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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Second periodical report
presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter**

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

THE SECOND REPORT

**OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES
AND PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL
AND MINORITY LANGUAGES**

I INTRODUCTION

1. In order to implement the program tasks of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Department for the Protection of Rights of and Cooperation with National and Other Minorities, Religious Groups and Nongovernmental Organizations, which operates within the MHRR as a separate organizational unit, prepared the Second Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Implementation of Measures and Principles Set Forth in the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (hereinafter: the Second Report) based on the reports of the appointed representatives of institutions and bodies dealing with the protection of minority rights.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 7 September 2005 and officially ratified it on 21 September 2010. Ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Bosnia and Herzegovina committed to protect rights of members of national minorities. The obligation was established in the Law on the Protection of National Minorities (passed in May 2003) and afterwards the Entities: the Republika Srpska (2005) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2008) enacted their own laws on the protection of national minorities.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two autonomous entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska, as well as the Brčko District. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of ten cantons. According to the constitution, there are three constituent peoples: Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, and three official languages, namely Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian.

4. Bosnia and Herzegovina has 17 statutory national minorities and Roma are the largest and most vulnerable national minority. In 2013 Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out a census and the official data will be published in mid 2015 when accurate numbers of minorities will be known.

5. The first reporting period was 2011, based on which the CoE Committee of Ministers and Committee of Experts adopted their views and recommendations on the application of the Charter on 10 July 2013 as follows:

Recommends that the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should take account of all the observations and recommendations of the Committee of Experts and, as a matter of priority:

- 1. Establish a structured policy and take flexible measures facilitating the application of the Charter;*
- 2. Provide appropriate forms and means for the teaching of the minority languages in co-operation with the speakers;*

3. *Establish a scheme for financing cultural activities and facilities relating to the minority languages;*
 4. *Make adequate provision so that public broadcasters offer programs in the minority languages;*
 5. *Use traditional forms of place-names in the minority languages.*
6. In order to prepare the first transparent and comprehensive report, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, as the leading agency, cooperated with appropriate ministries and institutions and the Council of National Minorities while drafting the First and the Second Reports. The Second Report consists of reports of relevant institutions taking account of the Committee of Experts' recommendations.
7. We will start from the fact that in 2011 Bosnia and Herzegovina paid special attention to Roma, as the largest and most vulnerable national minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The implementation of the "Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Roma Housing, Employment, Health Care" was intensified. The Action Plan on the Educational Needs of Roma was revised and the implementation started in 2010.
8. In 2008, by signing the Declaration on Bosnia and Herzegovina Joining the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 -2015, the Council of Ministers of BiH and Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities committed themselves to regular planning of solving Roma issues, which resulted in a progress in Roma housing, employment, health care and education.
9. In order to prepare the Second Report, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH asked the relevant ministries, institutions and relevant bodies, whose opinions were included in the Second Report, to participate in drafting the report. It also developed partnership with representatives of minority associations, who responded in writing, although some felt that a period between the first and the second report was too short for any significant reporting issues in this area.
10. It is necessary to point out that a request for submission of a report was sent to the relevant institutions at the state level, entities and the Brcko District of BiH in September 2014, but some institutions, the media and the Government of Brcko District of BiH have not submitted their reports stating that the activities have not changed compared to the first report.

II REPORTS ON ACTIVITIES OF RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS

1. THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL MINORITIES OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The report contains available information on implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter: the Charter) based on measures for the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life in accordance with Article 2(2) of the Charter. A specific characteristic of the national minorities' situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that national minorities are very heterogeneous in each specific geographic area. In most cases, members of national minorities are integrated into Bosnian-Herzegovinian communities and, thus, the members of the national minorities do not have a need for the exercise of their rights under the Charter. The fact is that a relatively small percentage of members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina actively speak the language of the parent country, which substantiates the stance that the needs to exercise

the rights of national minorities guaranteed by the Charter are limited. It is also necessary to point out that rights of the members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina defined in the Charter are not denied, except in the field of cultural activities and privileges.

1. Education

Low concentration of national minorities in one geographic region does not require special conditions for the implementation of the education process (at all levels, from pre-school to university studies). In areas with a significant concentration of members of a national minority (for example, the Municipality of Prnjavor), teaching in minority languages is organized as elective classes in primary schools. No instruction in minority languages is delivered in pre-school education in secondary schools or universities. The languages (Italian and Ukrainian) are taught only in primary schools and students receive grades in these subjects. For example, the Ukrainian language is taught in three schools: Prnjavor (17 students), Kozarac (26 students) and Lišnja (11 students) by qualified teachers. As part of project activities, distance language learning is provided (Italian and Ukrainian) via Skype in Prnjavor. Inclusion of distance learning of Roma and Czech languages in the project is planned. Departments for Turkish, Italian (closed) and German are opened at the universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and there is a plan to open departments of the Italian and Ukrainian languages at the University of Banja Luka.

When it comes to other language there were no proposals to introduce elective language courses. In the implementation of the measure titled "Education" there are difficulties to provide funds for teachers, transport of and students textbooks. These questions are not addressed systematically so there is a permanent threat of closure of teaching in minority languages.

One of the acceptable forms of education is out-of-school language courses organized by associations and language schools on a commercial basis or free of charge. The courses are held in the following languages: Slovenian, Czech, Italian, German and Russian, while for other languages out-of-school courses are not organized (for example: Polish, Slovak, Albanian, Roma...).

2. Judiciary

No cases of members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina seeking judicial administrative authorities to use their minority languages have been reported because all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina speak official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina and use them in courts.

3. Administration and public services

No cases of members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina seeking administrative authorities or public services to use their minority languages have been reported because all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina speak official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina and use them in administration and public services.

4. Media

The media, such as radio or TV outlets in minority languages, do not exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina because it is not reasonable – there are no people who can listener or watch the media in minority languages. For the same reason, there are no daily newspapers in minority languages or articles published in minority languages.

