

**SIXTH PERIODIC REPORT OF UKRAINE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
ON THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

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PREAMBLE

Ukraine signed the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (the "Framework Convention") on 15 September 1995. The Framework Convention was ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 9 December 1997 by the Law of Ukraine No. 703/97-VR, entered into force on 1 May 1998 and, in accordance with Article 9 of the Constitution of Ukraine, is part of the national legislation.

Pursuant to Article 25, clause 2, of the Framework Convention, Ukraine is required to submit periodic state reports containing information on the current state policy in the field of protection of national minority rights.

In accordance with clause 4 of the general recommendations for the submission of the sixth report by states on the implementation of the Framework Convention (hereinafter referred to as the Report), approved by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (hereinafter referred to as the CoE CM) at its 1439th meeting on 6 July 2022, the Report should cover the period from the adoption of the opinions on the fifth report to the submission of this one.

The fifth report of Ukraine on the implementation of the Framework Convention, covering the period from 2016 to June 2021, was received by the Council of Europe on 10 January 2022. The report took into account the provisions of the fourth opinion on Ukraine and the relevant Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/ResCMN (2020) 13 on the implementation of the Framework Convention by Ukraine, adopted on 8 December 2020. The text of the Fifth Report is

available in the state language on the DESS website at the following link: <https://dessa.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021.09.25-FCNM.docx>

At the time of the submission of the Sixth Report, the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention (hereinafter - the Advisory Committee) did not conduct an assessment visit to Ukraine due to the full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022. Accordingly, there are no opinions of the Advisory Committee and no resolution of the CoE CM on the Fifth Report of Ukraine. Nevertheless, for the purpose of continuous reporting on the implementation of the Framework Convention, Ukraine submits this Report, which covers the period from July 2021 to August 2024.

In connection with the Russian aggression, Ukraine duly notified the Council of Europe of its derogation from certain obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953). Some of these obligations relate to the rights and freedoms derived from the principles of the Framework Convention. Ukraine's actions are in line with Article 19 of the Framework Convention. At the same time, Ukraine is making efforts to ensure the full implementation of the Framework Convention.

The structure of the Report follows the format approved by the CoE CM at the 1439th meeting on 6 July 2022. Part I of the Report outlines measures to improve legislation in the field of national minorities and awareness of the Framework Convention. Part II of the Report provides an article-by-article description of the measures taken to implement the Framework Convention. In Part III, as recommended by the CoE CM, "in the framework of the ongoing dialogue with the Advisory Committee, States Parties may be invited to respond to specific questions that may arise from their particular national circumstances". In this Report, Part III is used to provide information on the situation of national minority rights in the context of the ongoing full-scale military aggression by the Russian Federation.

Ukraine highly appreciates the ongoing dialogue with the Advisory Committee and the importance of further implementation of the principles of the Framework Convention for the protection of the rights of national minorities, building a democratic and tolerant society within its internationally recognised borders. At the same time, it stresses the responsibility of the Russian Federation, in accordance with the principles of international humanitarian law, for the population in the territory it occupies.

The report was prepared by the State Service for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience (DESS) in cooperation with central and local executive authorities and following consultations with persons belonging to national minorities, including

through relevant public associations, as well as with other interested civil society groups.

PART 1. Practical measures at the national level to improve legislation on national minorities

During the reporting period, Ukraine significantly updated its legislation on national minorities and strengthened the powers of the relevant executive body in this area, the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience (hereinafter referred to as the DESS).

On 13 December 2022, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a new law "On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine" (hereinafter referred to as the Law No. 2827-IX), which entered into force on 30 June 2023. Law No. 2827-IX replaced the previous framework Law of Ukraine "On National Minorities in Ukraine" No. 2495-XII of 25 June 1992, which was in force during the previous reporting periods.

Law No. 2827-IX does not change the approach to national minorities: the definition is based on the principle of self-identification and objective criteria related to identity. The introduction of the concept of *community* is related to the request of certain groups of society that perceived the concept of *minority* as offensive. At the same time, there was no consensus among national minorities on the need to replace this term. Therefore, Law No. 2827-IX allows for the use of the term *national community*, which does not have an independent meaning from the concept of *national minority*.

On 21 September 2023, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine" on Certain Issues of Exercising the Rights and Freedoms of Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine" No. 3389-IX (entered into force on 8 November 2023). The adopted amendments provide for state guarantees of free textbooks (including electronic ones) for students of complete general secondary education belonging to national minorities. It also provides for the possibility of using languages of national minorities in advertising, during public, cultural, artistic, entertainment and spectacular events, emergency assistance, as well as assistance and protection to victims of domestic violence, and care in a residential care home for the elderly. The law clarifies the criteria on the basis of which the methodology for the use of national minority languages will be developed in settlements where persons belonging to them traditionally live or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population, and regulates the issue of specialised bookstores and entertainment.

On 9 October 2023, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the "Venice Commission") published the Opinion CDL-AD(2023)028-e to the Law of Ukraine No. 3389-IX dated 21 September 2023 "On Amendments to the Law of

Ukraine "On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine" on Certain Issues of Exercising the Rights and Freedoms of Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", in which it noted that the legal regulation in the field of ensuring the rights and freedoms of national minorities has undergone significant positive changes. At the same time, since this Law was limited to amendments to Law No. 2827-IX, which could not fully provide adequate guarantees for national minorities in all areas of law, the European Commission expressed some comments, mainly aimed at bringing certain provisions of the Law in line with the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1995, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992, available at: [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2023\)028-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2023)028-e)

On 8 December 2023, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, pursuant to the recommendations of the Venice Commission, adopted the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Consideration of the Expert Opinion of the Council of Europe and its Bodies on the Rights of National Minorities (Communities) in Certain Areas" No. 3504-IX (entered into force on 10 December 2023). This Law takes into account the main observations of the Venice Commission on further improvement of the legislation on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and is supplemented by provisions on the need to ensure the development and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of public life throughout the country. In addition to improving Law No. 2827-IX, amendments were made to the Laws of Ukraine: "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine", "On Education", "On Complete General Secondary Education", "On Higher Education", "On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language" and "On Media", which mainly relate to certain aspects of the exercise of the rights of national minorities in the areas of education and the use of their native language.

On 6 December 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 1355 "Some Issues of the State Service for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience", which significantly strengthened the powers of the DESS. Thus, the DESS was removed from the system of bodies of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, and its activities are directed and coordinated directly by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. In addition to the existing functions of implementing state policy, the DESS was empowered to shape it by submitting draft legal acts and proposals in the field of interethnic relations, religion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. In addition, independent structural units of regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations on ethnic policy and freedom of conscience became accountable to and controlled by the DESS.

Having received the relevant powers, the DESS actively began to implement the provisions of Law No. 2827-IX. During the reporting period, the DESS prepared a number of regulatory acts, each of which was subject to public discussion: representatives of national minority CSOs were involved in their preparation.

On 12 May 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Concept of the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" by Resolution No. 429-r, which was developed by the DESS in cooperation with experts from the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine and representatives of civil society.

On 23 July 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 769 "On Amendments to the Procedure for Holding a Competition to Determine Programmes (Projects, Events) Developed by Civil Society Institutions for the Implementation of which Financial Support is Provided". As a result, public associations of national minorities have the opportunity to receive financial support on a competitive basis for the implementation of programmes (projects, activities) at the expense of the State Budget of Ukraine and local budgets.

On 22 August 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 891 "On Amendments to Clause 12 of the Annex to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 11 October 2016 No. 710", which created the legal basis for the development and approval of the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034.

On 26 September 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034 and the relevant tasks and measures for its implementation by Resolution No. 850-r. The programme was developed by the DESS in cooperation with experts from the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, representatives of civil society and interested government agencies. Its goal is to create sustainable institutional conditions at the national and regional levels to meet the needs and effectively exercise the rights and opportunities of persons belonging to national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, as well as to promote social resilience, cohesion and national unity of Ukrainian society.

On 3 October 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 1047 "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 19 April 2022 No. 468 "On the Establishment of the Interagency Working Group on Coordination of the Implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period up to 2030", which ensures the participation of civil society activists representing the Roma national minority in developing proposals to improve the implementation of the Strategy.

On 22 December 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 1197-r "On Approval of the Action Plan for 2024-2025 to Implement the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period up to 2030". The document was developed with the active participation of civic activists representing the Roma national minority, the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and other stakeholders.

On 2 October 2023, in accordance with part two of Article 15 of Law No. 2827-IX, the DESS issued Order No. N-86/12 "Issues of the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", which was registered by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 22 November 2023 under No. 2017/41073 and entered into force on 29 December 2023.

On 9 February 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 181 "On Approval of the Methodology for the Use of Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine in Settlements Traditionally Resided by Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine or in Which Such Persons Make Up a Significant Part of the Population".

On 13 February 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 164 "On Approval of the Procedure for the Use of Funds Provided for in the State Budget for Measures to Implement the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine".

On 4 March 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 257 "On Approval of the Procedure for Determining the List of Settlements in which Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine Traditionally Reside or in which Such Persons Make up a Significant Part of the Population".

On 3 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 485-r "On Amendments to Annex 2 to the State Target National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" until 2034".

On 7 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 670 "On Approval of the List of Endangered Languages of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine".

On 21 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 738 "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 23 December 2015 No. 1075" to change the composition of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-German Commission for Cooperation on Matters of People of German Descent Residing in Ukraine. The amendments are related to the expansion of the powers of the DESS as a central executive body that ensures the formation and

implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) in accordance with Article 15 of Law No. 2827-IX.

On 2 February 2024, in accordance with Article 19 of Law No. 2827-IX, the DESS issued Order No. N-18/12 "On Approval of the Procedure for the Establishment and Functioning of the Centre for National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 6 February 2024 under No. 184/41529. Its purpose is to take into account the interests of persons belonging to national minorities in a balanced manner and to promote the activities of public associations of national minorities (communities) in exercising their rights to develop cultural traditions, preserve historical memory, learn their native language and other issues.

On 21 May 2024, the DESS issued an order "On Approval of the Personnel of the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", which launched the activities of a new advisory body with the representation of public associations of national minorities (communities), as provided for by Law No. 2827-IX. Then, on 31 May 2024, the first organisational meeting of the Council was held, where the management team was elected: the chairman, deputy chairman and secretary of the Council, as well as the initial action plan was discussed.

Ukraine recognises three indigenous peoples of Ukraine, which were formed on the territory of the Crimean peninsula: Crimean Tatars, Karaites and Krymchaks. The status of indigenous peoples of Ukraine is defined by a separate Law of Ukraine "On Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine" No. 1616-IX, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 1 July 2021 (hereinafter - Law No. 1616-IX), pursuant to which a number of by-laws developed by the DESS together with representatives of indigenous peoples of Ukraine were adopted.

On 10 September 2021, by the Order of the DESS No. N-30/12, the Advisory Council on the Implementation of Law No. 1616-IX was established, which included representatives of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, as well as specialists in public international law and experts in the field of interethnic relations. As part of the Advisory Council's work, a number of consultations were held with representatives of Karaite, Krymchaks and Crimean Tatar CSOs, as well as with members of the Presidium of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, on the implementation of the Law.

On 19 August 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolutions No. 859 "On Approval of the Procedure for Securing the Legal Status of the Representative Body of the Indigenous People of Ukraine" and No. 1018 "On Approval of the Procedure for Holding Consultations of Executive Authorities with Representative Bodies of Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine". They set out the institutional conditions

for the activities of representative bodies of indigenous peoples of Ukraine and the procedure for holding consultations with them, which is a fundamental condition for the exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples under international law and national legislation, as well as a guarantee of their effective participation in public affairs that may affect them.

On 19 August 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 874 "On Amendments to the Procedure for Securing the Legal Status of the Representative Body of the Indigenous People of Ukraine and Deprivation of Such Status", which opened the possibility for the DESS to directly submit a submission to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on securing the status of representative bodies of indigenous peoples.

At the same time, regulatory acts aimed at preserving and developing the Crimean Tatar language were being developed.

On 22 September 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 993 "On Approval of the Crimean Tatar Language Alphabet Based on the Latin Script". The Latin script is the basis for the vast majority of Turkic languages in the world.

On 22 February 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 224-r "On Approval of the Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022-2032". The purpose of the Strategy is to create regulatory, institutional, organisational and other conditions for the restoration, preservation and development of the Crimean Tatar language, expand the scope of its use, exercise the language rights of speakers of the Crimean Tatar language, increase the prestige of the indigenous language as a means of communication, and facilitate the de-occupation and reintegration of the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol after its return to the unified constitutional space of Ukraine. The same resolution approved the Operational Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022-2032.

On 6 January 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 19 "On the Establishment of the National Commission for the Crimean Tatar Language". The National Commission for the Crimean Tatar Language is an advisory body of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and is established to coordinate and harmonise the actions of central and local executive authorities on issues related to the implementation of the Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022-2032. It includes representatives of executive authorities and the Crimean Tatar people of Ukraine.

On 28 July 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 657-r "Issues of Developing the Spelling of the Crimean Tatar Language", which set a task

to ensure the development of a draft spelling of the Crimean Tatar language using the Crimean Tatar alphabet based on the Latin script by 30 September 2024.

On 22 November 2023, the DESS established a working group to develop a draft spelling of the Crimean Tatar language by Order No. N-103/12, which is actively working to solve this task. The working group includes leading linguists and professional teachers of the Crimean Tatar language. The working group held 4 meetings by August 2024.

The issue of protection of national minority rights is reflected in Ukraine's strategic documents, which were reported in the Fifth National Report of Ukraine. They remained in force during the reporting period:

- National Security Strategy of Ukraine (enacted by Presidential Decree No. 392/2020 of 14 September 2020);
- Strategy for the De-occupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol (enacted by Presidential Decree No. 117/2021 of 24 March 2021). On 4 April 2023, the Government updated the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy by adopting Resolution No. 288-r "On Amendments to the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the De-occupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol";
- National Human Rights Strategy (approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 119/2021 of 24 April 2021).

Institutional structure for ensuring the rights of persons belonging to national minorities

Law No. 2827-IX defines the goal of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities), which includes: promoting the development of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities; integration of national minorities into Ukrainian society on the basis of recognition of human and civil rights and freedoms; establishing norms of interethnic tolerance and mutual respect in Ukrainian society; strengthening national unity and ensuring multiculturalism of Ukrainian society; providing state support for endangered languages of national minorities.

Implementation of the state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) is based on an extensive system of state authorities. In its turn, the State Service for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience is designated as the central executive body that forms and implements state policy in the field of national minorities

(communities); relevant structural units of regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations are to ensure the implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) at the regional level; Parliamentary control in the area of national minorities (communities) is exercised by the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, De-occupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, as well as the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

Law No. 2827-IX (Article 15) defines the powers of the central executive body responsible for the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities), in particular, it establishes the powers to provide regulatory and legal support in the field of national minorities (communities), and to ensure control over the observance of legislation in the field of national minorities (communities), including monitoring the implementation of Ukraine's international obligations in the field of national minorities (communities).

Law No. 2827-IX (Article 16) defines the powers of the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and local state administrations to implement state policy in the field of national minorities (communities), in particular, to implement the legislation of Ukraine in the field of national minorities (communities), including state and regional programmes for national and cultural development of national minorities, and the possibility to establish structural units on national minorities (communities).

The Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, De-occupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and International Relations ensured timely and high-quality preparation of draft laws for consideration at the meetings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which made it possible to improve legislation in the field of national minorities (communities) in accordance with the requirements of the European Commission in a fairly short time.

During the reporting period, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) was institutionally distinguished in the work of the national ombudsman - the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. In particular, a Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Views was appointed. In November 2022, the Expert Council on National Minorities and Indigenous Peoples was established under the Representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Views (Order of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights No. 97.15/22 of 02 November 2022). A separate department was established within the Ombudsperson's Office to protect the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine and to monitor the proper protection of their rights.

Activities to raise awareness of the results of the fifth monitoring cycle and the Framework Convention

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Due to the full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022, the Advisory Committee did not conduct an assessment visit to Ukraine, and therefore there is no opinion of the Advisory Committee and no resolution of the CoE CM on the Fifth Report of Ukraine. Also, due to objective reasons, Ukraine did not implement the recommendations of the CoE CM for Ukraine to the previous report: *"make every effort to ensure that a comprehensive census is conducted as soon as possible; review, in close consultation with representatives of minorities, the census methodology, question wording and guarantees of voluntary and informed responses"*.

The All-Ukrainian Population Census was scheduled for 2023 in accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1542-r dated 09 December 2020 "On Conducting the All-Ukrainian Population Census in 2023". However, in accordance with clause 1¹ of Section VI of the Law of Ukraine "On the All-Ukrainian Population Census", no population census is conducted during the martial law in Ukraine and within six months after its termination or cancellation. In view of the above, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine cancelled the census in 2023 by its Resolution No. 962-r dated 23 October 2023 and instructed the State Statistics Service to prepare a proposal for the All-Ukrainian Census after the termination or cancellation of martial law in Ukraine.

PART 2. Actions taken to improve the implementation of the Framework Convention in the reporting period. Article-by-article comments.

Article 3

1. Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right to decide freely whether or not to be considered as such, and this decision or the exercise of rights in connection with it shall not prejudice such person.
2. Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and freedoms deriving from the principles set forth in this Framework Convention, individually and in association with others.

Comment to clause 1

Article 6 of Law No. 2827-IX guarantees the right to self-identification: "Every citizen of Ukraine shall have the right to freely decide whether to be considered as belonging to a national minority (community) (several national minorities (communities)). Such a decision or the exercise of rights in this regard shall not cause harm to such a person. No one may be forced to declare their status as a person belonging to a national minority (community). If a person has a need to exercise the rights guaranteed to persons belonging to national minorities (communities), it is sufficient to express a desire to exercise such rights." Clause two of this Article states: "Coercion of a citizen of Ukraine in any form to recognise his/her affiliation, refuse or change his/her affiliation to a national minority (community) is prohibited".

Ukraine does not maintain any database with a list of persons identifying themselves as belonging to national minorities. Relevant information on the national composition of Ukrainian society is generated only by the results of the All-Ukrainian Population Census, during which citizens can voluntarily indicate their national identity and specify the language they consider their native language.

Comment to clause 2

The rights, freedoms and obligations of persons belonging to national minorities are defined in the second section of Law No. 2827-IX, which includes eight articles and guarantees rights:

- for self-identification;
- freedom of public associations and peaceful assembly;
- freedom of expression of views and beliefs, thought, speech, conscience and religion;
- participation in political, economic and social life;
- use of a national minority language; education, in particular in national minority languages; preservation of the cultural identity of a national minority (community).

Article 5 of Law No. 2827-IX, in particular, states that the list of rights of persons belonging to national minorities is not exhaustive - such persons may be granted other rights and freedoms in accordance with the law. It is worth noting that this article states that citizens of Ukraine, regardless of ethnic origin, belonging to national minorities, are guaranteed equal civil, political, social, economic, cultural and linguistic rights and freedoms as defined by the Constitution of Ukraine for all citizens of Ukraine.

Article 4.

1. The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right to equality before the law and the right to equal legal protection. In this regard, any discrimination on the basis of belonging to a national minority is prohibited.

2. The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures, where necessary, with a view to achieving, in all fields of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and substantial equality between persons belonging to a national minority and persons belonging to the majority population. In this regard, they shall take due account of the particular situation of persons belonging to national minorities.

3. Measures taken pursuant to clause 2 shall not be considered an act of discrimination.

Comment to clause 1

Ukrainian legislation provides legal guarantees for the exercise of the rights and freedoms of national minorities both at the individual level and within national minority organisations. Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine guarantees citizens equal constitutional rights and freedoms and equality before the law regardless of race, skin colour, political, religious or other beliefs, gender, ethnic or social origin, property status, place of residence, language or other characteristics.

Part three of Article 3 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that the state guarantees persons belonging to national minorities (communities) the protection of their rights, freedoms and legally protected interests in accordance with the law.

Article 4 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that persons belonging to national minorities (communities) are equal before the law and have the right to equal legal protection and that any direct or indirect discrimination against persons belonging to national minorities (communities) is prohibited.

According to Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine "On Free Legal Aid" (hereinafter - Law No. 3460-VI), in exercising the right to free legal aid, no privileges or restrictions

may be applied to persons on the grounds of race, skin colour, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnic and social origin, place of residence, language or other grounds. One of the principles on which the state policy in the field of free legal aid in Ukraine is based is the availability of such aid to all categories of persons entitled to it (Article 5 of Law No. 3460-VI).

Pursuant to Article 8 of Law No. 3460-VI, all persons under the jurisdiction of Ukraine have the right to free primary legal aid, which includes such types of legal services as providing legal information, advice and clarification on legal issues; drafting applications, complaints and other legal documents (except for documents of a procedural nature); and assisting in ensuring access to secondary legal aid and mediation, in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine and Law No. 3460-VI.

Article 14 of Law No. 3460-VI defines the list of persons entitled to free secondary legal aid, which includes such types of legal services as defence; representation of persons in courts, other state bodies, local self-government bodies, before other persons; drafting of procedural documents, including for persons who do not have identity documents and confirmation of Ukrainian citizenship, on the establishment of facts of legal significance in court, related to the registration and issuance of such documents. Which is relevant for representatives of national minorities who were repressed during the Soviet era and returned to Ukraine after 1991 and representatives of the Roma national minority (community).

Pursuant to the provisions of Law No. 3460-VI, in the period from 1 July 2021 to 31 July 2024, free legal aid centres, which are territorial branches of the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, which is under the management of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, ensured the protection of the rights of national minorities (communities) by providing:

- free primary legal aid for 1,012 applications of persons who voluntarily reported their affiliation with national minorities/indigenous people (15 - Crimean Tatars, 997 - Roma);
- free secondary legal aid on 92 applications of persons who reported their affiliation with national minorities/indigenous people (3 - Crimean Tatars, 89 - Roma).

The questions most frequently asked by these individuals:

- issuance of identity documents and confirmation of citizenship; establishment of the fact of permanent residence on the territory of Ukraine as of 24 August 1991;
- registration or restoration of lost documents on state registration of civil status acts;
- establishing the fact of kinship, establishing the fact of childbirth, the procedure for registering the birth of a child, the procedure for adoption during martial law;
- the procedure for registering a place of residence, the procedure for obtaining the status of an internally displaced person, the procedure for crossing the state border during martial law;

- preparation of an application for the search for a missing person; the procedure for obtaining guardianship over an incapacitated person;
- the procedure for divorce and marriage; deprivation of parental rights and recognition of paternity, recovery of alimony (increase, decrease);
- the procedure for applying for a subsidy for utilities and other social benefits.

