

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

FEDERAL LAW ON THE NATIONAL-CULTURAL AUTONOMY

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May 22 1996

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This Federal law determines legal grounds of the national-cultural autonomy in the Russian Federation, establishes juridical conditions for the interaction between the State and the society for the defense of national interests of citizens of the Russian Federation in the process of choice of the ways and forms of their national-cultural development.

Chapter I. General provisions

Article 1. The notion of the national-cultural autonomy

The national-cultural autonomy in the Russian Federation (further - the national-cultural autonomy) is the form of the national-cultural self-determination which is the social association of citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to certain ethnic communities on the basis of their voluntary self-organization with the aim of the independent solution of the issues related to preservation of their identity, development of language, education, and national culture.

Article 2. Principles of the national-cultural autonomy.

The national-cultural autonomy is based on principles of:

- free will of citizens when considering their belonging to a certain ethnic community;
- self-organization and self-government;
- diversity of internal organization forms of the national-cultural autonomy;
- combination of public initiative with the state support;
- respect of the language, culture, traditions and customs of different ethnic communities,
- lawfulness.

Article 3. Legal status of the national-cultural autonomy

The establishment and activity of the national-cultural autonomy are regulated by this Federal law and other federal laws adopted in accordance with this law, appropriate provisions of the Constitutions (charters), laws and other normative legal acts of the subjects of the Russian Federation, as well as by generally recognized principles and standards of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation in the field of providing rights and freedoms of a man and a citizen.

If the rules established by the international treaty of the Russian Federation, differ from those stipulated by this Federal Law, then the rules of the international treaty are applied.

Article 4. Rights of the national-cultural autonomy

The national-cultural autonomy has the rights:

- to receive support from the government and local self-government bodies which is necessary for preserving the national identity, development of the national (native) language and national culture;
- to address the bodies of legislative (representative) and executive power, local self-government bodies, representing its national-cultural interests;
- to create mass media in the order established by the legislation of the Russian Federation, to receive and disseminate information in its national (native) language;
- to preserve and enrich its historical and cultural heritage, to have free access to the national-cultural values;
- to follow national traditions and customs, renew and develop art and folk trades;
- to create educational, scientific and cultural establishments and to provide their functioning according to the legislation of the Russian Federation;
- to participate through its plenipotentiaries in the activities of international non-governmental organizations;
- on the basis of the legislation of the Russian Federation, to establish and maintain, without any discrimination, contacts with the citizens and non-governmental organizations of foreign states.

Federal laws, the Constitutions (charters) and laws of the subjects of the Russian Federation may grant to the national-cultural autonomy also other rights in the field of education and culture.

Participation or non-participation in the activities of the national-cultural autonomy cannot provide the background for limiting the rights of the citizens of the Russian Federation as well as belonging to some ethnic group cannot provide the background for limiting their participation or non-participation in the work of the national-cultural autonomy.

The right to the national-cultural autonomy is not the right to national-territorial self-determination.

The realization of the right to the national-cultural autonomy must not cause any damage to the interests of other ethnic communities.

Chapter II. The system of the national-cultural autonomy. Procedure of establishment and registration of the national-cultural autonomy

Article 5. Organizational basis of the national-cultural autonomy

Organizational basis of the national-cultural autonomy is determined by peculiarities of settlement of the citizens of the Russian Federation who determine their belonging to a certain ethnic community, and by the charters of the national-cultural autonomies.

The national-cultural autonomies can be local (town, district, village, etc.), regional and federal.

Local national-cultural autonomies may form regional autonomy. If within the subject of the Russian Federation only one local national-cultural autonomy of citizens of the Russian Federation who determine their belonging to a certain ethnic community, has been created, then the national-cultural autonomy can receive the status of the regional national-cultural autonomy.

Regional national-cultural autonomies of two or more subjects of the Russian Federation can create bodies of inter-regional coordination of their activities. These bodies are not inter-regional national-cultural autonomies.

Federal national-cultural autonomies of citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community, can be created by regional national-cultural autonomies of two or more subjects of the Russian Federation. If within the Russian Federation only one regional national-cultural autonomy of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community has been created, then the national-cultural autonomy can receive the status of the federal national-cultural autonomy.

Federal, regional national-cultural autonomies of citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community which has a corresponding republic or autonomous district, autonomous region, and government bodies of the subject of the Russian Federation may coordinate their activity, participate in elaboration of federal and regional programmes in the field of the preservation and development of national (native) languages and national culture on the basis of the mutual agreements and treaties between federal, regional national-cultural autonomies and the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Article 6. The procedure of foundation, registration, re-organization and (or) liquidation of the national-cultural autonomy

The national-cultural autonomy is established according to the legislation of the Russian Federation and taking into account peculiarities of the national-cultural autonomy envisaged by this Federal law.

