 %) municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (6 municipalities two years ago) and in the municipality with a German minority population (not provided two years ago). In 48 municipalities (8 %), this legislation was issued in the state language and partially in the national minority language (28 municipalities two years ago); 45 of these were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (26 municipalities two years ago) and 3 were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (two municipalities two years ago). No municipalities with Ukrainian, Roma or German minority populations issued or published legislation of general application in minority languages.

Table 40: Legislation of general application issued and published in minority languages [§ 4(8) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 14 | 3 % | 45 | 9 % | 441 | 87 % | 6 | 1 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 0 | 0 % | 3 | 4 % | 62 | 92 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 51 | 98 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 15 | 2 % | 48 | 8 % | 571 | 89 % | 9 | 1 % | 643 |

Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic was displayed in the minority language along with the state language in publicly accessible areas administered by the municipality in 185 (29 %) municipalities, 179 of which were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 4 were municipalities with a Ruthenian national minority and one was a municipality with a Ukrainian and one with a German minority population. This information was made available in the state language and partially in the minority language in 162 (25 %) municipalities; 155 of these were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 6 were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population and one was a municipality with a Roma minority population. Two years ago, the report only examined the provision of this information in buildings serving as the seat of the mayor and municipal council.

Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic displayed in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the municipality

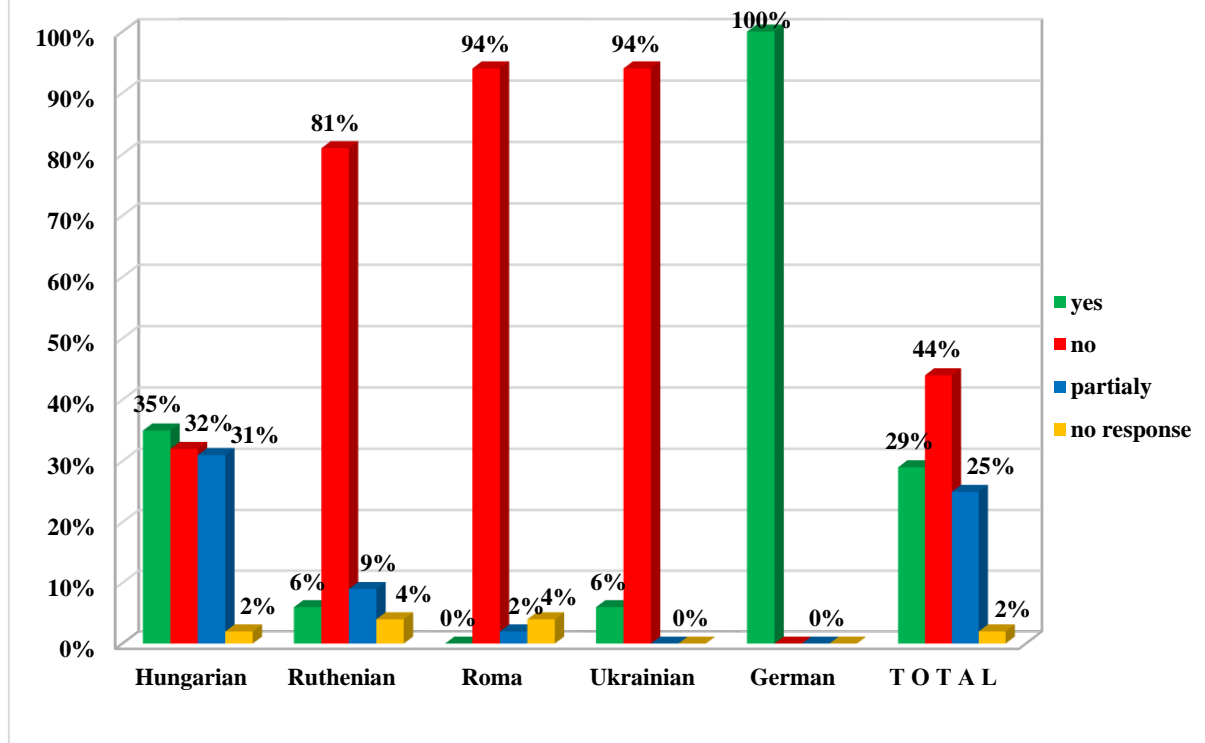


Table 41: Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of Slovak citizens displayed in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the municipality [§ 4(6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----|---------|-----------|---------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Hungarian | 179 | 35 % | 155 | 31 % | 161 | 32 % | 11 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 4 | 6 % | 6 | 9 % | 54 | 81 % | 3 | 4 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 2 % | 49 | 94 % | 2 | 4 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 16 | 94 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 185 | 29 % | 162 | 25 % | 280 | 44 % | 16 | 2 % | 643 |

Public information signs and notices (especially in stores, at sports facilities, in restaurants, on streets, next to and above roads, in airports, and at bus and railways stations) administered by municipalities were provided in the national minority language in 173 municipalities (27 %), namely in 169 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, two municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population and one municipality with a Ukrainian and German minority population each. These signs and notices were provided in 200 municipalities, namely in 195 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 4 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population and one municipality with a Roma minority population. Two years ago, the report only examined the provision of this information in buildings serving as the seat of the mayor and municipal council.

Table 42: Public information signs and notices (especially in stores, at sports facilities, in restaurants, on streets, next to and above roads, in airports, and at bus and railways stations) administered by municipalities provided in the national minority language [§ 4(6) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 169 | 33 % | 195 | 39 % | 125 | 25 % | 17 | 3 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 2 | 3 % | 4 | 6 % | 57 | 85 % | 4 | 6 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 2 % | 50 | 96 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 0 | 0 % | 16 | 94 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 173 | 27 % | 200 | 31 % | 248 | 39 % | 22 | 3 % | 643 |

The possibility to inform the public in a minority language using the municipal PA system or other technical means was used by 487 municipalities (75 %), namely 456 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 27 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, 3 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population and one municipality with a Roma minority population. 36 (6 %) municipalities used this possibility partially, namely 21 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 13 municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population and 32 municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population. German was not used for this purpose in the municipality with a German minority population.

Table 43: Announcements intended to inform the public provided using the municipal PA system or other technical means in a minority language [§ 5a(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 456 | 90 % | 21 | 4 % | 19 | 4 % | 10 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 27 | 41 % | 13 | 19 % | 25 | 37 % | 2 | 3 % | 67 |
| Roma | 1 | 2 % | 0 | 0 % | 50 | 96 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 3 | 18 % | 2 | 12 % | 12 | 70 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| T O T A L | 487 | 75 % | 36 | 6 % | 107 | 17 % | 13 | 2 % | 643 |

In response to the question how the announcements intended to inform the public were made in minority languages, 481 (75 %) municipalities reported that they used the municipal PA system (445 municipalities two years ago), 438 (68 %) municipalities reported that they used their public announcements board (334 municipalities two years ago), 282 (44 %) used the municipality's website (221 municipalities two years ago), 86 (13 %) used periodicals (89 municipalities two years ago), 23 (4 %) reported that they used the municipal television (30 municipalities two years ago), 17 (3 %) used information boards (8 municipalities two years ago), 7 (1 %) municipalities used social networks (the same number as two years ago), 3 municipalities used SMS, two municipalities used internet portals, two used mobile phone apps and one municipality used a regional magazine. 18 (3 %) municipalities reported that they used the state language when providing information to the public (17 municipalities two years ago).

According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., essential information published by municipalities on their public announcements boards, websites or in periodicals should be provided in the minority language along with the state language. This obligation was fulfilled by 92 (14 %) municipalities (150 municipalities two years ago), namely 88 municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (88 two years ago), two municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population and one municipality with a Ukrainian and German minority population each. This information was made available in the state language and partially in the minority language by 240 (37 %) municipalities, of which 222 were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (174 municipalities two years ago), 13 were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (8 municipalities two years ago), 3 were municipalities with a Roma minority population and two were municipalities with a Ukrainian minority population. The decrease in the number of municipalities that provided essential information fully in the minority language may be related to the fact that the questionnaire specified precisely which information is relevant from the standpoint of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Table 44: Provision of essential information in the minority language on municipal public announcements boards, municipal websites and in periodicals [§ 5a(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|-----------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 88 | 17 % | 222 | 44 % | 183 | 36 % | 13 | 3 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 2 | 3 % | 13 | 19 % | 49 | 73 % | 3 | 5 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 3 | 6 % | 48 | 92 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 6 % | 2 | 12 % | 14 | 82 % | 0 | 0 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 92 | 14 % | 240 | 37 % | 295 | 46 % | 17 | 3 % | 643 |

The possibility for inscriptions on monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques owned by the municipality to be displayed in the minority language along with the state language was used by 267 (42 %) municipalities (230 municipalities two years ago). In 111 (14 %) municipalities, these inscriptions were provided in the state language and partially in the minority language (83 municipalities two years ago). Two municipalities with a Hungarian minority population reported that these inscriptions were only in the minority language. 152 municipalities responded that this question did not apply to them.

Table 45: Minority language used on monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques [§ 4(7) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.]

| | yes | % share | partial | % share | no | % share | does not apply to our municipality | % share | no response | % share | total |
|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Hungarian | 252 | 50 % | 99 | 20 % | 35 | 7 % | 109 | 21 % | 11 | 2 % | 506 |
| Ruthenian | 11 | 16 % | 10 | 15 % | 26 | 39 % | 16 | 24 % | 4 | 6 % | 67 |
| Roma | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 27 | 52 % | 24 | 46 % | 1 | 2 % | 52 |
| Ukrainian | 3 | 17 % | 2 | 12 % | 8 | 47 % | 3 | 18 % | 1 | 6 % | 17 |
| German | 1 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 1 |
| TOTAL | 267 | 41 % | 111 | 17 % | 96 | 15 % | 152 | 24 % | 17 | 3 % | 643 |

3.1.6 Final questions (questions 66–71)

386 (60 %) municipalities (401 municipalities two years ago) found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact problem-free, 167 (26 %) municipalities found it partially problematic (120 municipalities two years ago) and 71 (11 %) municipalities found it problematic (42 municipalities two years ago). As regards the reasons why they found it problematic, 128 municipalities reported a lack of funding (81 municipalities two years ago), 101 municipalities reported a lack of technical support (60 municipalities two years ago), 92 municipalities indicated a lack of qualified staff (66 municipalities two years ago), 5 municipalities reported a lack of time, 3 municipalities reported a lack of staff, two municipalities identified the complexity of specialised translations of official documents as a problem, one municipality reported a lack of knowledge of the technical terminology in the minority language (5 municipalities two years ago) and one municipality complained about a lack of bilingual forms (the same number as two years ago). 4 municipalities reported that their residents had only a spoken command of the minority language, 3 municipalities reported that their residents did not know the Cyrillic script and 3 municipalities stated a lack of knowledge of the standardised form of the minority language as the reason for problems. One municipality with a Ukrainian minority population reported that Ruthenian was used for communication, one municipality with a Roma minority population reported that the residents communicated in the state language in official contact and one municipality with a Roma minority population reported that the residents belonging to the Roma minority used Hungarian and Slovak. Two municipalities²⁸ stated in the survey that conditions for using the minority language in official contact did not need to be created (9 municipalities two years ago) and 8 municipalities²⁹ responded that the residents were not interested. 13 municipalities³⁰ reported that the residents did not have a command of the minority language.

Complaints concerning breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. were received by 23 municipalities (19 municipalities two years ago), 16 of which were municipalities with a Hungarian minority population (5 municipalities two years ago), 5 were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (13 municipalities two years ago) and two were municipalities with a Roma minority population. Each of these municipalities received one complaint and two municipalities did not indicate the number of complaints. 5 municipalities stated that the subject of the complaint was the Report on the Use of National Minority Languages in Slovakia for the period 2015–2016. In 5 municipalities, the subject of the complaints was the fact that the name of the municipality in the minority language was not indicated on traffic signs, in 4 municipalities, it was the absence of a sign in the minority language on the municipal office building and in two municipalities the complaints related to deficiencies on

²⁸ These were: Arnutovce and Ostrovany (Roma national minority).

²⁹ These were: Ďurkov, Chmiňany (Roma national minority), Medzilaborce (Ruthenian national minority), Parihuzovce (Ukrainian national minority), Nové Hony, Dubník, Biskupice and Čakanovce (Hungarian national minority).

³⁰ These were: Žbince, Kačanov, Hlinné, Svinia, Malý Slivník, Toporec, Zborov, Dulovo (Roma national minority), Havranec (Ruthenian national minority), Chmeľová, Mikulášová, Prituľany, Nižný Mirošov (Ukrainian national minority).

the municipality's website. Complaints also concerned information on public announcements boards, information for passengers at bus stations, information provided on a notice regarding the risk of injury and danger on a construction site, failure to provide information relating to threats to life, failure to provide the essential information on the public announcements board and failures to issue documents or certain official forms that were requested. One municipality received a complaint because information was not made available in the state language on the municipality's website. In 10 cases, the municipalities eliminated the deficiencies; in 3 cases the deficiencies were eliminated partially; in one case, the municipality accepted the complaint and one complaint was forwarded to another authority. In two cases, it was demonstrated that the complaints were unjustified.

Conclusions – comparison of the survey results for 2018 and 2016

Areas where both the original absolute figures and percentages increased or remained unchanged:

- return rate (it remained 100 % for the German national minority),
- name of the municipality in the minority language displayed below the name in the state language on railway or bus station name signs (it remained 0 % for the Ukrainian and German minorities),
- written responses provided to written submissions in the minority language (it remained 0 for the Roma, Ukrainian and German minorities),
- municipal chronicles kept in the minority language (it remained 0 for the German minority),
- minority languages used by the municipal police in duty-related contact (it remained 0 for the Ukrainian and German minorities),
- consent given by the persons present to the use of minority languages by the municipal police in duty-related contact (it remained 0 for the Ukrainian and German minorities),
- requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments received by municipalities (increased only for the Hungarian minority; it remained 0 for the other minorities),
- bilingual public instruments issued by municipalities (increased only for the Hungarian minority; it remained 0 for the other minorities),
- decisions in administrative proceedings issued with counterparts in a minority language (increased only for the Hungarian minority; it remained 0 for the other minorities),
- supporting documents for municipal council sessions prepared in the minority language (increased only for the Hungarian and Ruthenian minorities),
- requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language, along with the state language, received by municipalities (increased only for the Hungarian minority; it remained 0 for the other minorities),
- legislation of general application issued and published in minority languages (it remained 0 for the Roma and Ukrainian minorities),
- information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic provided in the minority language.

Areas where the original absolute figures increased or remained unchanged and the percentages changed due to a higher questionnaire return rate:

- name of the municipality in the minority language indicated on municipality entry/exit signs (the percentage for the Ruthenian minority decreased),
- name of the public authority displayed on buildings in the minority language (the percentage for the Ruthenian minority decreased and remained 100 % for the German minority),
- name of the municipality in the minority language displayed along with the name in the state language on the buildings of public authorities (the percentage for the Ruthenian minority decreased and remained 100 % for the German minority),
- local place-names in the minority language (the percentage for the Ruthenian minority decreased and remained 0 for the Roma and German minorities),
- information about the possibilities for using the minority language orally and in writing in official contact made available at a visible place (the percentage for the Roma minority decreased, the number remained unchanged),
- availability of official forms issued under the municipality's authority in a bilingual format (the number for the Roma minority remained unchanged, but the percentage decreased),
- written submissions received from citizens in a minority language (it remained 0 for the Roma and German minorities; for the Hungarian minority , the number increased but the percentage remained unchanged),
- minority language used by council members at municipal council sessions (the percentage for the Ukrainian minority decreased and remained 0 for the German minority),
- minority language used by mayors at municipal council sessions (the percentage for the Ukrainian minority decreased and remained 0 for the German minority),
- minority language used at municipal council sessions as the language of proceedings (the percentage share for the Ukrainian minority decreased and remained 0 for the Roma and German minority),
- minority language used on monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques (the percentage remained unchanged for the Ruthenian minority and decreased for the Ukrainian minority).

Areas where the original absolute figures changed or remained unchanged and the percentages also changed due to a higher questionnaire return rate:

- street-name signs in the minority language (both the number and the percentage increased for the Hungarian minority; for the Ruthenian minority both the number and the percentage decreased; the number remained 0 for the Roma, Ukrainian and German minorities),
- a time slot reserved for handling administrative affairs in the minority language (both the number and the percentage decreased for the Roma minority and dropped to 0),
- minority language used in official records of the municipal office (overall, the number and the percentage decreased; the number of municipalities where it was partially used

- increased for both the Hungarian and Ukrainian minorities, decreased for the Ruthenian minority and remained 0 for the Roma and German minorities),
- requests for the issue of bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates received (the number increased for the Hungarian and Ruthenian minorities; the percentage for the Hungarian minority remained unchanged and decreased for the Roma minority; the number remained 0 for the Ukrainian and German minorities),
 - both the minority language and the state language used at municipal council sessions as the language of proceedings (both the number and the percentage increased for the Roma minority; for the Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities, the number increased but the percentage decreased; for the Hungarian minority, the number remained unchanged but the percentage decreased, and the number remained 0 for the German minority),
 - essential information provided in the minority language on the municipality's public announcements boards, municipal website or in periodicals (for the Hungarian minority, both the number and the percentage decreased; for the other minorities, both the number and the percentage increased),
 - proportion of staff with at least a spoken command of the minority language; the same applies to staff who have both a spoken and written command of the minority language (for the Roma minority, both the number and the percentage increased; the percentage remained 0 % for the German minority; for the Hungarian and Ukrainian minority, the number increased, but the percentage decreased; for the Ruthenian minority, both the number and the percentage decreased),
 - number and share of municipal police officers who have at least a spoken command of the minority language (both the number and the percentage decreased for the Hungarian minority; for the Ruthenian and Roma minorities, both the number and the percentage increased; the number remained 0 for the Ukrainian and German minorities),
 - number and proportion of municipal police officers who have both a spoken and written command of the minority language (for the Hungarian minority, the number decreased, but the percentage remained unchanged; the number increased for the Roma minority and remained 0 for the Ruthenian, Ukrainian and German minorities),
 - minority language used by municipal police officers who have a command of the minority language when communicating with citizens belonging to the national minority (the number decreased for the Hungarian minority; it increased for the Ruthenian and Roma minorities and remained 0 for the Ukrainian and German minorities; partial use of the minority language increased for the Hungarian minority),
 - requests for the issue of bilingual decisions received (the number increased for the Hungarian minority and decreased for the Ruthenian minority; no requests were submitted by the other minorities),
 - name of the municipality indicated in the minority language, along with the name in the state language, in decisions issued in the minority language (for the German minority, both the number and the percentage increased; for the Hungarian minority, the number increased but the percentage remained unchanged; it decreased for the Ruthenian minority; for the Ukrainian minority, partial used of the minority language increased; for the Ukrainian minority, the number remained 0),

- number of municipalities that do not create conditions for using national minority languages (the number increased only for the Ukrainian minority; for the German minority, the situation remained unchanged),
- complaints for breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages received (the number increased for the Hungarian and Roma minorities; it decreased for the Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities and remained 0 for the German minority).

Areas where the original absolute figures decreased or remained unchanged and percentages decreased:

- the number of requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements),
- receipt of submissions initiating administrative proceedings in a national minority language (such submissions were only filed by the Hungarian minority),
- provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language (only for the Hungarian minority, it remained 0 for the other minorities).

