

**THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES**

**(MIN-LANG)**

**FINLAND**

**Government's reply to the additional questionnaire**

**November 2006**

## PRELIMINARY SECTION

### ***Question no. 1.***

*Whereas the provisions of the Charter do not apply to the Aland Islands, the authorities state in the 3rd Periodical Report (p. 6) that it is important to improve and maintain the Swedish language skills of judicial and administrative authorities. Please specify what kind of measures are taken (specific training, etc.) and if those measures will be disseminated in other parts of Finland.*

The various bodies, the Ministries for instance, organise sector-specific Swedish language training to their civil servants. The Ministry of Justice organises courses of judicial Swedish to judges, and, today, an advanced course in Swedish is also available. After the adoption of the new Language Act, more Swedish training has been available to civil servants.

### ***Question no. 2.***

*Has it been envisaged to update figures for the new election of the Sámi Parliament in September 2007, as was the case for the election in 2003 (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 7)?*

Every four years, for the elections of the Sámi Parliament, a voters' list is compiled with the names of the persons entitled to vote. The list is made based on the voters' list of the previous elections and the Population Register Centre with the addition of the children coming of legal voting age before the election of persons already on the list entered *ex officio*. A person entitled to vote missing from the list may be inserted to the list at his request. The names of deceased persons are removed from the list as well as those who have declared they do not wish to be marked on it. Next time, a voters' list will be compiled for the elections in 2007, and after the election the number of Sámi speaking people will be updated.

### ***Question no. 3.***

*Is it possible to carry out a survey similar to the collection of information made by the Population Register Centre, Local Regional Officers, and Statistics Finland for non-territorial languages, i.e. to identify persons according to the language spoken and not to their ethnicity (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 8 on the Roma language)?*

In Finland, it is possible to register one language only as one's mother tongue. Therefore, for those with a multilingual background, official registers only show one mother tongue chosen by the person concerned. Conducting a study on persons speaking Roma, it would have to be in the form of a survey asking what languages a person speaks other than the mother tongue marked on the population register. So far, this kind of study has not been conducted.

The set of name codes in the population register system is based on the SFS-ISO 639-1 standards of language name codes. By using these codes it is possible to conduct an information search in the population register without revealing the ethnic background of the person searched. However, the name code list does not, for example, make a distinction between Skolt and Inari Sámi.

Belonging to a religious community constitutes a piece of sensitive information under the Personal Data Act. In case there is an obvious linguistic connection to a religion,

making that piece of information accessible presupposes specific deliberation in each case.

***Question no. 4.***

*Concerning the Roma community, there seems to be a trend in the new generation to use Finnish rather than Roma. Have specific measures been taken by the authorities to counter this trend (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 9)?*

The teaching of and the communication in the Roma language have increased. The National Board of Education has adopted a curriculum for the teaching of Roma. In the field of cultural politics, the Ministry of Education has in 2006 started to support a project for several years for the resuscitation of the use of the Roma language, realised by the Roma organisation and targeting especially children and adolescents.

The knowledge of the employees in social and health care concerning the Roma culture has been improved by means of a specific guide. Also, several projects have been set off in view of promoting the early education of Roma children.

The Roma Education Unit at the National Board of Education arranges annually both further and additional training for Roma-speaking teachers and teaching of the Roma language and culture for all teachers. The training consists usually of two-day courses. The Unit also arranges Roma language summer schools for adults, as well as updates and revises teaching material. In 2005, the Unit published a Roma-Finnish-English dictionary and a Finnish-Roma dictionary.

In 2004-2005, three projects on early childhood education of Roma children were started with project funding of Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in the cities of Vantaa, Turku and Varkaus. In these cities the percentage of Roma people of the population is significant by Finnish standards. The projects aim at increasing Roma children's attendance at early childhood education and pre-school education. The intention is to enhance early childhood education services so as to support Roma children's linguistic development both in the Finnish/Swedish and the Roma language.

In December 2005, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health published a guide "Reading with children", ("Lue lapsen kanssa"), which is intended both to serve Roma parents as a guide for child upbringing and to support children's linguistic development by providing pictures and words of the Roma language.

***Question no. 5.***

*Are the authorities supporting the relevant private initiatives carried out by the schools and the association in the Yiddish language (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 10)?*

The Jewish School in Helsinki teaches Hebrew and receives state subsidies for this purpose. The school does not teach Yiddish, but the language is used in the activities of the school, e.g. in songs etc.

***Question no. 6.***

*Have the recommendations of the working group on the implementation of the new Language Act and the new Administrative Procedure Act been implemented yet, and in particular "the good administrative practices" that have been detailed (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 12)?*

The final report of a project "Enabling citizens to conduct their affairs as smoothly as possible in their own languages" by the Ministry of Finance, includes recommendations for authorities as to how to take the legislation on languages into account in their duties. These recommendations can be implied in several ways. Increasingly, the requirements pertaining to the linguistic rights of the individual and the bilingual administration emerge in the result contracts and annual reports of administrative bodies. These recommendations do not, however, create new obligations to authorities; they are meant to make the application of language legislation more effective.

The Ministry of Finance is organising a seminar in November 2006 in order to evaluate the implementation of the recommendations of the Working group on the implementation of the new Administrative Procedure Acts. Some concrete measures within the competence of the Ministry of Finance aiming at the enhancement of bilingualism in the administration have already taken place.

The language aspect has been included in performance contracts between the Ministry of Finance and agencies subordinate to the Ministry of Finance (for instance the National Board of Taxation, the National Board of Customs and Statistics Finland). The practice has also been recommended to other Ministries.

For instance, the new wage system for civil servants enables the definition of the language skills among the qualifications required for a special post and among the criteria when assessing personal performance. Some agencies, for instance the National Board of Customs, apply additional language increments in order to reward the employees for their language skills.

A "Quality Barometer" has been developed in order to monitor citizen's satisfaction with the public service. Questions concerning the provision of services in Swedish are included in the questionnaire.

A special application of the quality measurement system "Common Assessment Framework", CAF, commonly used in the national public administrations in the European Union has been developed in order to introduce bilingualism, or when relevant, multilingualism as a quality factor in the public administration. In 2004 a pilot project was implemented, where the CAF criteria were utilised in order to identify good practices concerning the service provision on customers' mother tongue in nine organisations representing the national and regional levels.

Best practices identified during the self-assessment process have been illustrated and spread for further utilisation in the administration. For instance recruitment procedures, organisation of work processes and shifts, regional differentiation of service chains, networking, efforts concerning the electronic communication on multilingual basis and continuous monitoring of customer satisfaction turned out to be relevant topics, when improving the concrete service situations.

***Question no. 7.***

*Please indicate the timeframe for the publication of brochures on employment office services in the Roma language (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 12).*

No specific time frame has been set. From the viewpoint of the national Advisory Board on Roma Affairs, it has been more urgent to publish brochures on the day care and basic education of children, housing, social security etc.

In 2007, a research project will be launched about the availability of employment services for Roma people and the promotion of placement of Roma to the labour market. One of the aims of the project is to estimate the need for guidance in the employment services and possibly produce brochure/ counselling in labour administration services. Additionally the aim is to help the employment offices to promote the employment of Roma people in the best way possible. The research project is estimated to be finalised by the end of 2007.

***Question no. 8.***

*Please indicate which other minority languages and cultural groups would need support for school attendance of children (3<sup>rd</sup> PR, p. 13).*

The Basic Education Act provides for compulsory schooling and the obligations of the municipalities to organise teaching. Children residing in Finland permanently have the obligation and right to be schooled. The principle of compulsory schooling applies to all persons within the age range provided by the law representing minority languages and cultures as well.

The compulsory schooling of a child starts the year he turns seven. It ends when he has completed the basic education syllabus or when the period of his schooling has lasted for ten years. A municipality is responsible of organising basic education for children in age of compulsory schooling living in its area as well as pre-primary education during the year preceding the beginning the child's compulsory schooling. In case the pupil's legal guardian neglects his or her duty to survey that the child really is schooled, he or she is punishable by a fine for neglect of the compulsory schooling of the child.

What is more, as far as the last three classes of basic education are concerned, a national "Project for flexible basic education" was set off with the intention of being able to take into account the various kinds of needs and practices called for by a number of pupils in basic education.