The state-owned and private media allow members of national minorities, especially the associations of national minorities, to use the media. The media have shown openness in broadcasting or writing about events related to national minorities, but even the media have not resolved systematic funding of these types of programs or services. Members of national minorities may wish to use internet facilities to communicate in a minority language, which sometimes even occurs.

5. Cultural activities and entitlements

Members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have a strong need for cultural identification, which contributes to the preservation of tradition and culture of a nation. The implementation of the measures set out in the Charter indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina does not allow minorities to exercise the right guaranteed by the Charter (Article 12, paragraph 1 has been partially implemented, while there have been no achievements in the implementation of paragraphs 2 and 3). Bosnia and Herzegovina has committed to encourage or facilitate the organization of appropriate cultural activities and the establishment of cultural institutions under the paragraph in the regions where minority languages are not used and where the number of people to use minority languages justifies it. Also, the state has committed to draw up appropriate provisions in designing their cultural policy abroad to encompass regional or minority languages and the relevant cultures.

The failure to implement measures for the protection of minority languages, through cultural activities, is a reflection of the non-implementation of the Law on the Protection of National Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina where Articles 6, 7 and 8 determine that different levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina are obliged to provide funds for activities of national minorities - associations.

Individual associations of national minorities, of which the most active are: Slovenes, Czechs, Albanians and Ukrainians, carry out cultural activities in minority languages. However, these activities are project-based and dependent on the amount of funds which associations have.

6. Business and social life

No cases of members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina seeking the use of minority languages in business or social life have been reported because all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina use official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina in business and in all aspects of social life.

7. Cross-border exchanges

No cases of members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina having difficulties in the execution of bilateral and multilateral agreements that connect BiH with the countries which are using the same minority language have been reported. On the other hand, the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not provide incentive instruments of cross-border exchanges because there are no funds which are allocated for such purposes. When there are cross-border exchanges (as in the cases of Hungary and Ukraine) then they are results of project activities and not systemic cross-border exchanges.

2. THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AFFAIRS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina has no responsibilities for the implementation of the Charter so it has submitted its answer in accordance with its statutory mandate.

In accordance with constitutional responsibilities of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the education system is organized at the levels of entities (RS and FBiH), ten cantons in the FBiH entity and Brcko District of BiH.

Each of the twelve above-mentioned administrative units has its own Ministry of Education, the laws for education and budgets for education, sets education policies and has all other rights and obligations arising from the jurisdiction of educational authorities, responsible for the organization and functioning of education in their areas of responsibility. At the level of the Federation of BiH there is the Federation Ministry of Education and Science, which has a coordinating role in relation to the Cantonal ministries of education. At the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since 2003, the Ministry of Civil Affairs has been given the competence to coordinate activities between the entities, and it is responsible for co-operation at the international level in the field of education.

In accordance with the above, the principles set forth in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages are not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, but they are incorporated in the Framework Law on Preschool Education of BiH ("Official Gazette", No. 88/07), the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education of BiH ("Official Gazette", No.18 / 03), the Framework Law on Vocational Education and Training ("Official Gazette", No. 63/8) and the Framework Law on Higher Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina („BiH Official Gazette“ 59/07, 59/09).

So, Articles 10 and 11 – The right to language and Respect for religious freedom – of the Framework Law on Preschool Education of BiH reads: *„Language and culture of all constitutional peoples and every ethnic minority living in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be respected and included in preschool institution in compliance with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and European Convention on Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Framework Convention for Protection of Minorities and Convention of the Rights of the Child.“*

Several articles (3, 4, 6, 8, 34, 36) of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina are important. Article 8 reads: *“The language and culture of any major minority living in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be respected and shall fit into schools to the largest extent viable, in line with the Framework Convention on Protection of Rights of Ethnic Minorities.”* Article 34 reads: *„Private schools may not be established for the purpose of promoting racial, ethnic, religious, sexual or other prejudices, nor may they perform their functions in the manner contrary to the law, that is, in a manner as to promote the aforementioned prejudices.“* Article 36 *“...the school.. shall identify and implement their proper programs supporting and fostering diverse cultures, languages and faiths of their pupils and employees.”*

The Framework Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training of Bosnia and Herzegovina („BiH Official Gazette“ 63/08) also contains similar provisions such as Article 8 which reads: *„Education of a child member of national minorities shall be carried out in*

accordance with provisions of the Law on the Protection of Members of National Minorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina („BiH Official Gazette“ 12/03) in the language and script of national minorities, in accordance with provisions of this Law and other laws governing the education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”

The Framework Law on Higher Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina („BiH Official Gazette“ 59/07) also contains anti-discriminatory provisions concerning rights of national minorities such as

Article 4, which reads: „Higher education shall be based on: respect for human rights and civic freedoms, including prohibition of all forms of discrimination.“

Article 7 (Access to higher education), which reads:

Access to higher education carried out by licensed higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall not be restricted, directly or indirectly, on any actual or presumed ground such as sex, race, sexual orientation, physical, or other impairment, marital status, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, association with a national community, property, birth, age or other status.

3. THE FEDERATION MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCES

In 2011-2014, the Federation Ministry of Education and Science carried out a series of activities, which were aimed at improving the measures and principles established in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Thanks to the Yunus Emri Cultural Centre that prepared the curriculum for the Turkish language. The Turkish language is taught out in schools in Una-Sana Canton, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, Gorazde Canton and Sarajevo Canton. Due to the great interest of students the Turkish language will be introduced in Tuzla Canton.