3.2 Legal entities established by local self-government

Within the meaning of No 184/1999 Coll., in the municipalities defined by law, citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority also have the right to communicate orally and in writing in the minority language with legal entities established by local self-government. This aspect of the use of national minority languages was mapped out for the first time in the Report for the 2015–2016 period. Given the fact that there is no settled list of such legal entities, the Office of the Plenipotentiary approached all of the relevant municipalities and the 6 self-governing regions (the Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Banská Bystrica, Košice and Prešov regions) where these municipalities are located with a request for cooperation in the collection of data relating to these entities. A total of 70 municipalities sent back completed questionnaires for legal entities established by local self-government authorities; the Nitra self-governing region sent back questionnaires on behalf of 117 legal entities established by municipalities and 20 legal entities established by a self-governing region. According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., the aforementioned right does not apply to areas governed by special legislation, i.e. pre-school education, primary schools, secondary schools and culture. Of the above number, data for 55 relevant legal entities established by municipalities and 10 legal entities established by self-governing regions operating in social services, property management, technical services, healthcare, tourism, recreation and sports, housing administration, public benefit and community work, telecommunications and vocational training, were processed. 39 municipalities also sent information about 62 legal entities operating in the fields of pre-school education, primary schools, secondary schools and culture; these, however, due to the reasons referred to above, were not a subject of this analysis. Compared with the results from the preceding survey conducted in 2016, in which data for 41 relevant legal entities were processed, the current survey provides data for a total of 65 such legal entities.

This part of the survey examined 7 thematic areas related to the use of national minority languages under the competence of local self-government authorities based on Act No 184/1999 Coll. The respondents received a total of 55 questions in the following order: signs in minority languages (questions 1–6), official contact (questions 7–19), bilingual documents (questions 20–35), sessions of the bodies of the legal entities (questions 36–39), provision of information to the public (questions 40–46), public communication (questions 47–49) and final questions (questions 50–55). The questionnaire is provided in Annex 2.

3.2.1 Legal entities established by municipalities

Completed questionnaires were received from 31 municipalities (of which 30 were municipalities with a Hungarian and one was a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) containing information about 55 relevant legal entities established by municipalities. These comprised: 22 social service facilities, 9 property management entities, 8 technical services entities, 6 tourism entities, two housing administration entities, one public benefit and municipal utility entity, one telecommunications and vocational training entity, one entity operating in the field of sports and 5 leisure centres. For the sake of keeping the text concise, wherever this part of the report refers to a legal entity established by

a municipality, it means a legal entity in a municipality with a Hungarian minority population and, in one case, the necessary reference is made to the legal entity in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

Of the total of 55 legal entities, 41 (75 %) respondents reported that the name of the legal entity established by a municipality was displayed in the minority language. 8 (15 %) respondents indicated a name in the minority language, which was identical to that in the state language and some respondents provided a foreign-language name, for example in English. In 18 (33 %) cases, the name of the legal entity established by a municipality was displayed on buildings in the state language and in the minority language and in 35 (64 %) cases only in the state language. In one case, the respondent specified both options. In 33 (60 %) cases, the name of the legal entity established by a municipality in the minority language was displayed using the same font size and in 5 (9 %) cases a smaller font size was used. 16 respondents did not reply. In 30 (55 %) cases, the name of the municipality in the minority language was displayed on the building of the legal entity established by a municipality along with the name in the state language. In two (4 %) cases, the name was partially also displayed in the minority language. In 22 cases, the name of the municipality in the minority language was not displayed.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

548 (26 %) employees of legal entities established by municipalities (of the total of 2 146 employees) had a spoken command and 1 425 (66 %) had both a spoken and written command of the minority language. In total, 1 973 employees had at a least a spoken command of the national minority language. In one case, the response was not provided on the grounds of the protection of personal data. 52 (95 %) legal entities established by municipalities provided for the use of the minority language in official contact by means of their staff communicating in the minority language, one legal entity established by a municipality used interpreting and translation services.

23 (42 %) legal entities established by municipalities displayed at a visible place the information about the possibility of using a minority language; in 4 (8 %) cases, the information was provided in the state language, in 5 (91 %) cases, the information was provided in the minority language and in 14 (25 %) cases, the information was provided in both the state language and the minority language. 28 (51 %) legal entities established by municipalities did not provide this information. In 14 (25 %) cases, the information was made available on an information board, in 3 (5 %) cases on a public announcements board, in 4 (7 %) cases, it was provided in another manner (on the entrance door or the organisation's website) and in two (4 %) cases, a combination of the above methods was used.

5 (9 %) legal entities established by municipalities received 15 written submissions from citizens in a minority language in the period under review. These submissions included requests, complaints, commendations and opinions relating to cultural events organised by the

legal entities. Two (4 %) legal entities established by municipalities provided a response in the minority language along with the state language, one (2 %) provided a response in the state language and two did not provide a response in the minority language to the written submissions.

5 (9 %) legal entities established by municipalities partially used the national minority language along with the state language in official records, namely employee attendance records, internal minutes, notices, acts of general application and announcements for clients.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

In the period under review, 4 (7 %) legal entities established by municipalities provided all or some official forms in a bilingual format. Some of the forms related to applications to the municipal sports organisation, in other cases the legal entity did not provide any details. One (2 %) legal entity received a request for the issue of bilingual official forms in the period under review, which were issued on the basis of the request. One (2%) legal entity established by a municipality issued bilingual official forms even though it was not requested to do so. No legal entity established by a municipality received a request for the provision of bilingual public instruments, submissions initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language or requests for the issue of bilingual decisions. Similarly, no legal entity established by a municipality issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language.

Sessions of the bodies of the legal entities (questions 36–39)

The bodies of 19 (35 %) legal entities established by municipalities used the national minority language along with the state language at their sessions; 16 (29 %) used the state language and partially the minority language, including Ruthenian. Sessions were held in the state language and in the minority language by 26 (47 %) legal entities; 20 (36 %) legal entities held their sessions in the state language and 8 (15 %) legal entities used the minority language. The bodies of 10 (18 %) legal entities partially prepared the supporting documents for their sessions in the minority language and, in the case of two (4 %) legal entities, the documents were also prepared in the minority language. The bodies of 15 (27 %) legal entities endured the possibility to use the minority language at their sessions through the staff of the legal entity, in 9 (16 %) cases, every participant had a command of the minority language and 3 (5 %) legal entities established by municipalities provided for this possibility by means of interpreting services.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

One (2 %) legal entity established by a municipality received 3 requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language. On the basis of the request, this legal entity partially provided the information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language. Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in buildings serving as the seats of legal entities established by

municipalities was provided in the state language by 32 (58 %) such entities. 11 (20 %) legal entities established by municipalities displayed this information both in the state language and in the minority language and 10 (18 %) legal entities established by municipalities displayed this information partially in the minority language.

Public information signs and notices were also provided in the minority language by 30 (55 %) legal entities established by municipalities, including the legal entity established by a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population; 10 (18 %) legal entities partially provided this information in the minority language and 18 (33 %) legal entities established by municipalities did not provide public information signs and notices in the minority language. 26 (47%) legal entities established by municipalities provided these signs and notices on their websites, 17 (31 %) legal entities used their public announcements boards, 15 (27 %) legal entities used other means (e.g., in the case of the legal entity established by a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, using the municipal PA system, or on social networks, information signs, notice boards, in leaflets, brochures, etc.); 15 legal entities marked multiple answers. 12 (22 %) legal entities established by municipalities reported that they did not provide the information in the minority language anywhere.

Act No 211/2000 Coll. requires that legal entities that have been granted the authority to decide on the rights and obligations of natural persons or legal entities in the area of public administration make essential information³¹ as defined by special legislation also publicly available in the national minority languages in the relevant municipalities. This information was partially made publicly available by 13 (24 %) legal entities established by municipalities, 7 (13 %) legal entities made it available both in the state language and the minority language. 32 (58 %) legal entities established by municipalities did not make this information publicly available.

Public communication (questions 47–49)

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., in the relevant municipalities, citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority may use a minority language when communicating with the staff of healthcare facilities and social service facilities or facilities for social and legal protection of children and social guardianship and these facilities are required to make this possible as long as the conditions in the given facility so allow. 22 (40 %) facilities provided for the possibility of using the minority language by means of their staff communicating in the minority language, one (2 %) used interpreting and translations services and 32 (58%) used other means.

³¹ How the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information. § 5 of Act No 211/2000 Coll.

Final questions (questions 50–55)

45 (82 %) legal entities established by municipalities found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact to be problem-free, 8 (15 %) legal entities established by municipalities found it partially problematic and one legal entity established by a municipality reported it as problematic. A lack of qualified staff, a lack of funding, a lack of technical support, the complexity of specialised translations or a combination of these reasons were reported by the legal entities as the main reasons for the problems. Two legal entities (4 %) established by municipalities received 3 complaints concerning breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the period under review, which related to a directions board provided only in Slovak, Christmas wishes delivered to the facility published only in Slovak and a quote on a painting installed in a facility provided only in Slovak. The complaint related to the directions board lacking information in the national minority language was accepted and the shortcomings were eliminated; two complaints were assessed as unjustified.

3.2.2 Legal entities established by a self-governing region

The report maps out the 10 relevant legal entities established by the Nitra self-governing region in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 8 of which operate in the field of social services and two in the field of healthcare.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

The name of the legal entity established by the self-governing region in the minority language was provided by 7 (70 %) respondents. In the case of 6 legal entities, the name of the legal entity established by the self-governing region was displayed on buildings in the state language and, in 4 cases, it was displayed in both the state language and the minority language using the same font size.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

Of the total of 717 employees of the legal entities established by the self-governing region, 259 (36 %) had a spoken command of the minority language and 333 (46 %) had both a spoken and written command of the language; at the same time, every legal entity had at least one such employee and all legal entities established by the self-governing region ensured the use of the minority language in official contact by means of these employees. None of the relevant legal entities reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. No information about the possibility of using the minority language in their facility was provided by 5 (50 %) entities (1 facility did not respond to this question). 4 (40 %) legal entities provided this information in the minority language and 3 (30 %) also provided it in the state language, either on the public announcements board, the information board or a notice board. No legal entity established by the self-governing region received a written submission from citizens in a minority language. One of the 10 legal entities partially used the minority language in its official records.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

Two (20 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region partially used bilingual official forms (applications for admission to an emergency housing facility, questionnaires for recipients of social services), the remaining 8 (80 %) did not provide them. No legal entities established by the self-governing region received requests for the provision of bilingual public instruments, submissions initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language or requests for the issue of bilingual decisions. Consequently, no legal entities established by the self-governing region issued decisions in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language.

Sessions of the bodies of the legal entities (questions 36–39)

The bodies of two (20 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region used the national minority language along with the state language at their sessions; 3 (30 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region partially used the minority language in addition to the state language. Sessions of 3 (30 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region were held in the state language and in the minority language. 6 (60 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region held their sessions in the state language. Supporting documents for sessions of the bodies of the legal entities were not prepared in the minority language. In 6 (60 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region, the possibility to use the minority language was ensured through the staff of the legal entity, two (20 %) provided for this possibility in another manner and the remaining two did not respond to this question.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

None of the legal entities concerned received requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language. Two (20 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region displayed information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in buildings serving as their seats in both the state language and the minority language and one (10 %) legal entity partially provided this information in the minority language. 3 (30 %) legal entities established by self-governing regions reported that they provided general information for citizens in buildings serving as their seats partially in the state language and in the minority language; two legal entities reported that public information signs and notices were also provided in the minority language and a further two partially used the minority language, either on information boards or notice boards.

Public communication (questions 47–49)

The legal entities established by the self-governing region provided for the possibility of using the minority language by means of their staff.

Final questions (questions 50–55)

8 (80 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact to be problem-free and 2 (20 %) legal entities established by the self-governing region found it partially problematic. One facility reported a lack of funding as the main reason for this situation; a lack of knowledge of technical language and terminology was reported by one facility. The legal entities established by the self-governing region received no complaints concerning breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

3.3 State administration

3.3.1 Status and scope of competence of selected state administration authorities in relation to Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Pursuant to Act No 184/1999 Coll., which lays down the obligations of public authorities with regard to the use of national minority languages in the municipalities defined by the Act, citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority have the right to communicate with public authorities orally and in writing in the minority language in the municipalities defined by the Act, including the submission of documents and evidence. The Act also lays down further details in this respect. Local state administration authorities are authorities exercising state administration under special legislation, other than central government authorities or state administration authorities with national competence. Under Act No 184/1999 Coll., the right of the citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority to use a minority language before local state administration authorities is not derived from the place where the relevant authority is seated, but from the place of communication. If the place of communication is a municipality included in the list provided in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority have the right, in accordance with Act No 184/1999 Coll., to use the minority language in written and oral communication and the local state administration authority, to which the communication is addressed, is also required to follow Act No 184/1999 Coll. It follows from the above that if an organisational unit of a local state administration authority is located in a municipality included in the list provided in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., it is considered to be a public authority according to Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Given the above, the Office of the Plenipotentiary, in collaboration with the MI SR, the Ministry of Finance, the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, the State Veterinary and Food Administration and the Public Health Authority, identified the state administration authorities and their organisational units, in which a minority language is used in official contact along with the state language. A total of 89 state administration authorities were approached, of which 85 were state administration authorities in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and 4 were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population (two district offices, one customs office and one labour office). These included 14 district offices, 27 labour, social affairs and family offices, 16 tax offices, 13 customs offices, 8 regional veterinary and food administrations, 6 regional public health authorities and 5 state archives. For the sake of keeping the text concise, wherever this part of the report refers to a state administration authority, it means a state administration authority in a municipality with a Hungarian minority population. In 4 cases (two district offices, one customs office and one labour office), a reference is made that the state administration authority is located in a municipality with a Ruthenian national minority.

When comparing the data with the past questionnaire surveys, this part of the report used the surveys from the reports for 2012 and 2016 for any questions where a comparison could be made. With a view to the fact that, due to the process of a creating a new structure of state administration authorities³² which was taking place at that time, the report from 2014 focused on the results of inspections on the use of minority languages conducted by the corruption prevention and control section of the Office of the Government in selected district offices, it was not possible to compare the results of the questionnaire surveys with the report for that period.

The questionnaires examined 6 thematic areas related to the use of national minority languages under the competence of state administration authorities/local state administration based on Act No 184/1999 Coll. These thematic areas were broken down as follows: signs in minority languages, official contact, bilingual documents, meetings of state administration authorities/local state administration, provision of information to the public and final questions. The respondents received a total of 52 questions in the following order: signs in minority languages (questions 1–6), official contact (questions 7–19), bilingual documents (questions 20–35), meetings of state administration authorities/local state administration (questions 36–39), provision of information to the public (questions 40–46) and final questions (questions 47–52). Customs offices received a total of 54 questions. All state administration authorities that were contacted sent back their completed questionnaires. The questionnaire for the state administration authorities is provided in Annex 3. A list of state administration authorities and their organisational units that use a minority language in official written contact along with the state language within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll. is provided in Annex 8.

3.3.2 Information covering all state administration authorities

3.3.2.1 Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

Obligations related to signs in minority languages arise from Act No 184/1999 Coll., which lays down the obligations related to indicating the names of municipalities in national minority languages and governs the indication of the names of public authorities on buildings.

The name of the municipality in the minority language was displayed on the buildings of public authorities along with the name in the state language as prescribed by the Act by 71 (80 %) state administration authorities; these included all tax and customs offices, including a customs office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, and state archives; 13 (93 %) were district offices³³; 12 (44 %) were labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population; 7 (88 %) were RVFAs and 5 (83 %) were RPHAs. A comparison with the 2016 survey results reveals that significant changes have occurred in this respect. In 2016, the name of the municipality in the minority language was displayed along with the name in the state language on 44 % of the buildings of the relevant state administration authorities, while in 2018 this percentage reached 80 %.

³² For further details, please see: ‘Effective, reliable and open public administration’ programme, MI SR.

³³ One district office did not respond to this question.

The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was fulfilled by all state administration authorities with the exception of one labour office (i.e. 88 state administration authorities). A comparison of the survey results from 2012, 2016 and 2018 shows that significant changes have occurred in this respect.

Table 46: Name of the public authority displayed on buildings in the state language and in the minority language

| 2012 ³⁴ | | 2016 | | 2018 | |
|--------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| number | % share | number | % share | number | % share |
| 95 | 77 % | 61 | 74 % | 88 | 99 % |

The survey results also showed that, in 35 cases (40 %), the state administration authorities that used signs in both languages used a smaller font size for the minority language: 10 district offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population; 5 RPHAs; one RVFA; 4 state archives and 15 labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In 53 (60 %) cases, the state administration authorities displayed both names using the same font size: 4 district offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population; 16 tax offices; one RPHA; 7 RVFAs; one state archive; 11 labour offices and 13 customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In 2016, 33 (54 %) state administration authorities displayed their name using the same font size and in 28 (46 %) cases they used a smaller font size.

3.3.2.2 Official contact (questions 7–19)

Another thematic area of the questionnaire survey was compliance with the obligations of state administration authorities related to the use of national minority languages in official contact. In this context, the survey focused on identifying the number of staff of state administration authorities who have a spoken and written command of the relevant national minority language; how the use of minority languages in official contact is ensured; the provision of information about the possibilities for using the minority language in official contact at the seat of the state administration authority; acceptance of written submissions from citizens in minority languages and provision of responses to these submissions in the minority language along with the state language and the use of national minority languages in official records.

In connection with the above monitored areas, Act No 184/1999 Coll. lays down that public authorities and their staff are required to use the state language and, under the conditions laid down by this Act and special legislation, they also use minority languages in official contact. It also lays down that civil servants are not required to have a command of

³⁴ In relation to state administration authorities, it should be noted that, in 2012, the programme ‘Effective, reliable and open public administration’ started to be implemented by the MI SR, which created a new structure of local state administration authorities and the vast majority of specialised local state administration authorities ceased to exist. The questionnaire survey results for 2012 reflect the original structure of state administration before this reform was implemented.

the relevant minority language. This does not exclude the possibility that they do have a command of it. When providing information about the possibilities for using minority languages within the meaning of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., public authorities specify how the possibility to use minority languages in official contact has been ensured. Within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll., the information about the possibilities for using minority languages in official contact in oral and written form should be displayed at a visible place at the seat of the authority, nevertheless, the cited Act does not provide any details as to where this information should be displayed. According to Act No 184/1999 Coll., public authorities in the municipalities defined by the Act accept submissions, documents and evidence from citizens in national minority languages and, along with the state language, respond to submissions made in the minority language in that minority language. Act No 184/1999 Coll. also permits the use of minority languages in official records (in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records).

Ensuring the use of minority languages in official contact

In the context of providing information about the possibilities for using minority languages within the meaning of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., the state administration authorities that were approached specify how the possibility to use minority languages in official contact is ensured. According to the survey results, 78 (88 %) state administration authorities provided for this possibility by using their own staff who communicate in the national minority language; of these 10 were district offices, 26 were labour offices, 14 were tax offices, 12 were customs offices, 6 were RVFAs, 5 were RPHAs and 5 were state archives. In 3 cases – one district office and two tax offices – the state administration authorities provided for this possibility by using interpreting and translation services. In 5 (6 %) cases – two district offices, two RVFAs and one labour office – the state administration authorities provided for this possibility by using a combination of the above methods. In a further 3 cases (approx. 4 %), the state administration authorities stated that the need to provide for the use of the national minority language in official contact had yet to arise (of these, one was a customs office, one was a district office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population and one was an RPHA)³⁵.

The questionnaire survey revealed that the state administration authorities that were approached had a total of 4 057 employees, of whom 842 were employees of district offices, 2 027 were employees of labour offices, 479 were employees of tax offices, 328 were employees of customs offices, 170 were employees of RVFAs, 184 were employees of RPHAs and 27 were employees of state archives. Of the total of 4 057 employees of state administration authorities, 23 % had a spoken and written command of the minority language and 22 % had a spoken command of the minority language. A comparison of the results with the survey from 2016 shows that no significant changes have occurred in this respect.

³⁵ The Medzilaborce unit of the Humenné district office; Galanta unit of the Trnava customs office; Regional Public Health Authority in Rožňava.