Immigrants are given instruction preparing for basic education, Finnish as a second language instruction, and mother tongue instruction. In basic education, they are taught Finnish or Swedish as a second language, if their knowledge of these languages is insufficient. While studying Finnish or Swedish, immigrants also use the language as a tool for other studies. Finnish/Swedish as a second language instruction, instruction preparing for basic education and mother tongue instruction are included in the curricula for both general education and vocational basic education. In the matriculation examination it is possible to take a test of Finnish/Swedish as a second

language instead of a mother tongue test. Immigrants have access to instruction of their mother tongues in addition to Finnish/Swedish as a second language.

## **PART I**

### ***Question no. 9.***

*Has the Ministry of Justice and/or Advisory Board on Language Issues adopted any recommendation on issues relating to legislation on the national language and taken measures to overcome the observed problems (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 15)?*

The Ministry of Justice makes statements on the application of the legislation of languages to authorities on a regular basis. Among other things, it has made a recommendation to the effect that language skills have to be considered in the process of employing civil servants for the State or personnel for courts of law.

In its meeting on 27 September 2006, the Advisory Board on Language Issues dealt with its Action Plan laid out till the end of 2007. Taking initiatives and contacting authorities make up an essential part of the Plan in view of promoting a more efficient line of application of the language legislation. The Board also will also pronounce its point of view in the development of instruments of follow-up the implementation of the legislation.

### ***Question no. 10.***

*The Government has submitted its first report on language legislation to the Parliament, which focuses on legislation but not implementation. Has the Parliament discussed the report and made comments and suggestions to the government in this field?*

The Report of the Government on language legislation 2006 dealing with, in addition to legislation, its implementation, has been discussed in the Parliament. The Constitutional Committee has declared in its report that it is important for the Government to implement the measures and obtain the clarifications called for in it. In particular, it must investigate if the level of teaching the national languages is satisfactory from the viewpoint of the realisation of linguistic rights of individuals. In addition, according to the Constitutional Committee, it is necessary to investigate the real standing of the endangered Sámi languages as well as that of the Roma and the language of signs in the various sectors of the society.

### ***Question no. 11.***

*What measures, if any, have been taken to implement the Act on the Knowledge of Language required of Personnel in Public Bodies (424/2003)?*

The Ministry of Justice offers training and gives information on the contents of the law while answering questions of public officials as to its interpretation. In addition, it provides guidelines for authorities for establishing administrative sector-specific language competence requirements. The Ministry of Justice, among other things, has given a recommendation involving language proficiency requirements for the making of employment advertisements.

**Question no. 12.**

*Please provide, if possible, a copy in English of the recommendations issued by the Ministry of Labour on the Non-Discrimination Act (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 17). Are the equality plans finalised and available?*

The recommendations issued by the Ministry of Labour on the content of equality plans are found on the Ministry's website in Finnish, Swedish and Sámi. They are not yet available in English. For Finnish version, see [www.mol.fi/mol/fi/99\\_pdf/fi/04\\_maahanmuutto/04\\_yhdenvert/yvsuosit.pdf](http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/99_pdf/fi/04_maahanmuutto/04_yhdenvert/yvsuosit.pdf).

The Ministry of Labour will initiate during the autumn 2006 a research on the effectiveness of the Non-Discrimination Act to have more specific information also on the equality plans. Some of the equality plans have been send to the Ministry of Labour and are available, in Finnish, at [www.yhdenvertaisuus.fi](http://www.yhdenvertaisuus.fi).

The Ministry of Labour working group on equality has made a proposal for the implementation of the Non-Discrimination Act, the realisation of the outlinings of the principle of equality as well as the follow-up and assessment of the plan of the Ministry. In cooperation with the regional Employment and Economic Development Centre in Lapland, the accessibility and quality of services available to the Sámi in their Homeland has been assessed. Also, in cooperation with the Advisory Board of Roma Affairs the views of Romas concerning employment services and their standing in the labour market.

On the basis of their mandate, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Chancellor of Justice as well as the Ombudsman for Minorities may request authorities to provide their equality plans as part of the supervision they perform concerning the lawfulness of the actions of public authorities and officials. The Ombudsman for Minorities has requested a municipality or an authority to send its equality plan in a few specific cases.

**Question no. 13.**

*Does the support granted to municipalities and other providers of education concern all the Sámi languages or only the North Sámi language? (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.22)*

According to law, pupils in basic education, including pre-primary education, shall be taught Finnish, Swedish or Sámi as mother tongue in keeping with the language of instruction. Pupils living in the Sámi Homeland who are proficient in the Sámi language shall also be taught in Sámi.

In Finland, three Sámi languages are spoken, namely North Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Inari Sámi. Of these, North Sámi is most spoken. In the Sámi Homeland, a specific state subsidy is granted for teaching of and in Sámi. In addition, the Government grants annually subsidies for the production of teaching material in Sámi.

The funding for the teaching of the Sámi language as well as teaching in the Sámi language is granted to the municipalities under the same terms regardless of the type of Sámi language.

**Question no. 14.**

*Did the Sámi organisations or newspapers send any application or request to the authorities with a view to receiving grants/subsidies for the publication of newspapers (or developing an existing newspaper) in the North Sámi language, or in the Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi languages (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.22).*

In 2006, the Ministry of Education has subsidised an Inari Sámi language magazine out of a budget for the publication and distribution of cultural magazines. The subsidy represents a big part of the costs related to the making of it. Sámi language publications may continue to apply for subsidies out of a Ministry of Education budget reserved for the use by the Sámi Parliament intended for the support of the Sámi culture and the activities of Sámi organisations.

Sámi Parliament applied for public financial newspaper support for a Sámi language publication in April 2006. Funding was not granted on the basis of this application.

A cooperation between Finnish newspaper *Lapin Kansa* and Sámi newspaper *Min Áigi*, which is published in and funded by Norway, was initiated by a Sámi organisation MII Rs from Rovaniemi. The organisation operates on voluntary work basis and has limited financial resources.

**Question no. 15.**

*Have the authorities explored possibilities of establishing a newspaper in Sámi, for example in co-operation with the newspapers in Sámi in neighbouring countries?*

As an established principle, the authorities do not publish or establish newspapers in Finland, the initiatives must come from private persons or companies.

The oldest newspaper published in Sámi was launched in 1934. A newspaper in Inari Sámi has been published since 1987. The Finnish press operates mostly without public subsidies. The Government grants press subsidy mainly to the political and the Swedish-speaking press. The Ministry of Education supports the Sámi press by granting appropriations for transport, distribution and similar costs and participating in projects to develop newspapers.

The initiatives to establish newspapers in cooperation with existing Sámi newspapers have been considered positive. So far, no financing has been ascertained.

**Question no. 16.**

*Has any application been received from municipalities in the framework of the social welfare development project (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 23)?*

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs finances a number of development projects directed to Sámi and Swedish speaking minorities in the framework of a larger development project in the social services.

The Sámi section of the Social Welfare Centre in Northern Finland (Pohjois-Suomen sosiaalialan kehittämiskeskuksen saamelaisyksikkö) is developing a project aimed at creating a Sámi Social Development Centre (Saamelaisten sosiaalialan

kehittämissyksikkö). The project is planned together with municipalities in the Sámi Homeland and its intended starting date is 1st July 2007.

## **PART II**

### ***Question no. 17.***

*The Constitutional Committee (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 9) and the Committee of Experts encouraged the authorities to ensure the drafting of a legal framework for the Roma language. The authorities state that “provisions on other languages will also in the future be laid down in special legislation” (see 3rd PR p. 30). Have any measures been taken in that direction?*

Provisions other than those included in legislation concerning the national languages are covered by special legislation, such as special laws on the social services, health care and education. It has not been considered necessary to change the legal framework accounting for these sector-specific needs.

The Government submitted to Parliament its report on the application of language legislation in 2006. The report states several proposals for measures. However, there is no mention of special legislation on Roma language.

### ***Question no. 18.***

*Have the authorities noticed effects on the use of regional or minority languages, in particular the **Swedish language**, resulting from the on-going reform of municipal and service structure in Finland (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 28)?*

In the framework for the preparation of a reform concerning the the restructuring of services by municipalities, a special legal working group has addressed the issue of the realisation of the linguistic rights of individuals. In its interim report, the working group covers the effects of various types of options relating to municipal reform on the realisation of people's linguistic rights having considered specifically that the reform must not have as an outcome the weakening of the linguistic rights of individuals in a significant manner. A proposal for a law on the restructuring of services by municipalities is under consideration by the Parliament. The draft proposal includes a number of provisions aiming at ensuring linguistic rights by special arrangements. The reform being under way, it is not possible to assess the effects it will finally have on the implementation of linguistic rights.