Comment to clause 2

The state policy in the field of national minorities (communities), as defined by part 2 of Article 13 of Law No. 2827-IX, is based on the following principles:

- protection of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) as an integral part of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; prevention of discrimination against persons belonging to national minorities (communities);
- recognition of the right of a person belonging to a national minority (community) to freely choose and freely restore his/her affiliation with a national minority (community), to express his/her identity and distinctiveness;
- ensuring the free exercise by persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of their rights and interests to preserve and develop their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity;
- inclusive involvement of persons belonging to national minorities (communities), including through their public associations, in the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) at all levels of government;
- integration of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) into Ukrainian society on the basis of recognition of human and civil rights and freedoms;
- preventing forced assimilation of national minorities (communities); counteracting xenophobia, incitement to racial, ethnic and religious hatred; preventing inter-ethnic conflicts, the use of national minorities (communities) by other states for the autonomy of their regions of residence and disintegration of Ukraine;
- mutual respect, understanding and cooperation between all persons living in Ukraine, regardless of ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity and origin.

Such principles are also reflected in other legislative acts, in particular, Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" defines the principles of civil service. These include: ensuring equal access to the civil service, prohibition of all forms and manifestations of discrimination, absence of unreasonable restrictions or granting unreasonable advantages to certain categories of citizens when entering and performing civil service. Citizens of Ukraine who are members of national minorities have equal rights to enter the civil service and to hold political office. Civil servants, like all citizens of Ukraine, are not obliged to declare their ethnic origin, however, many officials in the public authorities publicly indicate their affiliation with certain national minorities (communities).

Ukrainian legislation does not provide for a quota for candidates belonging to national minorities (communities) in representative bodies at the national or local levels, but the current inclusive policy has produced noticeable results. For example, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the IX convocation has a significant number of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, including representatives of the Crimean Tatar people, Jewish, Georgian and other national minorities (communities). Persons belonging to national minorities are also represented at the level of regional and district councils, territorial communities, especially in places where national minorities live compactly. In particular, the Hungarian national minority (community) is represented in the Transcarpathian Regional Council by eight deputies (Transcarpathian Regional Organisation "KMKSZ" Party of Hungarians of Ukraine), which is 12.5% of the total number of deputies of this body. The Hungarian national minority (community) is also represented at the level of district and local councils, in particular in Berehove and Uzhhorod district councils, Berehove, Vynohradiv, Chop, Tyachiv, Mukachevo city councils.

The main tasks of ensuring the protection of human rights in Ukraine are set out in the National Human Rights Strategy, adopted in March 2021. One of the objectives of this Strategy is to ensure conditions for the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities. On 23 June 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved an action plan for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy for 2021-2023 by Resolution No. 756-r, which defines specific actions and tasks for all executive authorities involved in its implementation, including improving the legal and regulatory framework for the exercise of the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine. The National Human Rights Strategy became the basis for the development and adoption of such strategic documents as the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the period up to 2030 and the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034. The purpose of the measures set out in these documents is to achieve full and genuine equality between persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and persons belonging to the majority of the population of Ukraine in all spheres of economic, social, political and cultural life. The Ministry of Justice of Ukraine has prepared a draft Decree of the President of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Decree of the President of Ukraine of 24 March 2021 No. 119/2021". This draft provides for the updating of the National Human Rights Strategy, which was approved by the previous Presidential Decree. Amendments to the National Strategy are necessary in view of the new challenges faced by the state, in particular in connection with martial law and the subsequent post-war recovery process. The updated Strategy should be adapted to

current realities to ensure effective protection of human rights in an environment where the rights and freedoms of many Ukrainian citizens are under threat. The draft Decree was approved at a Government meeting on 12 September 2023 and sent to the President of Ukraine for consideration.

With regard to other issues in the field of anti-discrimination, the state is taking measures to improve the situation with regard to the provision of qualified legal aid to representatives of national minorities (communities), including Roma.

On 20 May 2022, the Law of Ukraine No. 2238-IX "On Amendments to Part One of Article 14 of the Law of Ukraine "On Free Legal Aid" to Expand the List of Persons entitled to Free Secondary Legal Aid" came into force. It was supplemented by a clause according to which the right to free secondary legal aid was granted to persons who do not have identity documents and confirmation of Ukrainian citizenship, on issues of establishing facts of legal significance related to the execution and issuance of such documents in court.

According to the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, which is managed by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, the free legal aid system conducts legal education activities: seminars, trainings, round tables, open classes, and other public events on topics relevant to national minorities (communities). Social networks are also actively used to hold webinars, presentations, video consultations, and to post podcasts, videos and other video materials.

During the reporting period, the free legal aid system conducted 2,373 legal awareness-raising events on the topics of preventing and combating discrimination; equal rights and opportunities for women and men, which reached 50266 people. In the same period, 155 in-person legal awareness events were held for representatives of the Roma national minority (community), which reached 2745 people, and 12 information posts were disseminated on the official pages of the system on the Internet, which were viewed more than 287 thousand times.

Legal awareness events were held on the following topics:

- the right to free legal aid; protection of constitutional rights and freedoms of man and citizen;
- documentation of stateless persons and persons with undetermined citizenship; access to social services for stateless persons; strengthening the legal capacity of Roma;
- combating discrimination against persons belonging to the Roma national minority; documenting war crimes against Roma and crimes against humanity in Ukraine;
- preventing and combating human trafficking;
- paperwork.

In order to conduct outreach, identify legal problems and provide legal services, the centres' staff conducted on-site visits to places of compact residence of persons belonging to the Roma national minority (community).

Article 5

1. The Parties undertake to create the necessary conditions for persons belonging to national minorities to be able to preserve and develop their culture, to preserve the basic elements of their identity, in particular religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

2. Without prejudice to the measures taken in accordance with their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies and practices of assimilating persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect such persons from any actions aimed at such assimilation.

Comment to clause 1

The Constitution of Ukraine stipulates that the state shall promote the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, as well as the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine (Article 11).

Article 12 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that persons belonging to national minorities (communities) have the right to:

- to preserve and develop their cultural, linguistic, religious identity, traditions and customs, to use the achievements (heritage) of their culture, to preserve and enhance their cultural heritage;
- to mark (celebrate) events related to their history and culture.

This article also provides that the state supports:

- identification and management of places of historical memory of national minorities (communities);
- holding cultural and artistic events of national minorities (communities);
- studying the history and culture of national minorities (communities);

ensures the protection of cultural heritage sites of national minorities (communities) and provides an opportunity for persons belonging to national minorities (communities) to study the history and culture of Ukraine.

In order to create the necessary conditions for persons belonging to national minorities (communities) to be able to develop and preserve their culture, the main elements of their identity and cultural heritage, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 769 "On Amendments to the Procedure for Holding a

Competition to Determine Programmes (Projects, Events) Developed by Civil Society Institutions for the Implementation of Financial Support Provided" on 23 July 2023. As a result, public associations of national minorities (communities) were given the opportunity to receive financial support on a competitive basis for the implementation of programmes (projects, activities) at the expense of the State Budget of Ukraine and local budgets. The DESS was instructed to develop mechanisms for the competitive selection of projects prepared by CSOs of national minorities (communities). In 2025, it is planned to start providing financial support for the implementation of projects selected on a competitive basis at the expense of the budget programme "Implementation of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine".

In the reporting period, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, in order to implement the cultural rights of national minorities (communities), prioritised the support of cultural diversity, in particular projects of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, including the preservation of unique ethnic cultures that are in a threatened situation and cultural and artistic projects aimed at strengthening cultural tolerance and respect in society. The following projects received financial support from 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Year	Project	Grant amount (in UAH)
2021	Ethnographic expedition and virtual museum of Galicia Germans	50 6,127.00
2021	Crimea. 25 years of fighting for Ukraine. 1999-2002.	68 5,284.61
2021	Festival of sub-ethnic groups of Ukraine 'Visiting the Highlanders' as part of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's independence	48 4,962.00
2021	"Who are we? Indigenous peoples and national communities of Ukraine" - an illustrated publication about cultural diversity	1, 428,597.23
2021	Dissidents. A book of Vakhtang Kipiani's interviews with dissidents - representatives of different nations imprisoned in the Soviet Union, with translation into foreign languages, creation of a web resource and an information campaign	73 3,082.87
2021	Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians: milestones	93

		of common struggle and solidarity	4,248.00
	2021	Persona CULT with Gulnara Pogotova (promoting the idea of unity of the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar nationalities)	1, 601,100.00
	2021	Emel (promoting the integration of Crimean Tatar culture into common cultural space of Ukraine)	1, 650,332.80
	2021	The multidisciplinary project "The Way / Yol" (preservation of the Crimean Tatar heritage)	8, 455,005.78
0	2021	ORTALAN (promotion of the topic of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people in 1944)	38 2,500.00
1	2021	Unterwalden 2.0: re-exposition of the museum and cultural centre "On the Unterval" (cognition and rethinking of multicultural Galician history)	89 0,395.00
2	2021	Search - a new season of podcasts on Urban Space Radio (promotion of the culture of national minorities)	87 0,048.00
3	2021	Hopak and lapserdash (promotion of the idea of the unity of Ukrainian and Jewish peoples)	52 6,650.00
4	2023	Zincir/Chain - links of memory (promoting the popularisation of cultures of the peoples of Crimea)	2, 214,318.00
5	2023	Bilgi/Knowledge: memory of culture (preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Crimean Tatar people)	1, 699,400.00
6	2023	WE ARE FRIENDS (raising awareness of Ukrainian and international audiences about the history of the Ukrainian-Crimean relations)	2, 702,214.00
7	2023	The material heritage of the Crimean Tatars of the XIV-XVII centuries: Podillya and Volyn	13 3,026.08
8	2023	What do we not know about us? (promotion of cultural diversity of the Crimea)	64 8,592.00
9	2023	Scholarship for the resumption of cultural and artistic activities Ablaev B.A. (promotion of the historical and cultural heritage of the Crimean Tatars and Crimea)	45 ,407.87
	2023	NATIONAL FRONT (a project about the defenders of Ukraine, representing different	95

0		nationalities)	1,176.00
		TOTAL	27 ,542,467.24

In 2024, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation continued its policy of supporting projects of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in accordance with the priorities of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation in 2024, approved by the decision of the Supervisory Board of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation of 27 October 2023 No. 25 and agreed by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine of 27 October 2023. This is the goal of the Culture. Regions competition programme. The objectives of the programme are: "promotion of regional culture, cultural diversity and values of national minorities and ethnic groups, their harmonious coexistence" and "preservation, development and representation of the cultural diversity of regional cultures, including the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples of Ukraine".

In 2024, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation used the opportunity to support 17 projects (as of 01 August 2024) aimed at promoting the cultural, linguistic and other needs of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine for a total of UAH 13,610 thousand. In 2025, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation opens the LOT "Culture of Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine". The LOT is intended to ensure the preservation and promotion of the culture of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine: Crimean Tatars, Krymchaks and Karaites, who are an integral part of the multicultural Ukrainian family.

On 26 September 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034 and the relevant tasks and measures for its implementation by Resolution No. 850-r. The purpose of the Programme is to create sustainable institutional conditions at the national and regional levels to meet the needs and exercise the rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, as well as to promote social stability, cohesion and national unity of Ukrainian society.

On 13 February 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 164 "On Approval of the Procedure for the Use of Funds Provided for in the State Budget for Measures to Implement the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine", which defines the mechanism for using funds first provided for in the State Budget of Ukraine for 2024 under the separate budget programme "Implementation of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine", in accordance with the requirements of Article 14 of Law No. 2827-IX. In 2024, the funds in the amount

of UAH 10228.3 thousand will be used to finance the activities of the State Target National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034. The DESS has been designated as the responsible executor of the budget programme. The budget programme implementation plan provides for the financing of the following activities:

No.	Name of the event	Amount, UAH thousand
1	Round table discussion "To know and to remember: current research and information products about the Roma Holocaust during the Second World War"	98.0
2	Holding a forum of the Greek national minority (community) in Ukraine	681.2
3	Holding an annual meeting with employees of local state administrations on topical issues of state policy in the field of interethnic relations, religion, national minorities (communities) and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples of Ukraine	840.1
4	Holding a forum of the Hungarian national minority (community) in Ukraine	800.0
5	Holding a forum of the Romanian national minority (community) in Ukraine	950.0
6	Holding a forum of the Polish national minority (community) in Ukraine	950.0
7	Holding a forum of national minorities (communities) of the south of Odesa region	725.51
8	Conducting a nationwide study on topical issues in the field of interethnic relations regarding ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of Ukrainians, demographic changes, identification of public attitudes towards national minorities (communities), indigenous peoples of Ukraine, conflict potential and topical issues in the field of interethnic relations, national minorities (communities) and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples of Ukraine	480.0
9	Conducting a regional study on topical issues in the field of interethnic relations: ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of residents of Chernivtsi and Transcarpathian regions, in order to analyse demographic changes, identify public attitudes towards national minorities (communities), conflict potential	807.0

	and topical issues in the field of interethnic relations, national minorities (communities) of Ukraine	
10	Conducting a nationwide survey among persons belonging to the Roma minority on education, access to healthcare, employment, the situation of internally displaced persons and other issues	2028.0
11	All-Ukrainian monitoring of public opinion to identify linguistic, ethnic, religious identities of Ukrainian citizens, needs for changes in state policy and results of state policy implementation	1886.49
	Total	10,228.3

Pursuant to Article 19 of Law No. 2827-IX, on 2 February 2024, the DESS issued Order No. H-18/12 "On Approval of the Procedure for the Establishment and Functioning of the Centre for National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine". The main tasks of the Centre for National Minorities (Communities) are:

- support and preservation of the traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage of national minorities (communities), creation of conditions for the full disclosure of their identity, preservation of language, culture and folk traditions;
- carrying out activities aimed at strengthening national unity and consolidation of Ukrainian society, deepening cultural ties between public associations of national minorities (communities) in the region;
- institutional support for public associations of national minorities (communities) by providing, in order of priority, premises for meetings, seminars, round tables, etc., classrooms for organising native language learning, rehearsals of vocal and choreographic groups, and organisational assistance in preparing events to celebrate national holidays or memorable dates related to national history.

For example, the activities of the Centre of Cultures of National Minorities of Transcarpathia, which is funded by the regional budget of the Transcarpathian region, are aimed at fulfilling these tasks. The Centre supports the activities of 28 regional national and cultural societies that do not have their own premises. The Centre provides organisational and methodological assistance in the preparation and holding of scientific and practical conferences, forums, round tables, seminars, discussions, trainings, meetings, celebrations on the occasion of memorable dates, days of cultures, etc. The Centre also organises joint events involving representatives of various national minorities of the region.

There are 5 centres of national minority cultures (communities) in Odesa region, whose activities are funded from the regional budget. In particular, four of them are

located in places of compact residence of national minorities in the South-West of the region:

Municipal institution "Odesa Regional Centre of Bulgarian Culture in Bolhrad";

Municipal institution "Regional Centre of National Cultures in Reni";

Municipal institution "Regional Centre of National Cultures" (Izmail);

Municipal Institution "Regional Centre of Gagauz Culture" (Vynohradivka village, Bolhrad district).

Even after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, the centres continue to be active, organising colourful festivals of national cultures where representatives of different nationalities demonstrate their cultural traditions.

In Zaporizhzhia region, the Centre of National Cultures "Suzirya" was established on the basis of the regional universal scientific library, which conducts research and educational activities and assists public organisations of national minorities (communities) in holding seminars, round tables and other non-mass events. It is funded by the regional budget.

The Centre for National Cultures of Vinnytsia Region and the Centre for the Development of National Cultures "United Family" in Kirovohrad Region are public organisations founded by representatives of various national minorities (communities). These organisations plan various events jointly with the structures of regional state administrations responsible for working with national minorities (communities). To support their activities, they receive financial assistance (grants) at the expense of regional budgets.

According to the information provided by the regional state (military) administrations, in 2022, there were 100 centres of national cultures and 524 creative teams formed by public organisations of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine. Unfortunately, the armed aggression of the Russian Federation has led to the curtailment of cultural work in the activities of CSOs. Most organisations have refocused on social protection and psychological support for families affected by the hostilities, as well as on supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which are resisting armed aggression in extremely difficult conditions. Some civil society activists have also been forced to leave the territory of Ukraine, as discussed in more detail in Part 3.

Comment to clause 2

Article 3 of Law No. 2827-IX defines state guarantees in the area of realisation and/or protection of the rights of Ukrainian citizens belonging to national minorities (communities), in particular, part two of this article stipulates that the state's integration policy provides for refraining from policies and practices of assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) against their will and protecting such persons from any actions aimed at such assimilation.

An important aspect of preventing the assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) is to enshrine in legislation and regulations the right to learn the native language of their minority and to use it freely not only in private life but also in public relations.

To this end, on 8 December 2023, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Consideration of the Expert Opinion of the Council of Europe and its Bodies on the Rights of National Minorities (Communities) in Certain Areas" No. 3504-IX, described in Part I of this report.

The law not only declares rights, but also prescribes mechanisms to ensure their realisation. According to the expert community, a particularly important aspect of the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities to use their native language is the addition of Article 10 of Law No. 2827-IX to Part 13, which stipulates that the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, within the powers granted to him/her by the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine "On the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights", exercises parliamentary control over the observance of the right of national minorities (communities) to use the languages of national minorities (communities). The introduction of another mechanism is defined in part 10 of Article 10 of Law No. 2827-IX, which obliges the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to approve a methodology that should determine the specifics of the use of languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine in settlements traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities (communities) or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population, in particular in relations with local executive authorities and local self-government bodies, their officials and in other areas.

On 9 February 2024, by Resolution No. 181, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Methodology for the Use of Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine in Settlements Traditionally Home to Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine or in Which Such Persons Make Up a Significant Part of the Population (the "Methodology") and recommended that local governments be guided by the Methodology for the Use of Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine in Relevant Spheres of Public Life.

The methodology defines the following areas of public life in which the languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine may be used by decision of a village, town or city council:

- providing topographic information;

- writing official names on the plates (signboards) of local self-government bodies and municipal enterprises;
- communication with the authorities;
- provision of public services;
- medical care;
- dissemination of information for general information;
 - provision of social services to elderly citizens and persons with disabilities. The Methodology also defines the conditions under which a local self-government body is obliged to make a relevant decision.

On 26 September 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 850-r "On Approval of the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034". The Programme includes a separate section aimed at ensuring the language rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine: "Ensuring the language rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, supporting the preservation of languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in accordance with the law". This section includes 16 measures that will be implemented at the national and regional levels, including the preparation of draft resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of the List of Endangered Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine" and "On Approval of the Strategy for the Preservation and Development of Endangered Languages".

In 2024, the DESS, in cooperation with the expert community, developed a draft resolution "On Approval of the List of Endangered Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine". The list was prepared taking into account the scientifically based proposals of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, as well as the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Extinction, published in 2010 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The draft was subjected to public discussion and finalised by the DESS based on the discussion's results.

On 7 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 670 "On Approval of the List of Endangered Languages of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine". The list includes the following languages: Belarusian, Gagauz, Yiddish, Karaite, Crimean Tatar, Krymchak, Roma, Rumeika, and Uruma.

Article 6

1. The Parties shall promote an atmosphere of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and shall take effective measures to deepen mutual respect, understanding and co-operation among all persons living within their territory, irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.
2. The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subjected to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence on the basis of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.

Comment to clause 1

Article 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine stipulates that the state promotes the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, as well as the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine.

Article 13 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that the state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) is aimed at, inter alia, establishing norms of interethnic tolerance and mutual respect in Ukrainian society; strengthening national unity and ensuring multiculturalism in Ukrainian society.

An analysis of available information on the assessment of the overall interethnic situation in Ukraine indicates that in 2022, problems related to illegal manifestations in the field of interethnic relations are mainly related to full-scale Russian aggression aimed at denying national statehood and accompanied by massive violations of citizens' rights, including on ethnic and religious grounds. According to the Security Service of Ukraine, in the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk and Kherson regions, the Russian military systematically conducts search and filtering activities among the local population to identify pro-Ukrainian individuals. The occupiers subject citizens with a pro-Ukrainian position to moral and psychological pressure and physical violence, illegally deprive them of their liberty, and seize their property. The occupation authorities pay considerable attention to young people in order to deprive them of their national and cultural identity.

The results of an all-Ukrainian survey conducted in October 2023 by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) on inter-ethnic prejudice in Ukraine show that the inter-ethnic situation in the territories controlled by the Ukrainian government is balanced. The xenophobia index in October 2023 was slightly below 4 (3.7 to be exact). This level is not high, it shows that the majority of ethnic groups in Ukraine

are within the range of 3, 4 or 5 on the xenophobia index. That is, the Ukrainians surveyed would not want representatives of certain ethnic groups to be members of their families and close friends, but they are ready to see them as neighbours, work colleagues and residents of Ukraine. The lowest social distance is with Poles - 2.93, followed by Jews - 3.39, Belarusians - 4.04, Romanians - 4.23, Roma - 4.75, and Russians - 4.96. KIIS compares the results with 2013 and notes an improvement in attitudes towards Jews and Roma in Ukrainian society and a significant increase in social distance towards Belarusians and Russians, more details are available here:

<https://kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1364&page=1&t=10>

It should be noted that in the context of a new stage of Russian armed aggression on the territory of Ukraine since 24 February 2022, the position of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples is consolidated and aimed at countering military aggression in order to defend Ukrainian statehood. Currently, representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine are confronting the enemy: they are jointly defending the territorial integrity of Ukraine in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, territorial defence, and civil resistance to military aggression.

The DESS monitors the participation of representatives of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in countering the enemy on the basis of open data (including news websites, social networks, official pages of individual representatives and public associations of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine). This monitoring is intended to:

- to record the contribution of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine to the struggle for Ukrainian statehood;
- honour the memory of fallen heroes - representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine;
- to form a factual basis for debunking disinformation narratives that use the ethnic factor to divide Ukrainian society;
- create a basis for communication materials aimed at improving attitudes towards national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples within Ukrainian society.

