

Official translation

CONVENTION
on providing special rights
for the Slovenian minority living in the Republic of Hungary
and for the Hungarian minority living in the Republic of Slovenia

The Republic of Hungary and the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter: the Contracting Parties)

- desiring to ensure the legal protection and preservation and development of the identities of the Slovenian national minority living in the Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian minority living in the Republic of Slovenia at as high a level as possible;

- being convinced that the real equality of the Hungarian and Slovenian national minorities, and the preservation of their national identities could be achieved through ensuring special individual and common rights for them;

- having in mind the principles of the international documents safeguarding the rights of national minorities, namely:

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter for New Europe, the meetings of the Conference on Human Dimension of the CSCE in Paris, in Copenhagen and in Moscow, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the concept of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;

- taking into account of the fact that the full development of the national minorities especially within the territories where they are historically inhabited, alongside the Raba River in the Republic of Hungary and alongside the Mura River in the Republic of Slovenia, may enrich the cultural life and the co-operation between both countries

have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The Contracting Parties shall ensure the possibilities for the national minorities and individuals belonging to them of preservation, development and free expression of their cultural, linguistic, religious, full Slovenian and Hungarian identities. To this end, they shall create and implement such appropriate measures and mechanism in the fields of education, culture, mass information, publishing and scientific-research activity, economy and other which may promote the multifolded development of the minorities.

Article 2

The Contracting Parties with paramount attention shall promote the institutionalised learning of and studying in their mother tongue in pre-school, elementary, secondary and higher education and the knowledge of the culture, history and present reality of the mother nation and the national minority.

To this end, they shall endeavour the exchange of experience in the educational system of the national minorities especially the bilingual teaching and the alternative use of the school-books of each others.

In addition, they shall promote the exchange of teachers and students, educational work-help materials and instruments, organisation of courses and professional training, mutual granting of state and foundation scholarship for full, partial and post-graduate education, especially education for teachers and theologians.

Beside it, they shall encourage the study and learning the language, culture and history of the national minorities and their mother nation by individuals belonging to the majority nation.

Article 3

The Contracting Parties shall encourage the full gratification of the cultural needs of the national minorities.

They shall promote the establishment and operation of their cultural institutions, associations and foundations.

To this end, they shall promote the sending for non-commercial purpose (free of duty taxes) of books and periodicals, sound and video records, the publishing activity of the national minorities, guest plays of professional and amateur artistic groups as well as the organisation of all cultural and artistic events which may serve the enrichment of the culture and identity of the national minorities living in both countries.

Article 4

The Contracting Parties shall ensure for the members of the national minorities the free use of their own language in their private and public life, including the free use and registration of their original surnames and given names.

The Contracting Parties undertake to ensure within the territory historically inhabited by their respective national minorities the equal use of both languages especially in regard to geographic names and public signs, in the local administration, in oral and written communications, in front of administrative and judicial organs and in public institutions.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties admit the rights of both minorities for receiving and disseminating information through radio and television broadcasts in their mother tongue.

To this end, they shall ensure for the national minorities to exercise their own information activity and to develop it. They shall support the free flow of information in the languages of the national minorities as well as the co-operation between the mass media of the minority and majority nations.

The Contracting Parties shall provide the possibilities of receiving radio and television broadcasts from their country of living and from the mother nation, as well as regular and suitable time for radio and television programs in their mother language.

Article 6

The Contracting Parties shall support scientific research and studies on the rights, history and present situation of the national minorities. To this end, they shall support the participation of the national minorities in such research, the creation and operation of the organisations of the national minorities and their co-operation with the Contracting Parties and shall allow research on minority issues in their respective territories.

Article 7

The Contracting Parties undertake that, making plans on regional and economic developments, they shall take into account the special interests of the national minorities, and within the territories historically inhabited by national minorities, they ensure economic and social development, that makes possible the social and economic equality of national minorities.

The Contracting Parties in the interest of the national minorities shall support all forms of trans-boundary co-operation, especially economic co-operation.

The Contracting Parties shall support such kind of regional economic development which prevent the emigration of the inhabitants and the forcible change of the ethnic composition of the population in territories historically inhabited by national minorities.

Article 8

The Contracting Parties in conformity with their national legislation shall ensure the appropriate participation of the national minorities in adopting decisions at local, regional and national level concerning the rights and situation of the national minorities and their members.

Article 9

The Contracting Parties undertake not to form the administrative and regional organisations of the state and local self-governments at the expense of the national minorities. They shall make efforts to close the administrative districts and parliamentary constituencies to the districts inhabited by both national minorities. The Contracting Parties in conformity with their national legislation shall ensure the conditions for the activity of the nation-wide organisations of the national minorities for the protection of the national minorities and for the protection of their interests.

Article 10

The Contracting Parties shall ensure for the minorities the possibilities of maintaining free and direct contacts with the citizens, state, and public organisations of their respective mother nations. To this end, they shall first open new border points, provide transport connections and support the economic and cultural contacts as well as the exchange of professionals.

Article 11

The Contracting Parties undertake to take into account of obligations deriving from this convention in the conclusion of other agreements and programmes on co-operation.

The Contracting Parties shall ensure the participation of the representatives of the national minorities in the conclusion of treaties directly concerning the situation and rights deriving from this Convention.

Article 12

The Contracting Parties shall provide appropriate material and other support to the implementation of obligations under the present Convention.

Article 13

No article of the present Convention shall be interpreted or implemented in a way that the level of rights guaranteed or achieved be diminished.

Article 14

No provision of the present Convention shall be interpreted in a way that it harms the territorial integrity of each Contracting Parties.

Article 15

The Contracting Parties shall set up a special inter-governmental minority Commission for monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the present Convention. The respective governments of the Contracting Parties shall delegate an appropriate number of representatives to this Commission at every meeting. The members of the Commission from the respective national minorities shall be appointed upon the proposal of their organisations.

The inter-governmental Commission shall meet, at least, twice a year alternatively in the territories of the Contracting Parties.

The tasks of the inter-governmental Commission are the following:

- to discuss the current issues of both minorities;
- to evaluate the implementation of obligations under the Convention;
- to prepare and adopt recommendations for their respective governments concerning the implementation and in case of necessity the amendment of the Convention.

The Commission adopts its decisions by consensus.

Article 16

The present Convention is subject to ratification in conformity with the relevant legislation of each Contracting Parties.

The present Convention shall enter into force after the expire of two month from the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification, the Commission referred to in Article 15 may be set up immediately after signing the Convention.

Article 17

The present Convention shall remain in force for five years, its validity shall thereafter be extended for another 55 years unless either of the Parties terminates it giving a six month notice in written form.

Done at Ljubljana on 6 November 1992, in duplicate in the Hungarian and Slovenian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Republic of Hungary For the Republic of Slovenia