The status of the national minority languages will be taken into account in the planned reform of municipal and service structures. Because the reform is only at a planning stage, it is difficult to assess its impacts. The Government Bill on an act on the reform of municipal and service structures suggests that, in the planning and implementation of certain arrangements, account shall be taken of the right of both the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking population to use their own language and to be served in this language, as well as the linguistic rights of the Sámi and their right as an indigenous people to maintain and develop their own language and culture in the Sámi Homeland. Thus, the requirements laid down in the Finnish Constitution must be

taken into account in the implementation of certain arrangements, and the solutions to be made depend on concrete situations.

According to the Bill, it is possible to make exceptions to the conditions for forming a municipality or a cooperation area, if the formation of a functional entity is necessary in order to safeguard the linguistic rights of Finnish-speaking or Swedish-speaking inhabitants, or to safeguard the rights of Sámi people concerning their language and culture.

The Bill further suggests that, for the provision of services that necessitate a broad population basis, Finland shall be divided under joint municipal boards listed in the Act on Specialized Medical Care. Each municipality shall belong under one joint municipal board. In addition, bilingual municipalities and monolingual Swedish municipalities shall be members of a joint municipal board that is responsible for ensuring the arrangement of services in Swedish in their member municipalities, according to a division of work to be agreed on separately.

The network of employment offices will be developed and combined in order to secure the availability of more exhaustive services. The development of the office network of the labour administration has not affected the availability of services in Swedish. Information and other material aimed at the customers of the labour administration are translated into Swedish. Phone services and electronic services, the data system for the labour administration as well as the home pages are in both languages (Finnish – Swedish).

***Question no. 19.***

*Have the authorities clarified their interpretation of Article 122 of the Constitution and taken into consideration the criticism made by the Swedish Assembly regarding the rearrangement of administrative boundaries for Swedish (ECRML (2004) 7 p.9 and 2<sup>nd</sup> PR p. 26)?*

According to Section 122 of the Constitution, when organising administration, one must aim at a compatible regional distribution ensuring the possibility for the Finnish and Swedish speaking populations to have access to services in their own mother tongue. Aiming at compatible regional distribution means, according to the arguments for the reform of the Constitution, equals to a requirement to avoid the creation of many different types of distribution in the organisation of the regional and local administration of the State. The ensuring and the realisation of the linguistic rights of individual citizens in accordance with Section 17.2 of the Constitution is a priority in the administrative organising of services. The purpose of Section 122 of the Constitution, is not, therefore, primarily, to ensure the formation of monolingual entities, but, instead, first and foremost, to ensure one's access to services in Finnish as well as Swedish. In case the services, regardless, can be ensured as provided for by Section 17.2, it is not necessary to establish regional boundaries according to language. Among other things, the legal working group working on the reform concerning the restructuring of services by municipalities, has addressed, in its interim report, the issue of the implications of the establishing of new boundary lines from the point of view of the realisation of the linguistics rights of the individual.

## **Swedish language**

### ***Question no. 20.***

*The drafting of the Language Act was aimed at ensuring a more effective implementation of linguistic rights of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 28). Please provide concrete examples of what the authorities have done in practice to actively secure the implementation of the Act.*

After the adoption of the new Language Act, administrative bodies have improved communicating in both national languages. Bilingual bodies, among other things, have paid attention for maintaining Internet sites in both languages. Authorities have had access to ample training on language legislation. More language courses have been available.

The setting up of a linguistic service in a manner provided by law has been laid down in the action plans of many administrative bodies. In municipalities, for instance, commitments relating to language issues have been made in view of being determined about taking the realisation of the linguistic rights of individuals into account. In some municipalities, a decision has been made to pay a bonus to civil servants for increasing their use of each national language. Also, Swedish-speaking professionals and translators have been increasingly hired for administrative bodies.

Swedish-speaking daycare, pre-primary education and other education is provided for by the Day Care Act, Basic Education Act, Upper Secondary Education Act, and the Act on Vocational Education and Training. For example, in pre-primary and basic education, the instruction for Finnish and Swedish speaking pupils shall be arranged in his/her mother tongue regardless of whether there are other pupils belonging to the same language group in the municipality or not. If there is no school giving instruction in that language in the municipality, that municipality has the option of purchasing instruction services from another municipality or a private provider authorized to provide basic education.

In addition, Swedish is taught as the second national language. It is an obligatory subject matter in basic, upper secondary as well as university education. From 2005, in the immatriculation examination, passing an examination in Swedish is voluntary.

According to the Local Government Act, bilingual municipalities must found an administrative body responsible for arranging education in both Finnish and Swedish and to establish a specific section for each language in administrative bodies answering for the arrangement of education.

Generally speaking, matters pertaining to Finland being a bilingual State, the availability of services in both Finnish and Swedish and the functions of public officials are provided for, among other things, in the Administrative Procedure Act, the Language Act, the Act on the Knowledge of Language required of Personnel in Public Bodies, the Government decree on the proficiency of Finnish and Swedish required from public officials in State administration and the Non-Discrimination Act.

The Library Act provides for the fact that in bilingual municipalities the needs of each language group has to be taken into consideration on an equal basis.

## **Sámi Languages**

### ***Question no. 21.***

*How do the authorities see the future of projects on the vocabularies and terminologies of the three Sámi languages and in particular Skolt and Inari Sámi, given the financial constraints and a clear lack of financial resources to ensure the development of the Sámi languages (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 28)?*

#### Dictionaries and work on terminology

The Sámi language is researched and /or taught, in particular, at the Universities of Oulu and Helsinki as well as at the Research Institute for the Languages in Finland, Kotus.

At the moment, there are three researchers employed by the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland, compiling a Sámi language etymological file called Álgu. It will be published in November 2006, accessible for all, open to development. One has the intention of setting off, based on Álgu, work to be done for the compilation of a dictionary, first of all, probably, on North Sámi. For a large part, it is Kotus that is responsible for the project, but cooperation has been done on the project with the Giellages Institute of the University of Oulu.

There is one language planner working on North Sámi and one part-time one on Inari Sámi. One part-time researcher is employed to study the situation of Skolt Sámi in the autumn of 2006. In addition, there is a Sámi language committee made up of experts representing the three Sámi languages spoken in Finland. The committee only has limited capacities of discussing matters pertaining to vocabulary or terminology since it represents all the three languages.

The work on Inari Sámi terminology and material has been partly financed by Kotus, partly by other resources. No work on vocabulary or terminology has been organised as regards the Skolt Sámi. The draft for a dictionary in Skolt Sámi by Satu and Jouni Mosnikoff is well on the way, but, for the time being, the financing of the publication is unclear.

The advancing of the work done on the vocabulary and terminology in Inari and Skolt Sámi depends both on finding human resources for this particular purpose as well as financial support and creating an infrastructure needed. For instance, for the time being, Kotus has no or little financing to offer unless the States grants subsidies needed by these objectives.

## **Roma language**

### ***Question no. 22.***

*Please clarify what kind of “more visible measures (...) are needed to improve the status of the Roma language” (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 30).*

See the reply to Question no. 4.

One possibility to correct the situation would be to prepare a Roma language policy programme, which would centralise all the work carried out to develop the Roma language. The Roma must also be informed more efficiently of their linguistic rights and the significance of a child's own language to his or her later development. Furthermore, the Roma language teachers should be properly educated with linguistic and teaching degree. These would need more resources e.g. for teaching and for awareness raising project among both the Roma and the general Finnish people.

### **Russian language**

#### ***Question no. 23.***

*In its 2nd evaluation report, the Committee of Experts notes that the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations made a request for the official recognition of the existence of the Russian language group in Finland and for legislation that would guarantee the possibility for this community to maintain its language, cultural tradition and religion. Please specify whether this request has been taken into consideration (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 9)?*

In Finland, there is no legal framework for the official recognising of minorities. Section 17.3 of the Constitution provides for the guarantee of the linguistic and cultural rights of minorities concerning all the minorities actually existing in Finland.

See the reply to Question no. 17.