Local national-cultural autonomies are established at general assemblies (conferences) by the delegates of national non-governmental associations.

Regional national-cultural autonomies are established at the conferences (congresses) by the delegates of local national-cultural autonomies.

Federal national-cultural autonomies of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community are established at the congresses by the delegates of regional national-cultural autonomies.

The national-cultural autonomies establish self-management bodies. The procedure of establishment, functions and names of these bodies are determined by national-cultural autonomies independently according to the legislation of the Russian Federation about the non-governmental organizations.

The registration of the national-cultural autonomies is held by the judicial body according to the procedure established by the legislation of the Russian Federation.

For the registration of the national-cultural autonomies the documents should be presented to confirm, that not later than 3 months before holding a constituent meeting (conference, congress) announcements about the coming establishment of the national-cultural autonomy had been made in mass media or by other means.

The juridical body which made a decision about the registration of the national-cultural autonomy sends the information about the registration within 10 days to the corresponding body of the executive power of the Russian Federation on national affairs for being included to the roll of national-cultural autonomies. The roll of national-cultural autonomies is available to be known by everybody.

The registration, re-organization and (or) liquidation of the national-cultural autonomy are accomplished in the order established by the legislation of the Russian Federation about non-governmental organizations.

Article 7. The consultative councils on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies at the Government of the Russian Federation, bodies of executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation and local self-government bodies

At the Government of the Russian Federation the consultative council on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies is established which acts on the voluntary basis.

The consultative council on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies at the Government of the Russian Federation:

- carries out coordination of the activity of national-cultural autonomies, facilitates establishment and consolidation of the relations between them;
- represents and defends cultural and social interests of ethnic communities in the bodies of state government of the Russian Federation;
- participates in the preparation of the federal programmes in the field of the preservation and development of national (native) languages and national culture, drafts of normative legal acts, as well as in the preparation of other decisions, concerning rights and legitimate interests of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community;
- advises the Government of the Russian Federation, federal bodies of the executive power on national problems of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community.

The consultative council on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies at the Government of the Russian Federation consists of the representatives from each federal national-cultural autonomy delegated for a definite term.

The procedure of the establishment, functioning and liquidation of the consultative council on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies at the Government of the Russian Federation is determined by the Government of the Russian Federation.

At the bodies of executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation, consultative councils or other advisory bodies on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies can be created. The procedure of establishment, functioning and liquidation of these bodies are established by the bodies of executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

At the bodies of local self-government of corresponding municipal formations consultative councils or other advisory bodies on the affairs of national-cultural autonomies can be formed. The order of establishment, functioning and liquidation of these bodies are determined by normative legal acts of municipal formations.

Chapter III. Ensuring the right of preservation, development and using the national (native) language

Article 8. The state protection of national (native) languages

The Russian Federation ensures the social, economic and legal protection of national (native) languages on the territory of the Russian Federation.

The right of citizens of the Russian Federation for preservation, development of the national (native) language, the freedom of choice and usage of the language of communication, upbringing and education is established by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, the Constitutions (charters) and laws of the subjects of the Russian Federation, by this federal law.

Article 9. Ensuring the right of preservation and development of the national (native) language.

Government bodies of the Russian Federation, government bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation:

- ensure implementation of the state policy directed to the preservation and development of national (native) languages;
- render financial (at the expense of means of corresponding budgets and extra-budgetary means), organisational and other support to the national-cultural autonomies in elaboration and implementation of state programmes in the field of preservation and development of national (native) languages.

Federal bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation assist national-cultural autonomies in:

- the publication of books, issuing the periodical press, organisation of TV and radio broadcasting, establishment of mass media both in Russian and in national (native) languages;
- the exchange of TV and radio programmes, audio and video materials, printed materials in national (native) languages between the subjects of the Russian Federation as well as between the Russian Federation and foreign countries.

Article 10. The right to the basic general education in the national (native) language and the choice of the language of upbringing and teaching

Citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to certain ethnic communities have the right to receive basic general education in the national (native) language and to the choice of the language of upbringing and teaching within the opportunities provided by the framework of education according to the legislation of the Russian Federation and the legislation of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Article 11. Ensuring the right to the basic general education in the national (native) language and the choice of the language for upbringing and teaching by the national-cultural autonomies

To ensure the right to the basic general education in the national (native) language and choice of the language for upbringing and teaching the national-cultural autonomies can:

