

Sixth Opinion on Italy

Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY 4
PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS 6
Priority recommendations 6
Other recommendations 6
Follow-up to these recommendations 7
MONITORING PROCEDURE 8
Follow-up activities and awareness-raising related to the recommendations of the Fifth Opinion of the Advisory Committee 8
Preparation of the state report for the sixth cycle 8
Country visit and adoption of the Sixth Opinion 8
ARTICLE-BY-ARTICLE FINDINGS 9
Scope of application (Article 3) 9
Population census (Article 3) 11
Legal and institutional framework for combatting discrimination (Article 4) 13
Preservation and promotion of minority cultures and languages (Article 5) 17
Promotion of intercultural dialogue, mutual respect and understanding (Article 6) 20
Protection from hostility and violence (Article 6) 23
Public service broadcasting in minority languages (Article 9) 25
Printed and online media in minority languages (Article 9) 27
Use of minority languages in contacts with the administration (Article 10) 29
Use of personal names in minority languages (Article 11) 31
Displays of minority language signs and topographical indications (Article 11) 32
Intercultural education and knowledge about national minorities (Article 12) 33
Equal access to education – Roma, Sinti and Caminanti (Article 12) 35
Teaching in and of minority languages (Article 14) 37
Effective participation in public affairs and decision-making processes (Article 15) 43
Housing conditions – Roma and Sinti (Article 15) 44
Effective access to employment and health – Roma and Sinti (Article 15) 46
Cross-border contacts and bilateral co-operation (Articles 17 and 18) 47

SUMMARY

1. In Italy, the scope of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities has remained unchanged over the sixth monitoring cycle and continues to be applied to the persons affiliating with the 12 "historical linguistic minorities" protected under the Law on Protection of Historical Linguistic Minorities (Law No. 482/99). This legislation provides financial support, on an annual basis, for specific areas of intervention (cultural activities, linguistic helpdesks, language training and toponomy). The funding can be requested only by state administrations, by non-profit national level public bodies, by local authorities, by chambers of commerce, by local health units and by the regions on whose territories the historical linguistic minorities live, but not by minority organisations as such. The actual allocation of the funds has been considerably reduced over the sixth monitoring cycle. The allocation occurs on a yearly basis, upon the issuing of a specific public notice and its implementation is subject to complex administrative procedures and rules (set out in Presidential Decree No. 345/01) which aim to guarantee the appropriate earmarking and management of the funds, but that make the full distribution of these funds and the establishment of long-term projects tailored to the needs and interests of the persons affiliating with the 12 linguistic minorities challenging. This impacts equal access to cultural and linguistic rights for numerically smaller minorities. These are less well placed to benefit from additional, regional and provincial legislation and financial support, in some cases deriving from the special autonomous status of the regions or provinces in which they live. Minority rights are thus protected and implemented in an asymmetric way within Italy.

2. Italy further applies the Framework Convention on an article-by-article basis to the Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti. A national legislative framework to protect their languages, traditions and cultures has yet to be introduced. Italy has adopted the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030). However, further efforts are required to combat segregated settlements and promote effective inclusion. Roma and Sinti are also significantly underrepresented in the labour market and further actions are needed to improve and provide long term and sustainable employment opportunities, particularly for women, as well as to overcome persisting practical barriers in access to healthcare and education.

3. Persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities are generally accepted as an integral part of society. However, the Advisory Committee is particularly concerned by a worrying general negative trend in societal climate regarding diversity in general, which materialises in practice by an increase of hate speech in the public and political discourse. This has targeted several groups, including persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti. Although some activities were carried out by UNAR, the Advisory Committee notes that the National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance, originally foreseen for the period 2021-2025, was only adopted in mid-2025.

Non-discrimination and data collection

4. Italy has developed a comprehensive legal framework for addressing discrimination. The National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) is a government body that acts as the Italian equality body at a national level. Its mandate regarding investigative and litigation powers needs to be strengthened and the necessary safeguards put in place to ensure it can perform its tasks independently from political or any other influence, and to comply with the Paris Principles. Since 2018 there has not been any data available on the number of hate crimes that have been prosecuted and sentenced.

5. Restrictions on the collection of statistics relating to ethnicity mean that there is insufficient data available at a national level to support the development of effective and targeted policies reflecting the needs and interests of persons affiliating with national minorities.

