Committee of Ministers: Media Recommendations in Monitoring of Languages Charter

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In recent months, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (CM) adopted five country-specific Recommendations concerning the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: Slovakia (first monitoring cycle); Slovenia and the United Kingdom (second monitoring cycle) and Hungary and Norway (third monitoring cycle). The Charter contains a number of provisions of relevance for the (audiovisual) media, the most detailed of which are to be found in Article 11. The latest Recommendations on the application of the Charter highlight a number of pertinent issues.

In respect of Slovakia, the CM recommended that the State authorities *inter alia* "improve the provision of broadcast and print media in all regional or minority languages" and "promote awareness and tolerance vis-à-vis the regional or minority languages and the cultures they represent as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Slovakia […] in the media."

The CM did not specifically target the audiovisual media in its Recommendations on Slovenia or the United Kingdom; in the case of the former, it did not deal with the media at all, but in the case of the latter, it recommended increased support for the print media in Scottish Gaelic and Irish.

In its Recommendation on Hungary, the CM was more detailed in its description of the course of action it advocated, *viz.* that the State authorities should "improve the offer of minority language programmes in the media, in particular by allocating a suitable radio frequency as well as developing and financing a comprehensive scheme for the training of journalists and other media staff using minority languages". Its Recommendation on Norway does not contain any observations or proposals relating specifically to the media.

The application of the Charter by States Parties is overseen by the Committee of Experts of the Charter and the CM. Periodic State Reports are evaluated by the Committee of Experts, on the basis of which the CM formulates its country-specific Recommendations.

Recommendation RecChL(2007)1 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Slovakia, 21 February 2007

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Recommendation RecChL(2007)2 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by the United Kingdom, 14 March 2007

Recommendation RecChL(2007)3 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Norway, 16 May 2007

Recommendation RecChL(2007)4 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Hungary, 20 June 2007

Recommendation RecChL(2007)5 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Slovenia, 20 June 2007

http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/local_and_regional_democracy/regional_or_minority_languages/2_Monitoring/Monitoring_table.asp#TopOfPage

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