The Federation Ministry of Education and Science participated in the development of the Revised Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Educational Needs of Roma (hereinafter: the Revised Action Plan), which was completed in 2010. The Ministry has its representative on the Expert Team for the Revised Action Plan Implementation Monitoring, which was appointed at the state level. The Expert Team is now working to finalize the third annual report on implementation of the Revised Action Plan on Educational Needs of Roma (two reports have already been put together and adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina). The representative of the Ministry, who is a member of the Expert Team, is tasked to collect, process and analyse data for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which expert team will use to produce the annual report on implementation of the Revised Action Plan. When it comes to the collection of data from the cantonal ministries of education, only six cantons, which have Roma students, are required to submit the requested data. Four cantons are not obliged to collect data because they do not have Roma students and they are Posavina Canton, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton and West Herzegovina Canton and Canton 10.

For years, the Federation Ministry of Education and Science allocated significant funds for the "Support to education of Roma children and other ethnic minorities and socially vulnerable categories" Programme. A total of BAM 95,000.00 were earmarked for the 2012 implementation of the Program from the budget of the Federation Ministry of Education and Science, of which BAM 58,600.00 were earmarked for projects aimed at improving the access and schooling conditions of the Roma and other national minorities and BAM 36.400,00 were earmarked for 77 Roma students in primary and secondary schools having gained excellent results at the end of school year. In 2013, for the implementation of the

above mentioned program a total of BAM 95,000.00 and BAM 51,777.00 were earmarked for funding of projects aimed at increasing the rate of attending pre-school, primary and secondary education of Roma children and their better integration into the education system, and BAM 43,223.00 were earmarked for 103 Roma students who gained excellent results at the end of school year in primary or secondary school. In 2014, for these purposes, BAM 30,000.00 were earmarked for Roma pupils who completed school with high grades, the data having been submitted for 85 Roma pupils in primary schools and 10 Roma students in secondary schools.

In addition, since 2008, the Federation Ministry of Education and Science has been implementing the Free Textbooks Project in cooperation with cantonal ministries of education. Under the Program, in 2012, free textbooks were insured for 17,242 first-grade students of primary schools in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. BAM 445,000 or 50 % of the total amount were earmarked from the budget of the Federation of BiH, while the remaining 50 % for the implementation of the project was earmarked from the budget of eight cantons. The Federation Ministry of Education and Science defined criteria for the distribution of BAM 600,000.00 in the 2013 Expenditures Program, which were earmarked for the purchase of free textbooks for students in need who attend the nine-year primary school in the entire Federation/all ten cantons. Given the project beneficiaries in 2013 were students in need, they included also Roma students in the communities where they lived. The same was done in 2014, but the amount was increased to BAM 700,000.00. The cantons are required to submit reports on the implementation of the Free Textbooks Project for students in need who attend the nine-year primary school and they completed this obligation in school year 2013 /2014. The funds have already been transferred to the cantons for school year 2014/2015 and so far reports on the implementation of the Free Textbooks Project for students in need who attend the nine-year primary school have been submitted by Bosnia-Podrinje Canton (Goražde Canton), Western Herzegovina Canton and Canton 10.

Further, the Ministry has a regular program in the field of higher education under title: "Boost to Education of Roma, BiH Citizens Who Study in Public Higher Education the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina". As part of the program, funds are allocated based on the applications filed upon a public call to Roma students, who are citizens of BiH, are studying at one of the public institutions of higher education in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and are enrolled in the specific year of study for the first time. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of previous success in education and financial circumstances of the applicant. In academic year 2012/13, 4 Roma students applied, of which 3 were awarded a scholarship in the amount of BAM 2,000.00. Although this is a regular program, for which funds are planned and appropriated each academic year, there is still the problem of insufficient number of Roma students who respond to the public call of the Federation Ministry of Education and Science. In academic year 2013/14, 5 Roma students applied, of which 4 were granted a scholarship in the amount of BAM 2,000.00. In academic year 2014/2015, the process of scholarship award has started but it has not been completed yet.

In addition, it should be noted that every year the Federation Ministry of Education and Science prepares the Information Paper on enrolment of students in primary and secondary schools in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to monitor the number of students enrolled in the first grade of primary school and in the first grade of secondary school and to monitor data on the total number of students in primary and secondary schools. That information is submitted to the FBiH Government for consideration and approval and afterwards conclusions and recommendations are submitted to the cantonal ministries of

education for joint action to reach inclusion of all children in primary education, as well as a larger number of children in secondary education, including children of all national minorities.

When it comes to the 2013 Work Programme, as part of the Program to fund projects in the field of pre-school, primary and secondary education, the Federation Ministry of Education and Science earmarked funds to support projects of educational institutions having larger numbers of Roma students and students of other ethnic minorities as well as projects that allow the promotion of the rights of national minorities, persons with special needs and adaptation of school facilities for their implementation.

The Council of National Minorities of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina sent a request for submission of information on the use of the Manual for students on the culture, heritage and traditions of national minorities in BiH and Methodical manuals for teachers, whose creation involved its members. On 6 February 2014, we sent a letter to all cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina requesting that they should provide the required information. The information on the successful use of the Manual for students on the culture, heritage and traditions of national minorities in BiH and Methodical manuals for teachers has not been finalized yet.

A representative of the Ministry is a member of the working group for drafting the Strategic Platform to address issues of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was drafted by the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with the OSCE. This document is being drafted and it is currently subject to public consultations.

The First Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the implementation of the measures and principles set forth in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages stated very accurately the legal framework in this area, as well as statistics and facts and on this occasion we have nothing more to add.

4. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

The Republika Srpska passed the Law on the Protection of Members of National Minorities (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska no. 02/04) which provides for rights and obligations of members of national minorities and obligations of authorities to respect, protect and develop ethnic, cultural, language and religious identity of members of national minorities.