- create non-state (public) pre-school establishments or groups in such establishments with upbringing in the national (native) language;
- create non-state (public) educational establishments (general, elementary, secondary and higher professional education) with instruction in the national (native) language;
- found other non-state (public) educational establishments with instruction in the national (native) language;
- elaborate, with the participation of aforementioned educational establishments, educational programmes, publish textbooks, methodological and other training literature which is necessary for ensuring the right to education in the national (native) language;
- submit proposals to federal bodies of the executive power, to the bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation and bodies of the local self-government about establishment of:
 - classes and groups with instruction in the national (native) language in the state, municipal educational establishments;
 - state, municipal educational establishments with teaching in Russian and extended learning of the national (native) language, national culture and history;
- take part in the development of the state educational standards as well as exemplary programmes for the state, municipal educational establishments with teaching in the national (native) language, other languages;
- organize the training and re-training of the pedagogical and other personnel for the non-state (public) educational establishments;
- conclude agreements with the non-governmental organizations outside of the Russian Federation about creating conditions for the realization of the right to education in the national (native) language, in particular agreements about training of the pedagogical personnel, about ensuring the scientific methodological, training, art literature, audio and video means of teaching in the national (native) language;
- carry out, in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation, other activities to ensure the right to education in national (native) language, the choice of the language of upbringing and teaching.

Non-state (public) educational establishments with instruction in the national (native) language ensure the teaching of Russian language as the official language of the Russian Federation according to the legislation of the Russian Federation and the state educational standards, as well as the teaching of the official languages of the subjects of the Russian Federation according to the legislation of these subjects.

Article 12. Ensuring by federal bodies of the executive power and bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation the right to the basic general education in the national (native) language, the choice of the language of upbringing and teaching.

Federal bodies of the executive power and bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation according to the legislation of the Russian Federation and the legislation of the subjects of the Russian Federation about on languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation, on education and according to this Federal law:

- ensure, when necessary, the creation of groups in the state, municipal pre-school establishments, classes or educational groups in the state, municipal educational establishments with teaching in the national (native) language;
- taking into consideration proposals of the national-cultural autonomies and particular conditions of a region, create the state educational establishments with teaching in the national (native) language, in Russian language with the extended learning of the national (native) language, national history and culture, as well as establishments of supplementary education (Sunday schools, optional courses, cultural-educational centres and other educational establishments) for learning and popularization of national (native) languages and national culture;
- assist in elaboration, publishing and acquiring educational programmes, textbooks, methodological aids and other educational literature necessary for teaching in the national (native) language;
- finance activities aimed at ensuring the right to education in the national (native) language in the state, municipal educational establishments at the expense of corresponding budgets and extra-budgetary assignments within the limits of funds allocated for education;
- organize, predominantly according to the recommendations of the national-cultural autonomies, training, re-training and vocational education of pedagogical and other personnel for educational establishments carrying out the educational activities in the national (native) language, other languages, also on the basis of the agreements between the subjects of the Russian Federation and international agreements;
- provide financial, juridical, organizational and other assistance to the national-cultural autonomies in creation of non-state educational establishments and in the development of other forms of upbringing and education in the national (native) language.

Chapter IV. Ensuring the right of preservation and development of the national culture

Article 13. Ensuring the right of preservation and development of the national culture by the national-cultural autonomies

To ensure the right of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to certain ethnic communities to the preservation and development of the national culture, the national-cultural autonomies can:

- create non-state (public) establishments of the national culture: theatres, cultural centres, museums, libraries, clubs, studios, archives and other establishments of culture and maintain their functioning;
- organize artistic unions, groups of the professional and amateur art, groups on learning the national heritage and achievements of the national culture;
- hold public events in the field of the national culture: festivals, contests, exhibitions, etc.;

- assist to organize of the national local lore, protection of the national monuments of history and culture; create ethnographic museums, museums of local lore and other voluntary museums;
- establish organizations dealing with art folk trade;
- publish historical, artistic, musical, folklore, ethnographic literature in the national (native) and other languages;
- found non-state (public) educational establishments on training creative workers, pedagogical and other personnel in the field of the national culture;
- develop and submit to the corresponding government bodies, bodies of the local self-government proposals about the preservation and development of the national culture;
- conclude agreements with non-governmental organizations located outside the territory of the Russian Federation on cultural exchange and cooperation in the field of the preservation of the national culture.