Education and media

6. The Italian educational system is characterised by different models. Schools and teachers have autonomy over which teaching and learning materials to use. Schools also have the authority to decide on 20% of the curriculum content, including *inter alia*, to valorise and enhance language competences. As a consequence, the situation of the 12 historical linguistic minorities varies significantly from one region to another, creating *de facto* a two-tier system in the teaching in and of minority languages in the country. Teaching of historical minority languages as an optional subject does not sufficiently encourage minority pupils to learn these languages while pursuing their studies and is insufficient for the development of their linguistic competences, which directly impacts on the long-term survival of these languages.

7. Radiotelevisione italiana (*RAI*), as the national public broadcasting company, is responsible for the inclusion of minority language programming within mainstream media. However, despite the objective set to provide an overall increase in programming and expansion of television and radio broadcasts in

minority languages, their availability does not meet the needs of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities and remains limited, even after the adoption of the *RAI* 2023-2028 service contract.

Effective participation in decision-making processes

8. Representation of the 12 historical linguistic minorities in public affairs provides them with limited influence on decision-making processes. The technical committee responsible for the allocation of the funds provided by Law No. 482/99. Representatives of government departments and other public regional, provincial and municipal bodies make up the majority of the members of this committee, rather than representatives of the historical linguistic minorities.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

9. The Advisory Committee proposes that the Committee of Ministers make the following recommendations with respect to the implementation of the Framework Convention by Italy.

10. The authorities should take the following priority measures to improve further the implementation of the Framework Convention, along with the implementation of all recommendations contained in this Opinion:

Priority recommendations

1) The Advisory Committee urges again the authorities to take all necessary steps to initiate and adopt, at the national level, a specific legislative framework for the protection of the rights of the Roma and Sinti, as well as the Caminanti, in effective consultation with their representatives at all stages of the process [see paragraph 25, Article 3].

2) The Advisory Committee urges again the authorities to ensure that long-term earmarked and sufficient funding is made available for the preservation and sustainable promotion of minority languages and cultures of the historical linguistic minorities [see paragraph 72, Article 5].

3) The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to increase their efforts to promote mutual respect, intercultural dialogue and understanding in society through education, cultural activities and the media at national, regional and local levels. The authorities should refrain from, and promptly and unequivocally condemn, all expressions of racist and xenophobic views, including from political leaders, and act resolutely against the proliferation of hate speech, including on social media [see paragraph 86, Article 6].

4) The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to ensure the full implementation of Law No. 482/99 regarding education, to ensure that education in and/or of minority languages is offered in territorial areas where these languages are traditionally spoken [see paragraph 177, Article 14].

5) The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to ensure that the equality body is fully independent, equipped with relevant financial and human resources, and vested with an appropriate and adequate mandate relevant to an equality body, including investigative powers and litigation competences [see paragraph 56, Article 4].

6) The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to develop a comprehensive and uniform data collection and statistical system among the police, the prosecution and the judicial authorities on the number of complaints related to hate crime and hate speech, and the number of cases being prosecuted and ultimately sentenced, disaggregated by categories of motivation and of victims [see paragraph 98, Article 6].

7) The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to implement and evaluate the impact of the National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in co-operation with the relevant stakeholders, so as to combat any expressions of racial hostility, hatred and xenophobia in society, including on the internet and during sports events [see paragraph 99, Article 6].

8) The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to ensure that persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities can use their respective language in contact with all local and/or regional administrations where Law No. 482/99 applies [see paragraph 125, Article 10].

9) The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to further strengthen, in close consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including Roma and Sinti representatives, integrated housing policies that go beyond settlement closures and promote long-term inclusion, with adequate living conditions and access to essential services, and to duly take into account the needs and interests of persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti [see paragraph 196, Article 15].

10) The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on the authorities to intensify their efforts to promote sustainable employment opportunities and to take measures to address practical barriers to healthcare for persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti, in particular for women and youth [see paragraph 203, Article 15].

Other recommendations

11. The authorities are invited to take account of the detailed observations and recommendations contained in the present Opinion of the Advisory Committee.

Follow-up to these recommendations

12. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to translate and publish the present opinion into the official and minority languages and disseminate its findings and recommendations widely among all stakeholders.

13. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to organise a follow-up event after the publication of this sixth-cycle Opinion to discuss and identify ways of implementing the recommendations made in this Opinion.