#### ***Question no. 24.***

*Please clarify why it has not been considered necessary to set up an advisory board for the Russian-speaking population (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.31 and ECLMR (2004)7 p.10).*

In Finland, it has been a long time there has been a specific advisory board addressing the issues relative to the traditional minorities, including the Sámi and the Roma. The affairs of other minorities are dealt with in the Advisory Board of Ethnic Relations and the board of minority affairs. Each of them have members representing the Russian-speaking minority in Finland.

In May 2006, the Council of the State set up an Advisory Board of Ethnic Relations (ETNO) for a term of three years, working under the Ministry of Labour. In this connection, in addition three regional boards were set up. Organisations representing ethnic minorities and immigrants were selected for the national branch of the Advisory Board by an open advertisement for organisations based on public criteria for selection. The Board represents 10 organisations, including the league of Russian-speaking people's associations in Finland. In addition, in some other organisations members of the Board there are persons speaking Russian as their mother tongue. In ETNO, issues concerning the Russian population in Finland are brought up on an equal basis with those relative to other ethnic minorities and groups of immigrants.

The purpose of ETNO is to enhance interaction of authorities, civic organisations and political parties represented in the Parliament with immigrants and ethnic minorities on a national, regional and local level. Its tasks include the following: (1) promote good ethnic relations and ethnic equality as well as diverse interaction and cooperation between different actors in the different fields of immigration policy; (2)

act as an organ of experts in the enhancing of the different sectors of immigration policy; (3) contribute to the promotion of immigrant organisational activities; as well as (4) provide information on immigration policy, promote the goal of ethnic equality and ethnic diversity as a human resource in society.

### **Yiddish language**

#### ***Question no. 25.***

*Please further develop on the co-operation between Yiddish speakers and the authorities with a view to protecting and promoting this language (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 10).*

In Finland, there are, for instance, consultative bodies that strive for promoting the rights of the speakers of minority languages. Representatives of minority languages are heard, *inter alia*, by the Board of Language Affairs. Also, the Ombudsman for Minorities is an authority with the main responsibility of promoting the standing of ethnic minorities and foreigners, their equality and legal protection as well as good ethnic relations in Finland.

### **Roma language**

#### ***Question no. 26.***

*According to the authorities, the current situation of the media should be improved (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 31). Please indicate what measures are being taken to improve the current situation (training of journalists, etc)?*

The Advisory Board on Roma Affairs sees that it is important to co-operate with the media. The Advisory Board organised in June 2006, a seminar called "The Roma and the media" which was directed for the Roma and the representatives of media.

#### ***Question no. 27.***

*Please indicate which body/authority is financing the church activities relating to the Roma (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 32).*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church has, within the framework of the social work, a specific working group entitled 'Kirkko ja Romanit' ('The Church and the Roma'). The group has organised different activities. It promotes, jointly with the Finnish Bible Society, the production of spiritual material in Roma. 'The Church and the Roma' is financed by the budget of the Church.

#### ***Question no. 28.***

*Have the municipalities been more involved in the promotion of the Roma Language, in particular through the special development programme proposed by the National Board of Education (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 11)?*

In arranging instruction, municipalities and schools must apply the Basic Education Act and the national core curricula provided for by the National Board of Education.

According to the opinion of the Advisory Board on Roma Affairs there has not been any progress regarding the special development programme.

Instruction in the Roma language has been given in establishments of basic education as from 1898. According to information from 2002, instruction in Roma was arranged for 230 pupils in nine municipalities. From 2005 to 2006, Roma language teaching materials have been published. In the core curriculum for early childhood education, the needs of Roma children have been seen to. In 2005, the educational guide 'Lue lapsen kanssa' (Read with your child) was published.

A school may have Roma as its language of instruction. Also, Roma may be taught as a mother tongue both in basic and upper secondary education. To come up with a more coherent approach for language teaching, the National Board of Education has published core curricula for the Roma language. However, in the immatriculation examination, one may not pass Roma as an examination in mother tongue.

The instruction in Roma may also be offered as part of education and training promoting employment. The first diplomas for professional instructors in Roma culture were obtained in 2004.

***Question no. 29.***

*Please provide, if possible, the following figures and data: the drop out rate of Roma children in primary and secondary school (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 12).*

In the statistics produced by Statistics Finland concerning education in Finland, pupils are not separated by ethnic background. According to the data collected by the National Board of Education, instruction of mother tongue for Roma-speaking pupils was provided in 2002 for 234 pupils in nine municipalities.

The attendance rate in Finnish schools on the basic education level is 100%. In the school year 2002-2003 there were 79 pupils in the whole country who entirely failed to attend compulsory education (there were 597,414 pupils in total). For ethical reasons, and because the number is so small, the statistics do not divide these pupils into groups.

In 2001 and 2002, the National Board of Education carried out a survey of the situation of the basic education of Roma children during the school year 2001-2002. In total 380 schools that had Roma pupils, 859 pupils in total, in that school year took part in the survey. The survey was carried out in extensive cooperation. Principals and teachers were interviewed on the acting of families and children of the minority culture in the school community.

According to the survey many Roma children had problems with attending and completing basic education. It states among other things that the educational level of Roma has improved in the long term and their positive attitudes towards education have increased. However, only 2% of Roma children attend pre-school education. It is estimated that 5 % of all the Roma pupils (41) dropped out of school during the period of 2001-2002. The number is high as the average drop-out rate in the country is close to zero.

The basic education project also included a questionnaire addressed to Roma families, collecting the parents' views on their children's education. According to the

interviews, almost a fifth, 18 %, of the age group had dropped out of comprehensive school. The basic education project has led to an estimation of 10-20 % dropouts.

According to a report made on school year 2001-2002, 5 % of Roma children dropped out of basic education that year. This National Board Education report on the state of affairs of Roma children basic education is available on the Internet.

**Question no. 30.**

*The National Board of Education proposed to introduce quotas for the admission of Roma students in teacher training and language studies (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 13 and 3<sup>rd</sup> PR pp. 36-37). Have the authorities envisaged implementing this recommendation?*

The Universities set up their own student selection criteria and any quotas in accordance with legislation relative to studies at the university level. The universities have not adopted Roma quotas in teacher training nor language teaching. At the university level, some courses on the Roma language have been available and some research has been conducted. The Roma language has not, however, been established as a subject matter in any university.

According to the Advisory Board on Roma Affairs, there have not been any efforts implementing this recommendation.

**Question no. 31.**

*Is the Roma cultural instructor's diploma open to non-Roma (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 34, see also ECRML (2004) 7 p. 14)?*

Yes.

**Question no. 32.**

*Please describe and clarify the "tailor made teaching of Roma" at the University of Helsinki (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 36)? How many students are taking this course in the University? Are there non-Roma following the classes?*

The Department of General Linguistics at the University of Helsinki has organised two basic courses in Roma language in 1999 and 2001.

Also two master's graduate theses of Roma language were made in this Department in 2001 and 2002.

The courses are intended for language students and the purpose of the credit is to make an introduction to elementary Roma and a reasearch in the Roma language from the point of view of language research in particular. Ten students participated in the study unit.

The unit in question is not part of the curriculum of the Department of General Linguistics at the moment. Instead, it has been available periodically every few years.

**Question no. 33.**

*Has there been any case law regarding discrimination based on languages (3<sup>rd</sup> PR pp. 17 and 49)?*

In 2004 the Ombudsman for Minorities submitted an application to the Discrimination Board concerning segregation in a comprehensive school based on the ethnic origin, national origin, or other personal characteristics of the pupils. The division of pupils into two classes had been made mainly on the basis of the mother tongue of the immigrant students. The Ombudsman asked the Board to examine, whether the school was guilty of segregation, i.e. one form of indirect discrimination. In its decision of 31 January 2006 the Board prohibited the school and the city of Helsinki to divide the age-groups into classes based on the language of the immigrant students. The city appealed against the decision to the Administrative Court of Helsinki and the case is still pending.

Since the mandate of the Discrimination Board is limited in the same way as the mandate of the Ombudsman for Minorities to cases concerning ethnic discrimination, the Board cannot examine cases without any link to ethnicity (which is usually the case for Swedish speaking Finns for example). However, the language can indirectly be relevant to cases concerning ethnic discrimination.