Bearing in mind that the needs of national minorities are different, it implies that they are within competences and responsibilities of several ministries:

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republika Srpska: the Law on Primary Education (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska No. 02/04): language and culture of national minorities in the Republika Srpska shall be respected and used in the school as much as possible, in accordance with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the Law on Protection of National Minorities (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska", No. 2 / 05). 14 associations of national minorities, including the Union of National Minorities of the Republika Srpska, which unites all national minorities in the Republika Srpska, are registered in Banja Luka. Among the associations, there are associations of Czechs, Hungarians, Roma, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Macedonians, Italians and the Union of National Minorities of the Republika Srpska, which represents all the ethnic minorities. The Union of National Minorities of the Republika

Srpska, which has the status of an association of public interest, the Republika Srpska currently has 14 associations of national minorities.

The National Assembly of the Republika Srpska established the Council for National Minorities as a special advisory body that consists of members of national minorities, which gives opinions and proposals to the National Assembly on all issues of rights, the position and interests of national minorities in the Republika Srpska. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republika Srpska, in accordance with Rules on co-funding of public needs in culture ("Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska", 7/10) regularly co-funds cultural activities of national minorities through public announcement for co-funding projects in the field of culture, which promote their language and their cultural heritage. Radio and Television of the Republika Srpska, as a public service of the Republika Srpska, is obliged to provide a special informative show for national minorities in their languages at least once a week. Projects of national minorities are funded from different sources: the Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Governance funds activities of the Union of National Minorities as an umbrella organization and the Ministry of Education and Culture funds projects of national minorities, in accordance with the Law on Associations and Foundations.

In primary school, through home room educational and upbringing lessons and history, geography and language lessons, students learn about different cultures, traditions, customs, cultural heritage. Further, they learn about the national minorities and their traditions. They also learn to respect diversity, tolerance, multiculturalism and acceptance of others.

A few primary schools teach the Ukrainian and Italian languages, as the languages of national minorities, two classes per week.

The European Day of Languages was marked with workshops of foreign languages, a fair of language schools, cultural programs and recitals in different languages.

The program activities included competitions in the knowledge of languages, cultures, sports and geography of the European countries. The workshops of foreign languages were organized and lecturers motivated students in an original and fun way to learn a foreign language.

There were lectures for teachers and language school promotions.

5. THE MINISTRY OF ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina requested that this Ministry should provide information on the legislative and other measures on the implementation of principles set forth in the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages.

Administrative proceedings within competences of the Ministry are conducted in accordance with the Law on Administrative Procedure of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e Article 16 of the Law which provides that parties to administrative proceedings have the right to use their language and the right to be informed about relevant facts of the case in their language.

The Administrative Inspectors Department, which is a section of the Ministry, carries out inspections of the work of administrative bodies and organizations of the Cantons, as well as

the local government, concerning the proper implementation of the Law on Administrative Procedure.

In addition, although the problem is not directly related to minority and regional languages, in order to communicate better and have easier access to administrative bodies, the Ministry has launched this year an initiative for the adoption of the Law on Sign Language, whose draft has been adopted by the Assembly of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

In this manner the parties' ignorance of the language used in the administrative proceedings is no longer an obstacle to exercising their rights and legal interests. Any denial of this right is grounds for the renewal of administrative proceedings.

The 2012 Working Programme of the Ministry envisages the passage of the Law on Protection of National Minorities, which precisely regulates the right to use regional or minority languages.

In 2013, the Government of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton carried a proposal of the draft law and sent it to the Assembly of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton for passage.

To date, the above-mentioned draft law has not been on the agenda of the Assembly of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

6. RTRS - RADIO AND TELEVISION OF THE REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

In the reporting period, respecting the legislation and editorial principles, the Radio and Television of the Republika Srpska, which has three media: television, radio and multimedia, sought to fulfil in all parts of its program the obligations that any public broadcasting service has to fulfil.

The Republika Srpska Radio and Television, as a public broadcasting service within the public broadcasting system of BiH, works in accordance with authorities and program policies regulated by the Law on RSRT (RS Official Gazette 49/06) and the Law on Public Broadcasting System of BiH (BiH Official Gazette no. 78/05) and certainly supports the application of all valid laws and regulations and provisions of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages as well.

The aim is for each year's program contents to record a growth, qualitative improvement and the satisfaction of our viewers, that is, of all citizens, including those who speak minority languages.

In the reporting period, which covered the period after 2011, RTS sought to, in times of recession, which has brought a series of economic, and consequently the programming restrictions, maintain a standard which has been present in our media for a decade.

For a decade now the Republika Srpska Radio has been airing "Korijeni" (Roots) which is intended for the promotion of national minorities and their languages, tradition, culture and other specific features. This show has been raising the issues that ethnic minorities face. The show explores all the essential themes of life of national minorities, from the application of the Law on Protection of National Minorities, the participation of national minorities in government at the local, entity and state levels, education, access to the media to the media promotion.

The show often present representatives of national minorities and representatives of the relevant institutions dealing with these issues, from which we ask answers to important questions such as the right of participation of national minorities in the local elections, representation of minorities in government and information about these representatives, what they do and how much they can do when it comes to promotion of the rights of minorities.

The show follows all developments and events organized by national minorities, whether they are seminars or workshops for national minorities and it also follows numerous cultural events organized by associations of minorities, not only in Banja Luka, but also in RS and BiH, and in neighbouring countries (Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia). The show promotes ethnic minorities by presenting their customs, culture, tradition and history.

For a while, the Ukrainians had their 15 minutes' portion in the show, they prepared it and the portion was broadcast in two languages - in Ukrainian and Serbian. "The Roots" systematically addresses the rights and position of the most vulnerable minority - the Roma. The program features a portion titled ' Romani Ći'/' Romani Soul" that presented the audience with stories about history, culture and tradition of the Roma people. For a while, "Romani Soul " was broadcast as an independent twenty minute show, in which famous Roma experts, historians, writers, scientists spoke about their culture, history and the importance of preserving the Roma language.