The facts of the activities of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples selected as a result of the monitoring became the basis for the preparation of the information Almanac of Resistance.

On 24 February 2022, DESS, together with the Public Council at DESS, held a press conference "Ukraine – a peaceful home for all of us: an appeal for support for Ukraine" at the Ukrainian National News Agency Ukrinform. During the press conference, representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous

peoples of Ukraine called on the world to support Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its internationally recognised borders, peace and security. The materials of the press conference were published on the resources of Ukrinform and DESS.

On 22 August 2022, DESS initiated and held an information event "Ethnic Communities of Ukraine: Joint Resistance to the Aggressor Today, Together in Ukraine Tomorrow" jointly with the National Memorial Complex of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes – Museum of the Revolution of Dignity with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. The event was attended by representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples who have directly joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine, volunteered and provide support to citizens affected by the hostilities. Please note that this support is not limited to representatives of their minority, but is common to all citizens affected by the hostilities.

On 11 December 2023, DESS held the Marathon "We Are Different, We Are Free, We Are United" at the Ukraine-Uninform Media Centre, where it presented the Almanac of Resistance prepared jointly with the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative. The Almanac includes valuable and sometimes life-changing stories of how people of all nationalities, each in their own place, united in the fight against a common enemy. Each story told by the participants of the Marathon is a testament to the resilience, strength and courage demonstrated by various national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in their resistance to the enemy. The Almanac of Resistance is available on the DESS website at <https://dessa.gov.ua/almanakh-sprotyv/>

In accordance with subclause 4 of clause 2 of Annex 2 "Tasks and Measures" to the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 26 September 2023 No. 850-r, it is planned to hold an annual Forum of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine as an information platform for discussing topical issues in the field of interethnic relations and ensuring the exercise of the rights of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine with all stakeholders.

The first all-Ukrainian Forum of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine, dedicated to the implementation of reforms to improve Ukrainian legislation in line with European legislation in the field of ethnic policy and ensuring the rights of national minorities (communities) in times of war, was held in Kyiv on 7 June 2024. It was attended by more than 100 representatives of national minorities (communities)

from all regions of Ukraine, representatives of state authorities, international organisations, diplomatic corps and journalists from leading media. The participants of the Forum adopted a final document in which they identified key priorities for ensuring the rights and protection of national minorities in Ukraine, which is published on the DESS website at: <https://dessa.gov.ua/pidsumkovyy-dokument-forumu-natsionalnykh-menshyn-v-ukraini/>

In order to ensure intercultural dialogue and foster tolerant attitudes towards representatives of national minorities, according to the regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations, libraries and other cultural institutions are taking measures on a regular basis to deepen mutual respect, understanding and cooperation between all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion.

Such events are held on the occasion of: International Holocaust Remembrance Day - 27 January; International Mother Language Day - 19 February; Day of Crimean Resistance to Russian Occupation - 26 February; International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - 15 March; Day of Remembrance of Ukrainians who saved Jews during World War II - 14 May; World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development - 21 May; International Roma Holocaust Day - 2 August; Babyn Yar Tragedy Remembrance Day - 29 September; International Day for Tolerance - 16 November, as well as on other days related to the history of a particular area.

In order to promote tolerance among young people and prevent xenophobia, general education institutions held open lessons on the Day of Law and Justice, communication hours on the threats of racism and xenophobia, the culture of interethnic relations, and tolerance as a step towards freedom; correspondence trips to countries around the world; exhibitions of students' drawings and poems entitled Me and My Rights; information minutes on Ukraine as a multicultural state; and other events.

According to the information of the Joint Stock Company "National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine" (hereinafter referred to as the Public (Sypilnyi) Broadcaster), projects in the languages of national communities are constantly being created - for them, and about them - in Ukrainian. The mission of the Coordination Centre for National Minority Broadcasting, which operates as part of the Department for Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities within the structure of the Public Broadcaster, is to promote the preservation and use of languages of national communities, to introduce the public to their culture, social life, traditions and modern

challenges, as well as to create, develop and disseminate content about national communities and indigenous peoples.

The main tasks of the Department for Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities:

- to inform the communities traditionally residing in Ukraine about events in Ukraine and the world in the languages of national communities and indigenous peoples;
- promote inter-ethnic dialogue, mutual understanding within the country and support Ukraine in its fight against the aggressor;
- develop a culture of diversity, equality and inclusion through quality content and institutional initiatives.

The Department's team consists of four editorial offices. The editorial office in Kyiv creates national projects of various formats and genres on the topics of diversity (including national communities and indigenous peoples), equality and inclusion. The content is adapted for various platforms of the Public Broadcaster, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, to reach a diverse audience.

Regional editorial offices for national community broadcasting in Uzhhorod, Chernivtsi and Odesa create local social and educational, cultural and artistic programmes and news in the languages of national minorities (communities): Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, German, Roma, Bulgarian and Gagauz, which are broadcast on the following platforms: television - local TV channels (all-Ukrainian broadcast); radio - Ukrainian Radio (also broadcasts in the app); YouTube, Instagram and Facebook - Suspilne Uzhhorod, Suspilne Chernivtsi, Suspilne Odesa.

Projects about national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in Ukrainian, which were implemented in the period from 2021 to 2023:

- special project "Understand Your Neighbour", number of episodes - 6;
- Visual Code project (March), number of episodes - 6;
- a short documentary film The Invisible Truth;
- a special project about the traditions of different nations called "Tasty Easter", the number episodes - 11;
- a series of explorers "What do you know about...?" (season 2), the number of episodes - 8;
- live broadcasts on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on 9 August by the Coordination Centre's editor from Melitopol (home of the Karaite indigenous people) on the projects Morning on Suspilne, Suspilne Studio, Ukrainian Radio and the special project of the Suspilne Crimea channel;
- project "Shades of Ukraine - Season 2", number of episodes - 2;
- social project "Svoi", number of episodes - 5;
- Visual Code 2 project, number of episodes - 6;
- project "Shades of Ukraine. War", number of episodes - 10;

- The Door project, number of episodes - 18;
- interview series "Boundaries", the number of recorded episodes - 20;
- a series of interviews in the Cultural Instinct project, the number of interviews prepared - 4;
- a series of reports for broadcast in the nationwide marathon "United News #UAtogether" and the regional marathon "Suspilne. Resistance" - more than 70 reports for the period from 1 March 2022 to 20 December 2022;
- Christmas at the Hostel is a documentary about a shelter created by Roma for all Ukrainians;
- documentary film "Chaplains. Faith in War";
- the documentary project My Crimea;
- a documentary about a Roma soldier, War Made Me This Way.

In 2023, the Public Broadcaster joined the project "Competent Media - Democratic and Tolerant Society", which aimed to prevent discrimination in the media against persons on the basis of ethnicity, nationality and disability, incitement to racial, national and religious hatred or their positive presentation (interpretation). During the public discussions, representatives of the Public Broadcaster acquainted the participants of the events with the best media practices of their own self-regulatory mechanisms that make it impossible to manifest and spread discrimination in their own information programmes and in professional teams.

Comment to clause 2

The Government of Ukraine is working to improve anti-discrimination legislation, and in 2023, draft laws were submitted to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine:

- "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine (regarding the harmonisation of legislation in the field of preventing and combating discrimination with the law of the European Union)" (Reg. No. 0931);
- "On Amendments to the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences and the Criminal Code of Ukraine on Combating Discrimination" (Reg. No. 5488), which aims to distinguish between criminal and administrative liability for discrimination, harmonise the conceptual framework in terms of qualifying various forms and manifestations of intolerance, and strengthen the role of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Principles of Combating Discrimination", the subjects empowered to prevent and combat discrimination are the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine; the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, other state bodies, authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local self-government bodies, CSOs, individuals and legal entities.

The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights takes measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostile attitude and hate speech or violence on the basis of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious affiliation, and the position of the Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, Rights of National Minorities, Political and Religious Views was introduced to coordinate activities in this area.

To ensure sustainable, systematic cooperation with representatives of national minorities (communities), deepening of intercultural dialogue, the Expert Council on National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples (hereinafter - the Expert Council) was established under the Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Views, which includes representatives of 29 public organisations of national minorities (communities), representatives of indigenous peoples of Ukraine, as well as experts of international organisations dealing with the protection of the rights of national minorities, including the Council of Europe and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

As part of the harmonisation of national anti-discrimination legislation in line with international equality standards, in spring 2023, the Commissioner applied to the European Network of Equality Authorities (EQUINET) for membership. In September, the EQUINET delegation visited Ukraine, and in October 2023, all its members unanimously supported Ukraine's membership in the network.

In the course of monitoring the observance of the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples, the Commissioner shall record cases of discriminatory actions against them. The Commissioner carries out consistent and comprehensive work aimed at ensuring absolute equality of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in the integrity and unity of Ukrainian society. In particular, during the reporting period, 8 such cases were identified, and the Commissioner's response acts were sent to the National Police of Ukraine for investigation and to the Commission on Journalistic Ethics to take measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin and to promote compliance with professional ethical standards by journalists of news agencies.

The National Police of Ukraine also conducts a systematic analysis of the status of investigations in criminal proceedings initiated on the grounds of intolerance, as well as verifies information on hate crimes reported in the media.

According to the Order of the National Police of Ukraine of 30 December 2022 No. 948 "On the Introduction of Reporting Forms on the Effectiveness of Police Activities Aimed at Combating Crime, Maintaining Public Safety and Order", the reporting form No. 1-N "Report on Offences Related to Intolerance and Discrimination" is to be

generalised, relevant statistical and analytical materials are to be compiled by region and posted in the information and communication system "Information Portal of the National Police of Ukraine" for use by the for use by specialised departments in their official activities.

According to the analysis of the information provided, in 2022, it was established that the investigative units in the regions initiated pre-trial investigations in criminal proceedings on 150 criminal offences of this category, which were qualified:

- under Article 161 (Violation of equality of citizens based on their race, nationality, region, religious beliefs, disability and other grounds) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (hereinafter - the CCU) - 131 criminal offences;
- under Article 178 (Damage to religious buildings or places of worship) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 5 criminal offences;
- 6 offences under Article 179 (Unlawful maintenance, desecration or destruction of religious shrines) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine;
- under Article 180 (Obstruction of a religious rite) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 8 criminal offences.

Of the specified number of criminal offences:

- indictments on 7 criminal offences (categories: national/ethnic intolerance; prejudice against Christians and members of other religions; violation of other human rights) were submitted to the court;
- plea agreements were drawn up in 3 criminal offences (categories - anti-Semitism and prejudice against Christians and members of other religions);
- in 2 criminal offences, a petition for the application of compulsory medical measures was filed with the court (categories - prejudice against Christians and members of other religions; national/ethnic intolerance).

Pursuant to Article 284 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine (the "CPC"), criminal proceedings under 64 criminal offences were closed. In other criminal proceedings under 74 criminal offences, as of 1 January 2023, the pre-trial investigation was ongoing.

According to the analysis of the information provided, in 2023, the investigative units of the main departments of the National Police in the regions initiated pre-trial investigations in criminal proceedings on 170 criminal offences of this category, which were classified as:

- Article 161 (Violation of the equality of citizens based on their race, nationality, region, religious beliefs, disability and other grounds) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 139 criminal offences;
- Article 179 (Illegal maintenance, desecration or destruction of religious shrines) - 8 criminal offences;
- Article 178 (Damage to religious buildings or places of worship) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 3 criminal offences;

- Article 180 (Obstruction of a religious rite) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 14 criminal offences;
- Article 129 (Threats of murder) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 1 criminal offence; - Article 300 (Importation, production or distribution of works promoting the cult of violence and cruelty, racial, national or religious intolerance and discrimination) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine - 5 criminal offences.

In 2023, indictments were submitted to the court for consideration on the merits in 15 criminal offences.

On 31 March 2023, the Law of Ukraine "On Media" came into force, which prohibits the dissemination of statements in the media and on video-sharing platforms in Ukraine that incite hatred, hostility or cruelty, incite discrimination or harassment against individuals and groups of individuals on the basis of ethnic or social origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or other grounds, citizenship, race, religion or belief, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or other grounds, and the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting (hereinafter - the National Council) was empowered to impose sanctions for relevant violations. Criteria have been developed for classifying information as such that may incite hatred, hostility or cruelty, incite discrimination or harassment against individuals or groups of individuals.

In the reporting period, the National Council continued to respond to appeals from Ukrainian citizens regarding non-compliance with Ukrainian legislation by broadcasters, in particular the spread of hate speech. In 2023, the National Council received 719 written appeals from citizens, which is almost twice as many as in 2022 (454 written appeals from citizens), but actually corresponds to the figure for 2021 (754 written appeals from citizens). The most relevant topics were: non-compliance by broadcasters with the statutory language quotas, possible violation of advertising laws, the need to strengthen the protection of public morality, and strengthening the state's information protection against the negative impact of propaganda, disinformation and hate speech used by the aggressor country to wage hybrid warfare.

In order to ensure the proper implementation of media legislation, in particular with regard to the dissemination of statements that incite hatred, hostility or discrimination, the National Council held a series of consultations in 2023 with representatives of the public and government agencies dealing with these issues. In total, between March and May 2023, the National Council initiated 3 working meetings with representatives of the Jewish, Roma and Crimean Tatar communities, as these ethnic groups are the most frequently mentioned in the media. The meetings discussed proposals for different criteria for classifying information in the context of discrimination and hate speech in the media on the basis of ethnicity. The meetings were attended by 63 people from the above-mentioned communities and 4 state institutions: DESS, the

Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, the State Enterprise "Crimean House", and the Mission of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

The preliminary results of communications with representatives of public associations of the above-mentioned national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples have resulted in the development of proposals for the Criteria for classifying information as inciting hatred, hostility, cruelty to individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of belonging to Jews, Roma, Crimean Tatars and/or as inciting discrimination or harassment. It is envisaged that the National Council will be able to use the criteria of the most relevant manifestations of hostility and discrimination defined in this way in its current regulatory and supervisory activities, and to make them public to the public and Ukrainian media for use in journalistic activities in preparing materials on all ethnic communities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine.

In the period from 1.07.2021 to 31.12.2023, the Head of the National Council took part in the round table "Integration of the Roma community under martial law" and focused the attention of the participants on the recommendations for the media developed and agreed with the Roma national minority to counteract the spread of Roma-phobia. Between September and December 2023, at the initiative of the National Council, public discussions were organised at the Ukrinform news agency (Kyiv, Ukraine) to prevent hate speech and discrimination against people with disabilities, people on ethnic, national and religious grounds, sexual orientation and gender identity in the media. They were attended by 300 people from all categories of media - national, regional and local audiovisual and audio companies, print media, and online media. They heard from people from different communities who used specific examples and media cases to demonstrate how stereotypes, vocabulary or images can offend, oppress or discredit people, including those from national minorities (communities). Particular attention was paid to the terminology that should not be used, to the ethics of communication, to the responsibility of a journalist or editor for each piece of information on sensitive topics.

Article 7

The Parties shall ensure respect for the rights of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Commentary to Article 7

According to Article 36(1) of the Constitution of Ukraine, citizens of Ukraine have the right to freedom of association in political parties and public organisations for the exercise and protection of their rights and freedoms and the satisfaction of political, economic, social, cultural and other interests.

According to Article 39 of the Constitution of Ukraine, citizens of Ukraine have the right to assemble peacefully, unarmed and to hold meetings, rallies, marches and demonstrations, which are notified in advance by executive authorities or local self-government bodies, except for restrictions established by law in the interests of national security and public order, public health or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Law No. 2827-IX guarantees persons belonging to a national minority (community) the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion. In particular, Article 7 guarantees the right, in accordance with the law, to participate in the formation and activities of public associations of national minorities (communities), in peaceful assemblies for the exercise and protection of their rights and freedoms, satisfaction of public, in particular economic, social, cultural, linguistic, environmental and other interests, and their integration into Ukrainian society. And Article 8 guarantees the right to freedom of observance and expression of views and beliefs, opinion, speech, conscience and religion. Article 8 also provides that a person belonging to a national minority (community) has the right to freely collect, store, use and disseminate information in the language of his or her national minority (community) orally, in writing or in any other way, and may profess any religion or none, freely worship individually or collectively, perform religious rites and rituals, conduct religious activities, and form religious organisations in accordance with the procedure established by law.

The Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations" defines the legal and organisational framework for the exercise of the right to freedom of association, the procedure for the formation, registration, operation and termination of public associations.

According to the information provided by the regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations, as of 1 January 2024, 1275 public associations of national minorities were registered in Ukraine in Vinnytsia (56), Volyn (27), Dnipro (105), Donetsk (80), Zhytomyr (45), Transcarpathia (67), Zaporizhzhia (44), Ivano-Frankivsk (36), Kyiv (35), Kirovohrad (45), Luhansk (47), Lviv (48), Mykolaiv (64), Odesa (165), Poltava (32), Rivne (20), Sumy (18), Ternopil (17), Kharkiv (34), Kherson (57), Khmelnytsky (52), Cherkasy (57), Chernivtsi (30), Chernihiv (33) regions, and in the city of Kyiv (50).

56 national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine have established public organisations, most of them are formed by representatives of Polish (209) and Roma (118) national minorities (communities), 42 public organisations formed by representatives of different national minorities (communities) are interethnic.

On 24 February 2022, in accordance with the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the introduction of martial law in Ukraine" No. 64/2022, it was allowed to restrict constitutional rights, including the rights set out in Article 39 of the Constitution of Ukraine.

Representatives of public organisations of national minorities (communities), like all citizens of Ukraine, are responsible for the restrictions imposed under martial law. They do not organise mass events for the safety of citizens. All conscious citizens are aware of the Russian aggressor's air and missile attacks on theatres, libraries, sports schools and children's hospitals in Ukraine. The majority of CSOs formed by representatives of national minorities (communities) have refocused on social protection and psychological support for families affected by the hostilities, as well as on supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which are resisting armed aggression in extremely difficult conditions. Some civil society activists have also been forced to leave the territory of Ukraine, as discussed in more detail in Part 3.

Article 8

The Parties undertake to recognise the right of every person belonging to a national minority to manifest his or her religion or belief and to establish religious institutions, organisations and associations.

Comment to Article 8

The Constitution and legislation of Ukraine are generally in line with the provisions of EU law on freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the guarantees of this right provided in EU documents and other provisions of international law.

The activities of religious organisations in Ukraine are regulated by the Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations". The law prohibits any coercion in determining a citizen's attitude to religion, professing or refusing to profess religion, participating or not participating in worship, religious rites and ceremonies, or teaching religion. There is no mandatory registration for religious organisations, but they have the right to register their charters in order to obtain the status of a legal entity. A religious community can be established by any 10 adult citizens. The registration procedure, as well as the terms and lists of required documents, are determined by law.

Ukraine remains a multi-confessional state, which in its attitude to religion is based on generally accepted norms of international law, recognising the equality of all religions and faiths, and providing maximum assistance to the activities of religious organisations representing them.

As part of ensuring freedom of religion and belief in Ukraine, national legislation does not prohibit the activities of unregistered religious associations, the number of

which is constantly increasing. Another evidence of religious pluralism in Ukraine is the absence of a monopoly in the religious environment at the national level. This makes the religious situation with the exercise of religious rights and freedoms significantly different from the situation in Russia. In particular, no church in Ukraine has a monopoly position, unlike the privileged status of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia. While defending its independence and territorial integrity, Ukraine also protects the religious pluralism of Ukrainian society, freedom of religion and belief of Ukrainian citizens.

According to official statistics, as of 1 January 2024, the landscape of religious organisations designed to meet the needs of national minorities (communities) to practice their traditional religion covers the entire territory of Ukraine.

To meet the religious needs of representatives of the Jewish national community in Ukraine, the following organisations operate: The Association of Jewish Religious Organisations of Ukraine, religious organisations of progressive Judaism, and the Chabad Lubavitch Hasidic Association of Jewish Religious Organisations of Ukraine. The total number of such religious organisations is 327. There are 4 religious organisations of the indigenous Karaite people on the territory controlled by the Ukrainian Government. There is no reliable information on the activities of Karaite and Krymchak religious organisations in the occupied territories; according to civil society activists, they do not hold public services to avoid reprisals.

In the mosques of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine, the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine "Ummah", the Religious Centre of Muslims of Ukraine "Ahmediye", the Religious Administration of Muslims of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (211 such religious organisations in total), representatives of Azerbaijani, Meskhetian, Arab, Uzbek, Turkmen, Tajik, Kyrgyz, Tatar, Chechen, Dagestani and other national minorities professing Islam and the indigenous Crimean Tatar people have the opportunity to meet their religious needs.

Representatives of Romanian, Moldovan, Greek, Bulgarian, Slovak, Czech, Polish, Hungarian and other European national minorities (communities) profess mainly Christianity and meet their religious needs in accordance with their own confessional preferences or traditions in Orthodox (19215), Catholic (1136), Greek Catholic (4154), Baptist (2659), Pentecostal (1793) religious organisations, respectively.

Certain religious organisations are localised in places of compact residence of the respective national minority. For Hungarians in Transcarpathian region, 103 religious communities, 55 communities of the Roman Catholic Church; 34 communities of the Greek Catholic Church; Jehovah's Witnesses in 10 settlements of the region, which are part of the "Transcarpathian local religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses" and 3 religious communities of Jehovah's Witnesses operating under their own

charters, provide services in their native language; 8 communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (which is canonically subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate), 8 communities of the Christian Evangelical Church of the Living God of Ukraine in the Transcarpathian region; 6 communities of Evangelical Christian Baptists; 5 communities of Seventh-day Adventists; 5 communities of the Evangelical Reformed Church; one religious community each of the Full Gospel Christian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Church of Hungarian Baptists.

The Ukrainian Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church has 29 religious communities in all regions of Ukraine that conduct services in Armenian.

Religious needs in their native language can be met by the Georgian community in the name of St. Queen Tamara (on the territory of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra National Reserve in the church of the Reverend Fathers of the Caves). There is also a Georgian religious community in the Church of the Nativity in Podil in Kyiv.

Representatives of the German national minority have religious organisations of Lutheran churches to meet their religious needs: German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine, Ukrainian Lutheran Church. Protestant Roma communities of Evangelical Christians (Baptists) and Pentecostals operate in Transkarpatia.