In its decision of 27 February 2006, for example, the Discrimination Board prohibited the social and health care authorities in the city of Espoo from discriminating a customer on the basis of his cultural background. To support the claims put forward in the application to the Board by the Ombudsman for Minorities referred among other things to faults by the authorities to make sure that the customer had an interpreter, when necessary. At one meeting at the social welfare office, the official had suggested that the customer with insufficient knowledge of spoken and written Finnish should communicate with the authorities only in written form.

The possibility to claim compensation for discrimination in a district court does not cover discrimination based on language (Non-Discrimination Act, Section 9).

**Question no. 34.**

*Is the national strategy for global education completed and implemented (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 39)?*

In 2005, the national committee was set up to draft a proposal for a global education action plan. The report of the committee "Global Education 2010" was published in January 2006. During this year part of the proposals have been implemented, some of them have been further discussed. The whole implementing process is going on; the objective is to get the final programme accepted by the Government by the end of 2006.

The core curriculum for basic education comprises seven thematic entities approached in the regular framework of teaching. Those entities include themes such as cultural identity and internationality. The core curriculum for upper secondary education contains a framework of six thematic entities, including cultural identity and knowledge of

cultures. State subsidies are granted to both general and vocational education to be spent on international projects.

**Question no. 35.**

*The Committee noted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> evaluation report that there was a lack of awareness among the general Finnish population of the needs of the speakers of Roma and Russian (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 15). Has progress been made since the last evaluation round concerning those two minority languages?*

No evaluation studies are done on this subject. The reason for lack of awareness depends partly on historical reasons. The Roma language is primarily a spoken language and an important part of cultural identity. The Roma in Finland have wanted to keep their language as their own language and the language has been kind of a “secret language” that has been learnt from Roma to Roma. There are still tendencies to keep the language within the minority and this might be the reason why the needs are not better known among the general Finnish population.

The Report of the Government on the application of language legislation, in March 2006, provides a comprehensive coverage on the needs of the speakers of the Roma and Russian languages, which has increased at least the awareness of the authorities and decision-makers of the needs of the speakers of minority languages. With the adoption of the new language legislation, minority languages have also been increasingly covered by the media, which must have increased the awareness of the general public of minority languages to some extent at least.

## **PART III – Swedish Language**

**Questions nos. 36-42 (General Education)**

During the 1980s and 1990s, the right of local authorities of making decisions on the organising of education increased significantly. In the beginning of 1999, new legislation concerning education entered into force. The authorities organising teaching (for instance, municipalities and consortia, communities, foundations and State establishments) were responsible for the planning and organisation of teaching in accordance with the legislation, provisions and the criteria set by State core curricula or degrees.

Laws on education determine the languages instruction and the mother tongue used in schools and educational institutions. They provide for the teaching of the second national language and foreign languages according to the distribution of lesson hours and core curriculum of each form of education apart.

Section 4, subsection 4 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998) provides for the obligation of a municipality with both Finnish and Swedish speaking pupils to arrange pre-primary and basic education for each language group apart. The municipality may arrange the education by itself, together with other municipalities or have it organised by another provider of instruction. Pre-primary education may be purchased from some other service provider, for example a day care center. A pupil has the right to free transportation or lodging under conditions provided by law.

According to Section 10, subsection 1 of the Basic Education Act, the instruction language of a school is either Finnish or Swedish, in some cases Sámi, Roma or the sign language. In addition, part of the instruction may be given in a language other than the pupil's mother tongue if it does not endanger his/her possibilities of following instruction.

The legal guardian of the pupil may choose the language of instruction in case the provider of education arranges instruction in more languages than one (Finnish, Swedish, Sámi, Roma, or the sign language) in which the pupil is capable of learning.

According to Section 12 of the Basic Education Act, the pupil shall be taught Finnish, Swedish or Sámi as mother tongue in keeping with the language of instruction. According to the choice of the guardian, as mother tongue, the pupil may also be taught the Roma language, sign language, or some other language which is the pupil's mother tongue.

According to Section 11 of the Basic Education Act, the basic education syllabus shall contain core subjects common to all such as the second national language and foreign languages, based on the distribution of lesson hours and the core curriculum.

In basic education, each pupil shall learn, in addition to his mother tongue, two other languages one of which shall be the second national language. The first of these two languages starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at the latest makes up the advanced syllabus (language A) while the second, starting, usually, in 7<sup>th</sup> grade is taught according to the mid-advanced syllabus (Language B). Eighty per cent of the pupils in Swedish language schools learn Finnish (finska) as their second national language, starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, while 20 % of them take Finnish, starting in 5<sup>th</sup> at the latest. Ninety per cent of the pupils in Finnish language schools have English as their first advanced syllabus choice. The second national language Swedish (svenska) starts in 7<sup>th</sup> grade at the latest. In 2003, Swedish (Language A) was chosen as the advanced syllabus choice by 1,3 % of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and as a voluntary advanced syllabus choice by 8,5 % of 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

Languages may also be offered as optional subjects starting, usually, in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. A little more 17 % of the pupils in 8<sup>th</sup> grade take optional languages. The second national language may not be optional, but Sámi may be studied as an optional language.

One provider of instruction may stress the importance of languages more than another. The first language to be learnt next to the mother tongue may start as early as in first grade. Another option might be to provide all instruction or a part of it in a language other than that of the rest of the school. The language in question might be the second national or a foreign language.

According to Section 6 of the Upper Secondary Education Act (629/1998) (not translated into English) the instruction language of the upper secondary school shall be either Finnish or Swedish. Sámi, Roma and the sign language may also be instruction languages. In addition, part of the instruction may be given in a language

other than the pupil's mother tongue in case it does not endanger his ability to follow instruction.

According to Section 8 of the Upper Secondary Education Act, the pupil shall be taught Finnish, Swedish or Sámi as mother tongue in keeping with the language of instruction. Following the choice of the pupil, as mother tongue, the pupil may also be taught the Roma language, sign language or some other language which is the pupil's mother tongue. Under Section 7, subsection 2 of the Upper Secondary Education Act, the upper secondary education syllabus includes, among other things, the second national as well as foreign languages based on the distribution of lesson hours and the core curriculum.

***Question no. 36.***

*Given the very low rate of tuition in regional or minority languages at the pre-school level, have the authorities taken any measures to increase the possibility for children to receive mother-tongue education (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 42)?*

- To be examined further.

***Question no. 37.***

*As regards basic education, why has the number of establishments providing education in Swedish slightly decreased (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 42)?*

An examination of the structure of the Finnish school network in terms of the number of pupils in different schools shows that education in Swedish is most commonly provided by schools with fewer than 50 pupils. In 2004, nearly 40 % of all schools providing basic education were small schools with fewer than 50 pupils. Of all Swedish schools, approximately 9 % had more than 300 pupils. The percentage of pupils in schools with more than 300 pupils was 29 %, while pupils in small schools accounted for some 10 %. There have been no significant changes in school size during the last few years.

Two of the bilingual municipalities in Finland have each only one school for basic education. In these municipalities, teaching is thus given in only one school and only in Swedish. In 2004, the schools providing teaching only for grades 1–6 numbered 241, and they had more than 21,300 pupils altogether. Of these schools, 104 were small schools with fewer than 50 pupils, and the percentage of pupils attending small schools providing teaching for grades 1–6 was approximately 15 %.

In 2004 there were 280 Swedish-speaking schools providing basic education, and their pupils numbered 32,180. In 1998–2004, the number of schools declined by 9. In 2004 there were additionally 13 Swedish special schools, with a total of about 320 pupils. Moreover, there were 5 private schools and one state school for both basic education and general upper secondary school education. Thus, the number of schools providing some form of basic education totalled approximately 299 in 2004. These 299 schools had a total of about 33,738 pupils in education ranging from pre-primary education to supportive education. Of all pupils, 718 attended pre-primary education and 64 additional education.

The number of pupils receiving education in Swedish increased continuously in the 1980s and 1990s, and up until the year 2003. According to Statistics Finland, the number of seven-years-old pupils registered as Swedish speakers has slightly declined again since 2002, and this trend seems to continue in the next few years. The same trend exists among the population in Finland as a whole.

In 2004, a total of 3,325 pupils received education in grade 1, whereas the corresponding figure in 1995 was 3,351. As a rule, the number of children registered in Swedish-speaking schools exceeds the corresponding number of children registered as Swedish speakers. In the last five years, the difference between the number of pupils registered in grade 1 and the number of seven-years-old children registered as Swedish speakers, according to Statistics Finland, has varied between 200 and 290 pupils per year. In other words, a rather large percentage of pupils not registered as Swedish speakers (+6–8 %) attend basic education provided in Swedish.