"The Roots" promotes activities of national minorities in a unique way, but also, in some cases, encourages the relevant authorities and institutions to increase their efforts to address problems of minorities and to become more familiar with their work. The importance of this show is reflected in the fact that through the public service, it promotes rights, activities, culture, customs and traditions of national minorities, but the lack of educated people/ professionals who know the languages of national minorities results in program limitations or inability to broadcast certain programs in the languages of national minorities with a professional translation. Each improvisation would be counterproductive and good intentions would be turned into its opposite.

The limiting factor is present in the other two media (television and multimedia) of RTRS. In a certain period a contact was made with the Ukrainian national minority which had its own show in the Ukrainian language that was translated into the Serbian language, which was necessary even for the Ukrainians themselves, and of course for other listeners who want to become familiar with this language.

The programs of these three media of RTRS spoke about the importance of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and its implementation. Further, other shows (Morning program, day program, Treasury of knowledge, Studiorum) discussed minority languages by guests or in different themes.

Of course, the news present properly all important events, including activities of associations, education, cultural and other aspects of life of national minorities, and activities relating to the promotion of minority languages.

The Republika Srpska Television broadcasts news about national minorities/minority languages in almost all news, educational, cultural, religious, youth and other shows.

In the Morning programme, RS TV has hosted representatives of the Union of National Minorities and its members - Associations of National Minorities (hereinafter: 'the Union') and the Association of Roma of Bijeljina (which is not a member of the Union) and broadcast the following:

- A contribution concerning the election of the President of the Union and featuring of the newly elected President of the Union, Mr. Franjo Rover.
- The most common broadcast stories in the programme were about Roma from Bijeljina and the activities of national minorities from Srbac.
- Reports on the employment of Roma in Prijedor, in particular the employment of a Roma inspector in the RS police.
- Most of the events in Banja Luka organized by national minorities at the city and republic levels (especially during the term of office of Mr. Stevo Havreljuk) were covered.
- Most of the activities of the Jewish Community of Banja Luka were covered and the like.

The guests featured 8-10 minutes and contributions/reports lasted between 2 and 4 minutes.

An educational show titled "Kvadrat na znanje" spoke about national minorities, mainly through stories about Roma education. E.g. in Prijedor, a majority of Roma children attend school, distinguishing this town by this, among other things, from other towns. The story was very affirmative and a true indicator that a society can and must rise above the discrimination of national minorities.

"Kvadrat na znanje" show of the Republika Srpska Television will continue to point out the need for access to education for all and it will also promote the need of national minorities to learn their mother tongues.

An informative show titled "In Focus", which has been broadcast for the sixth season by RTRS, deals, among other things, with issues and problems concerning national minorities in the Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Appropriate guests in the studio talk about the news from the area of economy, agriculture, culture, education and everyday life. The work of defenders of rights of persons with disabilities, demobilized soldiers, the sick, pensioners, farmers, children and young people, the less represented gender, ethnic minorities have been covered.

In 2013 and 2014, attention was paid to national minorities and some of the topics are:

1. Activates of the Council of National Minorities of the Republika Srpska. A show presented activities and the work of the Council of National Minorities. What did they do to 'insist' on changes to the Constitution so that word 'Others' can be replaced by words „ethnic minorities“? How did they prepare for and what activities had they taken in connection with the census? Was the Law on National Minorities respected in education and employment? What kind of cooperation did they have with authorities of the Republika Srpska?
2. The Association of Montenegrins in the Republika Srpska: Representatives of Montenegrins spoke about cooperation with the Union and Council of National Minorities of RS, the RS

House of Peoples and National Assembly, the MPs representing "Others", as well as the institutions of the Republic of Montenegro in charge of diaspora. The guests were representatives of the Republic, Gradiška, Doboj and Trebinje Associations of Montenegrins.

3. Results of work of MPs belonging to "Others" in the RS House of Peoples. We analysed results of work of national minorities in the House of Peoples of the RS National Assembly. How many legislative proposals were evaluated as harmful for minorities? How these MPs cooperate with their political parties, with the Union of National Minorities and ethnic associations whose members they were?

4. Cultural heritage of national minorities: Literary works of representatives of national minorities in the Republika Srpska and cooperation of RS writers with writers from the home countries of our national minorities

5. The Council of National Minorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina: about (non)appointment of new members of the Council of National Minorities of the BiH Parliament. What were benefits and drawbacks of this situation for members of national minorities? These issues were discussed by representatives of the Councils of National Minorities of the RS and the Federation of BiH and the Union of National Minorities of RS.

6. The tenth anniversary of the Union of National Minorities of the Republika Srpska: The show was dedicated to the jubilee of the Union of National Minorities of the Republika Srpska, which analysed the work, activities and upcoming tasks.

7. Funding of associations of national minorities in the Republika Srpska: How was the issue of RS national minority associations funding resolved? Did embassies of home countries help them and how? What is the cooperation among associations ... and many other current issues related to national minorities in the RS.

8. Roma Action Plans: Could Action Plans for Roma housing, employment, education and healthcare be implemented? Why there were no Roma employed in local and state-level administration? Were the funds intended to improve their status used for that purpose? The guests were representatives of the Union of Roma Associations from the Republika Srpska.

9. Activities of councillors from national minorities at the local level. Eighteen months after the local elections, municipal councillors in the RS presented their work. They talked about cooperation with local authorities, the implementation of plans and programs introduced during the local elections and systemic resolution of issues and the status of national minority they represent.

10. Activities of the new leadership of the Union of National Minorities RS: Action Program, activities and upcoming tasks of the new leadership of national minorities in the RS. Funding of the Union and associations, cooperation with relevant ministries. Was there a development strategy for national minorities, who should participate in the production of this document and other current issues.

11. Operation and activities of associations of national minorities of RS: After conversation with the RS leadership in the show new information about the development of the entity-level strategy of national minorities was presented. How were members of ethnic minorities affected by the May floods and how did their home countries help them? Did they have

adequate support and how did the Union of National Minorities take part in the delivery of aid to members of associations in the RS and BiH?