Table 47: Number and proportion of staff who have a command of the minority language

| state administration authority | total number of employees | spoken and written | % share | spoken | % share |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| district offices | 842 | 146 | 17 % | 155 | 18 % |
| labour offices | 2 027 | 390 | 19 % | 339 | 17 % |
| tax offices | 479 | 140 | 29 % | 157 | 33 % |
| customs offices | 328 | 155 | 47 % | 144 | 44 % |
| RVFAs | 170 | 38 | 22 % | 34 | 20 % |
| RPHAs | 184 | 58 | 32 % | 42 | 23 % |
| state archives | 27 | 13 | 48 % | 12 | 44 % |
| TOTAL | 4 057 | 940 | 23 % | 883 | 22 % |

Table 48: Comparison of the number and proportion of employees who had a command of the national minority language in 2016 and in 2018

| period | spoken and written | % share | spoken | % share |
|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| 2016 | 936 | 26 % | 681 | 19 % |
| 2018 | 940 | 23 % | 883 | 22 % |

Based on the results of the questionnaire surveys for 2012, 2016 and 2018, it can be concluded that the number of state administration authorities providing for the possibility to use national minority languages in official contact using their internal staff has been increasing – 63 % in 2012, 66 % in 2016 and 87 % in 2018. The number of state administration authorities providing for the possibility to use national minority languages in official contact by means of interpreting and translation services has increased slightly – 2.5 % in 2016 and 3 % in 2018. The number of state administration authorities that have used a combination of these methods or other methods of providing for the possibility in question has decreased – 15 % in 2012, 22 % in 2016 and 6 % in 2018.

- **Information about the possibilities for using minority languages**

Within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll., state administration authorities are required to display at a visible place information about the possibilities for using minority languages at the seat of the authority, in accordance with § 1 of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. The questionnaire survey examined whether this information was provided by state administration authorities and, if so, in what language and how.

Provision at a visible place of information about the possibilities for using the minority language in oral and written form in official contact at the seat of the public authority

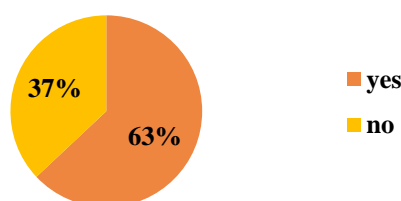


Table 49: State administration authorities that display the information about the possibilities for using the minority language available at a visible place at their seat

| state administration authority | total number | yes | % share | no | % share |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| district offices | 14 | 13 | 93 % | 1 | 7 % |
| labour offices | 27 | 10 | 37 % | 17 | 63 % |
| tax offices | 16 | 15 | 94 % | 1 | 6 % |
| customs offices | 13 | 0 | 0 % | 13 | 100 % |
| RVFAs | 8 | 7 | 88 % | 1 | 12 % |
| RPHAs | 6 | 6 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % |
| state archives | 5 | 5 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % |
| TOTAL | 89 | 56 | 63 % | 33 | 37 % |

The following were the 56 (63 %) state administration authorities which reported that they fulfilled this statutory obligation: 13 district offices, 10 labour offices, 15 tax offices, 7 RVFAs, 6 RPHAs and 5 state archives. 33 (37%) state administration authorities, of which one was a district office, 17 were labour offices, one was a tax office, 13 were customs office and one was a RVFA, did not fulfil this obligation. Of the 56 state administration authorities that fulfilled this statutory obligation, 34 (61 %) provided this information in the state language – 7 district offices, 6 labour offices, 14 tax offices, two RVFAs, 3 RPHAs and two state archives. Two (4 %) state administration authorities provided this information in the minority language (one labour office and one RVFA) and 19 (34 %) state administration authorities, of which 6 were district offices, two were labour offices, one was a tax office, 4 were RVFAs, 3 were RPHAs and 3 were state archives³⁶, provided this information in both the state language and the minority language.

Of the total of 56 state administration authorities that provided this information, 61 % used information boards for this purpose; these were 8 district offices, 10 tax offices, 3 RVFAs, 4 RPHAs, 3 state archives and 6 labour offices. 16 % used public announcements boards for this purpose; these were 3 district offices, 3 RVFAs and 3 labour offices. Other method of providing this information was used by 3 % of state administration authorities, comprising one state archive and one labour office, which provided this information in the entrance area or in the area near the information board. 20 % of state administration authorities, comprising two district offices, 5 tax offices, 3 RPHAs and one state archive, used a combination of the above methods.

In relation to the survey results in this part, we can summarise that 63 % state administration authorities fulfilled the statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities for using a national minority language at the seat of the authority and half of these authorities (61 %) provided this information in the state language. 61 % of these organisations made this information available on information boards. When comparing the results from the 2016 and 2018 surveys, it can be stated that the number of state administration authorities that have fulfilled the statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities for using a national minority language at the seat of the authority has slightly increased. In this context, it should also be noted that, in

³⁶ One labour office did not provide a response on this topic.

2012, the structure of the state administration authorities subject to this statutory obligation was different and, after 2013, multiple state administration authorities ceased to exist or were transformed into new organisations with different names, responsibilities and scope of competence. The proportion of state administration authorities that provided at a visible place information about the possibilities for using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was as follows – 77 % in 2012, 59 % in 2016 and 63 % in 2018.

Time slot reserved for handling administrative affairs in the minority language

For the first time, the questionnaire survey also examined whether state administration authorities had reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. Within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll., this is not an obligation, but an option. Of the total of 89 state administration authorities, 12 (13%) reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. Two of these were district offices, two were labour offices, 7 were tax offices and one was an RVFA. 76 (85 %) state administration authorities did not reserve a special time slot for this purpose – 12 of these were district offices, 24 were labour offices, 9 were tax offices, 13 were customs offices, 7 were RVFAs, 6 were RPHAs and 5 were state archives³⁷.

Written submissions in the minority language

The survey revealed that 5 (6 %) state administration authorities received written submissions in the minority language. One of these was a district office, one was a labour office, one was an RPHA³⁸ and two were state archives. 84 (94 %) state administration authorities received no such submissions. A total of 116 written submission³⁹ were received relating to minor offences; unauthorised operation of an organisation; and historical research and archive exploration activities. Two state administration authorities provided 3 responses to these submissions – one was a response from a district office and two were responses from state archives.

When comparing the data from the questionnaire surveys for 2012, 2016 and 2018, it can be noted that the total number of submissions⁴⁰ in minority languages has significantly increased in the area concerned, while the number of responses provided in the minority language remained unchanged and the number of state administration authorities that received written submissions in a minority language increased only slightly⁴¹.

³⁷ One labour office did not provide a response to this question.

³⁸ Two submissions were anonymous.

³⁹ Of the total number of 116 written submissions, 80 were received by labour offices, 33 by state archives, two by RPHAs and one submission by a district office.

⁴⁰ Total number of written submissions in a minority language – 18 submissions in 2012, 4 submissions in 2016, 116 submissions in 2018.

⁴¹ The number of state administration authorities that received written submissions in a minority language – 6 in 2012, 4 in 2016 and 5 in 2018. The number of state administration authorities that responded to written submissions in a minority language – 6 in 2012, 4 in 2016 and two in 2018.

Official records

Act No 184/1999 Coll. permits keeping official records in municipalities⁴², in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records, in the minority language along with the state language. From among the relevant state administration authorities, this possibility was partially used by one state administration authority (an RPHA); 87 (98 %) state administration authorities did not use this possibility and one state administration authority did not respond to this question⁴³. The RPHA partially used this possibility when keeping official records on professional competence; when performing state health oversight and official control of foodstuffs, in consultations and in educational activities. A comparison with the survey from 2016 reveals that no significant changes have occurred in this respect.

3.3.2.3 Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

In accordance with § 2 of Act No 184/1999 Coll., the questionnaire survey also examined the provision of official forms and bilingual public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) by state administration authorities in a bilingual format, both in the state language and in the minority language, if so requested. State administration authorities are only able to fulfil this obligation if such forms and specialised terminology in national minority languages are available to them. Also examined was the question of issuing decisions by state administration authorities in administrative proceedings in the state language with a counterpart in the national minority language if the administrative proceedings were initiated by a submission in the minority language or if so requested.

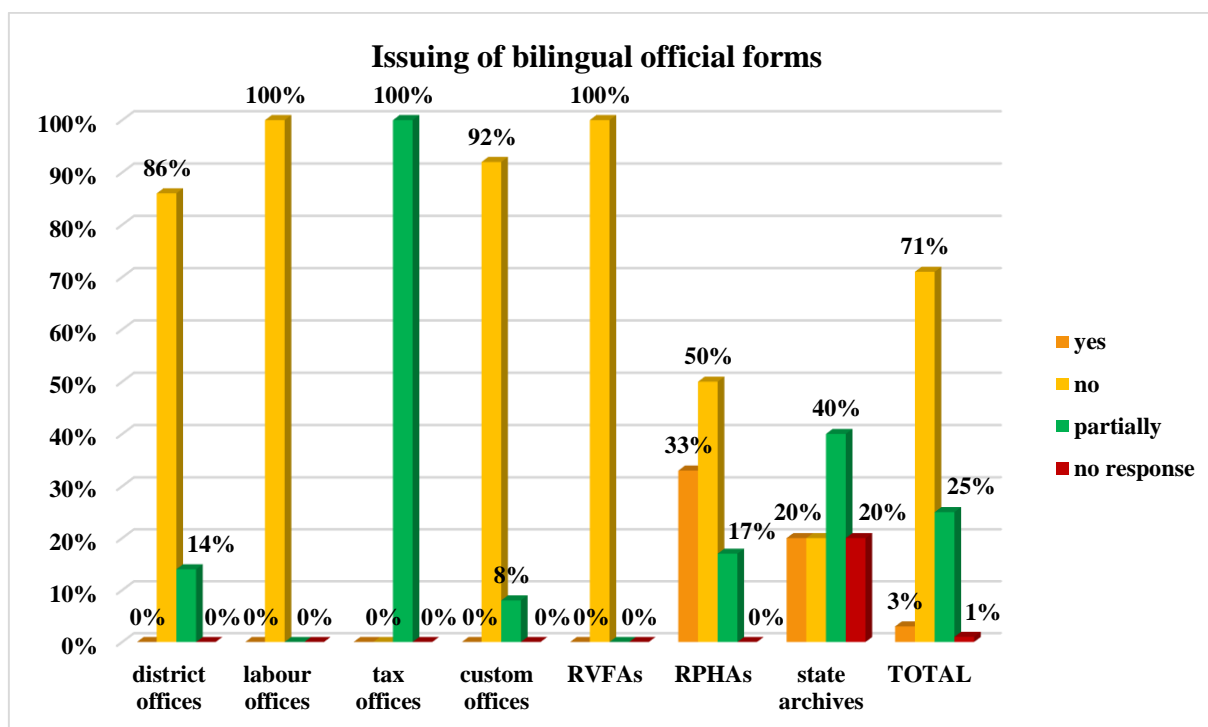
Official forms

The results of the questionnaire survey show that bilingual forms were issued only in rare cases. This obligation was fulfilled by 3 (3 %) state administration authorities, of which two were RPHAs and one was a state archive, and it was partially fulfilled by 22 (25 %) state administration authorities, of which two were district offices, 16 were tax offices, once was a customs office, one was a RPHA and two were state archives. 63 (approx. 71 %) state administration authorities did not provide citizens with official forms issued under their authority available in a bilingual format: 12 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), 27 labour offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 12 customs offices (of which one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 8 RVFAs, 3 RPHAs and one state archive⁴⁴.

⁴² Municipalities, in which citizens of the Slovak Republic who are persons belonging to a national minority and who permanently reside in the municipality accounted for at least 15 % of the population in two consecutive population censuses.

⁴³ One labour office did not provide a response to this question.

⁴⁴ One state archive did not respond to this question.



Bilingual official forms related to registrar’s offices, proceedings on minor offences, instructions for filling out tax returns, VAT control statements, overviews and reports relating to employment, tests to acquire professional competence certificates, public healthcare and exploratory research. No state administration authorities received a request for the issue of bilingual official forms in the period under review. If we compare the data from the questionnaire surveys for 2012, 2016 and 2018, it can be noted that the number of state administration authorities providing bilingual forms has been increasing⁴⁵.

Public instruments

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, during the period under review, no state administration authorities received requests for the issue of public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) in a bilingual format, both in the state language and in the minority language⁴⁶. No state administration authorities issued a bilingual public instrument. If we compare the data from the questionnaire surveys for 2012, 2016 and 2018, it can be concluded that no changes have occurred in this regard.

Administrative proceedings

During the period under review, no state administration authorities received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language and no state administration authorities received requests for the issue of bilingual decisions. No state administration authorities issued decisions in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in a minority language in the period under review. Decisions in a minority

⁴⁵ The percentage shares of state administration authorities that did not provide citizens with official forms issued under their authority in a bilingual format: 90 % in 2012, 91 % in 2016 and 71 % in 2018.

⁴⁶ One tax office did not respond to this question.

language indicating the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language were issued⁴⁷ by one state administration authority (RVFA) and one state administration authority indicated the name partially (a state archive). Such decisions were not issued by 87 (i.e. 98 %) state administration authorities. If we compare the data from the questionnaire surveys for 2012, 2016 and 2018, it can be noted that the situation practically did not change in this regard⁴⁸.

3.3.2.4 Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36-39)

According to § 3 of Act No 184/1999 Coll., meetings of public authorities in the municipalities defined by the Act may also be held in the minority language, if consent is given by all persons present. The survey data showed that 6 (7 %) state administration authorities, namely 6 labour offices, also used a minority language at their meetings. The state language and partially the minority language were used by 16 (18 %) state administration authorities, of which 5 were district offices, two were labour offices, 4 were tax offices, two were RVFAs, two were RPHAs and one was a state archive. 61 (69 %) state administration authorities did not use the minority language at their meetings: 9 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), 19 labour offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 11 tax offices, 10 customs offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 6 RVFAs, 4 RPHAs and two state archives⁴⁹.

Meetings were held in both the state language and the minority language by 14 (16 %) state administration authorities, of which two were district offices, 5 were labour offices, 4 were tax offices, one was an RVFA and two were RPHAs. 68 (76 %) state administration authorities held their meetings in the state language: 12 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), 22 labour offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 10 tax offices, 10 customs offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 7 RVFAs, 4 RPHAs and 3 state archives⁵⁰. A comparison with the results from the 2016 survey⁵¹ shows that no significant changes have occurred in this respect.

According to the survey results, the possibility to use a minority language at meetings was ensured by 47 (53 %) state administration authorities, at 9 (10 %) state administration

⁴⁷ Where the state administration authority issues decisions in a minority language.

⁴⁸ Decisions issued with a counterpart in the minority language: 3 decisions in 2012; 0 decisions 2016 and 0 decisions 2018.

⁴⁹ 6 state administration authorities (6 %), comprising one tax office, 3 customs office and two state archives, did not respond to this question.

⁵⁰ 7 state administration authorities (8 %), including two tax offices, 3 customs offices and two state archives, did not respond to this question.

⁵¹ 79 % of state administration authorities in 2016 and 76 % in 2018 did not hold their meetings in a minority language. Meetings were held in minority languages by 20 % of state administration authorities in 2016 and 16 % in 2018.

authorities, this possibility was not provided for at all⁵². Of the total of 47 state administration authorities, in two cases – one district office and one RVFA – this possibility was provided for by means of interpreting services; in 44 cases, comprising 8 district offices, 15 labour offices, 10 tax offices, 3 customs offices, 3 RPHAs, 4 RVFAs and one state archive, this possibility was provided for using staff who have a command of the minority language. At one RVFA, this possibility was provided for in multiple ways. The possibility to use minority languages at their meetings was not provided for at 9 state administration authorities: 3 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), one tax office, two RPHAs, one customs office, one state archive and one labour office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

Closely related to this is the question of the language, in which supporting documents for the meetings are prepared. In this respect, the survey showed that one state administration authority prepared these documents in the state language and partially in the minority language (an RPHA). 82 (92 %) state administration authorities prepared these documents in the state language: 14 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), 27 labour offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 15 tax offices, 10 customs offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 8 RVFAs, 5 RPHAs and 3 state archives⁵³.

3.3.2.5 Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

State administration authorities in municipalities defined by the Act are required to provide, at request, information on legislation of general application that falls within the scope of their competence in the minority language along with the state language. The survey revealed that no state administration authorities received requests for the provision of such information in the period under review. Act No 184/1999 Coll. also concerns the provision of information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language. This statutory obligation applies to all entities, regardless of their nature (all natural persons-entrepreneurs and legal entities). In this context, the state administration authorities were inquired whether such information provided in publicly accessible places administered by the state administration authority was also provided in the minority language. The survey results showed that 74 (83 %) state administration authorities, comprising 12 district offices (of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population), 26 labour offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 15 tax offices, 13 customs offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), two RVFAs, 4 RPHAs and two state archives, did not comply with this statutory obligation⁵⁴. 8 (9 %) state administration

⁵² 33 state administration authorities (37 %), comprising 2 district offices, 11 labour offices, 5 tax offices, 9 customs offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), two RVFAs, one RPHA and 3 state archives, did not respond to this question.

⁵³ 6 state administration authorities (7 %), including one tax office, 3 customs office and two state archives, did not respond.

⁵⁴ One state administration authority (a tax office) did not respond to this question.

authorities – one district office, two RPHAs, two RVFAs and 3 state archives – provided such information in the minority language. 6 (7 %) state administration authorities – one district office, two RPHAs, two RVFAs and one labour office (in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) – partially provided such information in the minority language.

Table 50: Provision of information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the minority language

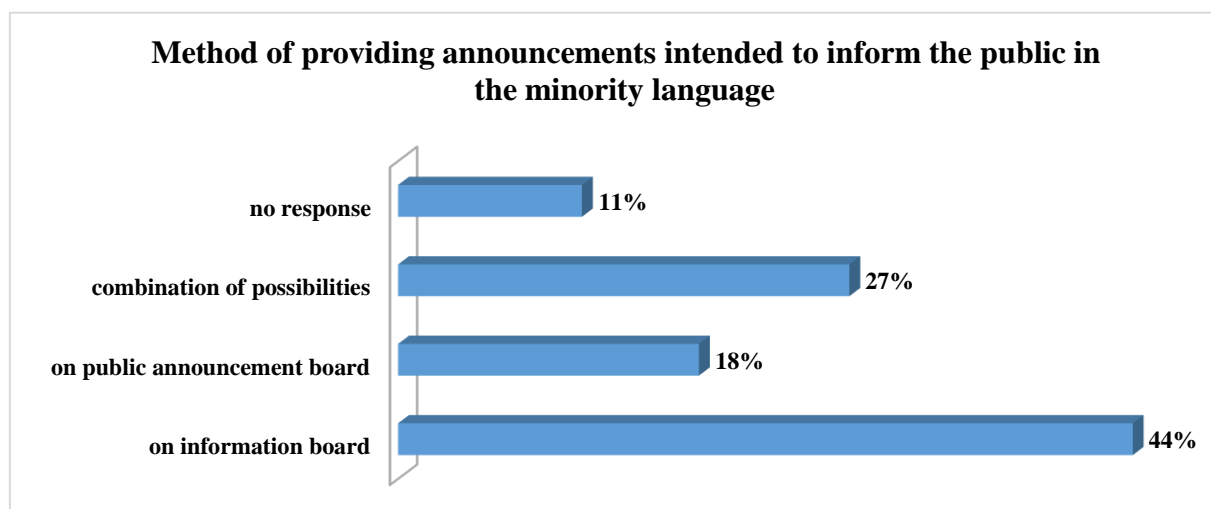
| state administration authority | total number | yes | % share | partially | % share | no | % share | no response | % share |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| district offices | 14 | 1 | 7 % | 1 | 7 % | 12 | 86 % | 0 | 0 % |
| labour offices | 27 | 0 | 0 % | 1 | 4 % | 26 | 96 % | 0 | 0 % |
| tax offices | 16 | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 15 | 94 % | 1 | 6 % |
| customs offices | 13 | 0 | 0 % | 0 | 0 % | 13 | 100 % | 0 | 0 % |
| RVFAs | 8 | 2 | 25 % | 2 | 25 % | 4 | 50 % | 0 | 0 % |
| RPHAs | 6 | 2 | 33 % | 2 | 33 % | 2 | 33 % | 0 | 0 % |
| state archives | 5 | 3 | 60 % | 0 | 0 % | 2 | 20 % | 0 | 0 % |
| TOTAL | 89 | 8 | 9 % | 6 | 7 % | 74 | 83 % | 1 | 1 % |

A comparison with the data from the previous questionnaire survey shows that the situation has changed in this regard. In 2016, this statutory obligation was not complied with by 97 % of state administration authorities, while in 2018 this was only 83 % of state administration authorities.