***Question no. 38.***

*Please provide, if possible, updated figures, concerning upper secondary education (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 42).*

According to the National Board of Education, in 2004 there were in all 440 (439 in 2003) establishments providing general upper secondary education (including for adults) In total 36 general upper secondary schools provided education in Swedish (36 in 2003).

***Question no. 39.***

*Please state the reason for the decreased number of students receiving vocational education (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 43).*

Vocational basic education has attracted a great number of pupils in the recent years. The number of applicants as well as that of those acceptance have increased during the past years in Swedish speaking instruction as well.

The number of applicants to Swedish speaking instruction as well as that of new students accepted has clearly increased year after year since 2002. From 2002 to 2005, the number of first-choice applicants to vocational basic education has gone up by 250 students. The corresponding number for those selected went up by approximately 220 students.

In Swedish-language vocational basic education there were approximately 5740 student in 2002, 6120 in 2003 and 6260 students in 2004. On a yearly basis, about 300 students speaking Swedish as their mother tongue attend Finnish vocational establishments. Correspondingly, about 200 students speaking Finnish as their mother tongue enter in Swedish vocational establishments every year.

Taking into account the vocational education organised as on-the-job instruction, the quantitative objectives set out for Swedish vocational education in the education and research development plan for the period 2003-2008 do not seem that far away.

All in all, for the age range 16-21 year olds, per person, the same amount of specified vocational education is available to the Swedish-speaking population and the Finnish.

In comparison to the rest of the population, the Swedish-speakers are offered, in percentages, more university than vocational education. The disparity between the education of the Swedish and Finnish speaking populations include, among other things, the structure of the economic activities and needs of bilingual and Swedish language regions, the traditions and the level of education of the Swedish speaking population as well as the educational demands expressed by the Swedish speaking adolescents.

***Question no. 40.***

*Have the authorities made an estimate of the total amount of financial resources needed to ensure a full implementation of education in Swedish (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 44)?*

- To be examined further.

***Question no. 41.***

*What measures, if any, have been taken to make the history of Swedish in Finland more visible in the curriculum (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 16)?*

- To be examined further.

***Question no. 42.***

*Are the results of the overall assessment carried out by the National Board of Education and the State province offices available, and have recommendations been adopted regarding regional or minority languages education (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 45)?*

- To be examined further.

***Question no. 43.***

*Please clarify whether periodical reports are drafted and made public (ECRML 2004-7 p. 16).*

The periodical reports are public documents.

***Question no. 44.***

*Are statistics available on the number of judges and prosecutors trained in the Swedish language (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.47)?*

Any specific study on how many of the judges or prosecutors has had their education in Swedish or has Swedish as their mother tongue has not been done. Language proficiency requirements in Finnish and Swedish have also been set for judges and prosecutors as part of their competence requirements.

As of 1.10.2006, there are approximately 330 prosecutors in Finland, consisting of 12 State Prosecutors, 300 District Prosecutors and 20 Assistant-Prosecutors. Out of these prosecutors, 3 State Prosecutors and approximately 20 District Prosecutors and 4 Assistant-Prosecutors are either native Swedish speakers or command the Swedish language well enough to perform prosecutorial duties, including bringing of charges and prosecuting cases orally before courts, in Swedish.

**Question no. 45.**

*Please give concrete examples (possibly statistics) of implementation of the relevant legislation. Has the level of personnel with a command of language improved? Has the use of the language by speakers in the courts increased?*

The 2006 Report of the Government on the application of language legislation states that the organisation of services still leaves to desire. Language proficiency requirements have, however, been extended to a larger range of functions, municipalities have reviewed their language use rules and language skills have been increasingly taken into account when employing personnel.

The amount of prosecutors commanding the Swedish language well enough to perform prosecutorial duties have not significantly increased during the reporting period. Swedish language training has been arranged both for prosecutors and clerical staff in order to increase the Swedish language skills of the personnel within the prosecution service.

**Question no. 46.**

*Has progress been made on the use of the Swedish language in the police administration in practice? What measures are envisaged to develop the teaching of the language for the basic police exam (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 48)?*

According to the language proficiency requirements set for police officers, they have to have the command of both of the national languages. The basic training of police officers includes Swedish, and graduating requires passing an examination in the language. A reform of police officers' basic degree is under way in the Ministry of the Interior.

**Question no. 47.**

*Please describe further the complaints addressed to the Chancellor of Justice on the language proficiency of the police (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 50). What were the practical problems resulting from the implementation of the new provisions on the knowledge of languages of the police (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 50)?*

In practice, problems have arisen from the fact the language training included the basic education of police officers has not been set up to the standards of the examination they are required to take.

**Question no. 48.**

*How do the authorities assess the progress made in practice regarding the command of the language among the judicial authorities responsible for civil proceedings in bilingual judicial districts (ECRML (2001) 3 p. 20)?*

Each authority, including bilingual courts, assumes the responsibility of being able to use both of the national languages in a manner provided by law. It is up to the authority to estimate whether its personnel has the command of both the languages sufficient to attend to its duties. Any general system of language skill assessment has not been created.

**Question no. 49.**

*How is the legal framework implemented in practice? Please provide concrete examples (eventually statistics) on progress made (ECRML (2001) 3 p. 20).*

It is up to each authority to ensure that the language legislation is implemented. On request, the Ministry of Justice has provided training for court and legal aid office personnel and informed the staff of the judicial administration of the language obligations of authorities (for instance, a special edition of the official documents concerning language legislation as well as the 2006 Report of the Government on the application of language legislation have been sent to all judicial administration authorities. Also, judicial administration publications include articles regarding the language legislation). The Ministry of Justice also provides advice to judicial administration authorities on its application.

The district court act has been amended, providing for bilingual courts to set up sections primarily Swedish, the purpose of which is, primarily, therefore to ensure the linguistic rights of those speaking Swedish. The setting up of such sections presupposes that that is the most appropriate way of ensuring those linguistic rights. Such sections have not, however, been set up as to date.

**Question no. 50.**

*The legal framework relating to the use of regional or minority languages by the administrative authorities is comprehensive. However, the Committee of Experts needs more information on the way this legislation is applied in practice (i.e. training of public officials) in order to ensure that the number of available public officials with a command of the Swedish language is improving (ECRML (2004)7 p. 18).*

The duty of each authority, according to law, on its own initiative, is to see to that the language proficiency of its personnel is maintained and increased. They shall, for instance, organise language training for them. There exists no statistical information on language training or other measures taken to enhance language skills.

For example, it could be seen to - by means of more flexible working hours and information systems - that a Swedish-speaking customer could get service from Swedish-speaking public officials.

On the various levels of the labour administration there are cooperation groups to secure the availability of services in Swedish. The groups may take initiatives, suggest measures and keep up with the availability of services in Swedish. The labour administration has a programme for developing the personnel, which encourages the personnel to language studies, among other things.

**Question no. 51.**

*The authorities refer to the legislation in force, and in particular to the obligation of local authorities (3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 52). Are the authorities aware of problems faced by minority speakers that do not have access to services in their own language in bilingual municipalities?*

Since the Language Act entered into force, especially after the publication of the 2006 Report of the Government on the application of language legislation, public officials

have become more aware of problems faced by speakers of minority languages. Increasing awareness is, however, a long-term process, a process that cannot be considered completed.

**Question no. 52.**

*Please describe how Sections 24 and 25 of the Language Act are implemented in practice (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 19 and 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 53).*

The 2006 Report of the Government on the application of language legislation addresses, among other things, problems encountered in the implementation of Sections 24 and 25 of the Language Act. The realization of the linguistic rights of an individual has become problematic due to the private nature of services offered by independent providers instead of the public sector.

Public authorities, the State and the municipalities, have recently started, increasingly, to outsource services to the private sector having no linguistic obligations provided by law, nor responsibilities for acting on official liability. When delegating such functions to the private sector, legislation relative to public purchasing is applied, and, as to language matters, Section 25 of the Language Act is applied. The application of legislation on public purchases has been seen as problematic, and the supplementary requirements set for public purchasing by the application of the Language Act has made the implementation and interpretation of laws concerned even more difficult.