12. Cultural heritage of national minorities: How was cultural heritage of national minorities preserved, nurtured and renewed? How were the competent institutions, local communities, national minority associations and individuals involved in the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage of minority communities? Were there mechanisms to nurture and renew the culture that the Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Macedonians, Ukrainians, Slovenians had brought with them?

13. Position and rights of Roma: Had there been any improvement in living conditions of the largest, but also the most vulnerable national minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina after accession of BiH to the "Decade of Roma" project? About planned and spent funds at the state level. How and how much were Roma associations engaged in activities which should help solve the problems of Roma? Along with representatives of the Union of Roma of RS, the guests were representatives of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the Roma Board.

"In Focus" is broadcast live and lasts 45-50 minutes and in the last 15 minutes the audience may ask the guests to answer questions.

There was a lot of interest in the shows dedicated to national minorities and on average 8 viewers called and asked questions (depending on the duration of the show). Callers were not only from the RS and BiH, but also from the region, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Austria where the show was broadcast on internet.

All guests and representatives of national minorities were satisfied with the choice of topics and guests. Besides in Banja Luka, the guests were in Informative Technical Centres in Prijedor, Bijeljina, Istočno Sarajevo, Trebinje and reports were broadcast also from towns and municipalities where persons belonging to national minorities lived. This program enabled attention to be given to ethnic minorities in order to express their views, problems, positive and negative aspects of the system, entities and the state, and in the future shows that would deal with the life and status of all members of national minorities in the Republika Srpska would be planned and made.

Multimedia, as the third type of media of RTRS, which can be watched in every part of the world on Internet, reports all relevant information relating to the life and work of national minorities. As soon as the need for human resources was met, this media would provide information in minority languages and other shows that are a program secret at the moment.

From the foregoing, it is not difficult to conclude that the Public Radio and Television of the Republika Srpska, in the framework of the Public Broadcasting System of Bosnia and Herzegovina, made a significant contribution to the promotion of minority cultures, and therefore minority languages.

RTRS has opened its doors to all ideas and, where it was possible to provide human resources (interpreters and connoisseurs of minority languages), supported the idea of broadcasting program contents in two languages.

In future, as always, RTRS together with relevant stakeholders (from governmental institutions, non-governmental and professional organizations and associations) will support all good ideas, whose final goal is the promotion and recognition of minority languages.

In case that EU funds be available to us, we will gladly carry out activities or be good partners in all actions that promote and encourage learning and the use of minority languages.

7. MINISTRY OF JUSTICE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

At the request of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, the following information has been provided:

Article 9 of the Charter, Judicial authorities

Article 9(1) of the Charter

The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below, according to the situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice.

In criminal proceedings:

A person deprived of liberty must, in his mother tongue or any other language that he understands, be immediately informed about reasons for his apprehension (Article 5 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Parties, witnesses and other participants in the proceedings shall have the right to use their own language in the course of the proceedings. If such a participant does not understand one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, provisions shall be made for oral interpretation of the testimony of that person and other persons and interpretation of official documents and identifications and other written pieces of evidence (Article 8(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina). This means that the suspect/accused in criminal proceedings has the right to have interpretation of witnesses' statements through e.g. court interpreter.

In order to ensure the exercise of this right, the Law provides for an obligation of the court/prosecutor to inform the participants in the proceedings that they have the right to use their own mother tongue(s) they understand and a note about this shall be made in the transcript and a response of the suspect/accused thereto shall also be noted (Article 8(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

If in the main trial the defendant, defence attorney or the injured party, was denied the use of his own language and the opportunity to follow the course of the main trial in his language, it amounts to a serious violation of points of procedure (Article 297(1)(c) of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Costs of interpretation into the languages of the parties, witness and other participants in the criminal proceedings that are incurred in enforcing the provisions of this Code shall not be collected from individuals who under the provisions of this Code are required to compensate the costs of criminal proceedings (Article 185(5) of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia

and Herzegovina). So, the costs shall be paid in advance from the budget regardless the decision on who has to pay the costs of criminal proceedings.

Further, the decision on compensation of the costs of criminal proceedings under the Criminal Procedure Code states that the costs of translation to the language of the parties and other persons participating in criminal proceedings that are incurred during the enforcement of the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, will not be paid by persons who are obliged to compensate the costs of criminal proceedings in accordance with the CPP (Article 1(4) of the Decision).

Besides the right to use mother tongue in oral communications in criminal proceedings, the Criminal Procedure Code determines that the person who is deprived of freedom or in custody, serving sentence or committed to mandatory psychiatric treatment or to mandatory rehabilitation for an addiction, shall also be delivered the translation of the papers referred to in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article in the language used by the person in question in the proceedings (Article 9(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

In civil proceedings:

Regarding the provisions on the civil procedure before the Court Bosnia and Herzegovina, civil proceedings are conducted in one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 11 of the Law of Civil Procedure before the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina) so the parties use one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the proceedings (Article 254 of the Law of Civil Procedure before the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and all court documents are delivered in one of official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 253 of the Law of Civil Procedure before the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Proceedings before courts adjudicating administrative matters (administrative disputes)

The Law on Administrative Disputes of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not contain provisions related to the language and script but contains a provision that relevant provisions of the law which regulates civil proceedings shall be applied to issues which are not regulated by this Law (Article 60 of the Law on Administrative Disputes of Bosnia and Herzegovina). This means appropriate application of the provisions on the use of language and script, as stated in the preceding paragraph.

Article 9(2) of the Charter

The Parties undertake:

- **not to deny the validity of legal documents drawn up within the State solely because they are drafted in a regional or minority language; or**
- **not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in a regional or minority language, and to provide that they can be invoked against interested third parties who are not users of these languages on condition that the contents of the document are made known to them by the person(s) who invoke(s) it; or**
- **not to deny the validity, as between the parties, of legal documents drawn up within the country solely because they are drafted in a regional or minority language.**

With regard to challenging the validity of legal documents in the country drafted in a regional or minority language and other requirements of Article 9(2) of the Charter, the answer is contained in the answers related to the legal provisions on the use of language in the criminal and civil proceedings.