Under § 4(6), Act No 184/1999 Coll. permits all public information signs and notices in municipalities defined by the Act to be also provided in the minority language. In this context, the state administration authorities were inquired whether they also provided the relevant notices in the minority language and, if so, where. According to the survey results, 43 state administration authorities (48 %) did not provide the relevant signs and notices in the minority language: 5 district offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 19 labour offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 6 tax offices, 9 customs offices, 3 RVFAs and one RPHA. These signs and notices were partially also provided in the minority language by 28 state administration authorities (32 %): 3 district offices (one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 6 labour offices, 10 tax offices, two customs offices (one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), one RPHA, 5 RVFAs and one state archive⁵⁵. 17 state administration authorities (19 %), comprising 6 district offices, two labour offices, two customs offices, two RVFAs, two RPHAs and 3 state archives, also provided the relevant signs and notices in the minority language. The survey results suggest that the situation has changed in this regard. In 2016, such signs and notices were not provided in the minority language by 96 % of state administration authorities, while according to the most recent survey, they were not provided by 48 % of state administration authorities. Of the total of 45 (51%) state administration authorities that provided the relevant signs and notices in the national minority language or provided them partially, in 20 cases these were provided on information boards, in 8 cases on public announcement boards and, in 12 cases, the state

⁵⁵ One state administration authority (a state archive) did not respond to this question.

administration authorities used a combination of possibilities (information boards, entrance areas, names of individual departments/room signs)⁵⁶.



55 (62 %) state administration authorities also provided announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language; of these 11 were district offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 14 were tax offices, 5 were RVFAs, 6 were RPHAs, 5 were state archives, 11 were labour offices and 3 were customs offices. No response to this question was received from 26 (29 %) state administration authorities: two district offices, two tax offices, 9 customs offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), one RPHA, two RVFAs and 10 labour offices. 8 (9 %) state administration authorities did not provide these announcements in the minority language: one district office (in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), 6 labour offices (one of them in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) and one customs office.

Of the total of 55 state administration authorities, 24 (44 %) provided these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, in the mailroom or on a notice board: 4 district offices, 7 tax offices, one RPHA, 3 RVFAs, two state archives, 5 labour offices and two customs offices. 16 (30 %) state administration authorities provided these announcements on public announcement boards: 3 district offices (of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population), two tax offices, one RPHA, 3 RVFA, one state archive and 6 labour offices. One state administration authority provided these announcements on its website (a tax office). In 14 (26 %) cases, the state administration authorities used a combination of the above possibilities: 4 district offices, 4 tax offices, 3 RPHAs, two state archives and one customs office.

With regard to the provision of information to citizens in national minority languages, Act No 184/1999 Coll. lays down that essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be

⁵⁶ 5 state administration authorities (3 labour offices, one district office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population and one customs office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) did not respond to this question.

obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) are to be also made available in the minority language. In this respect, the questionnaire survey examined whether essential information was made publicly available in the minority language along with the state language. The survey results showed that this information was not made publicly available by 70 (79 %) state administration authorities, of which 9 were district offices, 23 were labour offices, 16 were tax offices, 13 were customs offices (one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) two RPHAs and 7 RVFAs⁵⁷. The relevant information was made partially publicly available by 13 (15 %) state administration authorities, of which 4 were district offices, 3 were labour offices, two were RPHAs, one was a RVFA and 3 were state archives. This information was made publicly available by 5 (6 %) state administration authorities, comprising one district office, one labour office, two RPHAs and one state archive. The survey results suggest that no significant changes have occurred in this regard.

In 2016, essential information was not made publicly available in the minority language, along with the state language, on public announcements boards, websites or in periodicals in the case of 77 % of state administration authorities; in 2018, it was 79 % state administration authorities.

3.3.2.6 Final questions (questions 47–52)

43 (48 %) state administration authorities found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact problem-free, 30 (34 %) state administration authorities found it partially problematic and 12 (14 %) state administration authorities found it problematic⁵⁸. As regards the reasons for this situation, the majority of state administration authorities reported the non-existence of official documents, forms, specialised texts and legislation translated into national minority languages; a lack of staff with a command of the national minority language or lack of knowledge of the specialised terminology by the staff; a lack of funding for translation or interpreting services. State administration authorities in municipalities with a Ruthenian national minority also reported the following specific reasons: insufficient knowledge of the Cyrillic script⁵⁹ by the staff to be able to use written Ruthenian; non-existence of official and other forms or templates in Ruthenian. Compared with the results from the preceding questionnaire survey, it can be noted that, in 2016, 37 %

⁵⁷ One state administration authority (a state archive) did not respond to this question.

⁵⁸ 4 state administration authorities (4 customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) did not respond to this question.

⁵⁹ Medzilaborce unit of the Stropkov labour, social affairs and family office.

of state administration authorities found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact partially problematic or problematic; in 2018, it was 48 % of state administration authorities. This means that the number of state administration authorities that found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact partially problematic or problematic has slightly increased.

The handling of administrative offences related to the use of national minority languages falls under the competence of the Office of the Government. The questionnaire survey inquired into the complaints filed with state administration authorities concerning breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. Of the total of 89 entities that we approached, an RPHA received one complaint relating to the indication of the municipality's name on the RPHA building in the minority language. This complaint was resolved immediately. A comparison of the results from the questionnaire surveys shows that no significant changes occurred in this respect.

3.3.3 Information applicable to the individual state administration authorities

3.3.3.1 District offices

Of the total of 14 district offices, 12 were in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

Of the total of 14 district offices, 13 district offices (93 %) displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act; two of these were municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language is laid down by Act No 184/1999 Coll. All 14 district offices fulfilled this obligation. 10 (72 %) district offices displayed the name in the minority language along with the equivalent in the state language using a smaller font size and 4 (28 %) used the same font size (one of these was a district office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population).

Official contact (questions 7–19)

10 district offices (71 %) responded in the questionnaires that the use of the national minority language in official contact was ensured by means of their staff communicating in the minority language; of these 9 were municipalities with a Hungarian national minority and one was a municipality with a Ruthenian national minority. One district office in a municipality with a Hungarian minority population provided for this possibility by using translation and interpreting services and two municipalities with a Hungarian minority population used a combination of both methods. In one case, a district office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population reported that the need to provide for the use the minority language in official contact had yet to arise.

The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was fulfilled by 13 (93 %) district offices, of which two were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population. One district office in a municipality with a Hungarian minority population did not comply with this obligation. 7 (54 %) district offices provided this information in the state language; two of these were in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population. 6 (45 %) district offices in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population provided this information in both the state language and the minority language. 8 (62 %) district offices made this information available on an information board; of these, 7 were in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. 3 (23 %) district offices made this information available on the public announcements board; of these, two were in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. A combination of these methods was used by two (14 %) district offices in municipalities with a Hungarian national minority.

A time slot for handling administrative affairs in a minority language was reserved by two (14 %) district offices in municipalities with a Hungarian national minority. No such time slot was reserved in 12 (86 %) district offices, comprising two municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population. A written submission in the minority language was received by one district office in a municipality with a Hungarian minority population, which also responded to this submission. None of the district offices made use of the possibility to keep official records specified by the Act in the minority language along with the state language.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey show that bilingual forms were partially issued by two (14 %) district offices. 12 (86 %) district offices, including two municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide citizens with official forms falling within the scope of their competence in a bilingual format. No district offices received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a district office issue a bilingual public instrument. No district offices received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in that language. No district office issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey data showed that 5 (36 %) district offices partially used the minority language at their meetings. In the case of 9 (64 %) district offices, including two in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, the minority language was not used at the meetings. Two (14 %) district offices held their meetings in both the state language and the minority language. 12 (86 %) district offices, including two in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, held their meetings in the state language. At 8 district offices (57 %), the possibility to use a minority language at the meetings was ensured by means of

staff who have a command of the minority language and, at one district office, interpreting services were used. At 3 (21 %) district offices, including two in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, no provisions were made for using the minority language at the meetings. Two district offices did not respond to this question.

At all 14 district offices, including two in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, the documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

12 (86 %) district offices, including two in municipalities with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the minority language along with the state language in the municipalities defined by the Act. This information was provided by one district office and one district office provided this information partially.

Public information signs and notices were provided in a minority language at 6 (43 %) district offices and partially at 3 (21 %) district offices, one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. 5 (36 %) district offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide these signs and notices in the minority language.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also provided in the minority language at 11 (79 %) district offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. Two (14 %) district offices did not respond to this question. One district office (in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population) did not provide these announcements in the minority language. 4 (36 %) district offices provided these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board. 3 (27 %) district offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, provided them on public announcements boards. 4 (36 %) district offices used a combination of the above methods to make the information available.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by 9 (64 %) district offices; 4 (29 %) district offices partially made this information available in the minority language and one district office made it available in the minority language.

3.3.3.2 Labour, social affairs and family offices

Of the total of 27 labour offices, 26 were in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

12 (44 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was fulfilled by 26 (96 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In 15 (58 %) cases, the labour offices that displayed these names in the minority language along with the names in the state language used a smaller font size (of these one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population); in 11 (42 %) cases, the same font size was used.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

26 (96 %) labour offices responded in the questionnaires that they provided for the use of the national minority language in official contact by means of their staff communicating in the minority language; one of these was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In one case, the labour office provided for this possibility by means of their staff communicating in the minority language and by using interpreting or translation services.

The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was fulfilled by 10 (37 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. This statutory obligation was not fulfilled by 17 (63 %) labour offices. From among the labour offices that fulfilled this obligation, 6 (60 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, provided this information in the state language. In one case, the information was made available at the labour office in the minority language and in two (20 %) cases, the labour offices made this information available in both the state language and the minority language. A response on this topic was not provided by one labour office. This information was made available in the following manner: in 6 (60 %) cases, the labour offices made this information available on information boards and 3 (30 %) labour offices used public announcements boards to provide this information. One labour office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population made this information available in the vicinity of the information board.

A time slot for handling administrative affairs in a minority language was reserved by two labour offices (7 %), one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. No such time slot was reserved by 24 (84 %) labour offices. One labour office did not respond to this question. One labour office received a total of 80 written submissions in the minority language. These submissions related to administrative proceedings. The responses to these submissions were not provided in the minority language in addition to the state language. In 26 cases (96 %), the labour offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not use the possibility to keep official records specified by

Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the minority language along with the state language. One labour office did not respond to this question.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey show that none of the 27 labour offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, provided citizens with official forms falling within the scope of their competence in a bilingual format. No labour offices received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms and public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a labour office issue a bilingual public instrument. None of the labour offices received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in that language. No labour office issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey data showed that 6 (22 %) labour offices also used the minority language at their meetings. In the case of two (7 %) labour offices, the minority language was partially used at the meetings. The minority language was not used at 19 (70 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

The following responses were received to the question about the language used at the labour office's meetings: 22 (81 %) labour offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, used the state language; meetings were held in both the state language and the minority language by 5 (19 %) labour offices. No labour office held meetings exclusively in the minority language.

At 15 (55 %) labour offices, the possibility to use a minority language at the meetings was ensured by means of staff who have a command of the minority language. At one labour office in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, no provisions were made for using the minority language at the meetings. 11 (41 %) labour offices did not respond to this question.

At all 27 labour offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

None of the labour offices displayed information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language.

Public information signs and notices were provided in a minority language at two (7 %) labour offices and partially at 6 (22 %) offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In 19 (70 %) cases, the labour offices, including one in a

municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide these signs and notices in the minority language.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also provided in the minority language by 11 (41 %) labour offices. 10 (37 %) labour offices did not respond to this question. 6 (22 %) labour offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide these announcements in the minority language. 5 (45 %) labour offices provided these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board. 6 (55 %) labour offices provided these announcements on public announcements boards.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by 23 (85 %) labour offices; 3 (11 %) labour offices partially made this information available in the minority language and one labour office made it available in the minority language.

3.3.3.3 Tax offices

The questionnaire survey concerned a total of 16 tax offices in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

All 16 tax offices displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was also fulfilled by all 16 tax offices, all of which used the same font size for both names.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

14 (88 %) tax offices responded in the questionnaires that they the use of the national minority language in official contact was ensured by means of their staff communicating in the minority language. Two (12 %) tax offices used interpreting or translation services to provide for this possibility.

The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was fulfilled by 15 (94 %) tax offices. This obligation was not fulfilled by one tax office. Of the total of 15 tax offices, 14 (93 %) provided this information in the state language and one in both the state language and the minority language. In 10 (67 %) cases, the tax offices used information boards for this purpose; in 5 (33 %) cases, the offices used both information boards and public announcements boards. 7 (44 %) tax offices reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language; 9 (56 %) did not reserve any special time slot for this purpose. None of the tax offices received written submissions from citizens in a national

minority language or used the possibility to keep official records specified by Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the minority language along with the state language.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey show that bilingual forms were partially issued by all 16 tax offices. No tax office received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a tax office issue a bilingual public instrument. No tax office received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in that language. No tax office issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey data showed that 4 (25 %) tax offices partially used the minority language at their meetings. 11 (69 %) tax offices did not use the minority language at their meetings. One tax office did not respond to this question. 4 (25 %) tax offices held their meetings in both the state language and the minority language. 10 (63 %) tax offices held their meetings in the state language. Two tax offices did not respond to this question. At 10 (63 %) tax offices, the possibility to use a minority language at the meetings was ensured by means of staff who have a command of the minority language. No provisions were made for using the minority language at the meetings at one tax office. 5 tax offices did not respond to this question. Documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language at 15 (94 %) tax offices. One tax office did not respond to this question.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

15 (94 %) tax offices did not provide information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language. One tax office did not respond to this question.

Public information signs and notices were partially provided in the minority language at 10 (63 %) tax offices. In 6 (37 %) cases, these signs and notices were not provided in the minority language by the tax offices.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also displayed in the minority language at 14 (88 %) tax offices. Two (12 %) tax offices did not respond to this question. Of the total of 14 tax offices, 7 (50 %) displayed these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board. Two (14 %) tax offices displayed them on public announcement boards. One tax office provided the relevant announcements on its website. 4 (29 %) tax offices used a combination of the above methods to make the information publicly available. The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by any of the 16 tax offices.

3.3.3.4 Customs offices

The questionnaire survey concerned 13 customs offices, 12 of which were in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population and one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

All 13 customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of the state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was fulfilled by all 13 customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. All customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, displayed this name using the same font size.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

12 (92 %) customs office responded in the questionnaires that they provided for the use of the national minority language in official contact by means of their staff communicating in the minority language; one of these was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In one case, the customs office reported that the need to provide for the use of the minority language in official contact had yet to arise. The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was not fulfilled by the customs offices. None of the customs offices reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. None of the customs offices received written submissions from citizens in a national minority language or kept official records specified by Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the minority language along with the state language.

In connection with the use of a national minority language along with the state language in duty-related contact, the questionnaire survey revealed that 10 (77 %) customs offices partially used a national minority language in duty-related contact along with the state language, one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. 3 (23%) customs office used the state language in duty-related contact. At 4 (31 %) customs offices, the staff who have a command of the minority language used this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority and at 7 (54%) customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, it was used partially. In two cases, the staff who have a command of the minority language did not use it when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey show that bilingual official forms were partially issued by one customs office. 12 (92 %) customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide citizens with official forms falling within the scope of their competence in a bilingual format. No customs office received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a customs office issue a bilingual public instrument. No customs office received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in that language. No customs office issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey results showed that the minority language was not used at the office's meetings at 10 (77 %) customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. No response to this question was received from 3 (23 %) customs offices.

Meetings were held in the state language by 10 (77 %) customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. No response to this question was received from 3 (23 %) customs offices.

At 3 (23 %) customs office, the possibility to use a minority language at the meetings was ensured by means of staff who have a command of the minority language. In one case, no provisions were made for using the minority language at the customs office's meetings. 9 (69 %) customs offices did not respond to this question.

At 10 (77 %) customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language. No response to this question was received from 3 (23 %) customs offices.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

13 customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population, did not provide information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the minority language along with the state language in the municipalities defined by the Act.

Public information signs and notices were provided in a minority language at two (15 %) customs offices and partially at a further two (15 %) customs offices, including one in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. In 9 (70 %) cases, the customs offices did not provide these signs and notices in the minority language.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also provided in the minority language by 3 (27 %) customs offices. No response to this question was received from

9 (82 %) customs offices, of which one was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population. One customs office did not provide these announcements in the minority language. Two (18 %) customs offices provided these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board. One customs office used a combination of the above methods to make these announcements publicly available.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by any of the 13 customs offices, one of which was in a municipality with a Ruthenian minority population.

3.3.3.5 Regional veterinary and food administrations

The questionnaire survey concerned 8 RVFAs in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

7 RVFAs (88 %) displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was also fulfilled by all 8 RVFAs; 7 (88 %) of them used the same font size for both names and one used a smaller font size for the minority language.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, 6 RVFAs (75 %) provided for the use of the national minority language in official contact by means of their staff communicating in the minority language and two used both their staff communicating in the minority language and interpreting or translation services.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey revealed that none of the RVFAs provided citizens with official forms issued under their authority in a bilingual format. No RVFA received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did an RVFA issue a bilingual public instrument. No RVFA received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language. No RVFA issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey results showed that two RVFAs (25 %) partially used the minority language at their meetings. 6 RVFAs (75 %) did not use the minority language at their meetings.

One RVFA held meetings in both the state language and the minority language. In 7 (88 %) cases, the RVFAs held meetings in the state language.

One RVFA provided for the possibility of using the minority language at the meetings by using interpreting services, in 4 (50 %) cases, staff who have a command of the minority language was used for this purpose and, in one case, a combination of both methods was used. Two (25 %) RVFAs did not respond to this question. Documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language at all RVFAs.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

Two RVFAs provided information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language; two RVFAs provided this information partially and 4 RVFAs (50 %) did not provide it. Public information signs and notices were provided in the minority language at two RVFAs and partially at 5 (63 %) RVFAs. In one case, these signs and notices were not provided in the minority language.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also provided in the minority language at 6 RVFAs (75 %). Two RVFAs (25 %) did not respond to this question. Of the total of 6 RVFAs, 3 (50 %) displayed these announcements on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board and 3 (50 %) used public announcements boards.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by 7 RVFAs (88 %); one RVFA made this information partially available in the minority language.

3.3.3.6 Regional public health authorities

The questionnaire survey concerned 7 RPHAs in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

5 RPHAs (83 %) displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was fulfilled by all 6 RPHAs, of which one used the same font size for both names and 5 (83 %) RPHAs used a smaller font size for the minority language.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, 5 (83 %) RPHAs provided for the possibility of using the national minority language in official contact by means of their staff

communicating in the minority language. In one case, the RPHA reported that the need to provide for the use of the minority language in official contact had yet to arise.