**Question no. 53.**

*The Committee of Experts had information on printed work in Swedish in Helsinki University Library but no information on audio, audiovisual, and other work (ECRML 2001-3 p. 27). Please provide concrete examples, if any, of the latter.*

The Ministry of Education subsidises the activities of Swedish-speaking organisations in the field of audiovisual production. In the subsidising of their projects, Finnish and Swedish language audiovisual productions are taken into account based on equal criteria. The Swedish cinema magazine is subsidised by a State art committee. The Finnish Film Archive records materials in both the official languages.

**Question no. 54.**

*The Swedish speakers were of the view that the reflection of Swedish culture in Finnish cultural centres abroad could be improved. The undertaking was considered fulfilled but the Committee of Experts would like to know if any new promotion activities have been undertaken since the first monitoring round (ECRML (2001) 3 p. 27)*

Finnish Scientific and Cultural Institutes abroad keep on organising the type of events set out in their rules. Events are organised related to Finnish or Swedish culture, for example, introducing the Finnish provinces, Finnish culinary culture and literature. According to the estimates of the Ministry of Education, one of the 12 Institutes organises an event related to Swedish culture at least once a year. In addition, the Finnish Institute in Benelux celebrates the annual Svenska Dagen, or Swedish culture day. In 2005, the Finnish Scientific and Cultural Institutes founded an association financed by the Ministry of Education, with a representative speaking both Finnish

and Swedish. For instance, he produces the materials of the association in both the official languages.

**Question no. 55.**

*Please indicate if the situation has improved in larger companies, where there is no incentive to use Swedish (ECRML (2001) 3 p. 27).*

The Language Act does not concern private enterprises. According to a recent study conducted by the Confederation of Finnish Industries, however, language proficiency is appreciated, when employing personnel, by the private sector, too. According to the study, employers are aware of the fact that they do not have a sufficient number of employees with Swedish language skills.

## **PART III - Sámi languages**

**Question no. 56.**

*How are the language nests in the villages of Inari and Ivalo funded? Please explain why is it difficult to arrange a permanent financing system and what could be done by the authorities to overcome this problem and ensure sustainable permanent nests (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 64).*

The only official language nest is situated in Inari and is operated by the Inari Sámi Language association, Anarâškielâ servi ry. The Inari Sámi daycare group is situated in Ivalo. The municipality of Inari purchases daycare services in Inari Sámi from the Inari Sámi language association. The municipality of Inari obtains a share from the Sámi Parliament funds for securing Sámi social and health care services.

Some of the problems related to the funding of these day care activities are due to the unclear situation whether they are part of a day-care service, responsibility of the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs, or part of a school system, responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

**Question no. 57.**

*Have there been any requests to develop the language nests in other parts of the Sámi homeland (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 64)?*

Sámi parents residing outside the Sámi homeland are increasingly demanding Sámi daycare services and at least teaching of Sámi language in elementary schools and primary school. Language nest service would be very important in city areas where it is possible to assemble a large enough group of Sámi children.

**Question no. 58.**

*In day care nests, have the authorities envisaged alternatives to staff adequately trained in all three Sámi languages (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 64)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 59.**

*Are there any measures envisaged to improve the qualification of teachers for pupils following 7th-9th grades (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 66)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 60.**

*Are there measures envisaged to overcome the problem of the lack of teachers in Inari and Skolt Sámi at the upper level of comprehensive school (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 66)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 61.**

*Please indicate the ratio between courses taught in Finnish and Sámi in vocational education.*

In Finland, there is one provider of vocational education giving instruction in both Finnish and Sámi. According to the estimate of the provider about 5 % of the 120 credits comprising a basic vocational degree is realized in Sámi.

**Question no. 62.**

*Have the authorities evaluated the necessary additional measures for the study of Skolt and Inari Sámi and have they taken further steps (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.67)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 63.**

*Please indicate how many open colleges and workers' institutes arrange regular classes in the Sámi language and culture. Does "mainly" (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.67) mean that there are also Centres outside the Sámi area? If so, please indicate their location.*

The Sámi Education Institute arranges regular education in the Sámi language and culture. The Institute arranges education also outside the Sámi Area in various projects. Occasionally the Institute organises also education in the Sámi languages and culture in worker's institutes.

**Question no. 64.**

*According to the ECRI's recommendation (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 23) efforts should be stepped up to improve the representation of Sámi history and culture in the history syllabus of Finland. Have any concrete steps been made in that respect?*

A new core curriculum for basic education was adopted the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2006. The new curriculum based on the new principles and syllabi could be first applied as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2004, and, gradually in all grades the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2006 at the latest. The new core curriculum takes into account the instruction of pupils belonging to different linguistic and cultural groups, in particular that of the Sámi population. The respect of the human rights, equality, democracy, the safeguarding of the diversity of nature and the vitality of the environment as well as the acceptance of cultural diversity make up the value basis for basic education. In education, special national and local characteristics, the national languages, the existense of two national

churches, the Sámi as an indigenous people and the national minorities all have to be taken into consideration.

According to the principles of the new core curricula one has to take into consideration in the instruction of Sámi pupils that the Sámi are an indigenous people with its own language and culture. One of the Sámi languages (North, Inari or Skolt Sámi) is the mother tongue of some pupils as well as their language of instruction, and some are given Sámi instruction as a foreign language. The instruction of Sámi speaking pupils is mainly given in Sámi. The instruction has to strengthen their own identity and give them the possibilities of learning the language of their own, promoting their linguistic capacities. The objective of basic education is to promote the knowledge of one's own culture, history and the knowledge of the Sámi cooperation in the Nordic countries as well as awareness of the Sámi as a people, one of the indigenous peoples of the world. Education must support the identification of pupils with their cultural inheritance and promote a sense of belonging among the Sámi in the other Nordic countries as well.

Paragraph 29.07.21 of the State Budget 2006 allocated the net sum of EUR 18,827,000 for the operational costs of the National Board of Education. The sum may also be used for creating teaching materials and producing materials for Swedish speaking schools and other publications of smaller editions. According to the budget, EUR 258,000 was granted as subsidies to the Sámi Parliament to be distributed for the production of Sámi language teaching materials.

A committee for materials for education and teaching materials set up by the Sámi Parliament sees to the creation, production and distribution of Sámi language teaching materials as well as the Nordic cooperation in teaching material production and use of the grant. One person working full time for the Sámi Parliament is responsible for the actual realization of the project. The grant has been used to publish the basic type of school books, additional and audio-visual materials. Publications created in the mother tongue and translations of Finnish language school books for 1st to 9<sup>th</sup> graders account for the largest volume. Most of the grant has been used to the publication of teaching materials in North Sámi, but materials in Inari and Skolt have also been created.

***Question no. 65.***

*Please clarify whether the efforts made concern all three Sámi languages (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.68 and ECRML (2004) 7 p. 23)?*

The measures taken to improve the standing of the Sámi language apply to all the three variations. Most of the students in Sámi language teacher training at the university speak North Sámi. It has not been possible to arrange teacher training in various subjects in Inari and Skolt because there are no teacher training professors in those languages.

***Question no. 66.***

*Has the Official in charge of developing the position of the Sámi languages and the teaching of Sámi made any reports available (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 68)?*

The Report on Teaching in the Sámi Language in Elementary Schools in the Nordic Countries, prepared under commission by the Nordic organization of cooperation of the

Sámi Parliaments, the Sámi Parliamentary Council, has been published in Finnish, Inari Sámi and Swedish and is available in the Resource Center of the Sámi Parliament: [anni.nakkalajarvi@samediggi.fi](mailto:anni.nakkalajarvi@samediggi.fi) or [info@samediggi.fi](mailto:info@samediggi.fi).

**Question no. 67.**

*Please inform the Committee of Experts on the tasks of the newly created Department for Minority Languages that belongs to the Research Centre (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p.69)?*

A separate Department for Minority Languages of the Research Institute for the Languages in Finland was established the 1st of January 2006. Research personnel that had been part of the Institute, but organized differently, were transferred to the Department: researchers of Sámi etymology and the Karelian language having belonged to the dictionary department, the Sámi language planners from the language planning department as well as the researchers and planners of the Roma and Finnish sign language. The advisory boards of Sámi, Roma and the Finnish language have also been transferred to the new Department.