According to the regional state (military) administrations, in 2023, there were more than 100 Orthodox religious communities in Chernivtsi region and six in Odesa region that conducted rites in Romanian.

It is also worth noting that in 2024, the DESS conducted a religious examination of the charter of the religious organisation "Religious Community "Saint Dionysius Yerhan" (located in Izmail, Odesa region), which found that the religious community unites mainly representatives of the Romanian national minority and expressed a desire to obtain the status of an independent Orthodox community. The DESS issued an opinion on the possibility of registering the religious community in this status.

Special mention should be made of the activities of 4 ethno-confessional communities of the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Church of the East.

There are also ethno-confessional communities of Koreans (Korean Christian Methodist Church - Poltava region) and Chinese (Brotherhood of Chinese Christians of Evangelical Faith in Ukraine).

In August 2021, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's Independence, DESS launched the project "30 Years of Cooperation, 30 Years of Community Building", a web resource about the charitable initiatives of Ukraine's ethnic and religious communities that, regardless of their identity, provide assistance to Ukrainian citizens, which can be found here: <https://spilno.dess.gov.ua/>. The project presents the stories of communities formed on ethno-religious grounds, which act to

build and protect Ukraine's statehood and preserve their own identity. The project's participants are public and religious organisations: League of Muslim Women of Ukraine, Bismillah Islamic Cultural Centre, Eris Ertoba, Maryam, Sources of Tolerance Educational Camp, Safiya, and the Evangelical Lutheran religious community of Novohradkivka village.

In 2021, the state supported the creation of a platform for Muslim communities in Ukraine - the Congress of Muslims of Ukraine - the first all-Ukrainian association for a wide range of organisations that unite Muslims in cultural, scientific and charitable activities. The key vectors of the Congress' activities are social activism, scientific, educational and cultural work.

Annually, during the reporting period, the DESS held consultations with representatives of national minorities (communities) professing Islam on the possibility of performing the Hajj and Umrah to the holy places of Islam in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by Muslims of Ukraine. Similar interaction and communication at the level of working groups was also carried out by the DESS, state authorities and representatives of the Jewish national minority on the organisation of events related to the traditional Hasidic pilgrimage to the grave of Tzadik Nachman Bratslavsky in Uman.

On 8 April 2023, the President of Ukraine officially launched the tradition of holding an annual Iftar, a dinner held during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Ukrainian Muslim soldiers, leaders of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, and representatives of the Muslim clergy were invited to participate. The event was an important testimony and recognition of the importance of the Muslim community in Ukraine. The tradition was continued on 26 March 2024.

On 14 September 2023, on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with representatives of Jewish clergy and servicemen of Jewish nationality. The Head of State thanked for the support provided by Jewish communities during the full-scale Russian invasion.

On 18 April 2024, the President of Ukraine met with the Jewish community on the occasion of Passover. Such meetings at the highest level for several years in a row demonstrate the state's continued attention to the problems of national minorities. During these meetings, the parties have the opportunity not only to exchange greetings but also to identify vectors of cooperation in humanitarian, educational, international and other areas.

On 19 October 2023, during a meeting between the Prime Minister of Ukraine and representatives of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations, issues of cooperation between religious and ethnic communities and the Government were raised. The areas of humanitarian and psychological assistance,

support for internally displaced persons, social projects, and chaplaincy were identified as areas of joint action. The Prime Minister praised the role of religious institutions in strengthening Ukraine's defence capability and raising the level and professionalism of military chaplaincy.

Since April 2023, Ukraine has regularly graduated military chaplains who have completed advanced training courses in military chaplaincy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The chaplains receive a certificate and are promoted to the rank of officer upon signing a contract. An important stage in acquiring the status of a military chaplain is a six-week training course at the Military Institute of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. In the future, such military chaplains should be present in all combat units of the Armed Forces, the National Guard and the Border Guard Service. In the sixth graduating class of military chaplains, representatives of the Jewish national minority (a religious branch of Messianic Judaism) received their certificates.

On 29 June 2024, the National Prayer Breakfast was held in Kyiv under the patronage of the President of Ukraine. More than 800 people from 15 countries, 12 religious denominations, government officials, diplomats, military personnel, volunteers, chaplains, veterans and athletes were united by the National Prayer Breakfast, which was held for the first time under the patronage of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy. It was attended by representatives of different countries and different communities - religious and ethnic. This included representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine.

At the same time, Russian aggression is causing significant losses to the religious diversity of Ukrainian society, which includes the destruction of religious sites, restrictions on the possibility of religious practices, demographic losses and the disintegration of religious communities of national minorities and indigenous peoples.

The actions of the Russian occupation authorities in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine lead to the complete emasculation of the religious diversity of Ukrainian society through the use of structural discrimination, systematic persecution, abductions of religious leaders and the establishment of full control over those religious organisations that are acceptable to the Russian dominant ideology of the "Russian peace". According to the "Religion on Fire" monitoring by the Congress of National Communities of Ukraine in partnership with the Workshop of Academic Religious Studies, 495 religious sites were damaged or destroyed in Ukraine between 24 February 2022 and 24 November 2023.

The destruction of religious buildings is also accompanied by human losses. In particular, the mosque at the Bismillah Islamic Cultural Centre in Sievierodonetsk was completely destroyed during a second attack on 19 June 2022, with at least 20 people

killed in the shelling. Human rights organisations note that various religious communities suffer during the Russian aggression, but the most vulnerable are small religious communities, whose damage to a religious building can lead to the cessation of community activities altogether or for a long time. In the case of the indigenous Krymchaks, this may lead to the loss of native speakers of the Krymchak language, which is mainly used for worship.

Article 9

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in his or her own language, without interference by the State and regardless of frontiers. Within the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall ensure that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.
2. Clause 1 shall not prevent the Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and on the basis of objective criteria, of radio and television broadcasting or film enterprises.
3. The Parties shall not prevent persons belonging to a national minority from establishing and using print media. Within the framework of the legislation governing broadcasting and television, they shall, as far as possible, ensure that persons belonging to a national minority, taking into account the provisions of clause 1, are able to establish and use their own media.
4. Within the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure access to the media for persons belonging to a national minority, with a view to promoting tolerance and cultural pluralism.

Comment to clause 1

The current Law of Ukraine "On Media" provides for freedom of activity in the media sector, namely Article 4, clause 5, stipulates that the reception or retransmission of radio channels, television channels, programme catalogues originating from countries that are members of the European Union, as well as other radio channels, television channels, programme catalogues, the content of which meets the requirements of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television, other international treaties of Ukraine ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, as well as the requirements established by the Law of Ukraine "On Media"

At the end of 2021, Ukrainian programme service providers rebroadcast 185 foreign programmes, mainly educational, children's, music and entertainment formats, which are under the jurisdiction of 22 countries. The main languages of foreign programmes were English for 40 broadcasters, Russian for 21, and Russian-English (two audio

tracks) for 54. French is fully or partially present in 21 programmes, and 10 programmes are broadcast in Polish. Ukrainian-language audio tracks were available in 22 foreign broadcasters.

From the beginning of the war to 31 December 2022, the number of such programmes decreased to 106. The main languages of foreign programmes were: English - 20; Russian - 49; Ukrainian - 4; other languages included Ukrainian - 19; other foreign languages broadcasted were Polish, German, Turkish, Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Czech, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Slovak, and others.

According to the regional state (military) administrations, persons belonging to national minorities living in the border areas of Ukraine have the opportunity to watch television programmes and listen to radio programmes in their native language from neighbouring countries on their receivers without any obstacles. In Odesa region: Bulgarian from the territory of Bulgaria, Romanian from the territory of Romania and the territory of Moldova; Gagauz from the territory of Moldova. In Chernivtsi region: Romanian from the territory of Romania and Moldova; in Transcarpathian region: Romanian from the territory of Romania, Hungarian from the territory of Hungary, Slovak from the territory of Slovakia; Polish from the territory of Poland. In Lviv and Volyn regions: Polish from the territory of Poland.

The Internet is also an important factor in using the Internet to obtain information in their native language; according to the reports of national minority CSOs, the Internet is actively used to learn their native language, ethnography, geography and other knowledge about their country of origin. Various events are also held online. This has become especially relevant after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the RF).

Comment to clause 2

The provisions of this clause are reflected in paragraphs 13-15 of Article 2 of the Law of Ukraine "On Media", which stipulate that this Law applies to other audiovisual, print, online media services and services of audiovisual service providers if they are directed to the territory and audience of Ukraine. It also regulates the actions of the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting on interaction with such services.

Comment to clause 3

Article 40 of the Law of Ukraine "On Media" was significantly amended by Law No. 3504-IX dated 08 December 2023 to cover television and radio broadcasters that, in addition to broadcasting in the state language, broadcast exclusively in the languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, which are official languages of the European Union, languages of national minorities (communities) to which the

provisions of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages apply in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages". For such broadcasters, a quota of at least 30 per cent of the total duration of programmes in the state language is established, except for the languages of national minorities (communities), which is the state (official) language of a state recognised by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine as an aggressor or occupying state. In other words, such media can fill up to 70 per cent of their airtime with programmes in the language of their national minority (community).

According to the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting, the following private media broadcast programmes in the languages of national minorities (communities) during the reporting period:

- LLC TRK TVA (Chernivtsi) for the Romanian national minority in the Chernivtsi region;
- PE "Pulse Cultural and Information Centre" (Berehovo) and PE "TRK DANIO" (Uzhhorod) for the Hungarian national minority in the Transcarpathian region;
- LLC Radio Information Centre "Nezalezhnist" (Lviv) for the Polish national minority in the Lviv region.

The Crimean Tatar language is broadcast by the Simferopol regional news and entertainment TV channel ATR85, which broadcasts from Kyiv due to the temporary occupation of the Crimean peninsula. The channel stopped broadcasting from 31 March 2015 to 17 June 2015 due to political pressure from the occupation authorities in Crimea. In 2022, the TV channel experienced systemic difficulties with satellite broadcasting. The media holding also includes the Meydan FM86 radio station and the Lale87 children's TV channel. Against the backdrop of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, there has been a deterioration in Crimean Tatar language broadcasting in Ukraine.

According to the information provided by the regional state (military) administrations, in the reporting period, publications in the languages of national minorities were published in the regions of Ukraine.

In Transcarpathian region, there were 4 newspapers in Hungarian. Three weekly newspapers Karpatalja, Karpatino and Naplopo were published in Berehove, and Karpati Igaz Szo was published three times a week in Uzhhorod.

In Ivano-Frankivsk region, the regional newspaper Kurier Galicejski was published twice a month in Ukrainian and Polish. According to the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional State Administration, the region also has CKPiDE radio, whose online radio

programmes are broadcast in Polish and Ukrainian, and the newspaper Kurier Stanisławowski.

In Lutsk (Volyn region), a biweekly newspaper Monitor Wołyński (in Polish/Ukrainian) is published, targeting residents of Volyn, Rivne and Ternopil regions.

In the Chernihiv region, the association of Jewish communities of the CJF Hesed Esther publishes the newspaper Tkhiya.

In the Vinnytsia region, the Christian Democratic Union of Poles in Vinnytsia publishes the Polish-language newspaper Slovo Polske.

In the Chernivtsi region, local publications in Romanian are the New Day (Monitorul de Hliboca), Gazeta de Herța and Monitorul Bucovinean. The Chernivtsi Regional Society of Polish Culture named after A. Mickiewicz published a monthly newspaper Gazeta Polska Bukowiny in Ukrainian and Polish. The regional weekly Va-Bank was also published in Ukrainian and German in Chernivtsi.

In the Lviv region, the following newspapers are published: the Shofar newspaper of the Lviv Society of Jewish Culture named after Sholem Aleichem (Yiddish/Ukrainian), the bulletin of the All-Ukrainian Jewish Charitable Foundation Hesed-Arieh (Ukrainian/Hebrew), and the Kurier Galicia (Polish/Ukrainian). The editorial office of Radio Kurier Galicyjski⁸⁸ publishes a biweekly and a magazine for children, records a radio programme broadcast on Polish radio Wnet⁸⁹ and Ivano-Frankivsk's Vezha⁹⁰ station, and produces news stories that are broadcast on Polonia TV.

In Kyiv, the Union of Poles of Ukraine resumed publishing the Zennik Kijowski newspaper in early 2024, which is published twice a month in Polish.

Comment to clause 4

In order to ensure the preservation of information rights of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, promotion of content on their culture at the national level, during the reporting period, the Department for Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities of the Public Broadcaster continued to coordinate comprehensive cooperation with regional editorial offices of the Public (Suspilnyi) Broadcaster and public associations of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine.

When creating projects in and for languages of national minorities (communities), the team of the Public Broadcaster is guided by the Concept on Broadcasting of National Minorities (Communities) of UA:PBC JSC (hereinafter - the Concept).

Implementation of the Concept takes into account the content of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Constitution of Ukraine, the Laws of Ukraine "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages", "On Public Media of Ukraine", "On Media", "On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", "On Indigenous Peoples", "On Ensuring Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language", as well as other regulatory legal acts governing relations in this area. One of the main tasks of the national Public broadcaster is to promote the development of languages and cultures of national minorities (communities).

The team of the Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Department consists of four editorial teams. The editorial office in Kyiv produces national projects of various formats and genres on diversity, equality and inclusion in Ukrainian with adaptation for various platforms of the Public Broadcaster (*for details, see the explanation to Article 6 of the Framework Convention*).

Regional editorial offices for national community broadcasting in Uzhhorod, Chernivtsi and Odesa create local social, educational, cultural and artistic programmes and news in the languages of national minorities (communities) (Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, German, Roma, Bulgarian and Gagauz), which are broadcast on the platforms:

- television - local TV channels (nationwide broadcast);
- radio - Ukrainian Radio (also broadcasts in the app);
- digital platforms YouTube, Instagram and Facebook - Suspilne Uzhhorod, Suspilne Chernivtsi, Suspilne Odesa.

The regional editorial office for broadcasting of national minorities (communities) in the **Transcarpathian region** broadcasts in Hungarian, German, Romanian, Slovak and Romanian. These are TV and radio projects adapted for social media. The projects are broadcast nationwide (with subtitles in Ukrainian) on local channels. Radio programmes or news can be listened to on Ukrainian Radio and in the suspilne.radio app. All projects are adapted for social media, in particular for the Facebook and Instagram pages of Suspilne Uzhhorod. The projects of the regional newsroom in Transcarpathian region, which were implemented in the period from 2021 to 2023 and continue to be broadcast in 2024:

In Romanian - "Acasă la români" ("At the Romanians' home"): number of episodes in 2021 - 31; number of episodes in 2022 - 6; number of episodes in 2023 - 12; radio: "Romanian Meridians: number of broadcasts in 2021 - 261; number of broadcasts in 2022 - 25; news (local): number of broadcasts in 2023 - 252.

In Hungarian The Word in Hungarian ("Magyar szó"): the number of episodes in 2021 - 21; in 2022 - 5; in 2023 - 11; interview series in the "Common Purpose"

project: the number of episodes in 2022 - 6; radio: radio news (local): number of broadcasts in 2021 - 261; number of broadcasts in 2022 - 48; number of broadcasts in 2023 - 252; radio news (international): number of broadcasts in 2023 - 252.

In German, "Mit eigenen Augen" ("With my own eyes"): number of episodes in 2021 - 42; number of episodes in 2022 - 8; number of episodes in 2023 - 11; radio: "Deutsche Zeitung": number of episodes in 2021 - 52; number of episodes in 2022 - 7. Romano Givipen in the *Roma language*: the number of issues in 2021 - 30; in 2022 - 6; the number of issues in 2023 - 9.

Television and digital *in Slovak*: "Slovak Views: number of episodes in 2021 - 22; number of episodes in 2022 - 5; radio: "Slovak Kaleidoscope": number of episodes in 2021 - 52; number of episodes in 2022 - 8; in 2023 - 252; radio news (international): number of episodes in 2023 - 252.

The regional office in **Chernivtsi region** broadcasts in Romanian for national minorities (communities) in the region and international audiences. These are TV and radio projects adapted for social media. The projects are broadcast nationwide (with subtitles in Ukrainian) on local channels. Radio programmes or news can be listened to on Ukrainian Radio and in the suspilne.radio app. All projects are adapted for social media, including the Facebook and Instagram pages of Suspilne Chernivtsi. The projects of the regional newsroom in Chernivtsi region, which were implemented in the period from 2021 to 2023 and continue to be broadcast in 2024:

In Romanian, it has TV and digital platforms:

"In Our Bukovyna": number of episodes in 2021 - 51; in 2022 - 8; social and educational interviews in the "Obiectiv comun" ("Common Goal") project: number of episodes in 2022 - 8; in 2023 - 16; news: number of episodes in 2021 - 235; in 2022 - 241; in 2023 - 260;

Radio Day - Dialogue of the Day: number of episodes in 2022 - 83; Radio: news (local): number of episodes in 2021 - 331; in 2022 - 188; in 2023 - 252; Dialogue of the Day: number of episodes in 2021 - 227; number of episodes in 2022 - 104; Library of Romanian Authors: number of episodes in 2021 - 16; number of episodes in 2022 - 6; Musical Chair: number of episodes in 2021 - 37; number of episodes in 2022 - 6; We are the Children of this Land: number of episodes in 2021 - 6; "From the Sources of Folk Beauty": number of episodes in 2021 - 6; "Sunday Shop": number of episodes in 2021 - 7; "Treasury": number of episodes in 2021 - 5; "Your Doctor": number of episodes in 2021 - 21; news (international): number of episodes in 2023 - 252; social and educational interviews: number of episodes in 2023 - 16.

At the end of 2023, the regional editorial office for national minority broadcasting in Chernivtsi region was joined by the editorial office of Radio Ukraine International, which broadcasts in Romanian on the radio platform. Using the transmitters and online broadcasting of Ukrainian Radio, the team creates a number of genre-specific

projects that can be listened to by residents of Romania and Moldova, as well as other Romanian-speaking populations around the world. The team works as a whole and creates such projects:

- daily news bulletins with a running time of 8 minutes. The number of episodes in 2023 - 252. The total duration of all newscasts is 37 hours;
- project "We are from Ukraine and we are defending European values";
- project "We are from Ukraine and we are defending European values - results of the week". The programme is released every Saturday. The duration of one episode is 20 minutes;
- Ukrainian Society project. It is published on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. The duration of one episode is 20 minutes;
- The Cultural Compass in Time of War project. It is published every first Sunday of the month. The duration of one episode is 20 minutes.

The regional office in **Odesa region** broadcasts in Bulgarian, Gagauz and Romanian. This includes the TV and digital project Voice of the Bulgarians and news in Gagauz on the radio. In addition, the team produces reports in Ukrainian about all communities in the region, including Moldovan and Romanian communities living in the villages of Odesa region. Radio programmes or news can be listened to on Ukrainian Radio and in the suspilne.radio app. All projects are adapted for social media, including the Facebook and Instagram pages of Suspilne Odesa. The projects of the regional newsroom in Odesa region that were implemented in the period from 2021 to 2023 and continue to be broadcast in 2024:

In Bulgarian, TV and digital platforms: reports in the project "Voice in Bulgarian, Voice of Bulgarians": number of episodes in 2021 - 46; in 2022 - 14; in 2023 - 11; radio: news (local): number of episodes in 2021 - 49; in 2022 - 8; in 2023 - 252; news (international): number of episodes in 2023 - 252.

Episodes in the *Gagauz language* in the Ana Tarife project: 14 number of episodes in 2021 - 42; in 2022 - 6; news (local): number of episodes in 2021 - 50; in 2022 - 6; in 2023 - 252.

The Public broadcaster also creates linear and non-linear multimedia projects about Crimea and Crimean Tatars in Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar. News about Crimea can be read on the website of Suspilne Novyny, and media projects about Crimea can be viewed on the official YouTube channel of Suspilne Crimea. Projects implemented between 2021 and 2023: "History of the Crimean Tatars" (6 interviews) - stories of Crimean Tatars about the deportation of 1944, returning from places of exile to Crimea in the Crimean Tatar language; "Topic of the Day" - a daily analytical programme about events in Crimea; news in Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar and other information and awareness programmes on Crimea and the indigenous Crimean Tatar people.

The Public Broadcaster's team conducted a number of studies of media consumption by representatives of national minorities (communities), based on the results of the studies, plans to focus on disseminating information in minority languages through digital platforms and is constantly looking for specialists who are fluent in the languages of national minorities (communities) and Ukrainian.

Legislation on publishing plays an important role in the realisation of the rights of national minorities (communities) in Ukraine. Part 3 of Article 5 of the Law of Ukraine "On Publishing" stipulates that the state policy of supporting cultures of national minorities in publishing is carried out through the relevant executive authorities with the involvement of national cultural societies, as well as the Ukrainian Book Institute within its powers. According to Article 6 of the Law, this provision is implemented through state support to publishing houses, publishing organisations, printing and book trade enterprises that produce or distribute small-circulation (up to 5,000 copies) publications in the languages of small national minorities (communities) by providing tax and fee exemptions.

The State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine informs about the publication of books in the languages of national minorities (communities) for the period from 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2023, the obligatory copies of which were delivered to the State Scientific Institution "Ivan Fedorov Book Chamber of Ukraine" in the following volumes:

- In 2021, 156 books were published in 11 languages: Bulgarian (3), Gagauz (2), Crimean Tatar (3), Lithuanian (1), Moldovan (10), German (28), New Greek (1), Polish (19), Romanian (57), Slovak (4), and Hungarian (28);
- In 2022, 39 books were published in 6 languages: Crimean Tatar (1), German (12), Polish (7), Romanian (10), Slovak (2), and Hungarian (7);
- in 2023, 97 books were published in 12 languages: Belarusian (1), Bulgarian (2), Gagauz (1), Estonian (2), Crimean Tatar (2), Moldovan (2), German (13), New Greek (1), Polish (25), Romanian (25), Serbian (1), Hungarian (22).

Article 10

1. The Parties undertake to recognise the right of every person belonging to a national minority to the free and unimpeded use of his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.
2. In areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities or where they constitute a significant part of the population, at the request of such persons and if such request meets real needs, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as

far as possible, conditions allowing the use of the language of the minority concerned in the communication of such persons with each other and with the administrative authorities.