The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language in official contact was fulfilled by all 6 RPHAs; 3 of them (50 %) provided this information in the state language and 3 (50 %) provided this information in both the state language and the minority language. 3 (50 %) RPHAs made this information available on an information board and 3 (50 %) used multiple methods (the information board, public announcements board or the authority's website). No RPHA reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. One RPHA received two written submissions in the minority language, which were anonymous submissions relating to unauthorised business operations. Therefore, no responses were provided to these submissions. Official records were partially kept in the minority language by one RPHA; these concerned professional competence for epidemiologically-relevant activities, related to the performance of state health oversight and official control of foodstuffs or consultations, or related to educational activities.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, two (33 %) RPHAs provided citizens with official forms issued under their authority in a bilingual format, such forms were partially provided by one RPHA and 3 (50 %) did not provide such forms.

No RPHA received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a RPHA issue a bilingual public instrument. No RPHA received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language. No RPHA issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey results showed that two RPHAs partially used the minority language at their meetings. In 4 (67 %) cases, the national minority language was not used at the RPHA's meetings.

Two (33 %) RPHAs held their meetings using both the state language and the minority language and 4 (67 %) held meetings in the state language.

At 3 (50 %) RPHAs, the possibility to use a minority language at the meetings was provided for by means of staff who have a command of the minority language. At two (33 %) RPHAs, no provisions were made for the possibility to use of the minority language at the meetings. One RPHA did not respond to this question.

One RPHA prepared documents for the meetings in the state language and partially in the minority language and 5 (83 %) RPHAs only in the state language.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

Two (33 %) RPHAs provided information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic was provided in publicly accessible places in the municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language; this information was partially at a further two (33 %) RPHAs and two (33 %) RPHAs did not provide this information.

Public information signs and notices were provided in a minority language at two RPHAs and partially at one RPHA; 3 (50 %) RPHAs did not provide these signs and notices were in the minority language.

Announcements intended to inform the public were also provided in the minority language at 5 (83 %) RPHAs. One RPHA did not respond to this question. Of the total of 5 RPHAs, one displayed these announcements on the public announcements board, one used information leaflets, local TV or press and 3 used a combination of these methods.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was not fulfilled by two RPHAs; two RPHAs made this information partially available in the minority language and two did not provide it in the minority language.

3.3.3.7 State archives

The questionnaire survey concerned 5 state archives in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 1–6)

All state archives displayed the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language on the buildings of state administration authorities in accordance with the Act. The obligation to display the name of the public authority on buildings in the state language and in the minority language was also fulfilled by all state archives; one of them used the same font size for both names and 4 (80 %) state archives used a smaller font size for the minority language.

Official contact (questions 7–19)

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, all state archives provided for the possibility of using the national minority language in official contact by means of their staff communicating in the minority language. The statutory obligation to provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using a national minority language at the seat of the authority was also fulfilled by all 5 state archives. In 3 (60 %) cases, the state archives used information boards for this purpose; in one case, the building's entrance door was used and in one case the information board and the public announcements board were used. In 3 (60 %)

cases, the state archives provided this information in both the state language and the minority language and in two cases only in the state language.

No state archive reserved a time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language. Two state archives received 33 written submissions in the minority language, which related to historical research, requests (research into administrative information on individuals and legal entities) and exploratory research. Two state archives provided two responses to the above submissions. None of the state archives kept their official records in the minority language along with the state language.

Bilingual documents (questions 20–35)

The results of the questionnaire survey revealed that one state archive provided citizens with official forms issued under their authority in a bilingual format, one state archive partially provided such forms and two did not provide such forms. None of the state archives received requests for the issue of bilingual official forms or public instruments during the period under review. Neither did a state archive issue a bilingual public instrument. No state archive received submissions in a minority language initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language. No state archive issued a decision in administrative proceedings with a counterpart in the minority language during the period under review.

Meetings of state administration authorities (questions 36–39)

The survey results showed that one state archive partially used the minority language at its meetings. In two cases, the minority language was not used and in two cases no response was provided to this question.

Meetings were held in the state language by 3 (60 %) state archives. Two state archives did not respond to this question.

One state archive provided for the possibility of using the minority language at its meetings by means of staff who have a command of the minority language and, at one state archive, no provisions were made for the use of the national minority language at the meetings. 3 (60 %) state archives did not respond to this question. Documents for the meetings were prepared in the state language at 3 (60 %) state archives. Two (40 %) state archives did not respond to this question.

Provision of information to the public (questions 40–46)

3 (60 %) state archives provided information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places in the municipalities defined by the Act in the minority language along with the state language; this information was not provided by two (40 %) state archives. Public information signs and notices were provided in a minority language at 3 (60 %) state archives and partially provided at one state archive. One state archive did not respond to this question.

Announcements intended to inform the public were displayed in the minority language at all 5 state archives; one state archive provided these announcements on its public announcements board, two (40 %) on information boards, on the entrance door, at the mailroom or on a notice board, and two (40 %) used a combination of these methods.

The obligation to make essential information publicly available in the minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals was fulfilled by one state archive and partially by 3 (60 %) state archives. One state archive did not respond to this question.

3.4 Organisational units of armed security forces and rescue services

In § 3(1), Act No 270/1995 Coll. lays down that state authorities, local self-government authorities and other public authorities, legal entities established by them and legal entities established by law use the state language in official contact and their staff, civil servants, municipal police officers, members of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the ‘armed forces’), armed security forces, other armed forces and the Fire and Rescue Service are required to have a command and use the state language in official contact; this is without prejudice to the use of national minority languages in official contact in accordance with special legislation, i.e. Act No 184/1999 Coll. Within the meaning of § 7(4) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., if members of the armed forces, armed security forces, other armed forces, or officers of the Fire and Rescue Service or municipal police have a command of a minority language, they can use the minority language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority in the municipalities referred to in § 2(1). According to § 7a of the Act, the Office of the Government provides expert and methodological assistance to public authorities and organisational units of security forces and rescue services with regard to the implementation of this Act. A list of the organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service, armed security forces, armed forces of the Slovak Republic and other armed forces, in which a minority language is used in communication along with the state language within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll. is provided in Annex 9.

3.4.1 Organisational units of the Police Force

The roles, organisation and management of the Police Force are governed by Act No 171/1993 Coll., on the Police Force, as amended (hereinafter ‘Act No 171/1993 Coll.’). According to § 1(3) of Act No 171/1993 Coll., the operation of the Police Force is governed by the Constitution, constitutional acts, acts and other legislation of general application, as well as by international treaties binding on the Slovak Republic. According to § 2(2) of this Act, the Police Force performs state administration roles and other roles, if so provided for in special legislation. According to § 4(1) and (2) of Act No 171/1993 Coll., the Police Force is divided into the criminal police service, financial police service, public order police service, traffic police service, railway police service, property protection service, border and alien police service, special-purpose service, service for the protection of specified persons and the inspection service. The organisational structure of the Police Force includes a forensic science unit, which performs specialised activities and court expert activities in accordance with special legislation. The Police Force services operate within Police Force units that are set up and dissolved by the Minister; the Minister also defines their roles and internal organisation.

In the context of preparing the 2016 report, the Office of the Plenipotentiary identified 28 district directorates of the Police Force (hereinafter also ‘district directorates’), in which a minority language is used in official contact along with the state language. When preparing the report for the period 2017–2018, the MI SR identified 27 district directorates in the municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll. All the district directorates concerned sent back their completed questionnaires, which means that the return rate was 100 %. The district directorates were requested to respond to 37 questions covering the

following themes: official contact, bilingual documents, provision of information to the public and final questions. The questionnaire for the district directorates is provided in Annex 4.

Official contact (questions 2–11)

The survey showed that a total of 586 (10 %) officers (working at 18 district directorates) of the 5 709 officers in the 27 district directorates had a spoken and written command of the minority language and 1 029 officers (18 % working at 21 district directorates) had a spoken command of the minority language. 6 district directorates had no officers with a command of the national minority language. 13 district directorates provided for the possibility of using the national minority language when performing state administration tasks by means of the organisational unit's officers and 10 of these, together with a further 12, used interpreting or translation services for this purpose. One district directorate reported that persons belonging to national minorities communicated in the state language. 3 district directorates received 24 written submissions from citizens in a minority language. These related to the provision of information on a football match, proceedings on minor offences, criminal proceedings, illegal sale of goods and unauthorised business activities. One district directorate provided a response relating to information on a football match in the minority language, one district directorate provided such a response partially and one did not provide such a response. 6 organisational units of the Police Force used the minority language in duty-related contact in addition to the state language, 4 organisational units used it partially, 16 did not use the minority language at all and one district directorate did not respond to this question. At 10 organisational units of the Police Force, police officers who had a command of the minority language used this language when communicating with citizens belonging to a national minority, 8 units used it partially and the minority language was not used at 8 organisational units.

Bilingual documents (questions 12–27)

3 organisational units of the Police Force issued forms under their authority in a bilingual format and 8 units partially provided such forms, in particular in areas such as verification of professional competence for vehicle drivers (tests in national minority languages), instructions on the rights and obligations of persons whose personal freedom was restricted or forms used in criminal proceedings. No organisational units of the Police Force received requests for the issue of public instruments (such as permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) in a bilingual format, in both the state language and the minority language, in the period under review, therefore, such bilingual forms and public instruments were not issued. No organisational units of the Police Force received a request for the issue of bilingual decisions. One organisational unit of the Police Force received two submissions initiating administrative proceedings in a minority language, however, no decision in the minority language was issued in the period under review.

Provision of information to the public (questions 28– 31)

3 district directorates partially provided information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic displayed in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the organisational units of the Police Force; 24 district directorates did not provide it. The situation with regard to the provision of signs and notices in the minority language was similar – 4 district directorates made them available on the public announcements boards and, in 11 % of cases (3 district directorates), these were provided at car parks at cemeteries or in stores, or via the municipal PA system or local television. General essential information for citizens was partially provided in the national minority language by one district directorate (4%), 26 district directorates did not make it public available.

Final questions (questions 28–34)

9 district directorates (33 %) found creating the conditions for using the minority language in official contact, when performing state administration tasks, problem-free for the organisational unit of the Police Force, 12 district directorates (44 %) found it partially problematic and 5 district directorates (19 %) found it problematic. The biggest issue was a lack of qualified staff, which was reported as a problematic factor by 12 district directorates (44 %). 11 % of district directorates considered a lack of funding and inadequate technical support to be a complication, 19 % district directorates complained about a lack of command of the language and a shortage of interpreters.

3.4.2 Organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service

The establishment, status, roles, organisation and management of the Fire and Rescue Service are governed by Act No 315/2001 Coll., on the Fire and Rescue Brigade, as amended (hereinafter also ‘Act No 315/2001 Coll.’). According to § 4(1) of Act No 315/2001 Coll., the service comprises: the Praesidium of the service, regional directorates of the service, district directorates of the service, the Fire and Rescue Service of the Capital City of the Slovak Republic Bratislava, and facilities and units of the service. According to § 3(1) of Act No 315/2001 Coll., the service performs state administration roles related to fire protection and other roles referred to in special legislation. At request of the Office of the Plenipotentiary, the MI SR identified the relevant district directorates of the Fire and Rescue Service, in which a minority language is used in official contact along with the state language. All 6 units that were contacted returned their completed questionnaires, which means the return rate was 100 %. District directorates of the Fire and Rescue Service (hereinafter also ‘district directorates’) were requested to respond to a total of 54 questions covering the following themes: signs in minority languages, official contact, bilingual documents, meetings of organisational units of the rescue service, provision of information to the public and final questions. The questionnaire for organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service is provided in Annex 5.

Signs in national minority languages (questions 2–6)

Out of the 6 district directorates located in municipalities with a Hungarian minority population, 3 (50%) reported the name of their organisational unit in the minority language; the remaining 3 responded that they either did not have or did not know such a name. Two directorates displayed the name on their building along with the name in the state language using a smaller font size.

Official contact (questions 7–21)

The district directorates which are subject to Act No 184/1999 Coll. have a total of 355 members, of whom 113 (32 %) had a spoken and written command of the minority language and 95 (27 %) had a spoken command of the language. Every organisational unit had at least one member who had a command of the minority language, at two units there were only members who had a spoken command of the minority language. Members of two (33 %) district directorates used the minority language when communicating with citizens belonging to the national minority, members of one (17 %) district directorate used the minority language partially. 5 (83%) district directorates used their own members to provide for the possibility of using the minority language in official contact, one (17%) district directorate responded that the need for it had yet to arise. No district directorates reserved a special time slot for handling administrative affairs in the minority language and 5 of the 6 units did not provide at a visible place information about the possibilities of using the minority language in oral or written form in official contact at the seat of the authority. One unit provided this information in the state language on its information board. No district directorates received written submissions from citizens in the national minority language and

none of them used this language in official records, such as minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, etc.

Bilingual documents (questions 22–37)

None of the district directorates received requests for official forms, public instruments or decisions in a bilingual format, or submissions initiating administrative proceedings in the minority language.

Meetings of organisational units of the rescue service (questions 38–41)

None of the district directorates that were contacted held meetings in the minority language or prepared documents for meetings in the minority language.

Provision of information to the public (questions 42–48)

None of the district directorates received requests for the provision of information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language. None of the district directorates provided public information signs and notices or general essential information in the minority language. One district directorate partially provided announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language on its public announcements board, the remaining units either did not provide it or did not respond to the question.

Final questions (questions 49–54)

3 district directorates found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact problem-free, 2 district directorates found it partially problematic and one found it problematic. A lack of qualified staff, inadequate technical support and only partial knowledge of the minority language were reported as the key issues. None of the district directorates received complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July).

3.4.3 Organisational units of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps

The Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps (hereinafter also the ‘Corps’) were established under Act No 4/2001 Coll., on the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps, and are described as an armed force performing roles related to serving custody and imprisonment sentences, protection and guarding of the Corps’ facilities and protection of order and security in court buildings. In terms of organisational structure, the Corps comprise the general directorate, custodial institutions, prisons, prisons for juveniles, a hospital for accused and convicted persons and the Corps’ officers. The general directorate and the institutions are established and abolished by the MJ SR as separate publicly-funded organisation. For the first time, the questionnaire survey examined the use of national minority languages by the Corps’ officers and, in connection with this, one penitentiary institution (hereinafter also ‘prison’) was contacted, which sent back its completed questionnaire. The questionnaire for organisational units of the Corps is provided in Annex 6.

Official contact (questions 2–4)

The survey results showed that of the total of 236 officers of the prison, 113 (48 %) had a spoken and written command and 49 (21 %) had only a spoken command of the minority language. The prison’s officers who had a command of the minority language used this language when communicating with citizens belonging to the national minority.

Provision of information to the public (questions 5– 7)

Information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places under the prison’s administration was not provided in the minority language. The prison⁶⁰ we approached did not provide essential information⁶¹ in the minority language.

Final questions (questions 8–12)

The institution we approached did not receive any complaint concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages during the period under review.

⁶⁰ The Želiezovce penitentiary institution.

⁶¹ How the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity’s decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.

3.4.4 Organisational units of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic

Within the meaning of Act No 321/2002 Coll. on the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, the composition of personnel of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter also the ‘armed forces’) and their organisational structure in the time of war, state of war, state of emergency and state of crisis, is governed by a constitutional act. Civil servants and other civilian personnel also participate in the performance of the roles of the armed forces. The internal organisational structure of the divisions, units, offices and facilities of the armed forces and their logistic support is specified by the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic, at the proposal of the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces. The Slovak armed forces comprise a ground force and an air force. For the first time, the survey examined the use of national minority languages by members of the Slovak armed forces. A total of 6 military units of the armed forces that were approached and returned their completed questionnaires; 4 of them were military units of the Slovak Air Force and two were military units of the Slovak Ground Force. The questionnaire for the organisational units of the armed forces is provided in Annex 7.

Official contact (questions 2–4)

The survey results showed that of the total of 804 members of the 6 military units of the Slovak armed forces, 118 (15 %) had a spoken and written command and 96 (12 %) only had a spoken command of a minority language. Members of two military units of the Slovak armed forces who had a command of a national minority language used this language when communicating with citizens belonging to the national minority; it was partially used at 3 units and one unit did not use the minority language.

Provision of information to the public (questions 5– 7)⁶²

None of the military units of the Slovak armed forces reported the provision of information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic in publicly accessible places under the administration of the organisational unit and 3 military units reported that they had no premises accessible by the public. No military units of the Slovak armed forces made essential information⁶³ publicly available in the minority language.

Final questions (questions 8–11)

No military units of the Slovak armed forces received complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages during the period under review.

⁶² This does not apply to buildings and premises of the organisational units of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic that are not accessible by the public.

⁶³ For details see § 5a(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Conclusion

The present, fourth report on the situation regarding the use of national minority languages in the territory of the Slovak Republic is the most extensive so far in terms of the areas covered and the breadth and depth of the monitored parameters of the use of national minority languages based on Act No 184/1999 Coll. In continuation of the preceding reports, this report provides a comparison based on a time series of important statistical data that can be used to examine more deeply the dynamics of phenomena over time and analyse the facts that affected and influenced these phenomena. At the same time, the report continues to use the data processing method from the report for 2015–2016, which was aimed at identifying those areas where shortcomings exist in practical use of national minority languages.

The report maps out the situation with regard to the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the territory of the Slovak Republic in the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July 2018) in respect of the national legislative and institutional frameworks for the use of national minority languages, the international legislative framework for the use of national minority languages and the use of minority languages by public authorities and organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service, armed security forces, the Slovak armed forces and other armed forces. The report provides detailed and clear information obtained on the basis of an extensive questionnaire survey, which serves as an important source of information on the situation with regard to the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Basic findings: For all monitored entities, the report monitors three categories of language rights arising from Act No 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) language rights, compliance with which is compulsory and breaches of which constitute an administrative offence under § 7b of Act No 184/1999 Coll.;
- b) language rights, compliance with which is compulsory, but breaches of which do not constitute an administrative offence under Act No 184/1999 Coll.;
- c) language rights, the application of which is optional under Act No 184/1999 Coll.

The report includes a separate Annex 10, which contains a list and number of the specific deficiencies in the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. identified on the basis of the questionnaire survey.

§ 7b(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll. defines the language rights, compliance with which is compulsory and breaches of which constitute an administrative offence. An administrative offence related to the use of national minority languages in a municipality referred to in § 2(1) is committed by public authorities if they:

- fail to allow a citizen who is a person belonging to a national minority to communicate orally and in writing in the minority language or fail to inform such a citizen of this possibility [§ 2(3)];
- fail to issue, at the request of a citizen who is a person belonging to a national minority, a counterpart of a decision or birth, marriage or death certificate in the minority language [§ 2(4) and (5)];
- fail to display in the minority language the name of the authority on the building serving as their seat [§ 2(6)];

- fail to provide in the minority language an official form issued under their authority, if so requested [§ 2(7)];
- fail to display, within their territory and scope of competence, the name of the municipality in the minority language in the cases specified in § 4(1);
- fail to ensure the provision of information, notices and announcements within the scope of their competence [in accordance with § 4(6), first sentence];
- fail to provide, at request, information on legislation of general application in the minority language [§ 4(8)];
- fail to provide the Office of the Government with information and written documentation [as referred to in § 7a(3)].

Within the meaning of § 7b(2) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., an administrative offence related to the use of national minority languages is committed by legal entities or natural persons-entrepreneurs if they fail to display the signs or notices referred to in § 4(6) in the minority language, if these signs or notices contain information relating to threats to life, health, property or safety of citizens of the Slovak Republic.

The results of the monitoring show that deficiencies in the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. in the areas defined above may have occurred in a total of 1 267 cases (see Annex 10 to this report).

Another category are language rights, compliance with which is compulsory, but breaches of which do not constitute an administrative offence under Act No 184/1999 Coll.; these comprise the following rights:

- to receive a response from public authorities in the minority language to submissions written in the minority language;
- to have issued, at request, permits, licences, certificates and statements in the minority language;
- to have issued decisions of public authorities made in administrative proceedings in the minority language if the proceedings were initiated by a submission in the minority language;
- to have issued, at request, decisions of public authorities made in administrative proceedings in the minority language;
- to be provided with the essential information displayed on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in the periodicals published in the minority language.