With regard to the findings of the Committee of Experts on non-fulfilment of obligations provided in Article 9 of the Charter and the proposal to amend domestic legislation so that any party that appears in civil and other procedures could be allowed to use own language at no cost to the party, to lodge submissions in their language etc., one should bear in mind the number of members of certain ethnic minorities throughout the state, entities and municipalities, i.e. their number in the area covered by individual court or administrative body.

That this was taken into account when making the Charter can be seen in Article 9 which obliges the States Parties which have judicial districts in which the number of residents using a regional or minority language justifies the measures specified in Article 9, provided that the use of entitlements afforded by this article is not considered by judges to hamper the proper administration of justice. This justifies the established legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When it comes to international human rights standards, we emphasize that the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina determines that the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is directly applied and has supremacy over other laws and regulations in BiH and we remind you that Article 6(3) of the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, provides that everyone charged with a criminal offence has *inter alia* the right to be informed in a language which he understands and in detail of the nature and cause of the accusation against him and to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court. The right to use own language is guaranteed by the European Convention also to everyone who is arrested, providing that everyone who is arrested shall be informed in a language which he understands of the reasons for his arrest and of any charges against him (Article 5(2)). Therefore, the European Convention determines that every person charged with a criminal offence has the right to be informed in a language which he understands because this is necessary to achieve fair trial standards, which are guaranteed in the BiH legislation.

Article 14, Transfrontier exchanges

Regarding the letter in which you have requested information concerning international cooperation in the implementation of measures and principles set out in Article 14 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, we note that the subject area, which deals with international cooperation on the promotion and improvement of cooperation for the benefit of regional or minority the language in culture, education, information, vocational training and retraining, is not within competence of the Sector for International and Inter-Entity Legal Assistance and Cooperation.

It is important to note that the Sector for International and Inter-Entity Legal Assistance and Cooperation, which is in charge of the statutory procedure of concluding international bilateral and multilateral agreements regulating mutual legal assistance and cooperation,

within its competence, takes into account provisions of international conventions to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party when drafting and concluding bilateral agreements.

When it comes to inter-governmental co-operation which is within the competence of the Sector, general provisions of all concluded bilateral agreements guarantee equal protection of the rights of individuals and legal entities of both States Parties in proceedings before courts and other competent authorities. This covers the right of foreign individuals and legal persons to use their language before the courts and other competent authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the extent to which this right is guaranteed to BiH nationals before the competent authorities of the other State Party.

8. MINISTRY OF JUSTICE OF THE REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

Article 5 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republika Srpska (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska No. 53/12) provides for rights of a person deprived of liberty, i.e. provides that a person deprived of liberty shall be immediately informed, in his mother tongue or any other language that he understands, about the reasons for his apprehension and, prior to an interrogation, advised that he is not obliged to make a statement or answer questions, about his right to a defence attorney of his own choice as well as on the fact that his family, or other person designated by him shall be informed about his deprivation of liberty.

Article 8 of the above-mentioned Code governs the use of language and alphabet in criminal proceedings. The official languages of the Republika Srpska: the language of Serbian people, the language of Bosniac people and the language of Croatian people are equally used in any criminal proceedings. Latin and Cyrillic are the official alphabets. Parties, witnesses and other participants in the proceedings have the right to use their own language in the course of the proceedings.

If such a participant does not understand one of the official languages of the Republika Srpska, provision shall be made for oral interpretation of the testimony of that person and other persons and translation of official documents and identifications and other written pieces of evidence.

The above-mentioned persons are advised of these rights prior to the first examination and they may waive the rights if they know the language in which the proceedings are conducted. Interpretation is performed by a court interpreter.

Issues related to civil proceedings are regulated in the Law on Civil Procedure (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska No. 58/03).

Article 6 of the Law provides for the official languages in civil proceedings and they are: the language of Serbian people, the language of Bosniac people and the language of Croatian people, while the official scripts are Latin and Cyrillic.

Article 145 of the Law provides the following: Any witness who does not know the language in which the proceedings are conducted shall be heard through an interpreter. If the witness is deaf, questions shall be asked in written and if he is mute he shall be asked to answer in written. If the hearing cannot be executed in this manner, a person that can communicate with the witness shall be summoned. The court shall draw attention of the interpreter to the duty of faithful interpretation of questions the witness is asked and of statements which the witness gives.

Articles 313-315 of the Law on Civil Procedure define the use of languages in civil proceedings, providing that summons, decisions and other judicial documents in civil proceedings are served on the parties and other participants in proceedings in one of the languages cited in Article 6 of the Law. The parties and interveners in the proceedings who do not know any of the languages cited in Article 6 of the Law on Civil Procedure shall provide interpretation and translation of procedural actions taken and translation relating to examining of pieces of evidences they are presenting. Interpretation and translation are performed by court interpreters.

Article 9 of the Law on Misdemeanours of the Republika Srpska ("Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska" No. 63/14) provides for the rights of persons charged with misdemeanours.

Any defendant in misdemeanour proceedings has the right: 1) to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in accordance with the law, 2) to be informed promptly, in detail and in a language which he understands of the nature and reasons for accusations against him, 3) to be provided with adequate time and facilities to prepare his defence and to get familiar with all the rights, including the right to remain silent, 4) to defend himself in person or through counsel of his own choice or, if he has not got enough means, to be provided with legal aid when it is the interest of justice, 5) to examine or to have examined witnesses against him and to have obtained appearance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him; and 6) free assistance of an interpreter if he does not understand the language used in court or if he is deaf and mute or visually impaired.