3. The Parties undertake to guarantee to each person belonging to a national minority the right to be informed promptly, in a language he or she understands, of the grounds for his or her arrest, of the nature and reasons for any charges against him or her and of the right to defend himself or herself in that language, if necessary with the assistance of a free interpreter.

Comment to clause 1

The language rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) are guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine and the laws of Ukraine. In particular, Article 10 of the Basic Law stipulates that the free development, use and protection of languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine is guaranteed in Ukraine. The Constitution of Ukraine grants the status of the state language only to the Ukrainian language (part one of Article 10).

Articles 5 and 10 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulate that a person belonging to a national minority (community) has the right to free and unimpeded use of the language of his or her national minority in private and in public, in oral and written forms, within the limits not contrary to the law. Article 10 not only declares the right, but also defines the mechanisms for its implementation in various spheres of public life. In particular, it stipulates that public events (meetings, conferences, rallies, exhibitions, educational courses, seminars, trainings, discussions, forums, other public events) organised for persons belonging to national minorities (communities) may be held in the languages of the respective national minorities (communities). It also regulates the use of the language of a national minority (community):

- during cultural, artistic or entertainment events organised and conducted by persons belonging to a national minority (community);
- in the media established by national minorities (communities) in accordance with the law;
- in publishing activities and activities of bookstores and other institutions that, in accordance with the law, distribute books exclusively in the languages of national minorities (communities);
- in settlements traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities (communities), or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population (for more details, see the next clause).

The Law of Ukraine "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages" No. 802-IV stipulates that the provisions of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages apply to the languages of the following national minorities of Ukraine: Belarusian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Greek, Jewish, Crimean Tatar, Moldovan, German, Polish, Russian, Romanian, Slovak and Hungarian.

The Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" No. 2704-VIII, in Article 2, states that this Law regulates the functioning and use of the Ukrainian language as the state language in the spheres of public life defined by this Law throughout Ukraine and that the effect of this Law does not apply to the sphere of private communication and religious rites. The Law also stipulates that the procedure for the use of the Crimean Tatar language and other languages of indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine in the relevant areas of public life is determined by the law on the procedure for exercising the rights of indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine, taking into account the specifics defined by this Law.

Important for the exercise of the language rights of national minorities (communities) are the amendments made to Law No. 2704-VIII on 8 December 2023 by Law No. 3504-IX:

- to part one of Article 21 that the language of the educational process in educational institutions is the state language, and in classes (groups) with instruction in national minority languages that are official languages of the European Union, the right to use the language of the respective national minority in the educational process along with the state language is guaranteed;
- to Article 26 stating that the requirement for publishers of printed materials to publish in the state language at least 50 per cent of all titles of book publications published by them during the relevant calendar year does not apply to publishing materials published in the Crimean Tatar language, other languages of indigenous peoples or national minorities of Ukraine at the expense of the state and/or local budgets in accordance with the law on the procedure for exercising the rights of indigenous peoples, national minorities of Ukraine, as well as for publishing products published in national minority languages that are official languages of the European Union.

The Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" No. 889-VIII in its Article 4 stipulates that one of the principles of civil service is fluency in the state language and, if necessary, in a regional or national minority language, which is determined in accordance with the law. The law also guarantees the improvement of proficiency in the languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples during civil service.

Article 22 of the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations" No. 987-XII states that citizens and religious organisations have the right to acquire, possess and use religious literature in the language of their choice.

Comment to clause 2

Article 1 of Law No. 2827-IX sets out clear criteria for:

- the definition of "settlement traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to a national minority (community)" is a village, town or city where persons belonging to the relevant national minority (community), according to official state statistical information for the relevant periods, have been continuously residing for the last 100 years and constitute at least 10 per cent of the total population as of the time of collection or receipt of such information;
- the definition of "settlement where persons belonging to a national minority (community) constitute a significant part of the population" is a village, town or city where persons belonging to the relevant national minority (community), according to official state statistical information, constitute more than 15 per cent of the total population as of the time of collection or receipt of such information.

In accordance with Article 10(12) of Law No. 2827-IX, the procedure for determining the list and the list of settlements where persons belonging to national minorities (communities) traditionally reside or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population are approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

On 4 March 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 257 "On Approval of the Procedure for Determining the List of Settlements in which Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine Traditionally Reside or in which Such Persons Make up a Significant Part of the Population". In accordance with the approved procedure, the DESS, together with other state authorities, is working on the list of settlements. The main problems in its formation are the conduct of the All-Ukrainian Population Census in 2001, as well as the significant displacement of the population as a result of the full-scale military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

Paragraphs 7-11 of Article 10 of Law No. 2827-IX regulate the use of languages of national minorities (communities) in settlements traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities (communities) or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population:

- duplication of information for general information in the language of the national minority (community) (signs, pointers, signboards, notices, inscriptions and other publicly posted textual, visual and audio information, including official names on the signboards of local governments and municipal enterprises);

- on duplication of election campaign materials in the language of a national minority (community) during the presidential election, parliamentary election and local elections;
- on the distribution of internal and external advertising in the languages of the relevant national minorities (communities) with mandatory duplication in the state language;
- regarding communication with local executive authorities and local self-government bodies and their officials, the specifics of such relations using the language of national minorities (communities) are determined by a methodology approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

On 9 February 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 181 "On Approval of the Methodology for the Use of Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine in Settlements Traditionally Home to Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine or in Which Such Persons Make Up a Significant Part of the Population" (the "Methodology"). The document was developed as part of the reform to protect the rights of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine as part of the implementation of the European Commission's recommendations on the way to the start of EU membership negotiations.

The Methodology establishes uniform conditions and procedures for the use of languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine in those settlements where they traditionally live or where they constitute a significant part of the population. The document, in particular, defines the areas of public life in which languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine may be used alongside the state language by decision of a village, town or city council. This applies to the following issues:

- providing topographic information;
- writing official names on the plates (signboards) of local self-government bodies and municipal enterprises;
- communication with the authorities;
- provision of public services;
- medical care;
- dissemination of information for general information;
- provision of social services to elderly citizens and persons with disabilities.

The methodology stipulates that the use of the language of the respective national minority (community) of Ukraine in settlements is carried out on the basis of a decision of the respective village, town or city council, and the decision must specify:

- national minority (community) of Ukraine whose language is used in the territory of a village, town or city;

- language (languages) of the relevant national minority (community) of Ukraine, which is used on the territory of the village, town, city, provided that such language is codified. A codified language is a language for which standards of terminology, grammar, and spelling have been approved in Ukraine or in a foreign country;
- areas of public life in which the language of the relevant national minority (community) of Ukraine is used, in accordance with this Methodology;
- a source of funds to cover the costs of using the language of the respective national minority (community) of Ukraine in each sphere of public life, which is carried out at the expense of the State Budget of Ukraine under a separate budget programme, local budgets, as well as other sources not prohibited by law.

Comment to clause 3

The national legislation of Ukraine ensures the right of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples to use their native language in criminal, civil and administrative proceedings.

According to the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine (Article 29), criminal proceedings are conducted in the state language. The prosecution, the investigating judge and the court draw up procedural documents in the state language. At the same time, the suspect, accused, and witness have the right, among other things, to use their native language, to receive copies of procedural documents in their native or other language, and, if necessary, to use the services of an interpreter at the expense of the state. Thus, a person is notified of suspicion of committing a criminal offence in the state language or any other language that he or she has sufficient knowledge of to understand the essence of the suspicion of committing a criminal offence. The investigating judge, court, prosecutor, and investigator shall ensure that participants in criminal proceedings who do not speak the state language or do not speak it sufficiently have the right to testify, file petitions and complaints, and speak in court in their native or other language, if necessary, using the services of an interpreter in the manner prescribed by this Code.

Pursuant to part four of Article 376 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, court decisions by which the court concludes the trial on the merits are provided to the parties to the criminal proceedings or to the person in respect of whom the issue of compulsory educational or medical measures has been resolved, as well as to the representative of the legal entity in respect of which the proceedings are being conducted, in translation into their native or other language in which they are proficient. Translation of other procedural documents of criminal proceedings, the provision of copies of which is provided for by this Code, shall be carried out only at the request of the said persons.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 15 of the Code of Administrative Procedure of Ukraine, Article 9 of the Civil Procedure Code of Ukraine, and Article 10 of the Commercial Procedure Code of Ukraine, courts use the state language in court proceedings and guarantee the right of litigants to use their native language or a language they know in court. Litigants who do not speak the state language or have insufficient knowledge of the state language have the right to make statements, provide explanations, speak in court and file motions in their native language or a language they speak, using the services of an interpreter. An interpreter is allowed by a court ruling at the request of a party to the case or is appointed at the initiative of the court. The costs of the interpreter shall be reimbursed in accordance with the procedure established by law.

Article 11

1. The Parties undertake to recognise the right of each person belonging to a national minority to use his or her surname, patronymic and name in the language of the minority, as well as the right to have them officially recognised in accordance with the conditions provided for in their legal systems.
2. The Parties undertake to recognise the right of every person belonging to a national minority to publicly display signs, inscriptions and other private information in the language of his or her national minority.
3. In areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to a national minority or where they constitute a significant part of the population, the Parties shall endeavour, within the framework of their legal systems, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their particular situation, to use traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for general use also in the language of the minority concerned, if there is sufficient need for this.

Comment to clause 1

The national legislation of Ukraine ensures the right of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples to use their own name, patronymic and surname, taking into account the customs of the national minority.

Article 6, paragraph 3, of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that a citizen of Ukraine has the right to his or her own name, patronymic and surname, taking into account the customs of the national minority (community) to which he or she belongs. If, according to the customs of the national minority (community) to which the person belongs, the surname or patronymic are not components of the name, then only the components of the name shall be indicated in the identity documents confirming the citizenship of Ukraine, the special status of the person, based on the person's written

application, and the names of the father and mother shall be indicated in the birth certificate. It is also provided that citizens of Ukraine have the right to restore their national surname, name and patronymic in accordance with the established procedure. With regard to the issuance of identity documents, Article 40 of the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" stipulates that the surnames, names and patronymics of Ukrainian citizens are written in the state language in accordance with the rules of Ukrainian spelling, transcribed by transliteration using the letters of the corresponding alphabet in accordance with the sound in the state language and not translated into other languages. At the same time, an individual has the right to have his/her surname, name and patronymic transcribed in accordance with his/her national tradition.

With regard to the restoration of one's national surname, name and patronymic, Article 295 of the Civil Code of Ukraine provides that an individual who has reached the age of sixteen has the right to change his or her surname and/or name at his or her own discretion, and an individual who has reached the age of fourteen has the right to change his or her surname and/or name with the consent of legal representatives (usually parents).

The procedure for changing the name (surname, first name, patronymic) is regulated by Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine "On State Registration of Civil Status Acts" and the Procedure for Consideration of Applications for Changing the Name (Surname, First Name, Patronymic) of an Individual, approved by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 915 dated 11 July 2007.

Comment to clause 2

National legislation ensures the free use of national minority languages in private life. Article 10, paragraph 1, of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that a person belonging to a national minority (community) has the right to free and unimpeded use of the language of his or her national minority (community) in private and in public, in oral and written forms, within the limits not contrary to the law. The legislation on the functioning of Ukrainian as the state language does not apply to the sphere of private communication.

Article 32 of the Constitution of Ukraine stipulates that no one shall be subjected to interference with his or her private and family life, except in cases provided for by the Constitution of Ukraine. During the consideration of Case No. 1-9/2012 on the constitutional petition of Zhashkiv District Council of Cherkasy region regarding the official interpretation of the provisions of parts one and two of Article 32, parts two and three of Article 34 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on 20 January 2012 established that the provisions of part one of Article 32

and part three of Article 34 of the Constitution of Ukraine are systematically interrelated and provide for both the inadmissibility of violation of the human right to inviolability of private and family life and the exercise of the right to free assembly, storage, use and dissemination of information (Decision No. 2-rp/2012). Therefore, every person belonging to a national minority (community) has the right to publicly display signs, inscriptions and other private information in the language of their national minority.

Comment to clause 3

The methodology defines the procedure for using the languages of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine in the provision of topographic information as follows:

1) In settlements, it is allowed to duplicate names in the language of the respective national minority (community) of Ukraine on plates, signs, pointers of geographical objects, as well as squares, boulevards, streets, lanes, descents, passages, avenues, squares, embankments, bridges and other objects of toponymy of settlements intended for public use. The duplicated name of a place name is placed to the right or below its name in the state language. The font of the duplicated name should not be visually larger than the font of the name in the state language.

2) If necessary, on the basis of agreements with other states, taking into account the specific situation of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, instead of duplication, along with the name in the state language, it is allowed to use traditional correct forms of writing the names of geographical objects, squares, boulevards, streets, lanes, descents, passages, avenues, squares, embankments, bridges, and other toponymic objects in the language of the respective national minority (community) of Ukraine.

3) The list of place names and the correct spelling of their names, including the traditional correct forms of spelling, in the language of the respective national minority (community) of Ukraine shall be determined by the local self-government body following public hearings, taking into account the requirements of the legislation on the prohibition of propaganda of the communist and national socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes, as well as the requirements of the legislation on the prohibition of the production, distribution, public use of symbols of Russian imperial policy.

Article 12

1. The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and scientific research to promote the study of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and majorities.

2. In this regard, the Parties shall, in particular, provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to teaching aids and facilitate contacts between students and teachers belonging to different communities.
3. The Parties undertake to create equal opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to access education at all levels.

Comment to clause 1

Education in the language of an indigenous people or national minority of Ukraine alongside the state language is a right exercised in separate classes (groups) with instruction in the respective language, which are opened in accordance with the requirements of Article 12 of the Law of Ukraine "On Complete General Secondary Education". In accordance with part one of Article 12 of the Law, in order to properly organise the educational process in general secondary education institutions, classes and/or groups are formed, including special, inclusive, distance, evening, and language of instruction classes in the language of an indigenous people or national minority of Ukraine along with the state language.

The study of the culture, history, language and religion of national minorities is carried out as part of the curricula of educational institutions of all levels in Ukraine. Thus, the study of the topic "Ethnic composition of the population" (Geography, grade 8) addresses the issue of the national composition of the population of Ukraine. Educational programmes on the history of Ukraine include the study of topics on the history of the Crimean Tatar people.

In addition, the Ukrainian education system is introducing an integrated course on the Culture of Neighbourliness. The course curriculum takes into account the country's ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural, historical and geographical identity at the regional and national levels. The programmes cover the following topics: "A Child in the Diversity of Cultures", "History of People and Monuments of the Region", "Fiction", "Learning to Communicate", etc. The objectives of the course are to develop children's interest in communicating with people belonging to different national minorities living in the region; to develop the ability to participate in various communication formats organised by adults (in person, remotely - mail, Skype, chats, postcards, etc.); to foster respect for the Ukrainian language as the state language, for the different languages of people living in the region as part of their culture.

Since 2015, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MES of Ukraine) has been organising All-Ukrainian student competitions in languages and literatures of national minorities. Thus, the IV (final) stage of the All-Ukrainian Student Olympiads in Languages and Literatures of National Minorities of Ukraine was held in Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Polish, New Greek, Hebrew and Jewish literature.

In the 2023/2024 academic year, the All-Ukrainian Student Olympiad in Slovak Language and Literature will be held for the first time at the initiative of the Department of Education, Youth and Sports of the Transkarpatia Regional State Administration and with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

In accordance with the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of 08 November 2016 No. 95 "On Conducting Experimental Work on the Basis of Preschool and Secondary Educational Institutions of Transkarpatia, Odesa and Chernivtsi Regions", an all-Ukrainian experiment on the topic "Formation of Multilingualism of Children and Students: Progressive European Ideas in the Ukrainian Context" was conducted from 2016 to 2021. The purpose of the experiment was to test and experimentally verify the effectiveness of new educational approaches, when the main requirements for preschoolers and students of general secondary education institutions were the ability to effectively use several languages, including their mother tongue, the willingness to use the acquired knowledge in the process of further education and full life in a multilingual and culturally diverse society, as well as the need to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of representatives of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine. The novelty of the idea was to develop the multilingualism of children and pupils in the process of learning several languages and using them as a means of mastering the content of subjects, as well as developing their ability to communicate interculturally using several languages (mother tongue, state language and foreign language). Particular attention was paid to the development of the ability to use the state language, provided that the native national language is preserved and developed. The results of the experiment are summarised in the manual "Successful Practices of Multilingual Education in Ukraine", prepared by Ukrainian specialists and international experts with the support of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. The manual is freely available at the following link: <https://znayshov.com/FR/10784/476.pdf>

In accordance with the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated 29 September 2021 No. 1033, the innovative educational project "European Integrated Model of Education in a School with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction" is being implemented. The project aims to improve the quality of teaching Ukrainian language, mathematics, and other subjects with the widespread use of digital technologies and digitalisation of the educational environment.

In May 2022, the number of institutions participating in the project was increased from 6 to 81 (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of 29 August 2022 No. 770).

In April - June 2023, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogical Society in cooperation with the Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute named after Ferenc Rákóczi II measured the competence of students in grades 5 and 8 in 4 subjects: Ukrainian, English, Hungarian and mathematics. The purpose of the study was to measure students' competence in these subjects. The study involved 1371 students from 27 general secondary education institutions in Transcarpathia region (rural and urban), and the results showed positive dynamics.

The process of developing a general concept of bilingual education in classes (groups) with the language of instruction of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, identifying key implementers and partners to create a regulatory framework for the development of bilingual textbooks and providing them to general secondary education institutions with the language of instruction of national minorities (communities) is underway.

Comment to clause 2

Article 11 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that the state promotes the training and advanced training of pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical staff in the languages of national minorities (communities). It also stipulates that the state guarantees free provision of textbooks (including electronic ones) and manuals to students of complete general secondary education belonging to national minorities (communities) and pedagogical staff in accordance with the procedure established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

In 2023, 33 higher and vocational higher education institutions provided information on meeting the needs of students in learning languages and teaching in languages of national minorities. The largest number of teaching and research staff teach German. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, in the period from 2020 to 2024, bachelors were trained in the language and literature of national minorities/indigenous peoples: Crimean Tatar (44), Belarusian (8), Bulgarian (23), Polish (535), Russian (358), Serbian (8), Slovak (35), Czech (75), Croatian (10), Slovenian (5), German (1336), Romanian (663), Hebrew (24), Hungarian (21), and New Greek (53).

Masters have been trained in the following languages: Crimean Tatar (27), Belarusian (6), Bulgarian (11), Polish (251), Russian (479), Serbian (13), Slovak (18), Czech (50), Croatian (13), Slovenian (4), German (829), Romanian (6), Hebrew (5), and New Greek (30).

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine provides national minorities (communities) with textbooks on the language and literature of the respective national minorities (communities), as well as translated textbooks. Based on the results of the

competitive selection of textbooks and manuals for students of complete general secondary education and pedagogical staff, 54 titles of original and translated textbooks in the languages of national minorities (communities) were published in 2023, with a total circulation of 48877 copies worth UAH 30825.1 thousand. The Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2023" on Financial Support for the Security and Defence Sector and Addressing Priority Issues", adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 6 October 2023, allocated additional funds to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in the total amount of UAH 552.8 million for the publication and purchase of textbooks for 5th and 6th grade students. In 2024, 47 titles of textbooks for the 7th grade are planned to be printed with a total print run of 54556 textbooks.

Comment to clause 3

The educational rights of representatives of indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine are ensured in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine, the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (Article 7), the Law of Ukraine "On Preschool Education" (Article 10), the Law of Ukraine "On Complete General Secondary Education" (Article 5), the Law of Ukraine "On Out-of-School Education" (Article 7), the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language" (Articles 21, 22), the Law of Ukraine "On Ratification of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities", the Law of Ukraine "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages", international treaties ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and taking into account the OSCE High Commissioner for Human Rights recommendations on the rights of national minorities to education.

The Government of Ukraine is implementing reforms aimed at achieving European standards in all areas of public life. Reforming the education system is one of the key elements of this process. One of the key objectives of the education reform is to ensure equal opportunities for all Ukrainian citizens to exercise their constitutional right to quality education. The Law of Ukraine "On Education" of 5 September 2017 No. 2145-VIII laid down the legislative framework for ensuring qualitatively new conditions for obtaining education in Ukraine. The Law "On Complete General Secondary Education" pays special attention to the issue of access to complete general secondary education, including the availability of a sufficient number of educational institutions that provide free complete general secondary education, providing students with support in the educational process at the expense of the state and local budgets in the most accessible educational institution close to their place of residence.

Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine to study in their

native language or to learn their native language at different levels of education. The right to study the language of the respective indigenous people or national minority in municipal general secondary education institutions or through national cultural societies is guaranteed.

Educational institutions, in accordance with the educational programme, may introduce the teaching of one or more disciplines in two or more languages - the state language, English, other official languages of the European Union.

In the context of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine is taking measures to ensure that children who were forced to change their place of residence, including representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, continue their education in general secondary education institutions of Ukraine. The issue is regulated by the relevant order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated 28 March 2022 No. 274 "On some issues of organising general secondary education and the educational process under martial law in Ukraine". Other peculiarities of the organisation of the educational process under martial law are defined by: Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 290 of 1 April 2022 (in the academic year 2022/2023); Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 563 of 15 May 2023 (in the academic year 2023/2024).

In particular, students who were forced to go abroad as a result of Russian aggression:

- 1) may continue to study at the educational institution where he/she studied before going abroad on a distance learning basis (provided that the educational institution provides such an educational service);
- 2) if the educational institution where the child studied before going abroad cannot provide distance learning for the child, they can continue their education according to the state educational standards of Ukraine in other educational institutions of Ukraine of state, communal or private ownership that provide online learning;
- 3) students can continue their education in the family (home) form both in the educational institution where they studied before moving abroad and in another educational institution in Ukraine;
- 4) students may be enrolled in the State Lyceum "International Ukrainian School", which provides external education.
- 5) students may attend classes conducted in person (for example, on weekends) according to state standards and educational programmes of Ukraine, organised on the initiative of Ukrainian CSOs in certain countries with the assistance of the educational authorities of these countries and local authorities.

Students - internally displaced persons who have moved to places of temporary residence in the territory controlled by Ukraine may:

1) continue studying at the educational institution where he/she studied before the military aggression (if such an institution continues to provide educational services remotely);

2) to be enrolled in an educational institution at the place of temporary residence and study, depending on the security situation, either in an institutional or individual form of education (if the institution provides such services).