The Department conducts research and maintaining of minority languages (the Sámi languages, Romani and sign language as well as the cognate languages of Finland). The goal for the first year is to adopt a mode of closer cooperation for the researchers of the different languages. Establishing a separate Department aims at promoting the profile of minority language research and planning in the Institute and in other research bodies. The Department works in close cooperation with the other departments of the Institute while striving for becoming an active agent in the framework of minority languages. For this reason, one of the first issues the Department has to do is to gain more visibility and become known by the various interest groups.

**Question no. 68.**

*Please explain the lack of research or planning of Skolt Sámi in Finland? Will there be any initiatives to plan research activities in the future (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 69)?*

The Research Institute for the Languages in Finland will conduct a survey in autumn 2006 on the present language planning and research needs of Skolt Sámi and how to promote those functions. This has been difficult due to the fact, that it is a small language community and people who are active and speak the language have many other types of obligations as well.

As before, there are Skolt Sámi experts working for the Sámi advisory board. The board may deal with issues of principle common to all the Sámi languages. The issues of the Sámi languages apart cannot, however, be focused on.

One of the central objectives of the Skolt Sámi is to come up with a grammar, the drawing up of which would be the responsibility of Skolt Sámi experts. In addition, one Kotus researcher could assist in the creation of the grammar. So far, there is no specific plan as to the drawing up of the grammar.

**Question no. 69.**

*Please clarify whether the monitoring of education in the Sámi language is carried out by the Sámi Parliament or the Evaluation Council (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 24)?*

The Evaluation Council does not specifically monitor the education of the Sámi language. No evaluation has taken place recently.

**Question no. 70.**

*Have measures been taken to evaluate the education in the Sámi languages outside the Sámi homeland? (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 24) Is there any progress regarding the teaching of Inari and Skolt Sámi outside the Sámi Homeland (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 24)?*

See the reply to Question no. 69

**Question no. 71.**

*During the previous evaluation round, the Committee of Experts was informed of serious problems regarding the implementation of the undertakings in all proceedings before courts because of the lack of language skills of judicial officials (ECRML (2004) 7, pp. 24-25). Please provide information on the implementation of the existing legal framework and describe practical measures taken (training of officials, etc).*

The matter is paid attention to in the training of judges.

**Question no. 72.**

*As regards the labour administration, are the authorities referring to the three Sámi languages when mentioning “frequently used forms and instructions needed in customer service are translated into the Sámi languages”, despite the lack of skilled translators and revisers (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 75)?*

The employment office of Northern Lapland has three offices in the Sámi Homeland. The most commonly used forms used by the labour administration have been translated into the North Sámi language. In the office in Utsjoki, there are two employment service officers who can speak North Sámi language. Answers to enquiries in writing are translated into the Sámi language and it is possible to get interpretation in all the offices.

**Question no. 73.**

*Please specify the changes brought by the new Act on the Use of the Sámi language before the authorities in practice (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR pp. 73-74).*

73, 75, 76, 77

The 2006 Report of the Government on the application of language legislation includes short section on the implementation of the Act on the Use of the Sámi Language, and some problems have been written down. At the moment, there is no need to draw further conclusions before the first report provided for in the Act on the Use of the Sámi Language next year, given by the Sámi language office in cooperation with the Sámi language council.

Increasing amount of staff members of local and regional authorities participate in language courses aiming to take the intermediate Sámi language exam. Authorities have published information, such as Internet sites, increasingly in Sámi language.

**Question no. 74.**

*Have the authorities envisaged a time frame in setting up a technical system which allows the registration of written street names in the Sámi language (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 77)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 75.**

*Please provide further information on the implementation of Sections 17 and 18 of the Sámi Language Act (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 27).*

Municipally owned companies do not appear to use Sámi language at all in their information materials.

**Question no. 76.**

*In the previous evaluation rounds, the Committee of Experts observed that interpretation and translation was not adequately provided to meet the demand (ECRML (2004) 7 p. 27 and ECRML (2001) 3 p. 36). Please provide updated information on this undertaking.*

It was acknowledged with the entering into force of the new Sámi Language Act that use of Sámi language in official relations will cause more work for the Sámi language centre of Sámi Parliament. Government proposed additional resources for the Sámi language centre in order to enable the Sámi Parliament to fulfill its statutory duties. Two additional translator vacancies were to be established to Sámi language centre. Only one of these vacancies have been funded so far.

Also the funding for hiring translators for Inari and Skolt Sámi languages as well as funding for terminological work on Sámi languages is insufficient. Proper terminological standards would ease translation work and ensure that translators would not have to create terminology as they go and it would also standardise the use of expressions.

**Question no. 77.**

*Please provide further information on measures taken to improve the use of the Sámi language in practice (see ECRML (2004) 7 pp. 27-28), i.e. the recruitment of Sámi speakers, the provision of language courses to employees. The Committee of Experts is interested in information concerning municipalities other than Utsjoki.*

Municipalities may apply for state compensation to pay for Sámi language studies for its employees. The municipality of Utsjoki has increased its requirement for Sámi language skills for the qualification requirement for certain posts. Authorities such as the municipality of Enontekiö, the Finnish Forest and Park Service, the Administrative Board of Lapland, the Internal Revenue Office of Northern Lapland, police officials, employment offices, Lapland's border guard and the Social Insurance Institution have begun training their staff in the Sámi language. There appears still to be some uncertainty about the requirements for Sámi language daycare employees, especially regarding the substitute daycare employees.

**Question no. 78.**

*Have there been any plans, or contacts made with other Nordic countries to include Sámi diacritics in computer systems (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 77)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 79.**

*Please inform the Committee of Experts if children's programmes are available in the Sámi languages on TV (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 28).*

The children's programmes are not available in Sámi language on TV in Finland. There are plans starting to broadcast children's programmes in Sámi language in 2007. According to the plans, in 2007 Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) will send 15 children's programmes in Sámi Language once a week, 15 minutes each time.

**Question no. 80.**

*Have the authorities taken steps for the development of programmes in Inari and Skolt Sámi in TV broadcasting (see ECRML (2004) 7 p. 28)?*

The development and broadcasting of children's programs in Inari and Skolt Sámi are included in the plan of broadcasting Sámi language programs. This is dependant on the resources.

**Question no. 81.**

*Please clarify what are, if any, the possibilities for the Sámi Inari newspaper to have a sustainable financial support, i.e. grants or subsidies from the Ministry of Education (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 79).*

See the reply to Question no.14 above.

An Inari Sámi publication has for the first time ever been granted funding from the Ministry of Education in 2006. The funding is discretionary and is granted annually.

**Question no. 82.**

*Please inform the Committee of Experts whether positive discrimination has been applied in specific cases (ECRML (2001) 3 p. 38)?*

- To be examined further.

**Question no. 83.**

*Please inform the Committee of Experts on the time-frame envisaged for the construction and opening of the Sámi Cultural Centre (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 82).*

The financing of the construction and maintaining of the Sámi Cultural Centre is still an open question.

**Question no. 84.**

*Is support granted to Sámi literature covering all three Sámi languages (see 3<sup>rd</sup> report p. 83)?*

In addition to the fact that literature grants (authors' grants, library compensation etc.)

given by State and regional art committees are available to all speakers of Sámi, the Sámi Parliament takes the three Sámi languages spoken in Finland into consideration when deciding on grants.

***Question no. 85.***

*Has any decision been taken yet regarding the publication and distribution of information on the emergency numbers in the three Sámi languages by the Emergency Response Centre Administration (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 61)?*

Internet site of the emergency services lacks information in Sámi languages. The arrival of help is sometimes hindered because the names on the maps used by emergency services are different from the names that the Sámi use. This complicates the assistance to accident locations. On the other hand, the lack of Sámi speaking personnel in emergency centers creates insecurity among non-Finnish speaking Sámi, especially among children and the elderly.

***Question no. 86.***

*Is the money allocated to the municipalities for health and social welfare (such as early education and old age care) used for different Sámi languages? Is there any control over the allocation of this money between the languages (see 3<sup>rd</sup> PR p. 84)?*

The Provincial State Office of Lapland, via the Sámi Parliament, grants a subsidy to the municipalities aimed at promoting health and social services of the Sámi Homeland. The Sámi Parliament makes decisions as to the bodies receiving the money. The Sámi people are in agreement with the arrangement, but they hope the sum will increase. The Sámi Parliament is required to recognize all the Sámi languages spoken in Finland when allocating money. If plans of action are changed, money cannot be transferred from one language group to another; it should be used exclusively for the activities of the originally intended language group (Instructions Council of Lapland and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).