Article 14. Ensuring the right of preservation and development of the national culture by the federal bodies of the executive power, bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Federal bodies of the executive power, bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation, according to the legislation of the Russian Federation, the legislation of the subjects of the Russian Federation about culture and this Federal law:

- take into account proposals of the national-cultural autonomies in elaboration and implementation of federal and regional programmes of the national-cultural development;
- consider proposals of national-cultural autonomies about including into state educational standards for educational establishments carrying out educational programmes in the national (native) language, of courses on learning history, culture, ethnography, traditional kinds of labour activity, art folk trades, and make corresponding decisions;
- direct the activity of the state and municipal establishments of culture to the satisfaction of the needs of national-cultural autonomies;
- organize within the framework of state and municipal archives corresponding departments on culture, history, social life of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to certain ethnic communities;
- provide aid to the national-cultural autonomies in the creation of non-state (public) establishments of the national culture, opening non-state (public) educational establishments on training creative or other specialists, holding various public events in the field of the national culture;
- ensure the preservation of historical and cultural monuments valuable for the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to definite ethnic communities, which form a part of the cultural heritage of the Russian Federation;
- carry out other activities to create conditions for the preservation, revival and development of the national culture, realization of the national-cultural rights of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to a definite ethnic community.

Article 15. Ensuring the right of the national-cultural autonomies to the coverage of their activities in mass media

The state audiovisual media shall allocate broadcasting time for national-cultural autonomies. Periodicity, length of broadcasts and the language of broadcasts are determined by the agreements with founders and editorial staff of TV and radio programmes.

The government bodies of the Russian Federation, bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation support and encourage non-state media offering to national-cultural autonomies an opportunity to cover their activities free of charge.

In the federal programmes of the financial and organizational support to mass media, assistance to the media of national-cultural autonomies shall be included.

In the programmes of the subjects of the Russian Federation and local programmes of financial and organizational support to media, assistance to the media of national-cultural autonomies can be included.

Chapter 5. The financial and economic basis of the national-cultural autonomies

Article 16. The principles of financing of the national-cultural autonomies

The financing of the activities related to the implementation of the rights of the national-cultural autonomies is provided at the expense of:

- national-cultural autonomies, their establishments and organizations, private persons;
- the federal budget, the budgets of the subjects of the Russian Federation, local budgets.

Special federal, regional and local funds can be established for these purposes.

The financial means are provided to national-cultural autonomies for the financing of socially significant programmes of the national-cultural development, for carrying out events in the field of culture, education and charitable actions. Raising funds from non-budgetary sources cannot be the reason for decreasing budget appropriations allocated for the national-cultural development in the order envisaged by this Federal law.

Article 17. Ownership of the national-cultural autonomies

The national-cultural autonomies possess the ownership rights according to the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Article 18. Property of the national-cultural autonomies

The federal bodies of the executive power, bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation, bodies of the local self-government can transfer to the possession or lease to national-cultural autonomies, their non-commercial establishments and organizations, the state and municipal property in the order set by the legislation of the Russian Federation and the legislation of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

For carrying out their statutory goals and activities national-cultural autonomies, their non-commercial establishments and organizations can use premises transferred to them under the lease agreement.

The amount of payment for the lease of the premises by national-cultural autonomies, their non-commercial establishments and organizations, is determined in the order set for non-commercial organizations of culture and education on the territory of the given subject of the Russian Federation, and according to the Civil Code of the Russian Federation, other federal laws, laws and other normative legal acts of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Article 19. The financial support of the national-cultural autonomies by the State and local self-governments

In order to preserve the national identity, development of national (native) language and national culture, realization of national-cultural rights of the citizens of the Russian Federation who consider themselves to belong to certain ethnic communities, federal bodies of the legislative and executive power, bodies of the legislative (representative) and executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation:

- envisage appropriations for supporting the national-cultural autonomies in the federal budget as well as in the budgets of the subjects of the Russian Federation;
- take into account national needs when elaborating and spending federal funds of the regional development;
- create special federal, regional funds of national-cultural development;
- grant to the national-cultural autonomies tax, fee and loan privileges according to the legislation of the Russian Federation and legislation of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Bodies of the local self-government decide on the financial support of the local national-cultural autonomies according to the legislation of the Russian Federation about the local self-government.

Article 20. The main conditions of providing the state financial support to the national-cultural autonomies

Federal bodies of the executive power, bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation provide financial support to national-cultural autonomies, envisaged in article 19 of this Federal law, under the condition that these means are allocated for certain purpose and can be used only for the concrete activities. If necessary, such support is provided on the basis of the agreement with the corresponding national-cultural autonomy.

The choice of programmes and projects of the national-cultural development for the state financing is made by the bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation with the participation of the representatives of the national-cultural autonomies.

Federal financial bodies, financial bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation carry out supervision of usage of the allocated means according to their purpose prescription.

National-cultural autonomies must produce, in the set order and in time, the account about spending the state means received by them. In case of usage of the means of the state financial support not in accordance with the purpose prescription, the leadership of national-

cultural autonomies bear liability according to the established procedure.

Chapter VI. Final provisions

Article 21. Entry into force of this Federal law

This Federal law takes effect since the day of its official publication.

The president of the Russian Federation

B. Yeltsin

Moscow, the Kremlin

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