The issue of continuing education under Ukrainian programmes with the subsequent receipt of a Ukrainian educational document has also been resolved for students in the temporarily occupied territory.

Students in distance learning classes are taught in accordance with the standard educational programme for children who left Ukraine as a result of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation and are studying simultaneously in educational institutions of the host country and Ukraine, approved by Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1014 of 18 August 2023.

Article 13

1. Within the framework of their educational systems, the Parties shall recognise the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and manage their own private educational and training institutions.

2. The exercise of this right shall not impose any financial obligations on the Parties.

Comment to clause 1

In accordance with Article 22 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education", educational institutions of all forms of ownership have equal rights and obligations in conducting educational activities in accordance with the law.

Article 11 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that private educational institutions that provide full general secondary education at the expense of individuals and/or legal entities, including those founded by national cultural societies and representatives of national minorities (communities), have the right to freely choose the language of the educational process (except for educational institutions that receive public funds) and are obliged to ensure that students master the state language in accordance with state standards.

This position is also reflected in Article 5 of the Law of Ukraine "On Complete General Secondary Education": "Private educational institutions have the right to freely choose the language of the educational process (except for educational institutions that receive public funds) and are obliged to ensure that students master the state language in accordance with state standards. On the basis of the curriculum

defined in the educational programme of the educational institution, the pedagogical council shall draw up and its head shall approve an annual curriculum (one or more), which specifies the list of subjects (integrated courses), compulsory for study, elective (at the choice of students) educational components, in particular, subjects, courses, integrated courses, and the number of hours of study per week (and/or the number of hours per academic year). The educational programmes of private and corporate educational institutions may contain (at the expense of their own revenues) an increased number of academic subjects (integrated courses) and/or academic hours compared to the relevant standard educational programmes, subject to compliance with the requirements of sanitary legislation."

According to the information provided by the regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations, in 2023, there were private general education institutions where teaching was conducted in the languages of national minorities (communities): German (1), Bulgarian (1), Romanian (16), Hungarian (6), Russian (8). Institutions where the language of a national minority (community) was taught as a separate subject: German (435), Polish (35), Hebrew (11), Russian (6).

In 2023, the number of Sunday schools established by public associations of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine totalled 106 institutions with 3,823 pupils.

The Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" defines the basic legal, organisational and financial principles of the higher education system, creates conditions for strengthening cooperation between government agencies and businesses and higher education institutions on the principles of autonomy of higher education institutions, combining education with science and production in order to prepare competitive human capital for the country's high-tech and innovative development, self-realisation of the individual, and meeting the needs of society, the labour market and the state for qualified specialists. In accordance with the provisions of Article 27 of the Law, higher education institutions of state, municipal and private ownership have equal rights in conducting educational, scientific and other activities.

In accordance with Law No. 3504-IX, Article 48 of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" shall be supplemented with part four as follows: "Higher education institutions of private ownership have the right to freely choose the language of instruction, which is an official language of the European Union (teaching one, several or all disciplines, performing individual tasks and conducting control measures), while ensuring that persons studying in such institutions study the state language as a separate discipline.

The Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute named after Ferenc Rákóczi II is a non-governmental higher education institution of Ukraine, III accreditation level, founded by the Charitable Foundation of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogical Institute in Berehove, Transcarpathian region. The Institute has been operating since 1996 under licences issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Currently, it provides full-time and part-time training at the level of "junior specialist", "bachelor", "master", as well as preparatory and training courses, and conducts training in non-accredited specialities in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education".

The languages of instruction at the Institute are Ukrainian, Hungarian and English. The free choice of the language of instruction is in line with clause 3 of Article 48 of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education", which provides that private higher education institutions of Ukraine have the right to freely choose the language of instruction, while ensuring that students studying in such institutions study the state language as a separate discipline. By the decision of the Academic Council of the Institute, an in-depth study of the state language was introduced in accordance with the curriculum. Students study Ukrainian for 7 semesters. All students have an additional opportunity to study Ukrainian, as well as English and German, at courses organised by the Institute and free of charge for students and teachers. In addition, students whose native language is Ukrainian have the opportunity to study Hungarian as an optional foreign language.

The Educational and Information Centre of the Germans of Ukraine "BIZ-Ukraine" at the Council of Germans of Ukraine was established to support the German minority and all those interested in German culture in Ukraine. The main activity of the BIZ is to provide quality educational and information services. The BIZ in Ukraine is funded by the German government. The Centre has organised German language courses at most CSOs of the German national minority in all regions of Ukraine. The Centre develops methodological guidelines, publishes methodological literature and holds regular training seminars for course leaders. The seminars are also attended by German language teachers working in state and municipal educational institutions.

Article 14

1. The Parties undertake to recognise the right of every person belonging to a national minority to learn the language of his or her minority.
2. In areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities or where they constitute a significant part of the population, the Parties shall endeavour, where reasonably necessary, to provide, as far as possible and within the framework of their educational systems, adequate facilities for the teaching of the language of the

minority concerned or for study in that language to persons belonging to those minorities.

3. Clause 2 of this Article shall apply without prejudice to the study or teaching of the official language.

Comment to clause 1

Article 53 of the Constitution of Ukraine stipulates that citizens belonging to national minorities are guaranteed by law the right to study in their native language or to learn their native language in state and municipal educational institutions or through national cultural societies.

Law of Ukraine No. 3504-IX "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Taking into Account the Expert Opinion of the Council of Europe and its Bodies on the Rights of National Minorities (Communities) in Certain Areas" amended the Laws of Ukraine "On Education", "On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language", "On Complete General Secondary Education" regarding the use of national minority languages, which are official languages of the European Union, in the educational process. The relevant amendments provide for:

1) "In classes (groups) with instruction in national minority languages that are official languages of the European Union, the right to use the language of the respective national minority in the educational process alongside the state language is guaranteed" (Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education").

2) "Persons belonging to national minorities of Ukraine, whose languages are official languages of the European Union, and who started receiving general secondary education before 1 September 2018 in the language of the respective national minority of Ukraine, until the completion of full general secondary education have the right to continue receiving such education in accordance with the rules in force before the entry into force of this Law" (subclause 19 of clause 3 of Section XII of the Law of Ukraine "On Education").

3) "Persons belonging to national minorities of Ukraine whose languages are official languages of the European Union and who exercise the right to study in the respective languages in state, municipal or corporate educational institutions may receive: basic secondary education in the respective languages of national minorities, with the exception of subjects (integrated courses) related to the study of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian literature and history of Ukraine, which are taught in the state language; specialised secondary education in the respective languages of national minorities, except for academic subjects (integrated courses) related to the study of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian literature, history of Ukraine and defence of Ukraine, which are taught in the state language. The list of subjects (integrated courses) to be taught in the state language in classes (groups) with instruction in

national minority languages that are official languages of the European Union may be expanded by decision of the educational institution. Persons belonging to other national minorities of Ukraine shall receive basic and specialised secondary education in the state language in the amount of not less than 80 per cent of the annual amount of study time in state, municipal or corporate educational institutions. The list of subjects (integrated courses) taught in the state language and the language of a national minority is determined by the educational programme of the educational institution in accordance with the requirements of state standards and taking into account the peculiarities of the language environment and the provisions of paragraphs two to four of this part" (Article 5, clause 6, of the Law of Ukraine "On Complete General Secondary Education").

Pursuant to the recommendations of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine developed and approved the Roadmap for Creating Conditions for Improving the Quality of Education in the State Language and Languages of Indigenous Peoples and National Minorities (Communities) in General Secondary Education Institutions of Ukraine for 2023-2027 (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 178 of 14 February 2024) (hereinafter - the Roadmap). On 1 March 2024, with the assistance of the Council of Europe and public associations of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, a roundtable discussion was held to present the Roadmap. The full version of the Roadmap is available here: https://osvita.ua/legislation/Ser_osv/91467/

The Roadmap aims to promote the creation of conditions for improving the quality of education in the state language and education in (or study of) languages of indigenous peoples and national minorities/communities in educational institutions in accordance with the Ukrainian legislative and regulatory framework in the field of education. Accordingly, the main tasks of the national language and educational policy of Ukraine at the current stage of its development are to strengthen the foundations of the state language, recognise it as an important factor in the formation of national and civic identity; promote the development of the native language of representatives of indigenous peoples and national minorities (communities), ensure its active role in the educational process in order to preserve the ethno-cultural identity of students; support for cultural diversity as a valuable resource of the state, development of tolerance and mutual respect in interethnic communication; meeting the cultural and educational needs of national communities, taking into account the priorities of Ukraine's social and political development.

The State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034 identifies the provision of educational rights as a priority, in

particular, the planned task No. 3 "Ensuring support and development of education at various levels in the languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in accordance with the law", which includes 9 measures to support and develop education at various levels in the languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine and task No. 4 'Ensuring the linguistic rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, supporting the preservation of languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in accordance with the law', which includes 16 measures, including measures to develop a draft Strategy for the preservation and development of endangered languages (Urum, Rumean, Karaite, Krymchak and others).

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 23 February 2022 No. 224-p approved the operational plan for the implementation of the Crimean Tatar Language Development Strategy for 2022-2032. The goal of the Strategy is to create regulatory, institutional, organisational and other conditions for the restoration, preservation and development of the Crimean Tatar language, expanding the scope of its use, exercising the language rights of Crimean Tatar speakers, and raising the prestige of the indigenous language as a means of communication.

According to the education authorities of the regional state (military) administrations, in 2023, there were 205 general secondary education institutions (municipal and private; hereinafter - GSEI) with classes taught in the languages of indigenous peoples and national minorities (communities) alongside the state language, with 35,776 students enrolled. 70 GSEIs with classes taught in Ukrainian and other languages of national minorities. Of these: 17 GSEIs with Ukrainian and Romanian languages (Transcarpathia and Chernivtsi regions); 3 GSEIs with Ukrainian and Polish languages (Khmelnyskyi and Lviv regions); 4 GSEIs with Ukrainian and Russian languages (Dnipro (1), Kharkiv (3)); 1 GSEI with Ukrainian and Slovak languages (Transcarpathia region); 27 GSEIs with Ukrainian and Hungarian languages (Transcarpathia region). 135 GSEIs with classes with only one language of instruction, including: 3 GSEIs with Polish (Lviv region); 4 GSEIs with Russian (Dnipro (3), Odesa (1)); 59 GSEIs with Romanian (Transcarpathia, Chernivtsi regions); 69 GSEIs with Hungarian (Transcarpathia region); 1 GSEI with German (Kyiv).

In the Odesa region, in the 2023/2024 academic year, classes were formed in 17 general secondary schools in accordance with requests for the provision of quality educational services, taking into account the choice of language of instruction of students. These institutions conduct the educational process in two languages, which is provided for by a number of legislative acts in the field of education and the free

choice of participants in the educational process, namely: Ukrainian and Romanian (16 institutions), Ukrainian and Bulgarian (1 institution).

Comment to clause 2

A network of educational institutions with classes (groups) with education in the Hungarian language has been formed in Transcarpathia region. In Berehove, Mukachevo, Rakhiv, Tyachiv, Uzhhorod, Khust districts of the region, there are educational institutions with classes (groups) with instruction in Hungarian and study of the Hungarian language.

Out of 604 preschool education institutions, 108 have at least one group with Hungarian as the language of instruction. A total of 207 groups are organised for 3,327 children of the Hungarian national minority (community).

In the academic year 2022/2023, there were 96 general secondary schools with 15,953 students studying in Hungarian, including 710 in six private lyceums. In 69 educational institutions, the educational process was carried out in Hungarian, with 715 classes for 11,913 students. In 27 institutions, 271 classes with Hungarian as the language of instruction were operating alongside classes with instruction in the state language, with 4,040 students enrolled. In 19 general secondary education institutions, 2,258 students studied Hungarian as a second foreign language, and 481 students studied it as an optional subject.

The network of educational institutions with classes (groups) with education, training in Romanian or studying it is formed in Transcarpathia, Chernivtsi and Odesa regions. In these regions, there are 64 schools with Romanian-language classes, where 3,093 children are educated in Romanian. There are also 93 general secondary schools with Romanian-language classes, where 15,487 pupils study in Romanian. In addition, 2,606 pupils in 18 general secondary schools in Chernivtsi region study Romanian as an independent subject.

There is a network of educational institutions with classes (groups) with education in the Slovak language in Transcarpathia region. In the city of Uzhhorod is home to 2.5 thousand Slovaks, and there is one pre-school education institution to meet the educational needs of the Slovak national minority, where 22 children are brought up in their native language. The basic school providing complete general secondary education is Uzhhorod Lyceum No. 4 with 358 students, which has three levels of education. At the first level (primary school), classes are taught in Slovak, and at the other two levels - in Ukrainian and Slovak. In addition, 14 secondary schools in Transcarpathia region teach Slovak as an independent subject.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, there is one institution on the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government where the Crimean Tatar language is taught as an independent subject - the private institution "Crimean Tatar Lyceum "Birlik Skul" in Kyiv region. Five classes study the Crimean Tatar language as an academic subject: Grade 5 - 7 students; Grade 6 - 4 students; Grade 7 - 10 students; Grade 8 - 6 students; Grade 9 - 10 students. As part of elective courses or in clubs, 188 pupils study the Crimean Tatar language.

As part of the implementation of the Crimean Tatar Language Development Strategy, the National Corpus of the Crimean Tatar Language was created and presented on 23 November 2023. This is an electronic array of texts that allows researching the Crimean Tatar language as a database. The platform will serve as an open database of educational, scientific and other materials in the Crimean Tatar language. The corpus allows analysing a large amount of language materials in a few clicks. For example, the service can process an array of 20,000 pages of texts in a matter of seconds. The project lasted a year and brought together about 30 participants from different parts of Ukraine and the world. Over the course of the year, more than 900 materials were analysed, including fiction and non-fiction, periodicals, etc.

Article 15

The Parties shall create the necessary conditions for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those concerning them.

Comment to Article 15

Article 9 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that persons belonging to national minorities (communities) have the right to participate in elections and referendums, to freely elect and be elected to state and local self-government bodies, have equal access to civil service and service in local self-government bodies, and the right to equal participation in the economic and social life of the country, including in matters related to the preservation and promotion of the culture, traditions and identity of the national minority (community) to which they belong. Part two of this Article stipulates that the state shall create the necessary conditions for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) in social and economic life, as well as in the management of public affairs.

Law No. 2827-IX defines inclusive involvement of persons belonging to national minorities, including through their public associations, in the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) at all levels of government as one of the principles on which state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) is based (Article 13, clause 5, part 2).

Part two of Article 15 of Law No. 2827-IX contains a direct prescription that the central executive body responsible for the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities), in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Central Executive Bodies", shall establish an advisory body, which shall include representatives of public associations of national minorities (communities), as well as, if necessary, other permanent or temporary advisory and consultative bodies.

On 2 October 2023, in accordance with part two of Article 15 of Law No. 2827-IX, the DESS issued Order No. N-86/12 "Issues of the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", registered by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 22 November 2023 under No. 2017/41073, effective from 29 December 2023.

On 21 May 2024, the DESS issued an order "On Approval of the Personnel of the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine", which launched the activities of a new advisory body for the representation of public associations of national minorities (communities), as provided for by Law No. 2827-IX. The Council includes 18 representatives of public associations of national minorities (communities), who were selected through an open competition held by the DESS in accordance with the Regulation on the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine.

On 31 May 2024, the first organisational meeting of the Council was held to elect its management team: the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary of the Council, as well as to discuss the initial action plan. The Council, in accordance with its tasks, studies and analyses the state of ensuring the realisation and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, the causes of national problems of preserving and developing the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of Ukraine.

In accordance with subclause 4 of clause 2 of Annex 2 "Tasks and Measures" to the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 26 September 2023 No. 850-r, it is planned to hold an annual Forum of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine as an information platform for discussing topical issues in the field of interethnic relations and ensuring the exercise of the rights of representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine with all stakeholders.

The first all-Ukrainian Forum of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine, dedicated to the implementation of reforms to improve Ukrainian legislation in line with European legislation in the field of ethnic policy and ensuring the rights of national minorities (communities) in times of war, was held in Kyiv on 7 June 2024. The Forum participants adopted a final document in which they identified key priorities for ensuring the rights and protecting the legitimate interests of national minorities in Ukraine. The document is published on the website of the DESS, available at: <https://dess.gov.ua/pidsumkovyy-dokument-forumu-natsionalnykh-menshyn-v-ukraini/>.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine is implementing measures to ensure the effective work of the advisory body - the Council of Representatives of Public Associations of Indigenous Peoples and National Minorities of Ukraine under the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, established in accordance with the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 606 of 7 June 2018. The purpose of the Council is to promote the creation of effective organisational and legal conditions for indigenous peoples and national minorities (communities) to exercise their constitutional right to education in their native language, to learn their native language, to learn the state language, to take into account public opinion in the process of preparing decisions of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and to maintain a constant dialogue with the public. The Council consists of 41 representatives of public associations of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine. The Council develops proposals for drafts of the state educational policy on ensuring the rights of national minorities and indigenous peoples in the educational sphere, as well as carries out expert examination and monitoring of the implementation of relevant decisions. The Council also performs a communication function in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and public associations of national minorities and indigenous peoples in the process of developing state policy in the field of education.

Article 18 of Law No. 2827-IX stipulates that local state administrations, local self-government bodies, and their officials, at the initiative of public associations of national minorities, may establish advisory, consultative, and other auxiliary bodies, which include representatives of public associations of national minorities (communities), to take into account the interests and exercise of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) provided for by law when addressing issues within their competence. Part two of this Article stipulates that draft decisions of local state administrations, local self-government bodies, and their officials on issues related to the exercise of the rights and freedoms

of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) provided for by this Law shall be submitted for discussion by advisory bodies on national minorities (communities), if established.

Proposals and remarks of advisory bodies on national minorities (communities) are of a recommendatory nature and are mandatory for consideration by the relevant authorities and officials. Local state administrations, local self-government bodies and their officials are obliged to inform the relevant advisory bodies on national minorities (communities) about the results of consideration of the submitted proposals within ten days from the date of their receipt.

According to the reports of the regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations, the Councils of representatives of national minority CSOs were established at 17 regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations, in Odesa and Ivano-Frankivsk regions such Councils were established at the departments (offices) of culture of the regional state administration, in Vinnytsia region it was established as a public organisation: "Council of National Societies of Vinnytsia Region". In other regions, representatives of national minority associations are members of the Public Councils at regional state administrations. Regional state (military) administrations regularly consult with representatives of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples on issues related to interethnic relations.

With regard to other forms of involvement of persons belonging to national minorities in decision-making processes, it should be noted that, in accordance with clause 1 of §42 of the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, approved by Resolution No. 950 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 18 July 2007, the developer of a draft law or draft regulatory act of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine must organise a public discussion of those drafts that are of important public importance and relate to the rights and obligations of citizens. In the reporting period, DESS systematically organised consultation meetings with representatives of civil society organisations of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine to discuss draft legislation and regulations.

In 2023, consultations were held to discuss proposals for the preparation of the Concept of the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity", and 16 meetings were held with representatives of the following national minorities between 16 January and 3 April: Romanian, Hungarian, Moldovan, Polish, Bulgarian, German, Slovak, Czech, Lithuanian and Estonian, Jewish, Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Gagauz, Roma and representatives of the Crimean Tatar, Karaite and Krymchak indigenous peoples.

On 8 May 2023, consultations with representatives of national minority CSOs were held at the Government House under the chairmanship of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, with the participation of the Head of the DESS, to develop proposals for the draft State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity".

On 22 May 2023, DESS held a consultation meeting to discuss the draft Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the period up to 2030 for 2024-2025. The meeting was attended by 26 Roma activists who made more than 30 suggestions and comments on the draft.

On 8 June 2023, the DESS held a consultation meeting to discuss the draft Procedure for the Establishment and Functioning of the Centre for National Minorities (Communities) developed pursuant to the provisions of part one of Article 19 of Law No. 2827-IX. 44 representatives of national minority CSOs and the expert community attended the meeting. Representatives of the public sector made 16 proposals to improve the draft order.

From 20 August to 3 September 2023, DESS organised a public discussion of the draft State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034. The public discussion was held in two formats:

- 1) the materials were published on the official website of the DESS and all interested parties could submit comments and suggestions to the draft in writing;
- 2) From 28 to 31 August 2023, DESS held online meetings of eight thematic working groups. The working groups brought together interested representatives of national minority and indigenous peoples' CSOs, government agencies and representatives of the expert community. The online meetings of the thematic groups were highly participatory, with 30 to 46 participants attending the meetings. The meeting of the first thematic group was opened by the First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The discussion resulted in 25 oral and written proposals to the draft Programme.

On 7 September 2023, the DESS held an online consultation meeting to discuss the draft Regulation on the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine. The meeting was attended by 42 representatives of national minority CSOs and the expert community.

On 29 September 2023, the DESS held an online consultation meeting to discuss the draft resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of the Methodology for the Use of Languages of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine in Settlements Traditionally Home to Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine or in Which Such Persons Make Up a

Significant Part of the Population". The meeting was attended by 38 representatives of national minority CSOs.

On 24 November 2023, at a consultation meeting of the Prime Minister of Ukraine with representatives of the Government, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Office of the President of Ukraine and representatives of national minorities, the draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Taking into Account the Expert Opinion of the Council of Europe and its Bodies on the Rights of National Minorities (Communities) in Certain Areas" was discussed. The meeting was attended by 29 representatives of national minorities (communities).

The national electoral legislation does not contain discriminatory provisions on ethnic/racial grounds. Citizens of Ukraine from among persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples are elected to electoral bodies of state power at all levels on an equal basis. (For more details, see explanations to Article 4, clause 2). Such principles are also reflected in other legislative acts, in particular, Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" defines the principles of civil service, including: ensuring equal access to civil service, prohibition of all forms and manifestations of discrimination, absence of unreasonable restrictions or granting unreasonable advantages to certain categories of citizens when entering and performing civil service. Citizens of Ukraine who are representatives of national minorities (communities) have equal rights to enter the civil service and to hold political office.

In places where ethnic communities are compactly populated, persons belonging to national minorities and indigenous peoples or speaking their languages are represented at the level of regional and district and local councils, and work in state administrations and local self-government bodies.