MONITORING PROCEDURE

Follow-up activities and awareness-raising related to the recommendations of the Fifth Opinion of the Advisory Committee

14.No round table to follow up on the recommendations of the Fifth Opinion of the Advisory Committee took place. The Opinion and Committee of Ministers Resolution were published on the website of the Ministry of Interior. However, they were not translated in Italian or in the national minority languages.[1]

Preparation of the state report for the sixth cycle

15.The sixth state report was received on 14 March 2024. Organisations representing and promoting the rights of persons affiliating with national minorities were consulted in its preparation.[2]

Country visit and adoption of the Sixth Opinion

16.This sixth-cycle Opinion on the implementation of the Framework Convention by Italy was adopted in accordance with Article 26(1) of the Framework Convention and Rule 25 of Resolution (2019)49 of the Committee of Ministers. The findings are based on information contained in the sixth state report, other written sources, as well as information obtained by the Advisory Committee from governmental and non-governmental sources during its visit to Alghero, Trieste, Udine and Rome from 7 to 11 April 2025.

17.The Advisory Committee expresses its gratitude to the authorities for their excellent co-operation before, during and after the visit, and to the other interlocutors it met during the visit for their valuable contributions. The draft opinion, as approved by the Advisory Committee on 16 October 2025, was transmitted to the Italian authorities on 20 October 2025 for observations, according to Rule 37 of Resolution (2019)49. The Advisory Committee welcomes the observations received from the Italian authorities on 2 January 2026.

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18. A number of articles of the Framework Convention are not covered in the present opinion. Based on the information currently at its disposal, the Advisory Committee considers that the implementation of these articles does not give rise to any specific observations. This statement is not to be understood as signalling that adequate measures have now been taken and that efforts in this respect may be diminished or even halted. Rather, the Advisory Committee considers that the obligations of the Framework Convention require a sustained effort by the authorities. The Advisory Committee assesses the situation in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time of monitoring.

[1] Portale Servizi.
[2] See sixth state report, p. 6 and its appendices 1 and 2.

ARTICLE-BY-ARTICLE FINDINGS

Scope of application (Article 3)

19. The territorial and personal scope of application of the Framework Convention in Italy has remained unchanged. At the constitutional level, the legal framework protecting national minorities[3] is primarily based on Article 6 of the Italian Constitution of 1947.[4] Additionally, specific constitutional provisions apply to the regions of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste.[5] At the national level, although several specific laws or legislative decrees have been adopted,[6] the main legislation governing the protection of historical linguistic minorities is Law No. 482/99.[7] This law aims at protecting on an equal basis the Albanian (Arbëresh),[8] Catalan, Croat, Franco-Provençal, French, Friulian, German, Greek, Ladin, Occitan, Sardinian and Slovene historical linguistic minorities.

20. Several laws protecting historical linguistic minorities have also been adopted at a regional level, in particular in the autonomous regions of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, as well as in the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen. These laws provide additional rights to persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities.[9] Some regions without similar statutes of autonomy, have occasionally adopted specific legislative measures that impact on the protection of minority rights in their respective territories.[10] The distribution of powers between the national and regional authorities – considering the specificities of the decentralised structure of the Italian Republic – has been the subject of jurisprudence by the Italian Constitutional Court, which has provided a clear delineation of responsibilities regarding the protection and use of minority languages at each legislative level.[11]

21. The Italian authorities, in their state report, provide information on the historical linguistic minorities protected under Law No. 482/99, considering them covered by the Framework Convention, as well as on Roma and Sinti, despite the absence of any legal instrument at a national level granting them comprehensive protection (see Articles 4 and 15).[12] A similar position has been adopted regarding the Caminanti.[13] The state report also addresses the situation of stateless persons of Roma affiliation.[14]

22. Some interlocutors of the Advisory Committee, who are considered as belonging to an already recognised historical linguistic minority indicated that they self-identify as belonging to a separate

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[3] In the domestic legislation, national minorities are referred to as "linguistic minorities" or "historical linguistic minorities". In the context of this Opinion, the terminology of the Framework Convention and the terminology used at the national level should be understood as having the same meaning.

[4] Constitution of the Italian Republic, Article 6: "The Republic safeguards linguistic minorities by means of appropriate measures."

[5] Special Statute for the Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia; Special Statute for Trentino Alto-Adige/Südtirol; Special Statute for the Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste.

[6] See for instance Law No. 38/01 on the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region; Legislative-Decree No. 262/10 regarding the protection of the Ladin, Mòcheno and Cimbrian populations of the province of Trento; Legislative-Decree No. 16/16 regarding the transfer of functions in the field of protection of the language and culture of historical linguistic minorities in Sardinia.