Article 10 of the Law defines the rights of detained persons in case a person has been apprehended and detained. These rights include:

- contact with a consular representative if he is a foreign national,
- access to emergency medical assistance if necessary; and
- to be informed on the maximum number of hours or days that such defendants might spend in detention before appearance in the court.

In case a person is apprehended and detained for having committed a misdemeanour, he will immediately receive the Document on the Rights of Accused and Detained Persons.

9. THE OMBUDSMAN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OF BIH

Based on the recommendations of the Committee of Experts on the implementation of the measures and principles set out in the Charter, the Ombudsman Institution for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted the following information:

1. *to establish a structured policy and take flexible measures facilitating the implementation of the Charter;*

Based on information available to the Ombudsman Institution and monitoring of the situation in this area, we must note that so far the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have failed to make a structured policy regarding the application of the Charter.

We must point out that there are numerous practical examples that show great willingness of authorities to take measures aimed at the implementation of the Charter, however, we must conclude that it is a growing number of local initiatives though, but a broader plan for such measures lacks.

We believe that, for a start, until the policy has been in place, even limited activities, such as exchange of lessons learned and good practices from different places and in different fields, could yield better results and also reduce costs and achieve better effects if such activities were coordinated.

Further, there are flexible measures for the implementation of the Charter, but such measures should be encouraged and implemented on a broader scale.

We consider that carrying out the flexible measures is extremely important for the implementation of the Charter through affirmative and promotional measures and then authorities should not perceive it just as fulfilling the minimum standards. Regarding the flexibility of measures and their justification, we will give more details in the discussions of recommendations below, particularly of the recommendations relating to teaching of minority languages.

2. to provide appropriate forms and means for the teaching of the minority languages in co-operation with the speakers;

We wish to point out that this segment should be considered as part of the structural policy and flexible measures.

By a cursory analysis of the current state of language learning, we can conclude that they are broadly relegated to out-of-school courses and partly to teaching in schools as additional classes in mainstream education.

However, due to the limited number of teachers and the places where such courses can be organized the use of new technologies (internet, digital formats, interactive learning etc.) should be considered so that the language learning could be widespread and that some initial levels of language could be acquired in this manner, which would boost the use of the languages.

Also, we support the opinion of the Committee of Experts that minority languages cannot be taught only in out-of-school courses, but they need to be, as much as possible, integrated in mainstream education classes. For this reason we believe that the authorities should be more flexible in determining the criteria for minority language teaching in mainstream education.

We believe that the policies and method of dealing with minority languages is not just a matter of meeting the legal minimum, but of promoting diversity and pluralism.

The lack of adequately trained persons who can teach minority languages could be mitigated with adequate planning and provision of funds and with plans for holding classes in several places.

Certainly, it should be taken into account that at this moment the most important thing is to include the younger generation, both in learning the language of national minorities in mainstream education classes and in different forms of learning in extracurricular and after-school activities and, as already mentioned, new technologies should be considered such as, for example, setting up a website where they could learn minority languages and the like, as well as greater access to different forms of cultural production (books, various publications, films and series) in minority languages.

Of course, subsequent efforts to draw up programs to include persons who are not members of minorities would certainly contribute to long-term sustainability and continuity of teaching of minority languages. This would contribute to way the younger generation's intercultural learning, i.e. permeability and mutual influence of cultures and pluralistic society.

3. to establish a scheme for financing cultural activities and facilities relating to the minority languages;

In its work and reports the Ombudsman Institution has always emphasized that the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina should take measures in accordance with the possibilities in order to ensure adequate funding of programs and segments relating to minorities, including cultural activities.

We would also highlight the need to exchange lessons learned and good practices; namely, from the situation in the field we can notice that a number of cultural and artistic associations, as well as associations of citizens, have a significant volume of activities, although with limited resources.

This is not only a result of the funds they receive and the relationships they have with governments cultural institutions and local governments, but also the capacities of these associations itself, including qualifications, knowledge and skills of their members.

Certainly, one of the most important factors that define the scope of cultural activities of any association, including the ones that are dedicated to culture, is whether they have their own premises or premises that can be used free of charge, as well as some form of permanent funding on which they can count. For that reason, measures should be taken so that cultural activities related to minority languages can have favourable treatment.

4. to make adequate provision so that public broadcasters offer programmes in the minority languages;

The Ombudsman Institution points out that we should take all measures to ensure that public broadcasters provide programs in minority languages. Those programs should be available in television stations and radio stations.

5. to use traditional forms of place-names in the minority languages

The measure should be widely implemented, as it is extremely desirable. Posting place-name signs in minority languages should be considered. Also, a number of local governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina has a practice of posting not only names of streets but also information boards on persons, events and historical figures after which the streets were named, and it would be desirable to write them in minority languages in all cases where the street names are linked to national or linguistic minorities. Further, we believe that street names in places where minorities live should be posted in minority languages.

SUMMARY

- The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have made efforts to improve the situation of national minorities in the past two years, although the country was faced with economic challenges and severe floods that have engulfed the entire region.

- Members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are generally incorporated into the community and they are exercising the rights defined by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- Low concentrations of national minorities in one geographic region make it difficult to create special conditions for the implementation of the educational process in the languages of minorities at all levels. Where there is a higher concentration, as in Prnjavor, teaching in minority languages is implemented.
- In the period between the two reports, the media showed openness to minority programs and the number of shows and programs for minorities increased. Each year, the program contents records a quantitative and qualitative growth and a progress.
- The issue of funding of cultural and other activities of minorities prevails, especially in municipalities with smaller budgets.
- The reporting period is relatively short for any significant progress in the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, but the commitment of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue their work to improve the implementation of the Charter is evident.

PROPOSED CONCLUSION

1. The Second Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Implementation of Measures and Principles Set Forth in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has been adopted and the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina is tasked with transmitting it to the Secretariat of the Council of Europe on European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.