The results of the monitoring show that deficiencies in the application of this category of language rights may have occurred in 709 cases (see Annex 10 to this Report).

Language rights, the application of which is optional under Act No 184/1999 Coll., comprise:

- the name of the municipality⁶⁴ on railway station, bus station, airport and river port signs in the municipality also displayed in the minority language;
- street names in the municipality displayed in the minority language;
- local place-names in the municipality displayed in the minority language;
- official records also kept in the minority language, in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records;
- municipal chronicles also kept in the minority language;
- the use of minority languages by municipal police officers in duty-related contact;
- minority languages used by municipal police officers, officers of armed security forces, other armed forces and the Fire and Rescue Service who have a command of the minority language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority;
- minority languages used at municipal council sessions by members of the municipal council;
- meetings of public authorities also held in the minority language;
- legislation of general application also issued in the minority language by public authorities;
- the provision of announcements intended to inform the public through municipal PA systems or other technical means also in the minority language;
- the provision of inscriptions on monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques also in the minority language.

The results of the monitoring show that the language rights in this category were exercised in 2 194 cases and partially exercised in 1 053 cases. These rights were not exercised in 2 611 cases (see Annex 10 to this Report).

If we compare the total number of the deficiencies identified with those from the preceding report, we can conclude that there has been a positive change in terms of reducing their number – the results of the monitoring shows that while the number of potential breaches of Act No 184/1999 Coll. was 1 712 in 2016, there were only 1 267 such cases in 2018. As regard the language rights, compliance with which is compulsory, but breaches of which do not constitute an administrative offence under Act No 184/1999 Coll., the mapping in 2016 revealed that potential deficiencies in this area existed in 590 cases, while in 2018 there were 709 such cases. In 2016, language rights, the application of which is optional under Act No 184/1999 Coll., were exercised in 1 736 cases, partially exercised in 698 cases and not exercised in 2 440 cases. In 2018, the language rights in this category were exercised in 2 194 cases, partially exercised in 1 053 cases and not exercised in 2 611 cases.

The results of the monitoring also revealed that in the case of municipalities, the situation with regard to the use of national minority languages in official contact has improved for every national minority. Greatest progress was achieved in the use of the

⁶⁴ The term municipality is used within the meaning of § 2(1) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

language of the Hungarian national minority, but progress was also made with regard to the use of Ruthenian, Romani and Ukrainian. No changes occurred in the case of the only municipality with a German minority population.

There were some significant changes relating to official contact in state administration. Almost all state administration authorities provided for the possibility of using the national minority language in official contact – the majority of these authorities used Hungarian and, in 4 cases, Ruthenian was partially used. As regards signs in national minority languages, the number of state administration authorities displaying on their buildings the name of the municipality in the minority language along with the name in the state language and the name of the public authority in the minority language has increased. Slight improvement was achieved in the provision of information to the public in the national minority language. One of the areas where no progress has been achieved is the availability of bilingual documents – bilingual forms were issued only in rare cases, decisions were not issued with counterparts in the minority language and public instruments (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were not issued in a bilingual format. Less than half of municipalities and state administration authorities found creating conditions for using national minority languages in official contact as problematic or partially problematic. They identified the following as the relevant factors: a lack of funding, inadequate technical support and a lack of qualified staff.

In conclusion, we should note that the results of the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire survey in this report, including comparisons with the results of the surveys used in the preceding reports, unveiled persisting deficiencies and opportunities for improvement. In the same manner as the conclusion of the report for the 2015–2016 period, this report also identifies the areas and scope of non-compliance with Act No 184/1999 Coll. In the context of implementing the Government Resolution approving the report for the 2015-2016 period, the Office of the Government, in cooperation with the Plenipotentiary, took steps aimed at eliminating the deficiencies together with activities to establish cooperation and interaction with several relevant ministries. At his own initiative, the Plenipotentiary visited several municipalities where persons belonging to national minorities reside. The objective of these visits was to help improve the application of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages. The results of the most recent survey show that these activities contributed to positive developments in this area since the situation has demonstrably improved in terms of several parameters; on the other hand, the survey also showed that as awareness of the rights increases, municipalities and state administration authorities become increasingly more aware that certain problems continue to persist. Based on this experience, in the forthcoming period, it will be necessary to continue the cooperation and activities that have started and, in liaison with the relevant ministries, state administration authorities, municipalities and Slovak citizens belonging to a national minority, continue to eliminate the remaining deficiencies and strengthen the provision of expert and methodological assistance by the Office of the Government in the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

List of annexes

- Annex 1: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for local self-government authorities (municipalities)
- Annex 2: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for legal entities established by a local self-government authority
- Annex 3: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for national/local state administration authorities
- Annex 4: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of the Police Force
- Annex 5: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of rescue services
- Annex 6: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps
- Annex 7: Questionnaire on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic
- Annex 8: List of state administration authorities and their organisational units that use a minority language along with the state language in official written contact within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll.
- Annex 9: List of the organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service, armed security forces, Slovak armed forces and other armed forces in which a minority language is used along with the state language in communication within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll.
- Annex 10: List and number of specific deficiencies in the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. identified on the basis of the questionnaire survey

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages for local self-government authorities
(municipalities)

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic. Within the meaning of § 7a(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in areas falling under their competence. Public authorities that do not provide the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic with information and written documentation for this purpose will commit an administrative offence under § 7b(1)(h) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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|------------------------------------|
| SIGNS IN MINORITY LANGUAGES |
|------------------------------------|

1. Please provide the name of the municipality in the state language:

.....

2. Please specify the national minority for which this questionnaire is being completed (if the municipality has multiple minority populations, the questionnaire is to be completed separately for each national minority):

.....

3. Please provide the name of the municipality in the minority language:

.....

4. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed on the *municipality's entry/exit signs*:

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

d) not applicable to our municipality (note: if the name of the municipality in the minority language is identical to that in the state language)

5. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided in a national minority language in the form of additional text notices on traffic signs:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to our municipality (note: if no traffic signs with additional text notices are installed in the municipality)

6. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed below the name in the state language on *railway station, bus station, airport and river port name signs*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to our municipality

7. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 6, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed below the name in the state language on the *railway station, bus station, airport and river port name signs* using:

- a) the same font size
- b) a smaller font size

8. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed along with the name in the state language on the *buildings of public authorities*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

9. Please indicate how the *name of the public authority* is displayed on the *buildings*:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

10. Please indicate whether the *name of the public authority* in the minority language is displayed on the *buildings* along with the equivalent in the state language using:

- a) the same font size
- b) a smaller font size

11. If *street-name signs* are used in your municipality, are these:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language
- c) not applicable to our municipality

12. If local place-name signs are used in your municipality, are these:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language
- c) not applicable to our municipality

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| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
|-------------------------|

13. Please indicate the total number of staff at your municipal office:

.....

14. Please specify the number of staff who have a command of the minority language:

- a) spoken and written
- b) only spoken

15. Please indicate how your municipality provides for the possibility of using minority languages in official contact:

- a) by means of the municipality's staff communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

16. Please indicate whether a time slot is reserved in your municipality for handling administrative affairs in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) no

17. Please indicate whether information about the possibilities for using minority languages in official contact, in both spoken and written form, is displayed by your municipality at the seat of the public authority within the meaning of § 1 of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) yes
- b) no

18. If you marked a) in response to question 17, in what language is this information provided (note: multiple answers are possible)?

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language

19. If you marked a) in response to question 17, how is this information provided (note: multiple answers are possible)?

- a) on the municipality's public announcements board
- b) on the municipality's information board
- c) by other means (please specify)

.....

20. Please indicate whether your office received *written submissions* from citizens in the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

21. If you marked a) in response to question 20, what was the total number of such submissions during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July)?

.....

22. If you marked a) in response to question 20, what areas did these submissions concern?

.....

23. If you marked a) in response to question 20, please indicate whether your office’s *responses to submissions* written in the minority language were provided in the minority language along with the state language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

24. Please indicate whether your municipality uses the minority language in official records of the municipal office – e.g. minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, etc.:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

25. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 24, please indicate in what areas:

.....

26. If your municipality keeps chronicles, are these also kept in the minority language?

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to our municipality

MUNICIPAL POLICE (note: complete only if this question applies to your municipality)

27. Please specify the total number of municipal police officers:

.....

28. Please specify the number of municipal police officers who have a command of the minority language:

- a) spoken and written
- b) only spoken

29. Please indicate whether the minority language is used by municipal police officers along with the state language in duty-related contact:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

30. Did the persons present give their consent to the use of the minority language by municipal police officers in duty-related contact in your municipality?

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) in some cases

31. Do municipal police officers in your municipality who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority?

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

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| BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS |
|----------------------------|

OFFICIAL FORMS

32. Please indicate whether your municipality provides citizens with *official forms* issued within the scope of its authority *in a bilingual format*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

33. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 32, please specify in what areas these are provided:

.....

34. Please indicate whether your municipality received *requests for the issue of bilingual official forms that are both in the state language and the minority language* during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

35. Please indicate whether your municipality issued, at request, *bilingual official forms* that were both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS

36. Please indicate whether your municipality received *requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

37. If you marked a) in response to question 36, please specify the number of the requests during the period under review:

- number of requests for permits:
- number of requests for licences:
- number of requests for certificates:
- number of requests for opinions:
- number of requests for statements:

38. If you marked a) in response to question 36, please indicate whether any *bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were issued during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

39. If you marked a) in response to question 38, please specify the number of the requests during the period under review:

- number of permits:
- number of licences:
- number of certificates:
- number of opinions:
- number of statements:

40. If your municipality has a registrar’s office, did it receive *requests for the issue of bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates* during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July)?

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) not applicable to our municipality

41. If you marked a) in response to question 40, please indicate whether *bilingual birth, marriage or death certificates* were issued in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

42. If you marked a) in response to question 41, please specify the number of the certificates during the period under review:

- number of birth certificates :
- number of marriage certificates:
- number of death certificates:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

43. Please indicate whether your municipality received *submissions initiating administrative proceedings* in a minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

44. If you marked a) in response to question 43, please specify the number of the submissions during the period under review:

45. Please indicate whether your municipality received *requests for the issue of bilingual decisions* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

46. If you marked a) in response to question 45, please specify the number of the requests during the period under review:

47. Please indicate whether your municipality *issued decisions in administrative proceedings* with a counterpart in the minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

48. If you marked a) in response to question 47, please specify the number of the decisions during the period under review:

49. If you marked a) in response to question 47, please specify what areas these decisions concerned:

.....

50. If your municipality issues decisions in the minority language, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is provided along with the name in the state language *in decisions* issued in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to our municipality

SESSIONS OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES

51. Please indicate whether the members of the municipal council in your municipality use a minority language at the sessions of the municipal council:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

52. Please indicate whether the minority language is also used by the mayor of your municipality at the sessions of the municipal council:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

53. Please indicate in what language the sessions of the municipal council in your municipality are held:

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

54. Please indicate whether supporting documents for the sessions of the municipal council are also prepared in the minority language in your municipality:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

55. Please indicate how your municipality provides for the possibility of using minority languages at municipal council sessions:

- a) by means of interpreting services
- b) by other means (please specify):
.....

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

56. Please indicate whether your municipality received *requests for the issue of information on legislation of general application* in the minority language, along with the state language, in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

57. If you marked a) in response to question 56, please specify the number of the requests during the period under review:

58. If you marked a) in response to question 56, please indicate whether your municipality provided information on legislation of general application in the minority language along with the state language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

59. Please indicate whether legislation of general application is also issued and published in the minority language by your municipality:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

60. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the municipality:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

61. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices (especially in stores, at sports facilities, in restaurants, on streets, next to and above roads, in airports, and at bus and railways stations) administered by the municipality are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

62. Please indicate whether announcements intended to inform the public using the municipal PA system or other technical means are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

63. Please indicate where announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language are made by your municipality (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on the municipality's website
- b) through the municipal PA system
- c) on municipal television
- d) in the municipality's periodicals
- e) on the municipality's public announcements board
- f) other (please specify):

.....

64. Please indicate whether essential information (information about the composition and powers of the municipality's self-government bodies, an overview of legislation, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the municipality in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of individuals and legal entities in relation to the municipality, the place, time and method how information can be obtained, information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the procedure to be followed by the municipality when handling any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the municipality for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information, as well as information about the management of public finances and the municipality's property) on the municipality's public announcements board, website and in periodicals is also published in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

65. If your municipality owns monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques, are the inscriptions on them provided in the minority language along with the state language?

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to our municipality

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| FINAL QUESTIONS |
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66. Please indicate whether your municipality finds creating conditions for using minority languages in official contact:

- a) problem-free
- b) partially problematic
- c) problematic

67. If you marked b) or c) in response to question 66, please provide the reason:

- a) a lack of qualified staff
- b) a lack of funding
- c) a lack of technical support
- d) other factors (please specify)

.....

68. Please indicate whether your municipality received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

69. If you marked a) in response to question 68, please specify the total number of the complaints during the period under review:

70. If you marked a) in response to question 68, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:
.....

71. If you marked a) in response to question 68, please specify how these complaints were handled:.....

Date:
Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):
.....

Date:
Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the mayor of the municipality):
.....

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages for legal entities established by local self-
government authorities

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic. Within the meaning of § 7a(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in areas falling under their competence. Public authorities that do not provide the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic with information and written documentation for this purpose will commit an administrative offence under § 7b(1)(h) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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| SIGNS IN MINORITY LANGUAGES |
|------------------------------------|

1. Please provide the name of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority in the state language:

.....

2. Please provide the name of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority in the minority language:

.....

3. Please specify the national minority for which this questionnaire is being completed (if the municipality has multiple minority populations, the questionnaire is to be completed separately for each national minority):

.....

4. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed along with the name in the state language *on the buildings of the legal entity* established by a local self-government authority:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

5. Please indicate how the *name of the legal entity* established by a local self-government authority is displayed *on its buildings*:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

6. Please indicate whether the *name of the legal entity* established by a local self-government authority is displayed *on buildings* in the minority language along with the equivalent in the state language using:

- a) the same font size
- b) a smaller font size

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| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
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7. Please specify the total number of staff of the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority:

8. Please specify the number of staff who have a command of the minority language:

- a) spoken and written
- b) only spoken

9. Please indicate how the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority provides for the possibility of using minority languages in official contact:

- a) by means of staff of the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority who communicate in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

10. Please indicate whether a time slot is reserved by the local state administration authority for handling administrative affairs in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) no

11. Please indicate whether information about the possibilities for using minority languages in official contact in both spoken and written form is displayed by the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority at a visible place at the seat of the

public authority within the meaning of § 1 of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) yes
- b) no

12. If you marked a) in response to question 11, please indicate in what language this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language

13. If you marked a) in response to question 11, please indicate how this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on the public announcements board
- b) on the information board
- c) by other means (please specify)

.....

14. Please indicate whether the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority received *written submissions* filed by citizens in the minority language during the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

15. If you marked a) in response to question 14, what was the total number of such submissions during the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July)?

16. If you marked a) in response to question 14, what areas did these submissions concern?

.....

17. If you marked a) in response to question 14, please indicate whether the *responses of the legal entity* established by a local self-government authority *to submissions* in a minority language were, in addition to the state language, also provided in the minority language during the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

18. Please indicate whether a minority language is also used in official records – e.g. minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, etc. by the *legal entity* established by a local self-government:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

19. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 18, please specify in what areas:

.....

BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS

OFFICIAL FORMS

20. Please indicate whether the *legal entity* established by a local self-government authority provides citizens with *official forms* issued within the scope of its authority *in a bilingual format*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to the legal entity established by a local self-government authority

21. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 20, please specify the areas in which these are provided:

.....

22. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual official forms* that are both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

23. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority issued, at request, *bilingual official forms* that were both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS

24. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) not applicable to the legal entity established by a local self-government authority

25. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of requests for permits:
- number of requests for licences:
- number of requests for certificates:
- number of requests for opinions:

- number of requests for statements:

26. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please indicate whether any *bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were issued during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

27. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of permits:
- number of licences:
- number of certificates:
- number of opinions:
- number of statements:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

28. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *submissions initiating administrative proceedings* in a minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) not applicable to the legal entity established by a local self-government authority

29. If you marked a) in response to question 26, please specify the number of the submissions in the period under review:

.....

30. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual decisions* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) not applicable to the legal entity established by a local self-government authority

31. If you marked a) in response to question 30, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

.....

32. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority issued *decisions in administrative proceedings* with a counterpart in the minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes

b) no

33. If you marked a) in response to question 32, please specify the total number of such decisions in the period under review:

34. If you marked a) in response to question 32, please specify what areas these decisions concerned:

35. If the legal entity established by a local self-government authority issues decisions in a minority language, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is provided along with the name in the state language in *decisions* issued in the minority language:

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

d) not applicable to the legal entity established by a local self-government authority

| |
|---|
| SESSIONS OF THE BODIES OF THE LEGAL ENTITIES |
|---|

36. Please indicate whether a minority language is used at the sessions of the bodies of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority:

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

37. Please indicate in what language the sessions of the bodies of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority are held:

a) in the state language

b) in the minority language

b) in the state language and in the minority language

38. Please indicate whether supporting documents for sessions of the bodies of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority are also prepared in a minority language:

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

39. Please indicate how the possibility of using minority languages at the sessions of the bodies of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority is provide for:

a) by means of interpreting services

b) by other means (please specify):

.....

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

40. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *requests for the issue of information on legislation of general application* in the minority language, along with the state language, in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

41. If you marked a) in response to question 40, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

42. If you marked a) in response to question 40, please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority *provided information on legislation of general application* in the minority language along with the state language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

43. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the legal entity established by a local self-government authority:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

44. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the legal entity established by a local self-government authority are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

45. Please indicate where announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language are made by the legal entity established by a local self-government authority (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on its website
- b) on its public announcements board
- c) other places (please specify):

.....

46. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other

submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity’s decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

AREAS OF PUBLIC CONTACT

47. If the legal entity established by a local self-government authority is a healthcare facility, please indicate how it provides for the possibility of communicating with the staff of the healthcare facility in the minority language (please complete only if applicable):

- a) by means of the healthcare facility’s staff communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

48. If the legal entity established by a local self-government authority is a social services facility, please indicate how it provides for the possibility of communicating with the staff of the social services facility in the minority language (please complete only if applicable):

- a) by means of the social services facility’s staff communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

49. If the legal entity established by a local self-government authority is a facility for the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, please indicate how it provides for the possibility of communicating with the staff of the facility for the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship in the minority language (please complete only if applicable):

- a) by means of the staff of the facility for the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

FINAL QUESTIONS

50. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority found creating the conditions for using minority languages in official contact:

- a) problem-free
- b) partially problematic
- c) problematic

51. If you marked b) or c) in response to question 50, please provide the reason:

- a) a lack of qualified staff
- b) a lack of funding
- c) a lack of technical support
- d) other factors (please specify)

.....
52. Please indicate whether the legal entity established by a local self-government authority received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

53. If you marked a) in response to question 52, please specify the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

54. If you marked a) in response to question 52, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

.....
55. If you marked a) in response to question 52, please specify how these complaints were handled:

.....
Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):
.....

Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the statutory representative of the legal entity established by a local self-government authority):
.....

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages for local state administration authorities⁶⁵

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic. Within the meaning of § 7a(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in areas falling under their competence. Public authorities that do not provide the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic with information and written documentation for this purpose will commit an administrative offence under § 7b(1)(h) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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| SIGNS IN MINORITY LANGUAGES |
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1. Please provide the name of the local state administration authority in the state language:

.....

2. Please provide the name of the local state administration authority in the minority language:

.....

3. Please specify the national minority for which this questionnaire is being completed (if the municipality has multiple minority populations, the questionnaire is to be completed separately for each national minority):

.....