[7] Law No. 482/99 on the Protection of Historical Linguistic Minorities has been designed to secure the protection of the rights of 12 historical linguistic minorities: Albanian, Catalan, Croat, Franco-Provençal, French, Friulian, German, Greek, Ladin, Occitan, Sardinian and Slovene.

[8] The Albanian historical linguistic minority, settled in southern and insular parts of Italy (mostly in the regions of Calabria and Sicily, but also in the regions of Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Campania, and Molise) is called Arbëresh. Persons affiliating with this minority are referred to as Arbëreshë (the plural form of Arbëresh).

[9] See for instance in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste: Regional Law No. 47/98 safeguarding the linguistic and cultural characteristics and traditions of the Walser populations of the Lys Valley; in Friuli Venezia Giulia: Regional Law No. 20/09, Provisions for the protection and promotion of the German-speaking minorities of Friuli Venezia Giulia; in Sardinia: Regional Law No. 22/18 defines the competences of the Region in matters of language policy, in particular the promotion and enhancement of Catalan and Sardinian, but also Sassarian, Gallurian and Tabarquin, which are spoken in northern and southern Sardinia; in Trento: Law No. 6/08.

[10] See Norme regionali - Provincia Autonoma di Trento - Minoranze Linguistiche. See also, for instance, Regional Law No. 26/21 on the protection and enhancement of the Abruzzo regional linguistic heritage; Regional Law No. 23/20 on the protection of the Arbëreshë linguistic minority of Villa Badessa, a hamlet of the Municipality of Rosciano (PE) and extraordinary contribution to support the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy; Regional Law No. 5/12, Norms for the promotion and protection of minority languages in Apulia; Regional Law No.11/09 on the Protection, Development and Promotion of the Piedmont Linguistic Heritage; Regional Law No. 30/21 Promotion of the linguistic minorities present in the Veneto Region.

[11] See in this respect, *inter alia*, Constitutional Court Decisions Nos. 28/1982; 312/1983; 289/1987; 62/1992; 261/1995; 15/1996; 159/2009; 170/2010; 88/2011; 42/2017; 81/2018.

[12] It should be noted that, since the first monitoring cycle, several bills have been unsuccessfully submitted to the Italian Parliament to protect the rights of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti through specific legislation or by amending Law No. 482/99. This legislative vacuum was discussed in, and was subject of various recommendations in previous monitoring cycles (e.g. ACFC, Fifth Opinion on Italy, adopted on 5 October 2022, para. 46).

[13] The Caminanti is a semi-sedentary group widespread in Sicily. The largest community is found in the municipality of Noto, in the province of Syracuse, but there is also a settlement in the municipality of Riesi in the province of Caltanissetta. During its monitoring visit, the Advisory Committee did not have the opportunity to meet with Caminanti representatives.

[14] Sixth state report, pp. 7, 35-36 and 122-123.

linguistic and cultural minority and expressed the wish to be recognised as such.[15] Furthermore, several languages spoken in Italy which have been recognised as such in the World Atlas of Languages (WAL) in danger do not receive legal protection at the national level, despite several requests from their speakers.[16] The Advisory Committee has also been made aware of the interest expressed by some regional authorities to have the rights of inhabitants of their regions protected under the Framework Convention.[17]

23. The Advisory Committee reiterates that, on the one hand, "the right to free self-identification contained in Article 3 of the Framework Convention is a cornerstone of minority rights," and "access to minority rights should therefore not depend on formal recognition,"[18] while, on the other hand, "state parties have a margin of appreciation as regards the personal scope of application to be given to the Framework Convention to take the specific circumstances prevailing in their country into account. While the Framework Convention binds states parties from its entry into force within the domestic jurisdiction, its framework character nevertheless requires additional legal instruments at domestic level to make it fully operational. […] This margin must be exercised in accordance with […] the obligation to interpret a treaty in good faith and in the light of its object and purpose."[19] Therefore, "the Advisory Committee has […] called on states parties to ensure that all persons and groups who may benefit from the Framework Convention are made aware and enabled to avail themselves of the right to self-identify freely in order to access the rights contained in the Framework Convention."[20] "When examining the approaches taken by states parties with regard to the scope of application of the Framework Convention, the Advisory Committee has therefore consistently encouraged the authorities to be inclusive and context specific and to consider on an article-by-article basis which rights should be made available to whom. Such an approach not only ensures the most effective implementation of the Framework Convention based on fact rather than status, but it also promotes a societal climate of dialogue and understanding, where cultural diversity is viewed as a source of enrichment rather than division."[21]