On 22 December 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 1197-r "On Approval of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period up to 2030 for 2024-2025" (hereinafter - the Action Plan). The document envisages the development and implementation of regional action plans, taking into account the specifics of the situation, needs and ethno-cultural characteristics of persons belonging to the Roma national minority (community). The document also introduces the practice of reporting by the responsible public authority for the implementation of the Action Plan on a systematic basis.

The Action Plan envisages ensuring equal rights and opportunities for Roma in all spheres of public life, in particular in education, healthcare, housing and communal services, labour and employment, social sphere, culture and art. The Action Plan includes 62 measures for the implementation of 23 tasks in various spheres of public

life related to the process of Roma integration into the public life of the country, aimed at achieving the 8 strategic goals defined by the Strategy, the implementers of 32 items are regional and Kyiv city state (military) administrations. Public activists - representatives of the Roma national minority (community) - were actively involved in the preparation of the Action Plan. From 1 to 14 May 2023, a public discussion of the draft Action Plan was held, written proposals for the draft were submitted by the International Charitable Organisation "Roma Women's Fund "Chiricli" and the Transcarpathian Regional Charitable Foundation "Blago", other organisations focused their efforts on discussing the draft act at an online meeting held on 22 May 2023. The meeting was attended by 26 Roma activists who expressed more than 30 suggestions and comments to the draft, most of which coincided with the written proposals submitted earlier. The Roma Council of Ukraine expressed a number of critical remarks and requested an additional period of time to develop proposals for the draft Action Plan. Taking into account that a significant number of leaders of public associations have the status of internally displaced persons or are abroad, the participants of the meeting agreed to this proposal. The proposals from the Roma Council of Ukraine were submitted to the DESS on 14 July 2023. Based on the results of the public discussion, eleven new measures and editorial amendments were introduced to the draft act.

DESS coordinates the implementation of the Action Plan at the national level and is actively working to implement the tasks and measures.

On 16 April 2024, DESS, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), with the support of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Support for implementing European standards relating to anti-discrimination and rights of national minorities in Ukraine", announced the launch of a sociological study on the observance of Roma rights in Transcarpathia region.

On 17 April 2024, a roundtable discussion was held in Kyiv on expanding access to identity documents for Roma. The event was organised by the DESS and the Ombudsman of Ukraine with the support of the joint EU-CoE project "Support for implementing European standards relating to anti-discrimination and rights of national minorities in Ukraine". The participants got acquainted with the results of the pilot project on Roma documentation, which is being implemented in Mukachevo, Transcarpathia region. The participants of the roundtable discussed legal mechanisms to simplify the procedure for documenting Roma.

On 21 May 2024, the DESS issued Order No. N-53/12 "On Approval of the Personal Composition of the Council of Public Associations of National Minorities

(Communities) of Ukraine". The Council includes the Head of the Roma Council of Ukraine, which unites 46 CSOs of the Roma national minority (community) from all regions of Ukraine.

On 27-28 May 2024, a monitoring visit to the Chernihiv and Cherkasy regions was conducted to observe the rights of representatives of the Roma national minority (community). The monitoring group included representatives of the DESS, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, and the National Police of Ukraine. The group visited educational institutions and places of traditional residence of the Roma national minority (community) in the cities of Chernihiv, Pryluky, Smila and Zolotonosha. It was established that there is no educational segregation of Roma children, local authorities provide social support to families in difficult life circumstances, and provide opportunities for the development of national culture. The main problems stated are employment and the deterioration of the financial situation due to the full-scale invasion of Russian troops, in particular in Chernihiv, Roma families lost their homes due to shelling.

On 7 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 670 "On Approval of the List of Endangered Languages of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine", the purpose of which is to preserve and develop the languages of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in danger of extinction, which is in line with Article 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine. The list also includes the Roma language, for which it is necessary to ensure the process of codification and the possibility of optional teaching in general education institutions.

On 7 June 2024, the Forum of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine was held, attended by more than 100 representatives of national minorities (communities) from all regions of Ukraine, including representatives of the Roma national minority (community).

On 10 July 2024, the first meeting of the Interagency Working Group on Coordination of the Implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society until 2030 was held. The Interagency Working Group consists of 26 members and is chaired by the Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The Interagency Working Group includes deputy heads of central executive authorities responsible for the implementation of the Strategy, the Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Interethnic Relations, the Representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities,

Political and Religious Views and five representatives of Roma CSOs selected through an open competition. The meeting heard the report of the DESS on the implementation of the Strategy in 2023 and in the first half of 2024, and discussed the activities to be implemented in 2024, including the commemoration of the International Roma Holocaust Day.

Article 16

The Parties shall refrain from adopting measures which alter the proportional composition of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and which aim to restrict the rights and freedoms deriving from the principles set forth in this Framework Convention.

Comment to Article 16

The new territorial structure in Ukraine was approved on 12 June 2020 by the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Determination of Administrative Centres and Approval of Territories of Territorial Communities", developed in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine", and by the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine No. 807-IX "On the Formation and Liquidation of Rayons(Districts)" dated 19 July 2020. As of 1 January 2021, there are 1469 communities formed by amalgamation of villages, towns and cities in Ukraine, and 136 new rayons have been formed. In the reporting period, no other measures were taken to change the territorial structure.

According to part two of Article 13 of Law No. 2827-IX, the state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) is based on the principles of integration of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) into Ukrainian society on the basis of recognition of human and civil rights and freedoms and prevention of forced assimilation.

Taking into account these principles and the specifics of the settlement of national minorities (communities), in order to protect the right of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) to use the languages of national minorities (communities), Law No. 2827-IX defines the territory of the settlement (village, town, city) where persons belonging to national minorities (communities) traditionally reside or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population. In order to avoid abuses at the local level, the list of settlements where persons belonging to national minorities (communities) traditionally reside or where such persons constitute a significant part of the population is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (Article 10(12) of Law No. 2827-IX).

On 4 March 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 257 "On Approval of the Procedure for Determining the List of Settlements in which Persons Belonging to National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine Traditionally Reside or in which Such Persons Make up a Significant Part of the Population", which establishes the procedure for determining the list of settlements in which persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of Ukraine traditionally reside or in which such persons make up a significant part of the population.

Article 17

1. The Parties undertake not to impede the exercise of the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful cross-border contacts with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular with those persons with whom they share common ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious characteristics or common cultural heritage.

2. The Parties undertake not to impede the exercise of the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organisations at both national and international levels.

Comment to clause 1

The provisions of this Article of the Framework Convention are reflected in Article 21 of Law No. 2827-IX, which stipulates that persons belonging to national minorities (communities) and public associations of national minorities (communities) may maintain relations with representatives of countries of ethnic origin, national public associations outside Ukraine, and participate in the activities of relevant international non-governmental organisations. Such individuals and public associations may receive assistance from foreign states, individuals, public associations, foundations and other foreign institutions in accordance with the procedure established by law.

According to the Lviv State (Military) Administration, international cooperation is quite active in the Lviv region, with the aim of implementing joint projects and strengthening international relations between CSOs. In order to protect people, including those belonging to national minorities, the authorities are making efforts to conclude agreements with neighbouring states. In particular, territorial communities in Lviv region, together with Polish partners, are actively working on developing projects for the Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine programme, which was approved by the European Commission on 30 November 2022. It provides an opportunity to continue cross-border cooperation between Poland and Ukraine, strengthen ties between organisations and residents of the border areas, and develop the areas covered by cooperation.

According to the Odesa State (Military) Administration, in 2020-2023, they were implemented in the Odesa region:

- European project "EFIGE - Cross-border Complex. Connecting Cultural Heritage in the Danube Region". The project was competitively selected under the Joint Operational Programme of the European Union "Romania - Ukraine 2014-2020" within the priority "Promotion and preservation of cultural and historical heritage". The main partners of the project were the Tulcea County Council (Romania), the Executive Committee of the Izmail City Council, FLAG - Danube Delta (Tulcea, Romania), and the Prut-Danube Sustainable Development Association (Galati, Romania).

- the project "GreeTHiS - Green Tourism and Historical Heritage - A Stepping Stone for the Development of the Black Sea Basin 2014-2020" with the participation of project partners from Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova;

- the project "VOCALIC - Enhancing the Value of Cultural Identity and Common History for Tourism Development in the Lower Danube Border Area", which was selected through a competitive process under the European Union's Joint Operational Programme Romania - Ukraine 2014-2020. The main partners were the Youth CSO "New Generation of Europe" (Izmail, Ukraine) together with its partners - the Danube Delta Sustainable Development Association (Tulcea, Romania) and the Municipality of Cilia Vecie (Tulcea County, Romania).

Article 18

1. The Parties shall endeavour, where appropriate, to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to their respective national minorities.

2. Where necessary, the Parties shall take measures to encourage cross-border cooperation.

Comment to clause 1

The provisions of this article of the Framework Convention are reflected in Article 20 of Law No. 2827-IX, which stipulates that Ukraine promotes the development of international cooperation on the protection of the rights and interests of national minorities (communities), in particular by concluding and implementing multilateral and bilateral agreements in this area. It also stipulates that state authorities, within the limits of their powers, cooperate with the relevant authorities of other states and international organisations in the field of protection of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities (communities), and contribute to the resolution of issues related to national minorities (communities), including through

interstate dialogue. The provision of part three of this article is important, according to which persons belonging to national minorities (communities) are given the opportunity to be members of intergovernmental bilateral commissions on ensuring the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities (communities).

Ukraine continues to implement existing bilateral agreements on the protection of the rights of national minorities (communities), in particular, to ensure the work of bilateral intergovernmental commissions:

- of the bilateral Ukrainian-Slovak Commission on National Minorities, Education and Culture;
- mixed Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities;
- of the mixed Ukrainian-Hungarian commission on national minority rights;
- Intergovernmental Ukrainian-German Commission for Cooperation on the Affairs of People of German Descent Residing in Ukraine.

During the reporting period, Ukraine and Romania continued negotiations on the outcomes of the VII meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities in the format of a video conference. During these meetings, the parties discussed relevant issues of national minorities (communities) in the context of the provisions of the Framework Convention, as well as relevant international standards within the Council of Europe and the OSCE. The last such meeting was held on 11 February 2022. Due to Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, this format of work was suspended. Ukraine continues to cooperate with Romania in other formats, in particular, the issue of national minorities is included in the Agreement on Security Cooperation between Ukraine and Romania of 11 July 2024. The issues of national minorities (communities) were discussed at the first meeting of the governments of the two countries on 18 October 2023. In particular, the Ukrainian side reaffirmed the need to resolve the issue of artificial distinction between the Romanian and "Moldovan" languages, given the granting of Romanian as the official language in the Republic of Moldova.

On 17 February 2023, in Kyiv, the Head of the DESS, Victor Yelenskyy, met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Romania to Ukraine, Alexandru-Victor Micula, to discuss the ethno-political and religious situation in Ukraine and Romania, as well as the specifics of governance in the field of religion and the protection of national minority rights in both countries. The participants of the meeting discussed further steps to deepen Ukrainian-Romanian cooperation in the field of protection of national minority rights and resume the work of the joint intergovernmental commission. Representatives of the DESS also took part in the

International Conference "National Minorities in Romania - Successful Minority Policies for Social Cohesion and Democratic Stability" on 20-21 October 2023 in Timisoara and in the roundtable on "Strengthening Equality and Protection of National Minorities' Rights in Ukraine in line with European Standards, including in the framework of the EU accession negotiations", which was held in Chernivtsi on 30 May 2024 at the initiative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ukraine and Hungary worked to resume the work of the Joint Ukrainian-Hungarian Commission on National Minority Rights. In particular, in July 2021, the Ukrainian side prepared and submitted to the Hungarian side the draft minutes of the XVIth regular meeting of the Joint Commission. To agree on the issues proposed for consideration, at the initiative of the Ukrainian side, the co-chairs of the Joint Commission met via video conference on 30 July 2021 and offline in Kyiv on 21 September 2021. At the invitation of the Hungarian side, in December 2021, a delegation of the DESS visited Hungary to study Hungarian policy on national minorities and to agree on the issues for the next meeting of the Commission. Due to the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, consultations were suspended, and the Hungarian side's claims to Law No. 2827-IX adopted in December 2022 moved the issue of the right of the Hungarian national minority (community) to use its native language into the sphere of interstate relations. In particular, this issue was discussed during a meeting in Uzhgorod on 29 January 2024 between the Hungarian delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ukrainian delegation led by the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. And also during the official visit of the Prime Minister of Hungary to Ukraine on 2 July 2024.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, Hungary and Ukraine have reached agreements to continue and deepen joint work to meet the educational needs of the Hungarian minority in Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in Hungary. On 22 July 2021, during the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary to Kyiv, the Governments of Ukraine and Hungary signed an Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Documents on Education and Academic Degrees. The Agreement provides for the simplification of the procedure for mutual recognition of documents on education and academic degrees obtained in educational and research institutions of Ukraine and Hungary. As a result of the agreements reached during the second meeting of the working group, three subgroups of experts were formed to work on the following areas: textbook publishing, professional development of teachers, and methods of teaching the Ukrainian language in Hungarian-language classes.

On 16 September 2021, the third meeting of the Ukrainian-Hungarian interdepartmental working group on education took place in Uzhgorod, and as a result, an innovative educational project on the topic "European Integrated Model of School with Hungarian as the Language of Instruction" was launched on the basis of general secondary education institutions of Transcarpathia region for October 2021 - November 2026." The Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogical Society is involved in the project. The aim of the project is to create an effective integrative model of education that is comfortable for students, ensuring its quality for members of the Hungarian national minority in the process of reforming Ukrainian schools. The project participants include 80 general secondary education institutions with classes taught in Hungarian. The meeting also included consultations on the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary on cooperation under the Hungarian scholarship programme for 2022-2024.

On 15 September 2023, the IV meeting of the Ukrainian-Hungarian Interagency Working Group on Education took place in Budapest. During the meeting, the parties discussed the measures taken to implement the Protocol of the third meeting, in particular: studying the Ukrainian language and teaching in Hungarian in general secondary education institutions of Ukraine; development and publication of textbooks and manuals; advanced training of teachers. During the meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary on cooperation under the Hungarian scholarship programme for 2023-2025.

During the reporting period, consultations were held with the Slovak side on holding the next meeting of the bilateral Ukrainian-Slovak Commission on National Minorities, Education and Culture, in particular during the meeting of the Prime Minister of Ukraine Denys Shmyhal with the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Robert Fico and joint consultations of the Governments of Ukraine and the Slovak Republic on 11 April 2024 in Mihalovce (Slovak Republic), and an agreement was reached to hold such a meeting in the first half of 2025.

On 22 October 2021, the 11th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-German Commission for Cooperation on Matters of People of German Descent Residing in Ukraine took place in Kyiv. The meeting was held in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. The Commission positively assessed the results of the work of both Parties and drew attention to the need for further implementation of joint projects at the local, regional and state levels. The Parties agreed that the next meeting of the Commission would take place in 2022 in the Federal Republic of Germany, but the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 suspended

consultations on this issue. In order to resume the work of the Commission, on 21 June 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 738 "On Amendments to Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1075 of 23 December 2015" on changing the composition of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-German Commission for Cooperation on Matters of Persons of German Descent Residing in Ukraine. The amendments are related to the expansion of the powers of the DESS as a central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national minorities (communities) in accordance with Article 15 of Law No. 2827-IX. Consultations with the German side are underway to hold the 12th meeting in the first quarter of 2025.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the official procedure for signing the "Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Poland on pre-school and general secondary education institutions with instruction in Polish or study of Polish as a national minority language in Ukraine and kindergartens and schools with instruction in Ukrainian or study of Ukrainian as a national minority language in the Republic of Poland" is underway in 2024. The signing of this agreement will help to ensure the right of Ukrainian citizens belonging to the Polish national minority to learn Polish and study in Polish in pre-school and general secondary education institutions of Ukraine, and of citizens of the Republic of Poland belonging to the Ukrainian national minority to learn Ukrainian and study in Ukrainian in kindergartens and schools of the Republic of Poland. In particular, at each level of complete general secondary education, the Ukrainian and Polish parties will provide students belonging to the Polish and, respectively, the Ukrainian national minority with textbooks for learning Polish and Ukrainian, as well as promote the professional development of teachers who teach Polish and, respectively, Ukrainian as languages of national minorities.

Comment to clause 2

The imposition of martial law throughout Ukraine significantly affected the development of cross-border cooperation, but some events took place even under such circumstances.

According to the regional state (military) administrations, the following events took place in the border regions.

In the Odesa region:

On 1 June 2022, the Izmail Art Gallery of the Regional Centre for Aesthetic Education hosted the International Children's Art Festival "DANUB - THE RIVER OF FRIENDSHIP" online on Children's Day.

More than 350 children from 5 European countries took part in it. The exhibition-competition brought together young artists from Ukraine, Moldova,

Romania, Bulgaria and Germany, who live on the banks of the great European river Danube;

The OKO International Ethnographic Film Festival was held not in Bolgrad, as planned, but in Torun (Poland) on 13-18 November 2022 and in Helsinki (Finland) on 20 November 2022;

On 8 December 2022, the 21st International Festival of Bulgarian Culture "Bulgarians da si ostanem!" ended in Reni in an online format, dedicated to the Day of Bessarabian Bulgarians. It was attended by 87 groups and soloists, including 17 groups from Bulgaria.

During 2020-2023, the European project "EFIGE - Cross-border Complex. Connecting Cultural Heritage in the Danube Region". Connecting Cultural Heritage in the Danube Region". The project was competitively selected under the Joint Operational Programme of the European Union "Romania - Ukraine 2014-2020" within the priority "Promotion and preservation of cultural and historical heritage". The main partners of the project were the Tulcea County Council (Romania) and the Executive Committee of the Izmail City Council.

In the Rivne region:

On 5-8 June 2022, the delegation of the Rivne Region took part in the Three Seas Initiative Local Government Congress (Lublin, Poland). During the meeting with the leadership of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, the priorities of Rivne Region participation in the Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2021-2027 were discussed. The delegation discussed with the representatives of the Lubelskie Voivodeship and the Congress participants from other regions of Poland included in the Programme project initiatives that can be implemented within the Programme in 2022-2024;

On 19-23 September 2022, the Deputy Head of the Rivne Regional State Administration met with the leadership of the Podlaskie Voivodeship and the Warmia and Mazury Voivodeship to discuss the implementation of joint projects of cross-border cooperation "Ukraine-Poland 2021-2027" in the field of culture.

The Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine programme, approved by the European Commission on 30 November 2022 for the period up to 2027, provides an opportunity to continue cross-border cooperation between Poland and Ukraine, strengthen ties between organisations and residents of the border areas, and develop the areas covered by cooperation on the Ukrainian side: Volyn, Lviv, Transcarpathia, Rivne, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk Regions.

Article 19

The Parties undertake to respect and to implement the principles set forth in this Framework Convention, resorting, where necessary, only to such limitations or derogations from their obligations as are provided for in international legal instruments, in particular the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and which may be applicable to the rights and freedoms deriving from the above principles.

Comment to Article 19

Ukraine ratified the Framework Convention without reservations. However, due to the full-scale invasion of the territory of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, Ukraine was forced to introduce certain restrictions, in particular, clause 3 of Section 5 "Transitional and Final Provisions" of Law No. 2827-IX states: "To establish that for the period of martial law in Ukraine, introduced by the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the introduction of martial law in Ukraine" of 24 February 2022 No. 64/2022, approved by the Law of Ukraine "On Approval of the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the introduction of martial law in Ukraine" of 24 February 2022 No. 2102-IX, and for six months from the date of its cancellation or termination, the temporary restrictions on the exercise and protection of the rights defined in Article 7 (in terms of the right to peaceful assembly) Articles 14, 18, 19 and part three of Article 20 of this Law, the rights of national minorities (communities) that identify their affiliation by ethnic origin with a state recognised in Ukraine and/or by international organisations as a terrorist state (aggressor state) that commits acts of aggression against Ukraine."

PART 3. Special issues: national minorities in times of war

In this Report, Part III is used to provide information on the impact of the military aggression of the Russian Federation (RF) on the situation of national minorities in Ukraine and the situation of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine.

In order to intimidate the population, the Russian military conducts missile, artillery and air strikes on settlements, residential areas, social and cultural facilities and places of worship. People are forced to flee from the hostilities and this poses a threat to the preservation of national minority cultures.

A national survey commissioned by the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Ukraine has shown that since 24 February 2022, about 32 million people in Ukraine have been directly or indirectly affected by the consequences of the war. Since the beginning of the war, more than half of Ukrainians have lost their income, more than 6 million people have fled abroad for temporary protection, and more than 5 million have become internally displaced, more details are available here:

https://ukraine.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11861/files/documents/Survey%20results_ENG_web.pdf

The unique cultures of small peoples, such as the Meskhetian Turks, Krymchaks, Karaites, and Nadazov Greeks, were under great threat due to the occupation. Cultural traditions were preserved in the places where these peoples densely populated through the practice of traditional religious rites, the use of their native language in everyday life, and the transmission of folk traditions between generations through folk art.

The Nadazov Greeks are a unique ethnic group of Greeks with their own language and culture, which was formed on the Crimean peninsula and has been living in the south of the Donetsk region of Ukraine since the late 18th century. Within this ethnic group, there are two language groups: Uruma and Rumeika. Since 2014 and until now, almost all the settlements of the Nazov Greeks have been under occupation. The damage done to Mariupol has had a critical impact on the possibility of preserving the culture and the very survival of this community.

As a result of the hostilities, cultural centres, religious buildings were destroyed, cultural property belonging to national minorities in Mariupol, Volnovakha, Melitopol and other cities under occupation were looted, museum exhibits, art collections, archival materials and other valuables were taken by the occupiers to the territory of Russia.

According to the Donetsk Military Regional Administration, as a result of hostilities, settlements with a compact Greek community population suffered significant destruction: Volnovakha city, Sartana village, Hranitne village, Bugas village, Chermalyk village, Starohnativka village, Staromlynivka village and other settlements. In particular, the following were destroyed:

- houses of culture, where folklore groups rehearsed and folk costumes were kept;
- library, where works of Uruma and Rumeian poets and writers were collected, and thematic exhibitions were arranged to tell the story of the community;
- schools and kindergartens, where corners were decorated in the national traditions of the Nadazov Greeks, using historical and modern materials.