⁶⁵ Note: In the case of organisational units of tax offices, labour, social affairs and family offices, regional veterinary and food administrations, regional public health authorities and state archives, the name of the authority, with the exception of district offices, was used throughout the questionnaire. The questionnaires for customs offices contained identical questions, but these were extended to include the following two questions: Question 9: 'Please indicate whether the customs office uses a minority language in duty-related contact in addition to the state language.' and question 10: 'Do employees of the customs office who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority?'

4. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed along with the name in the state language *on the buildings of the local state administration authorities*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

5. Please indicate how the *name of the local state administration authority* is displayed *on the buildings*:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

6. Please indicate whether the *name of the local state administration authority* in the minority language is displayed *on the buildings* along with the equivalent in the state language using:

- a) the same font size
- b) a smaller font size

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| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
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7. Please specify the total number of staff of the local state administration authority:

.....

8. Please specify the number of staff who have a command of the minority language:

- a) spoken and written
- b) only spoken

9. Please indicate how the local state administration authority provides for the possibility of using minority languages in official contact:

- a) by means of the staff of the local state administration authority communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

10. Please indicate whether a time slot is reserved by the local state administration authority for handling administrative affairs in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) no

11. Please indicate whether information about the possibilities for using minority languages in official contact – in both spoken and written form is displayed by the local state administration authority at a visible place at the seat of the public authority within the meaning of § 1 of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) yes
- b) no

12. If you marked a) in response to question 11, please indicate in what language this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language

13. If you marked a) in response to question 11, please indicate how this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on the public announcements board
- b) on the information board
- c) by other means (please specify)

.....
14. Please indicate whether your authority received *written submissions* from citizens in a minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

15. If you marked a) in response to question 14, what was the total number of such submissions during the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July)?

16. If you marked a) in response to question 14, what areas did these submissions concern?

.....
17. If you marked a) in response to question 14, please indicate whether your authority's *responses to submissions* written in a minority language were also provided in the minority language in addition to the state language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

18. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority also uses a minority language in official records – e.g. minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, etc.:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

19. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 18, please specify in what areas:

.....

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| BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS |
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OFFICIAL FORMS

20. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority provides citizens with *official forms* issued within the scope of its authority *in a bilingual format*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

21. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 20, please specify the areas in which these are provided:

.....
22. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual official forms* that are both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

23. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority issued, at request, *bilingual official forms* that were both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS

24. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

25. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of requests for permits:
- number of requests for licences:
- number of requests for certificates:
- number of requests for opinions:
- number of requests for statements:

26. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please indicate whether any *bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were issued during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

27. If you marked a) in response to question 26, please specify the number of the instruments in the period under review:

- number of permits:
- number of licences:
- number of certificates:
- number of opinions:
- number of statements:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

28. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *submissions initiating administrative proceedings* in a minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

29. If you marked a) in response to question 28, please specify the number of such submissions in the period under review:

.....

30. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *requests for the issue of bilingual decisions* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

31. If you marked a) in response to question 30, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

.....

32. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority *issued decisions in administrative proceedings* with a counterpart in the minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

33. If you marked a) in response to question 32, please specify the total number of such decisions in the period under review:

34. If you marked a) in response to question 32, please specify what areas these decisions concerned:

35. If the local state administration authority issues decisions in a minority language, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is provided along with the name in the state language *in decisions* issued in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no
- d) not applicable to the local state administration authority

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| MEETINGS OF LOCAL STATE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITIES |
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36. Please indicate whether a minority language is used at the meetings of the local state administration authority:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

37. Please indicate in what language the meetings of the local state administration authority are held:

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

38. Please indicate whether supporting documents for meetings of the local state administration authority are also prepared in a minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

39. Please indicate how the possibility of using minority languages at the meetings of the local state administration authority is provided for:

- a) by means of interpreting services
- b) by other means (please specify):

.....

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| PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC |
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40. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *requests for the issue of information on legislation of general application* in the minority language, along with the state language, in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

41. If you marked a) in response to question 40, please specify the number of the such requests in the period under review:

.....

42. If you marked a) in response to question 40, please indicate whether the local state administration authority *provided for information on legislation of general application* in the minority language along with the state language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

43. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the local state administration authority:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

44. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the local state administration authority are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

45. Please indicate where the local state administration authority provides announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on its website
- b) on its public announcements board
- c) other places (please specify):

.....

46. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

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| FINAL QUESTIONS |
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47. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority finds creating condition for using minority languages in official contact:

- a) problem-free
- b) partially problematic
- c) problematic

48. If you marked b) or c) in response to question 47, please provide the reason:

- a) a lack of qualified staff
- b) a lack of funding
- c) a lack of technical support
- d) other factors (please specify)

.....

49. Please indicate whether the local state administration authority received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

50. If you marked a) in response to question 49, please provide the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

51. If you marked a) in response to question 49, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

.....

52. If you marked a) in response to question 49, please specify how these complaints were handled:

.....

Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):

.....

Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the head of the local state administration authority):

.....

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE

on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of the Police Force

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Please provide the name of the organisational unit of the Police Force in the state language:

.....

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| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
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2. Please specify the total number of officers in the organisational unit of the Police Force:

3. Please specify the number of officers in the organisational unit of the Police Force who have a command of a minority language:

a) spoken and written

b) only spoken

4. Please indicate how the organisational unit of the Police Force provides for the possibility of using minority languages in the performance of state administration tasks:

a) by means of officers of the organisational unit of the Police Force who communicate in the minority language

b) by means of interpreting or translation services

c) by other means (please specify):

.....

5. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force received *written submissions* from citizens in a minority language in the context of the performance of state administration tasks in the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

a) yes

b) no

6. If you marked a) in response to question 5, what was the total number of such submissions during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July)?

7. If you marked a) in response to question 5, what areas did these submissions concern?
.....

8. Please indicate whether the *responses* from the organisational unit of the Police Force to *submissions* received in a minority language in the context of the performance of state administration tasks were, in addition to the state language, also provided in the minority language in the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

9. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 8, please specify in what areas:
.....

10. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force uses, in addition to the state language, a minority language in duty-related contact:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

11. Do the officers of the organisational unit of the Police Force who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority?

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

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| BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS |
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OFFICIAL FORMS

12. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force provides citizens with *official forms* issued within the scope of its authority *in a bilingual format* in the context performing state administration tasks:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

13. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 12, please specify the areas in which these are provided:
.....

14. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force received *requests for the issue of bilingual official forms* that are both in the state language and the minority language in the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

15. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force issued, at request, *bilingual official forms* that were both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS

16. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force received *requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

17. If you marked a) in response to question 16, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of requests for permits:
- number of requests for licences:
- number of requests for certificates:
- number of requests for opinions:
- number of requests for statements:

18. If you marked a) in response to question 16, please indicate whether any *bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were issued during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

19. If you marked a) in response to question 16, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of permits:
- number of licences:
- number of certificates:
- number of opinions:
- number of statements:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

20. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force *received submissions initiating administrative proceedings* in a minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

21. If you marked a) in response to question 20, please specify the number of such submissions in the period under review:

.....

22. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force received *requests for the issue of bilingual decisions* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

23. If you marked a) in response to question 22, please specify the number of the such requests in the period under review:

.....

24. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force *issued decisions in administrative proceedings* with a counterpart in the minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

25. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please specify the total number of such decisions in the period under review:

26. If you marked a) in response to question 24, please specify what areas these decisions concerned:

.....

27. If the organisational unit of the Police Force issues decisions in a minority language, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is provided along with the name in the state language in *decisions* issued in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

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| PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC |
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28. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the organisational unit of the Police Force:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

29. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the organisational unit of the Police Force are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

30. Please indicate where the organisational unit of the Police Force provides announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on its website
- b) on its public announcements board
- c) other places (please specify):

.....

31. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

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| FINAL QUESTIONS |
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32. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force finds creating conditions for using minority languages in official contact in the context of the performance of state administration tasks:

- a) problem-free
- b) partially problematic
- c) problematic

33. If you marked b) or c) in response to question 32, please provide the reason:

- a) a lack of qualified staff
- b) a lack of funding
- c) a lack of technical support
- d) other factors (please specify)

.....

34. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the Police Force received complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

35. If you marked a) in response to question 34, please provide the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

36. If you marked a) in response to question 34, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

.....

37. If you marked a) in response to question 34, please specify how these complaints were handled:

.....

Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):

.....

Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the head of the organisational unit of the Police Force):

.....

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages for organisational units of rescue services

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic. Within the meaning of § 7a(3) of Act No 184/1999 Coll., on the use of national minority languages, as amended, the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic is entitled to request public authorities to provide it with information and written documentation on the use of minority languages in areas falling under their competence. Public authorities that do not provide the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic with information and written documentation for this purpose will commit an administrative offence under § 7b(1)(h) of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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| SIGNS IN MINORITY LANGUAGES |
|------------------------------------|

1. Please provide the name of the organisational unit of the rescue service in the state language:

.....

2. Please provide the name of the organisational unit of the rescue service in the minority language:

.....

3. Please specify the national minority for which this questionnaire is being completed (if the municipality has multiple minority populations, the questionnaire is to be completed separately for each national minority):

.....

4. Please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is displayed along with the name in the state language on the *buildings of the organisational unit of the rescue service*:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

5. Please indicate how the *name of the organisational unit of the rescue service* is displayed on *its buildings*:

- a) only in the state language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

6. Please indicate whether the *name of the organisational unit of the rescue service* in the minority language is displayed *on the buildings* along with the equivalent in the state language using:

- a) the same font size
- b) a smaller font size

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| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
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7. Please specify the total number of staff of the organisational unit of the rescue service:

.....

8. Please specify the number of staff who have a command of the minority language:

- a) spoken and written
- b) only spoken

9. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service uses, in addition to the state language, a minority language in duty-related contact:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

10. Do the members of the organisational unit of the rescue service who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority?

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

11. Please indicate how the organisational unit of the rescue service provides for the possibility of using minority languages in official contact:

- a) by means of the staff of the local state administration authority/organisational unit communicating in the minority language
- b) by means of interpreting or translation services
- c) by other means (please specify):

.....

12. Please indicate whether a time slot is reserved by the organisational unit of the rescue service for handling administrative affairs in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) no

13. Please indicate whether information about the possibilities for using minority languages in official contact in both spoken and written form is displayed by the

organisational unit of the rescue service at a visible place at the seat of the public authority within the meaning of § 1 of Government Regulation No 535/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll.:

- a) yes
- b) no

14. If you marked a) in response to question 13, please indicate in what language this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language

15. If you marked a) in response to question 13, please indicate how this information is provided (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on the public announcements board
- b) on the information board
- c) by other means (please specify)

.....
16. Please indicate whether your unit received *written submissions* from citizens in a minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

17. If you marked a) in response to question 16, what was the total number of such submissions during the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July)?

18. If you marked a) in response to question 16, what areas did these submissions concern?

.....
19. If you marked a) in response to question 16, please indicate whether your unit's *responses to submissions* written in a minority language were, in addition to the state language, also provided in the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

20. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service also uses a minority language in official records – e.g. minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, etc.:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

21. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 20, please specify in what areas:
.....

BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS

OFFICIAL FORMS

22. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service provides citizens with *bilingual official forms* within the scope of its authority:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

23. If you marked a) or b) in response to question 22, please specify the areas in which these are provided:

.....
24. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service received *requests for the issue of bilingual official forms* that are both in the state language and the minority language in the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

25. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service issued, at request, *bilingual official forms* that were both in the state language and the minority language during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS

26. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the service received *requests for the issue of bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

27. If you marked a) in response to question 26, please specify the number of the requests in the period under review:

- number of requests for permits:
- number of requests for licences:
- number of certificate requests:
- number of requests for opinions:
- number of requests for statements:

28. If you marked a) in response to question 26, please indicate whether any *bilingual public instruments* (permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements) were issued during the 2017–2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

29. If you marked a) in response to question 28, please specify the number of the instruments in the period under review:

- number of permits:
- number of licences:
- number of certificates:
- number of opinions:
- number of statements:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

30. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service *received submissions initiating administrative proceedings* in a minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

31. If you marked a) in response to question 30, please specify the number of the submissions in the period under review:

.....

32. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service received *requests for the issue of bilingual decisions* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

33. If you marked a) in response to question 32, please specify the number of the *requests* in the period under review:

.....

34. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the rescue service *issued decisions in administrative proceedings* with a counterpart in the minority language in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

35. If you marked a) in response to question 34, please specify the total number of such decisions in the period under review:

36. If you marked a) in response to question 34, please specify what areas these decisions concerned:

.....

37. If the organisational unit of the rescue service issues decisions in a minority language, please indicate whether the *name of the municipality* in the minority language is provided along with the name in the state language in *decisions* issued in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially

- c) no
- d) not applicable to the local state administration authority/organisational unit

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| MEETINGS OF ORGANISATIONAL UNITS OF THE RESCUE SERVICE |
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38. Please indicate whether a minority language is used at the meetings of the rescue service’s organisational unit:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

39. Please indicate in what language the meetings of the rescue service’s organisational unit are held:

- a) in the state language
- b) in the minority language
- b) in the state language and in the minority language

40. Please indicate whether supporting documents for meetings of the rescue service’s organisational unit are also prepared in a minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

41. Please indicate how the possibility of using minority languages at the meetings of the rescue service’s organisational unit is provided for:

- a) by means of interpreting services
- b) by other means (please specify):

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| PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC |
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42. Please indicate whether the rescue service’s organisational unit received *requests for information on legislation of general application* in the minority language, along with the state language, in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

43. If you marked a) in response to question 42, please specify the number of the such requests in the period under review:

.....

44. If you marked a) in response to question 42, please indicate whether the rescue service’s organisational unit *provided for information on legislation of general application* in the minority language along with the state language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

45. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the rescue service's organisational unit:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

46. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the rescue service's organisational unit are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

47. Please indicate where the organisational unit of the rescue service provides announcements intended to inform the public in the minority language (note: multiple answers are possible):

- a) on its website
- b) on its public announcements board
- c) other places (please specify):

.....

48. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

| |
|------------------------|
| FINAL QUESTIONS |
|------------------------|

49. Please indicate whether the rescue service's organisational unit finds creating conditions for using minority languages in official contact:

- a) problem-free
- b) partially problematic

c) problematic

50. If you marked b) or c) in response to question 49, please provide the reason:

- a) a lack of qualified staff
- b) a lack of funding
- c) a lack of technical support
- d) other factors (please specify):

.....
51. Please indicate whether the rescue service's organisational unit received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):*

- a) yes
- b) no

52. If you marked a) in response to question 51, please provide the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

53. If you marked a) in response to question 51, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

.....
54. If you marked a) in response to question 51, please specify how these complaints were handled:

.....
Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):

.....
Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the head of the organisational unit):

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages
for organisational units of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Please provide the name of the organisational unit in the state language:

.....

| |
|-------------------------|
| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
|-------------------------|

2. Please specify the total number of officers in the organisational unit:

3. Please specify the number of officers in the organisational unit who have a command of a minority language:

a) spoken and written

b) only spoken

4. Do officers of the organisational unit who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority in your municipality?

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

| |
|---|
| PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC |
|---|

5. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority language in publicly accessible areas administered by the organisational unit:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

6. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the organisational unit are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

7. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

| |
|------------------------|
| FINAL QUESTIONS |
|------------------------|

8. Please indicate whether the organisational unit received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

9. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please provide the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

11. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

12. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please specify how these complaints were handled:

Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):

Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the head of the organisational unit):

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
QUESTIONNAIRE
on the use of national minority languages
for organisational units of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic

Dear respondents,

We wish to request your cooperation in our survey on the situation regarding the use of minority languages in the Slovak Republic in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July) by completing this questionnaire. The data is being collected by the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the purposes of preparing the Report on the Use of Minority Languages in the Territory of the Slovak Republic to be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic.

Please read the questionnaire carefully, circle the correct answers and complete the relevant information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Please provide the name of the organisational unit of the armed forces in the state language:

.....

| |
|-------------------------|
| OFFICIAL CONTACT |
|-------------------------|

2. Please specify the total number of members of the armed forces in the organisational unit:

3. Please specify the number of members of the armed forces in the organisational unit who have a command of a minority language:

a) spoken and written

b) only spoken

4. Do members of the armed forces in the organisational unit who have a command of the minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority in your municipality?

a) yes

b) partially

c) no

| |
|---|
| PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC |
|---|

5. Please indicate whether information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic is also provided to citizens in the minority

language in publicly accessible areas administered by the organisational unit of the armed forces:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

6. Please indicate whether public information signs and notices that are administered by the organisational unit of the armed forces are also provided in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

7. Please indicate whether essential information (how the entity required to provide the information was established, its powers and scope of competence and description of its organisational structure, as well as the place, time and method how information can be obtained; information as to where applications, proposals, inquiries, complaints or other submissions can be filed, the place, time and manner of submitting appeals and the possibility of judicial review of the entity's decisions, including an explicit indication of the requirements that must be met, the procedure to be followed by the entity when processing any requests, proposals and other submissions, including the appropriate time limits to be complied with, an overview of regulations, guidelines, instructions and interpretative statements, which are followed by the entity in its actions and decisions or which govern the rights and obligations of natural and legal entities in relation to the entity, the tariff of the administrative fees collected by the entity for administrative acts and the tariff of fees for disclosure of information.) is also made available in the minority language:

- a) yes
- b) partially
- c) no

| |
|------------------------|
| FINAL QUESTIONS |
|------------------------|

8. Please indicate whether the organisational unit of the armed forces received *complaints concerning breaches of the Act on the Use of National Minority Languages* in the 2017-2018 period (until 1 July):

- a) yes
- b) no

9. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please provide the total number of such complaints in the period under review:

10. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please specify the subject matters of these complaints:

.....

11. If you marked a) in response to question 8, please specify how these complaints were handled:

.....

Date:

Questionnaire completed by (name, surname, position and signature):

.....

Date:

Questionnaire approved by (name, surname, position and signature of the head of the organisational unit of the armed forces):

.....