Between 15-18 March 2022, as a result of hostilities, the premises of the Greek Cultural Centre "Meotida" of the Mariupol Society of Greeks in Mariupol were damaged. As a result of looting, paintings by Mariupol Greek artists disappeared; the fate of archival materials is unknown. In March 2022, as a result of hostilities in Mariupol, the building of the Hippocrates Greek Medical Centre was half-destroyed. The building's facade and roof were damaged and expensive medical equipment was completely destroyed. In March 2022, the building of the Cultural Centre of the Federation of Greek Societies of Ukraine in Mariupol was damaged. Its unique library, furniture, appliances, collection of paintings by Ukrainian artists of Greek origin, etc. were destroyed.

As a result of active hostilities on the territory of the region, as well as significant destruction of cultural institutions, all organisations of national minorities (communities) in the region and their creative teams lost the opportunity to carry out their statutory activities. In the cities of Volnovakha, Kostiantynivka, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, and Mariupol, CSOs and creative teams of the Armenian national (minority) community were active, but due to hostilities, the destruction of cultural institutions, and the temporary occupation of some districts of the region, they were forced to cease their activities.

In March 2022, as a result of hostilities, the premises of the Wiedergeburt Mariupol Society of Germans were damaged.

The centre of the national minority (community) of Meskhetian Turks living in Bakhmut and Kramatorsk districts also ceased its activities. Meskhetian Turks living in the Bakhmut district were able to gather in the Central City Library of Bakhmut, which was completely destroyed by intense fighting. The centre of the Azerbaijani national community, which had been active in Pokrovsk, Mariupol and Kramatorsk districts before the full-scale invasion, was forced to temporarily cease its activities due to the active hostilities.

A similar situation has developed in the southern part of Zaporizhzhia region, where Bulgarian, Greek, Karaite, and Czech cultural societies have ceased their activities due to the occupation.

On the territory of the left-bank part of Kherson region, CSOs of Roma, Meskhetian Turks and Crimean Tatars ceased their activities due to the occupation. Some of the Meskhetian Turks and Crimean Tatars left the area for Turkey.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are another challenge for national minorities (communities) in Ukraine. The risks and consequences of a full-scale war for the majority of society and for minority groups whose situation was already vulnerable may be different. One of these minorities is the Roma, who had economic problems for most families before the war as a result of internal segregation. Roma families from Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Sumy, Chernihiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Dnipro, Kyiv regions and the city of Kyiv became IDPs. This conclusion can be drawn, among other things, from the results of the survey "Situation of Roma IDPs in Wartime" conducted by the international charitable organisation "Roma Women's Fund "Chirikli" as part of a joint project with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) in May 2022, more details at the link: <https://chirikli.com.ua/zvit/stanovyshche-romiv-doslidzhennia/>

According to the results of this survey, the accessibility of social benefits and pensions in Odesa region was positively assessed by 47% of respondents, and in Transcarpathia - by 62%. The accessibility of administrative services in Odesa region was positively assessed by 20% of the polled representatives of the Roma national minority (community), and in Transcarpathia - by 59%. The biggest problems, according to the survey, are food (32% of respondents) and housing (23% of respondents). 32% of respondents rent housing, and 39% live with relatives or friends. 32% of the surveyed representatives of the Roma national minority (community) need to restore their documents. Biased attitude when applying to different institutions was experienced by 59% of respondents in Odesa region and 19% in Transcarpathian region. 28% of the surveyed representatives of the Roma national minority (community) indicated that they are considering moving abroad. These are mostly representatives of families whose homes were completely destroyed as a result of the hostilities.

The majority of Roma IDPs are hosted in Transcarpathian region, with shelter provided in prayer houses of Protestant communities, in shelters specially organised by CSOs, and simply by local Roma in their families. The Transcarpathian Regional State (Military) Administration reports on systematic meetings with representatives of Roma CSOs and leaders of Roma settlements, including directly in places where

Roma live. Communication with Roma activists on the provision of humanitarian assistance to IDPs of the Roma national minority (community) is constantly maintained. In some territorial communities of the region, representatives of the Roma community also work as advisers or employees on Roma issues.

It is worth noting the considerable self-organisation shown by public associations representing the Roma national minority (community). In particular, the Transcarpathian Regional Charitable Foundation "Blago", with the support of local authorities and grants from international organisations, has organised two shelters in Uzhgorod for members of the Roma national minority (community) and other IDPs from the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine. They have been provided with proper living conditions and free meals. The total number of IDPs who have lived at the shelters since the beginning of the full-scale invasion until August 2024 is more than 4 thousand people. The international charitable organisation Roma Women's Fund Chiricli opened a shelter in Mukachevo, headed by Rada Kalandia, an IDP from Donetsk region. Cooperation with clergy of Roma settlements, who also contribute to providing assistance to Roma IDPs, has become an important tool; dozens of religious communities have organised the reception and accommodation of IDPs in their families and church premises.

The study "The Situation of Roma Communities during the War in Ukraine", conducted by the Active Group in May-June 2024 at the request of the CSO "Voice of Roma", was conducted in the Dnipro, Transcarpathia, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa and Kharkiv regions of Ukraine and showed what problems remain acute for Roma IDPs. The study showed that the most acute problems for Roma IDPs at the time of the survey were the following:

- housing that needs to be rented and, above all, the need to have an additional large expense in the family budget - rent;
- the jobs lost in the previous place of residence cannot be found in the new place; discrimination against IDPs is added to the problem of discrimination against Roma, as employers believe that IDPs are not permanent. At the same time, those Roma who used to have private houses and were able to feed their families from their gardens are deprived of this opportunity due to forced displacement;
- negative attitudes of local residents (even Roma) towards IDPs. In particular, due to the competition for jobs, some respondents from the local residents' group claimed that IDPs have a much easier life than they do because they receive state assistance;
- psychological problems are associated with the experience of having worked, raised, built and been left with nothing all their lives. This is psychological stress, especially for older people. It is also depressing to feel fear not only for yourself but also for your relatives who remain in danger.

- lack of assistance and indifference to the problems of IDPs, there are isolated statements of respondents about discrimination in social services.

According to the results of the survey on the problems that have been exacerbated by the war, personal physical security was the most acute problem, with 64.6% of respondents reporting it. The physical safety of children is also critical, with 58.4% of respondents considering it more acute. Problems with work and decent pay are acute for 41.8% of respondents. The security of property/real estate and the availability of a place to live are of concern to 36.9% and 39.1% of respondents, respectively. The need for clean water and food remains acute for 39.5% of respondents. Clothing and basic necessities are a problem for 37.1% of respondents. The only positive impact of the war mentioned by respondents was the strengthening of cohesion and mutual support, mainly within the Roma community, more details are available here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WebT9z2zywK0hrFisxFI9YDYy1TeAhSp/view>

In order to respect the rights of vulnerable groups, the Government of Ukraine has introduced transparent and accessible mechanisms for receiving state assistance, which can also be used by representatives of the Roma national minority (community) if necessary. In particular, social benefits, assistance to single mothers, large families, compensation for lost property due to the armed aggression of the Russian Federation, etc. can be applied for through the Unified State Web Portal of Electronic Services (Portal Diya). This service is available at all operating administrative service centres of territorial communities. An important role in supporting IDPs is played by the centres of social services of territorial communities, which, together with Roma community associations, help Roma families in difficult life circumstances.

In April 2023, the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights launched a pilot project "Documentation of persons from the Roma national minority (community) and development of legal mechanisms to simplify this procedure" in Mukachevo, Transcarpathian region, with the support of the Council of Europe project "Supporting the reform of the national minority legal framework and the resilience of national minorities and Roma in Ukraine". The project involved the DESS, the State Migration Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine. The aim of the project is to assist persons belonging to the Roma national minority who legally reside in Ukraine in obtaining identity documents and confirming their citizenship, and to create legal mechanisms to simplify the passporting procedure for undocumented persons. In August 2024, 302 people who needed documents were interviewed as a result of the project. Of these, 88 people received a passport of a citizen of Ukraine (46 people for the first time).

On 21 November 2023, with the participation of representatives of the Roma community, experts and representatives of state authorities, a roundtable discussion "Integration of the Roma community under martial law" was held to discuss ways to address the challenges faced by the Roma community as a result of hostilities.

In accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 22 December 2023 No. 1197-r "On Approval of the Action Plan for 2024-2025 for the Implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period up to 2030", the implementation of the Action Plan starts in 2024. The Action Plan includes 62 measures to fulfil 23 tasks in various spheres of public life related to the process of Roma integration into the public life of the country, which are aimed at achieving the 8 strategic goals set out in the Strategy. The plan also includes measures aimed at supporting Roma IDPs.

In order to more effectively implement the Action Plan, on 1 February 2024, DESS held an online meeting of the Roma Coordination Group of the joint EU-CoE project "Support for implementing European standards relating to anti-discrimination and rights of national minorities in Ukraine", which brought together international organisations operating in Ukraine, namely the United Nations Development Programme, UN Women, the UN Refugee Agency, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the European Commission, the World Bank and representatives of local authorities implementing the Action Plan. The Roma Coordination Group is a platform created to establish synergies between relevant partners in Ukraine to improve the quality of support to the Roma community, namely, planning and implementation of joint activities and initiatives to protect the rights of Roma, with a focus on women and children, stateless and undocumented persons, and addressing discrimination at the societal level.

Another illustrative example is the situation of the Jewish national minority (community) in Ukraine. As a result of the hostilities, both functioning synagogues in Mariupol were completely destroyed, and the buildings of both synagogues operating in Kharkiv were damaged. Holocaust memorials and Jewish cemeteries were also damaged by shelling. In particular, one Russian missile exploded in the immediate vicinity of the Babyn Yar memorial in Kyiv. According to Jewish religious beliefs about the ashes of the dead, such incidents are perceived by the community as very painful. Also, the rocket attack on the city of Uman on 28 April 2022, which claimed the lives of 23 civilians, was in close proximity to a Jewish shrine in the city. Such actions of the aggressor caused a large migration of representatives of the Jewish minority (community). To save their lives, people are forced to move to safer regions and even abroad.

The structure of the Jewish community in Ukraine has its own specifics. The Jewish community in Ukraine is very old in age when compared to the age structure of society as a whole. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that young and middle-aged people emigrated more actively in previous years, and the relative stability of the ethnic identity of older people. Older age made it more difficult to evacuate from the area of hostilities and temporary occupation. The Jewish community has developed an infrastructure to assist Jewish refugees in moving to Israel directly from the borders of Ukraine and within the country. According to Joseph Zissels, co-president of the Association of Jewish Organisations and Communities of Ukraine (AJCU), in 2022, the association's priority was humanitarian projects in various areas, ranging from the evacuation of Jewish families from the war zone to the implementation of a large-scale psychological rehabilitation project for war victims. He said that an analysis of migration conducted by the association showed that approximately 25,000 Jews left Ukraine, which is only 10% of the total minority population, and that communities in the western regions of Ukraine have grown significantly due to IDPs. The Association helps IDPs to establish their lives in new places of residence. However, the continuation of intense hostilities and significant destruction of civilian infrastructure in the east of the country in the following years forced many members of the Jewish community to leave the country. Ethnic Jews have an immediate opportunity to obtain citizenship of another country - Israel (as well as some other states). In addition to passports, in Israel they will also immediately receive additional assistance and support during the first stage of repatriation. Unlike the majority of Ukrainian refugees to Europe, these people are unlikely to return to Ukraine. These processes threaten to sharply reduce the size of the Ukrainian Jewish community, up to the point of disappearing communities in many cities in the east and south of the country.

Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Germany and others have adopted programmes of simplified citizenship and enhanced adaptation for members of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine - their compatriots leaving Ukraine. These processes threaten to reduce the number of people belonging to national minorities (communities) in Ukraine, especially those who have traditionally lived in many towns and villages in the east and south of the country.

Russia's policy on interethnic and interfaith relations in the temporarily occupied territories

Russia's war against Ukraine is yet another traumatic example of the "ethnic card" being played on the European continent. From the very beginning, the Russian Federation appealed to the "ethnic traumas" of the past, trying to provoke a chain

reaction, justify and legitimise its own aggressive actions in Ukraine, and sow chaos. Instead, according to recent sociological studies, the opposite process has taken place, leading to a radical consolidation of the Ukrainian population.

A significant part of Ukraine's multi-ethnic regions and population is under the Russian occupation regime, including places of compact residence of Greeks, Bulgarians, Roma, Meskhetian Turks, Crimean Tatars, and descendants of Swiss and German colonists. The military actions of the Russian army on the territory of Ukraine, which have been repeatedly recognised by international organisations as crimes against humanity, have led to serious violations of the rights and freedoms of ethnic communities. They have been subjected to brutal torture and killings, abductions, forced displacement, extrajudicial punishment, politically motivated persecution and imprisonment, extra-legal mechanisms and instruments of direct and indirect discrimination, which violate fundamental human rights set out in international law. Many members of national minorities have lost their homes due to shelling and active hostilities. In the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, many ethnic communities have suffered from unauthorised searches and robberies of both private property and the premises of their CSOs. This forces people to leave their places of traditional residence and seek refuge in their country of ethnic origin.

According to representatives of all-Ukrainian associations of national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, after the start of the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, contacts with representatives of the respective national minorities in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea have virtually ceased. This is due to the total tracking of the so-called "foreign agents" by the Russian law enforcement agencies. CSOs of such national minorities as German, Polish, Czech, Estonian, Roma, Bulgarian, which were registered under Ukrainian law, did not re-register at the request of the occupation authorities. Most civil society activists left the territory of Crimea. Representatives of national minorities whose home countries are members of the European Union are actively seeking opportunities to leave the temporarily occupied territory.

According to an unrecognised census conducted by the occupation authorities of Crimea in 2021, the number of representatives of national minorities associated with European countries has halved since 2001. In 2001, there were 2790 Germans, in 2021 - 1142, Jews - 5531 and 2137, Greeks - 3036 and 1791, Bulgarians - 2282 and 1005, Poles - 4459 and 1404, Estonians - 674 and 182, Czechs - 774 and 231, Moldovans - 4562 and 1811.

The data on the representatives of the small indigenous peoples of Crimea - the Karaites and Krymchaks - is of great concern. The number of Karaites has

significantly decreased from 715 in 2001 to 318 in 2021, and the Krymchaks are completely absent from the census conducted by the occupation authorities.

The CSO Crimean Tatar Resource Centre constantly records facts of human rights violations in the temporarily occupied Crimea, and in 2022, in particular, illegal actions by the occupation authorities were recorded:

- 138 cases of arrests, including 104 against members of the indigenous Crimean Tatar people. Thus, on 26 May 2022, the Appellate Instance of the 'Supreme Court of Crimea' changed the sentence in absentia against the leader of the Crimean Tatar people Mustafa Dzhemilev, sentencing him to 3 years in prison and a fine of 20 thousand rubles;

- 263 cases of violations of the right to a fair trial, 205 of which concerned Crimean Tatars. In addition, facts of inadequate conditions of detention in pre-trial detention centres and prisons, violations of the rights of political prisoners, including physical torture, continue to be recorded.

Due to the harsh conditions of detention, many representatives of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, among those deprived of their personal liberty as a result of the armed aggression against Ukraine, acquire and/or worsen existing chronic diseases, which often leads to death. According to human rights defenders, namely the ZMINA Human Rights Centre, at least 66 political prisoners, including representatives of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, have serious health problems, disabilities, need urgent medical care or are elderly. Thus, during the period of Russian aggression, 2 persons deprived of their personal liberty as a result of armed aggression against Ukraine, who were detained and convicted in the territory of the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, died in places of detention due to the lack of medical care. In particular, on 07.02.2023, Konstantin Shiring died in a colony in the Orenburg region of the Russian Federation, who was sentenced in October 2021 by the so-called "Supreme Court of the Republic of Crimea" to 12 years in prison with a maximum security colony; on 10.02.2023, Dzhemil Gafarov, who was detained in 2019 and sentenced to 13 years in prison by the Southern District Military Court of the Russian Federation on 11 January 2023, died in a pre-trial detention centre in Novocherkassk.

Since 2015, the Russian Federation has been conscripting Crimeans into the occupation army, which is a war crime under Article 8 of the Rome Statute, and the mobilisation that began on 21 September 2022 has significantly increased the number of Ukrainian citizens who have become victims of war crimes as those mobilised are sent directly to the frontline. Crimean Tatars are actively resisting the mobilisation, facing administrative and criminal prosecution by the occupation authorities.

According to the National Institute for Strategic Studies, such violations have been recorded throughout the reporting period, including repressive measures against residents of the temporarily occupied Crimea in August 2024, who were accused by Russia of allegedly planning sabotage, cooperating with Ukrainian law enforcement agencies, and discrediting the Russian army. The occupier-controlled media spread anti-Ukrainian narratives, demonised the Armed Forces, and attributed crimes against humanity to Ukraine.

The economic situation is getting worse, with constant power cuts in Crimean cities. The peninsula is facing a fuel shortage and fuel prices have risen. Due to drought, drying up of rivers and reclamation facilities, the yield of traditional agricultural crops on the peninsula has fallen significantly, which affects economic performance.

Russian media in Crimea spread narratives about the Mejlis' calls for the armed de-occupation of Crimea. The occupation authorities are repressing Muslim communities and media outlets that are not under their control. As of August 2024, 117 Crimeans are being persecuted in the so-called Hizb ut-Tahrir case, 114 of them are representatives of the indigenous Crimean Tatar people. 82 of them are serving their sentences in Russian prisons and colonies, 28 are in pre-trial detention centres, 2 are under house arrest, and 5 have been released. Citizens of Ukraine continue to leave the occupied Crimea en masse (over 20,000 people per year), with a significant number of them being Crimean Tatars who migrate abroad, in particular to Germany and Turkey.

Some recent typical examples of human rights violations by the occupation authorities:

- On 2 August 2024, the defendants in the so-called 'Hizb ut-Tahrir case' - Abdulmejit Seytumerov, Ametkhan Umerov, Eldar Yakubov, Seydamet Mustafayev, Remzi Nimetulaev and Ruslan Asanov - were transferred from SIZO-2 in Crimea to SIZO-1 in Rostov-on-Don;
- On 5 August 2024, several armed groups of masked security forces broke into the homes of Jehovah's Witnesses in the villages of Razdolnoye, Sinokisne and the city of Alushta. Interrogations and searches were conducted, and electronic devices and personal records were seized. In the village of Razdolnoye, a believer was visited at work. He was laid face down on the floor and his hands were tied with a nylon tie, which caused him to injure his arm;
- On 28 August 2024, the occupation World Court in Crimea found the founder of the independent newspaper Kyrym, Seyran Ibragimov, guilty of "abuse of freedom of information" and imposed a fine of 250,000 rubles;
- On 30 August 2024, the occupation "Supreme Court of the Republic of Crimea" accepted for consideration a lawsuit filed by the regional department of the Russian

Ministry of Justice demanding the liquidation of the Alushta Muslim community and its exclusion from the unified register of legal entities. This community is not part of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Crimea.

The news of the murder by Russians of minors Nikita Khanganov and Tigran Hovhannisyan, both of Armenian descent, who were accused by the local occupation authorities in Berdiansk (temporarily occupied territory of Zaporizhzhia region) of "anti-Russian and terrorist activities", was shocking. According to the Media Initiative for Human Rights, the criminal prosecution of the teenagers began on 30 September 2022 after several months of harsh interrogations with beatings and electric shocks to extract confessions from them. On 26 June 2023, the occupation authorities of Zaporizhzhia region confirmed the deaths of Tigran Hovhannisyan and Nikita Khanganov, who 'were blocked and killed as a result of coordinated and prompt actions by law enforcement agencies'. Journalists learned that the boys were killed by a sniper's shot: Tyhran received a fatal gunshot wound to the heart, and his friend - to the head. According to Radio Liberty's Pryazovia News project, the occupation authorities did not hand over the bodies of the dead teenagers to their families, but probably buried them secretly in the summer of 2024.

Numerous reports by international organisations and missions permanently operating in Ukraine show Russia's blatant disregard for its international legal obligations. Since the beginning of its aggression against Ukraine in 2014, Russia has violated nearly 400 different international law treaties, including the UN Charter, the Hague and Geneva Conventions, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and many others.

In particular, the OHCHR Report on Crimea states the following: "The occupying authorities of the Russian Federation in Crimea have consistently suppressed freedom of expression, including minority culture and identity, and severely restricted freedom of religion of minority groups, in particular those opposed to official narratives, particularly the Mejlis. The space for civil society to operate, criticise and advocate has been significantly narrowed. Media have been closed, disproportionately affecting the Crimean Tatar and ethnic Ukrainian communities, their rights to freedom of expression and access to information, as well as to enjoy and preserve their own culture and identity" (clause 37).

"In the ten years of coverage of the human rights situation on the peninsula, Russia's disregard for its obligations under IHL has caused serious and lasting harm to the people of Crimea. A similar situation is observed in other parts of Ukraine: eight

years after the occupation and illegal annexation of Crimea, the Russian Federation continued the occupation and then illegal annexation of districts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, where OHCHR has documented similar violations" (para. 39).

In assessing the impact of Russian aggression on national minorities, Ukraine relies on information from state authorities, local governments, civil society and law enforcement agencies (in cases where certain acts are classified as crimes). In particular, the following studies were prepared during the reporting period:

"The Situation of National Minorities (Communities) and Indigenous Peoples under the Occupation of the Russian Federation" The timeframe of the study covers the period February 2022 - August 2023.

<https://ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/%D0%94%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%86%D1%96%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D1%96%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%88%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BF%D1%96%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%96%D0%BA%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%86%D1%96%D1%97.pdf>

Special report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights on the observance of the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine for the period from 24 February 2022 to 31 December 2023

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/%D0%A1%D0%BF%D0%B5%D1%86%D1%96%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D1%8C.pdf>

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation during the Russian occupation of the territory of Ukraine and its consequences, 24 February 2022 - 31 December 2023

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/ukraine/2023/2024-03-20-OHCHR-Report-Occupation-Aftermath-UKR.pdf>

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "Ten years of occupation by the Russian Federation: human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine"

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/ukraine/2024-02-28-OHCHR-Ten-Years-Occupation-Crimea-UKR.pdf>

ECHR judgment "Ukraine v. Russia (concerning Crimea)" of 25.06.2024 (cases 20958/14 and 38334/18)

<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22002-14347%22%5D%7D>

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