**List of state administration authorities and their organisational units,
in which a minority language is used along with the state language in official written
contact within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll.**

| No.: | District offices | minority language |
|------|--|----------------------|
| 1. | Senec district office | Hungarian |
| 2. | Dunajská Streda district office | Hungarian |
| 3. | Galanta district office | Hungarian |
| 4. | Komárno district office | Hungarian |
| 5. | Levice district office, Šahy unit, Želiezovce unit | Hungarian |
| 6. | Nové Zámky district office | Hungarian |
| 6.1 | Nové Zámky district office, Štúrovo unit | Hungarian |
| 7. | Šaľa district office | Hungarian |
| 8. | Rimavská Sobota district office | Hungarian |
| 9. | Košice-okolie district office, Moldava nad Bodvou unit | Hungarian |
| 10. | Michalovce district office, Veľké Kapušany unit | Hungarian |
| 11. | Rožňava district office | Hungarian |
| 12. | Trebišov district office, Kráľovský Chlmec unit | Hungarian |
| 13. | Medzilaborce district office | Ruthenian |
| 14. | Humenné district office, Medzilaborce unit | Ruthenian |

| No.: | Labour, social affairs and family offices | minority language |
|------|--|-------------------|
| 1. | Dunajská Streda labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 2. | Dunajská Streda labour, social affairs and family office, Šamorín unit | Hungarian |
| 3. | Dunajská Streda labour, social affairs and family office, Veľký Meder unit | Hungarian |
| 4. | Galanta labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 5. | Komárno labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 6. | Komárno labour, social affairs and family office, Hurbanovo unit | Hungarian |
| 7. | Komárno labour, social affairs and family office, Kolárovo unit | Hungarian |
| 8. | Košice labour, social affairs and family office, Moldava nad Bodvou unit | Hungarian |
| 9. | Levice labour, social affairs and family office, Šahy unit | Hungarian |
| 10. | Levice labour, social affairs and family office, Želiezovce unit | Hungarian |
| 11. | Lučenec labour, social affairs and family office, Filákovo unit | Hungarian |
| 12. | Michalovce labour, social affairs and family office, Veľké Kapušany unit | Hungarian |
| 13. | Nové Zámky labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 14. | Nové Zámky labour, social affairs and family office, Šaľa unit | Hungarian |
| 15. | Nové Zámky labour, social affairs and family office, Štúrovo unit | Hungarian |
| 16. | Pezinok labour, social affairs and family office, Senec unit | Hungarian |
| 17. | Revúca labour, social affairs and family office, Tornaľa unit | Hungarian |
| 18. | Rimavská Sobota labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 19. | Rimavská Sobota labour, social affairs and family office, Gemerský Jablonec unit | Hungarian |
| 20. | Rimavská Sobota labour, social affairs and family office, Bátka unit | Hungarian |
| 21. | Rožňava labour, social affairs and family office | Hungarian |
| 22. | Rožňava labour, social affairs and family office, Plešivec unit | Hungarian |
| 23. | Stropkov labour, social affairs and family office, Medzilaborce unit | Ruthenian |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 24. | Trebišov labour, social affairs and family offices, Kráľovský Chlmec unit | Hungarian |
| 25. | Trebišov labour, social affairs and family office, Streda nad Bodrogom unit | Hungarian |
| 26. | Trebišov labour, social affairs and family office, Čierna nad Tisou unit | Hungarian |
| 27. | Veľký Krtíš labour, social affairs and family office, Vinica unit | Hungarian |

| No.: | Tax offices | minority language |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | Bratislava tax office, Senec unit | Hungarian |
| 2. | Trnava tax office, Dunajská Streda unit | Hungarian |
| 3. | Trnava tax office, Galanta unit | Hungarian |
| 4. | Trnava tax office, Šamorín contact point | Hungarian |
| 5. | Nitra tax office, Komárno unit | Hungarian |
| 6. | Nitra tax office, Nové Zámky unit | Hungarian |
| 7. | Nitra tax office Nitra, Štúrovo unit | Hungarian |
| 8. | Nitra tax office, Šaľa contact point | Hungarian |
| 9. | Nitra tax office, Hurbanovo contact point | Hungarian |
| 10. | Nitra tax office, Kolárovo contact point | Hungarian |
| 11. | Nitra tax office, Šahy contact point | Hungarian |
| 12. | Banská Bystrica tax office, Rimavská Sobota unit | Hungarian |
| 13. | Košice tax office, Rožňava unit | Hungarian |
| 14. | Košice tax office, Moldava nad Bodvou contact point | Hungarian |
| 15. | Košice tax office, Veľké Kapušany contact point | Hungarian |
| 16. | Košice tax office, Kráľovský Chlmec contact point | Hungarian |

| No.: | Customs offices | minority language |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Trnava customs office, Dunajská Streda unit | Hungarian |
| 2. | Trnava customs office, Galanta unit | Hungarian |
| 3. | Trnava customs office, Veľký Meder unit | Hungarian |
| 4. | Nitra customs office, Štúrovo unit | Hungarian |
| 5. | Nitra customs office, Komárno unit | Hungarian |
| 6. | Nitra customs office, Nové Zámky unit | Hungarian |
| 7. | Nitra customs office, Štúrovo unit | Hungarian |
| 8. | Banská Bystrica customs office, Rimavská Sobota unit | Hungarian |
| 9. | Košice customs office, Rožňava unit | Hungarian |
| 10. | Michalovce customs office, Čierna nad Tisou unit | Hungarian |
| 11. | Michalovce customs office, Ubl'a unit | Ruthenian |
| 12. | Michalovce customs office, Veľké Slemence unit | Hungarian |
| 13. | Michalovce customs office, Dobrá unit | Hungarian |

| No.: | State archives | minority language |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Banská Bystrica state archive, Rimavská Sobota Archive | Hungarian |
| 2. | Košice state archive, Rožňava Archive | Hungarian |
| 3. | Nitra state archive, Komárno Archive | Hungarian |
| 4. | Nitra state archive, Nové Zámky Archive | Hungarian |
| 5. | Nitra state archive, Šaľa Archive | Hungarian |

| No.: | Regional veterinary and food administrations | minority language |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | Senec regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 2. | Dunajská Streda regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 3. | Galanta regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 4. | Komárno regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 5. | Nové Zámky regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 6. | Šaľa regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 7. | Rimavská Sobota regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |
| 8. | Rožňava regional veterinary and food administration | Hungarian |

| No.: | Regional public health authorities | minority language |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Dunajská Streda regional public health authority | Hungarian |
| 2. | Galanta regional public health authority | Hungarian |
| 3. | Komárno regional public health authority | Hungarian |
| 4. | Nové Zámky regional public health authority | Hungarian |
| 5. | Rimavská Sobota regional public health authority | Hungarian |
| 6. | Rožňava regional public health authority | Hungarian |

List of the organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service, armed security forces, Slovak armed forces and other armed forces in which a minority language is used along with the state language in communication within the meaning of Act No 184/1999 Coll.

| No.: | Organisational units of the Fire and Rescue Service | Minority language |
|------|--|-------------------|
| | Name of the district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | |
| 1. | Dunajská Streda district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |
| 2. | Galanta district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |
| 3. | Komárno district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |
| 4. | Nové Zámky district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |
| 5. | Rimavská Sobota district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |
| 6. | Rožňava district directorate of the Fire and Rescue Service | Hungarian |

| No.: | Organisational units of the Police Force ⁶⁶ | Minority language ⁶⁷ |
|------|--|---------------------------------|
| | Name of the district directorate/local department of the Police Force | |
| 1. | Senec district directorate | Hungarian |
| 2. | Dunajská Streda district directorate | Hungarian |
| 3. | Komárno district directorate | Hungarian |
| 3.1. | Komárno local department | Hungarian |
| 3.2. | Bátorove Kosihy local department | Hungarian |
| 3.3. | Hurbanovo local department | Hungarian |
| 3.4. | Kolárovo local department | Hungarian |
| 3.5. | Zemianska Oľča local department | Hungarian |
| 4. | Levice district directorate | Hungarian |
| 4.1. | Levice local department | Hungarian |
| 4.2. | Kalná nad Hronom local department | Hungarian |
| 4.3. | Šahy local department | Hungarian |
| 4.4. | Želiezovce local department | Hungarian |
| 5. | Nové Zámky district directorate | Hungarian |
| 5.1. | Nové Zámky local department | Hungarian |
| 5.2. | Dvory n. Žitavou local department | Hungarian |
| 5.3. | Štúrovo local department | Hungarian |
| 5.4. | Šurany local department | Hungarian |

⁶⁶ District directorates and local departments of the Police Force whose territorial competence covers municipalities listed in Government Regulation No 221/1999 Coll., as amended.

⁶⁷ According to § 7 of Act No 184/1999 Coll., if members of the Slovak armed forces, armed security forces, other armed forces and the Fire and Rescue Service, or municipal police officers, have a command of the minority language, they can use the minority language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to the national minority in the municipalities referred to in § 2(4).

| | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 6. | Šaľa district directorate | Hungarian |
| 6.1. | Šaľa local department | Hungarian |
| 6.2. | Močenok local department | Hungarian |
| 6.3. | Vlčany local department | Hungarian |
| 7. | Lučenec district directorate | Hungarian |
| 8. | Revúca district directorate | Hungarian |
| 9. | Rimavská Sobota district directorate | Hungarian |
| 10. | Veľký Krtíš district directorate | Hungarian |
| 11. | Brezno district directorate | Romani |
| 12. | Zvolen district directorate | Romani |
| 13. | Žiar nad Hronom district directorate | German |
| 14. | Košice-okolie district directorate | Hungarian |
| 15. | Michalovce district directorate | Hungarian |
| 16. | Rožňava district directorate | Hungarian, Romani |
| 17. | Trebišov district directorate | Hungarian |
| 18. | Spišská Nová Ves district directorate | Romani |
| 19. | Bardejov district directorate | Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Romani |
| 20. | Humenné district directorate | Ukrainian |
| 21. | Stará Ľubovňa district directorate | Ukrainian |
| 22. | Svidník district directorate | Ukrainian, Ruthenian |
| 23. | Kežmarok district directorate | Romani |
| 24. | Poprad district directorate | Romani |

| | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 25. | Prešov district directorate | Romani |
| 26. | Vranov nad Topľou district directorate | Romani |
| 27. | Galanta district directorate | Hungarian |

| No.: | Organisational units of the Slovak armed forces | minority language |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | Kolíňanský vrch operational unit/Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade/Slovak Air Force | Hungarian |
| 2. | 3030 Zvolen military unit/Mierovo/Slovak Air Force | Hungarian |
| 3. | 3030 Zvolen military unit/Ožďany/Slovak Air Force | Hungarian |
| 4. | 3030 Zvolen military unit/Veľká Ida/Slovak Air Force | Hungarian |
| 5. | 8024 Rožňava military unit/Slovak Ground Forces | Hungarian |
| 6. | 7945 Rožňava military unit/Slovak Ground Forces | Hungarian |

| No.: | Organisational units of the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps | minority language |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Želiezovce correctional institution for sentenced prisoners | Hungarian |

List and number of specific deficiencies in the application of Act No 184/1999 Coll. identified on the basis of the questionnaire survey

- a) Language rights, compliance with which is compulsory and breaches of which constitute an administrative offence

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of local self-government authorities (municipalities) | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 12 | a citizen of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority not allowed to communicate orally and in writing in the national minority language | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 249 | information about the possibility of communicating orally and in writing in the national minority language not provided | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 2 | a counterpart of a decision or birth, marriage or death certificate not issued in the national minority language at the request of a citizen of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority | § 7b(1)(b) |
| 74 | the name of the authority not displayed in the national minority language on the building serving as its seat | § 7b(1)(c) |
| 6 | an official form issued under their authority not provided in the national minority language when so requested | § 7b(1)(d) |
| 18 ⁶⁸ | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not indicated on the municipality's entry/exit signs | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 56 | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not displayed on the buildings of public authorities | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 130 | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not indicated in decisions issued in the minority language within their territory | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 442 | information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic not displayed in the national minority language, along with the state language, in publicly accessible places | § 7b(1)(f) |
| 2 | information on legislation of general application not provided in the minority language at request | § 7b(1)(g) |
| 13 | information and written documentation for the purposes of the report on the use of national minority languages in the Slovak Republic not provided to the Office of the Government | § 7b(1)(h) |
| Total: 1004 | | |

⁶⁸ Pursuant to Act No 135/1961 Coll. on roads (Road Act), as amended, state administration in the matters of motorways and expressways is performed by the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic as a central government authority [§ 3(3)(g)], class I roads are administered by district offices in regional capitals [§ 3(4)(a)], class II and III roads are administered by district offices [§ 3(5)(a)] and local state administration in the matters of local and special-purpose roads is performed by municipalities as transferred state administration duties. All these authorities also decide on the use of traffic signs on the roads under their administration.

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of legal entities established by a municipality | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 28 ⁶⁹ | information about the possibility of communicating orally and in writing in the national minority language not provided | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 35 | the name of the authority not displayed in the national minority language on the building serving as its seat | § 7b(1)(c) |
| 22 | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not displayed on the buildings of public authorities | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 31 ⁷⁰ | information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic not displayed in the national minority language, along with the state language, in publicly accessible places | § 7b(1)(f) |
| Total: 116 | | |

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of legal entities established by a self-governing region | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 5 ⁷¹ | information about the possibility of communicating orally and in writing in the national minority language not provided | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 4 | the name of the authority not displayed in the national minority language on the building serving as its seat | § 7b(1)(c) |
| 3 | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not displayed on the buildings of public authorities | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 7 | information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic not displayed in the national minority language, along with the state language, in publicly accessible places | § 7b(1)(f) |
| Total: 19 | | |

⁶⁹ 3 legal entities did not respond to this question.

⁷⁰ 2 legal entities did not respond to this question.

⁷¹ One municipal legal entity did not respond to this question.

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of state administration authorities | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 4* | a citizen of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority not allowed to communicate orally and in writing in the national minority language | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 33** | information about the possibility of communicating orally and in writing in the national minority language not provided | § 7b(1)(a) |
| 5*** | the name of the authority not displayed in the national minority language on the building serving as its seat | § 7b(1)(c) |
| 20**** | the name of the municipality in the national minority language not displayed on the buildings of public authorities | § 7b(1)(e) |
| 74***** | information relating to threats to life, health, safety or property of citizens of the Slovak Republic not displayed in the national minority language, along with the state language, in publicly accessible places | § 7b(1)(f) |
| Total: 136 | | |

* 1 district office (MI SR), 1 customs office (Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, hereinafter 'MF SR'), 1 RPHA (Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, hereinafter 'MH SR'), 1 district directorate of the F&RS (MI SR) – all of them reported, however, that they had yet to receive a request for such communication

** 1 district office (MI SR), 17 LSAFOs (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, hereinafter 'MLSAF SR'), 1 tax office (Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, hereinafter 'MF SR'), 13 customs office (MF SR), 1 RVFA (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, hereinafter 'MARD SR')

*** 1 LSAFO (MLSAF SR), 4 F&RS units (MI SR)

**** 15 LSAFOs (MLSAF SR), 1 RVFA (MARD SR, signs had been ordered), 1 RPHA (MH SR), 3 F&RS units (MI SR)

***** 12 district offices (MI SR), 15 tax offices (MF SR), 26 LSAFOs (MLSAF SR), 13 customs office (MF SR), 4 RVFAs (MARD SR, one RVFA used pictograms), 2 RPHAs (MH SR), 2 state archive (MI SR, of which one used pictograms), 6 F&RS units (MI SR)

b) Language rights, compliance with which is compulsory but breaches of which do not constitute an administrative offence

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of local self-government authorities (municipalities) | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| 48 | response to a submission in a national minority language not provided in the national minority language along with the state language | § 2(3) |
| 4 | permits, licences, certificates, opinions and statements not issued in a bilingual format, both in the state language and in the national minority language, when so requested | § 2(5) |
| 4 | decision of a public authority in administrative proceedings not issued with a counterpart in the national minority language along with the state language where proceedings were initiated by a submission in the national minority language | § 2(4) |
| 3 | decision of a public authority in administrative proceedings not issued with a counterpart in the national minority language along with the state language, when so requested | § 2(4) |
| 535 | essential information not made publicly available in the national minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals | § 5a(2) |
| Total: 594 | | |

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of legal entities established by a municipality | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| 3 | response to a submission in a national minority language not provided in the national minority language along with the state language | § 2(3) |
| 32 | essential information not made publicly available in the national minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals | 211/2000 Coll., § 6(5) |
| Total: 35 | | |

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of legal entities established by a self-governing region | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| 7 | essential information not made publicly available in the national minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals | 211/2000 Coll., § 6(5) |
| Total: 7 | | |

| Number of deficiencies | Type of deficiency in the case of state administration authorities | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| 2* | response to a submission in a national minority language not provided in the national minority language along with the state language | § 2(3) |
| 70** | essential information not made publicly available in the national minority language along with the state language on the municipality's public announcements board, website or in its periodicals | § 5a(2) |
| Total: 72 | | |

* 1 LSAFO (MLSAF SR), 1 RVFA (MARD SR, no response was provided as the submission was anonymous)

** 9 district offices (MI SR), 23 LSAFOs (MLSAF SR), 16 tax offices (MF SR), 13 customs office (MF SR), 7 RVFAs (MARD SR), 2 RPHAs (MH SR) and 6 F&RS units (MI SR)

c) Language rights, the application of which is optional under Act No 184/1999 Coll.

| The option is used | the option is partially used | the option is not used | Type of the optional right in the case of local government authorities (municipalities) | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 127 | 43 | 189 | the name of the municipality in the national minority language also displayed on railway station, bus station, airport and river port signs | § 4(3) |
| 115 | 0 | 41 | street-names also displayed in the national minority language in the municipality | § 4(4) |
| 62 | 0 | 58 | local place-names also displayed in the national minority language within the territory of the municipality | § 4(4) |
| 20 | 89 | 522 | official records, in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records, also kept in the national minority language along with the state language | § 3(4) |
| 183 | 58 | 209 | the municipality's chronicles also kept in the national minority language | § 3(3) |
| 40 | 8 | 4 | the national minority language used along with the state language in duty-related contact by municipal police officers | § 7(3) |
| 41 | 9 | 4 | municipal police officers who have a command of the national minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to a national minority | § 7(4) |
| 387 | 122 | 124 | members of the municipality council use the national minority language at the council's sessions | § 3(2) |
| 145 | 293 | 192 | meetings of the public authority also held in the national minority language | § 3(1) |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|---------|
| 15 | 48 | 571 | legislation of general application issued under the municipality's authority available in the national minority language along with the state language | § 4(8) |
| 173 | 200 | 248 | public information signs and notices administered by the municipality are also provided in the national minority language | § 4(6) |
| 487 | 36 | 107 | announcements intended to inform the public made using the municipal PA system or other technical means provided in the national minority language along with the state language | § 5a(1) |
| 267 | 111 | 96 | inscriptions on monuments, memorials and commemorative plaques provided in the national minority language along with the state language | § 4(7) |
| Total: 2 062 | Total: 1 017 | Total: 2 365 | | |

| The option is used | the option is partially used | the option is not used | Type of the optional right in the case of legal entities established by a municipality | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 0 | 5 | 49 ⁷² | official records, in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records, also kept in the national minority language along with the state language | § 3(4) |
| 8 | 26 | 20 | meetings of the public authority also held in the national minority language | § 3(1) |
| 41 | 0 | 0 ⁷³ | announcements intended to inform the public made available in the national minority language along with the state language | § 5a(1) |
| Total: 49 | Total: 31 | Total: 69 | | |

⁷² One legal entity did not respond to this question.

⁷³ 14 legal entities did not respond to this question.

| The option is used | the option is partially used | the option is not used | Type of the optional right in the case of legal entities established by a self-governing region | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 0 | 1 | 9 | official records, in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records, also kept in the national minority language along with the state language | § 3(4) |
| 2 | 3 | 5 | meetings of the public authority also held in the national minority language | § 3(1) |
| 7 | 0 | 0 ⁷⁴ | announcements intended to inform the public made available in the national minority language along with the state language | § 5a(1) |
| Total: 9 | Total: 4 | Total: 14 | | |

| The option is used | the option is partially used | the option is not used | Type of the optional right in the case of state administration authorities | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 0 | 1 | 87 ⁷⁵ | official records, in particular minutes, resolutions, statistics, registers, statements, public information and records of churches and religious communities intended for the public, with the exception of registrar's office records, also kept in the national minority language along with the state language | § 3(4) |
| 14 | 0 | 68 ⁷⁶ | meetings of the public authority also held in the national minority language | § 3(1) |
| 55 | 0 | 8 ⁷⁷ | announcements intended to | § 5a(1) |

⁷⁴ 3 legal entities did not respond to this question.

⁷⁵ One state administration authority did not respond to this question.

⁷⁶ 7 state administration authorities did not respond to this question.

⁷⁷ 26 state administration authorities did not respond to this question.

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--|--|
| | | | inform the public made available in the national minority language along with the state language | |
| Total: 69 | Total: 1 | Total: 163 | | |

| The option is used | the option is partially used | the option is not used | Type of the optional right in the case of organisational units of armed security forces and rescue services | Relevant provisions of Act No 184/1999 Coll. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 12 | 12 | 9 ⁷⁸ | members of armed security forces who have a command of the national minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to that national minority | § 7(4) |
| 2 | 4 | 0 | officers of the Fire and Rescue Service who have a command of the national minority language use this language when communicating with citizens of the Slovak Republic belonging to that national minority | § 7(4) |
| Total: 14 | Total: 16 | Total: 9 | | |

⁷⁸ One organisational unit of armed security forces did not respond to this question.