24. The Advisory Committee, which welcomes the level of protection offered in the Italian legal system for the rights of persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities recognised under Law No. 482/99, notes that it practice, the implementation of this legislation, combined with the adoption of other legislation at the regional and provincial levels, does not offer the same level of protection for persons affiliating with these 12 minorities (see Articles 5, 10, 11, 14). It further notes that other measures, adopted at the regional and local levels, offer a certain degree of protection – albeit much more limited – to other minority languages, as contributing to the historical, artistic and immaterial heritage of the country.[22] However, Italy still has no legislative framework at the national level for protecting the minority rights of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti.[23] Concerning the situation of stateless persons, the Advisory Committee takes note of the regulatory changes that were introduced in citizenship acquisition laws, as well as the concrete support given by local authorities and civil society and welcomes the significant decrease in the number of stateless persons (from 15 000 to 2 000 persons during the monitoring cycle).[24] The Advisory Committee emphasises that an open and flexible approach to the scope of application of the provisions of the Framework Convention would adequately reflect the complex demographic, linguistic and cultural realities across the country and meet the existing needs and interests, in accordance with the Framework Convention.

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[15] For instance, in a communication submitted to the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues on 12 December 2022, the Associazione Identita e Tutela Val Resia sought recognition as a separate linguistic and cultural minority, distinct from the Slovene linguistic minority. On 18 September 2023, three special rapporteurs (including the Special Rapporteur on the right to education) jointly contacted the Italian authorities to receive their observations, which were communicated on 18 April 2024. See Special Rapporteur communications and Italy's responses (2023) - Centro di Ateneo per i Diritti Umani, consulted on 25 July 2025.

[16] See World Atlas of Languages (WAL) in danger. These languages are Emilian, Ligurian, Lombard, Neapolitan, Piedmontese, Romagnolo, Sicilian and Venetian.

[17] A notable event was the adoption of Regional Law No. 28/16, application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities,(by the Veneto Region. While this legislation was ultimately declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court in its Decision No. 81/18, the Advisory Committee notes that there remains interest from persons who self-identify as a national minority to be recognised as such in the national legal framework. See for instance bill no. 371, communicated on 28 November 2022, *Amendments to Law No. 482/99*, containing provisions on the protection of historical linguistic minorities.

[18] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4, The Framework Convention: a key tool to managing diversity through minority rights. The scope of application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted on 27 May 2016, paras. 9 and 28.

[19] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 6.

[20] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 14.

[21] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 7.

[22] See the provisions of Article 9 of the Constitution of the Italian Republic: "The Republic […] safeguards natural landscape and the historical and artistic heritage of the Nation".

[23] At the regional level, however, several laws have been adopted to recognise and protect the cultural identities and historical traditions of the Roma and Sinti. See for instance Regional Law No. 26/21, "Protection and promotion of the regional linguistic heritage of Abruzzo", which explicitly includes Romani.

[24] Sixth state report, p. 35.

Recommendations

25.**The Advisory Committee urges again the authorities to take all necessary steps to initiate and adopt, at the national level, a specific legislative framework for the protection of the rights of the Roma and Sinti, as well as the Caminanti, in effective consultation with their representatives at all stages of the process.**

26.The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to take a pragmatic, flexible, open and constructive approach to the scope of application of the Framework Convention, on an article-by-article basis, and invites them to establish a regular dialogue with persons having expressed an interest in the protection of rights enshrined in the Framework Convention to ensure its most effective implementation.

27.The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to further increase, at all levels, general awareness about the Framework Convention and Opinions of the Advisory Committee, to publish them on relevant official public websites in Italian and in minority languages and to make them accessible by other means to persons affiliating with national minorities.

Population census (Article 3)

28.At the national level, data on national minorities are limited due to legal restrictions on the collection of statistics relating to ethnicity. Since October 2018, the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT)[25] has conducted annual surveys, on a sampling basis, by collecting the main characteristics of Italy's resident population and its social and economic conditions at national, regional and local levels.[26] However, this data collection does not encompass ethnic, linguistic or religious self-affiliation of respondents. Law No. 482/99 does not allow for the collection of data on the estimated number of persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities,[27] and no official statistics are published at the national level on the public use of minority languages, the number of pupils attending courses in or of minority languages, or on the audience of media outlets in minority languages, which are the three main pillars of this legislation. To the knowledge of the Advisory Committee, the most recent analysis on "the use of Italian language, dialects and foreign languages" was published in 2017 by ISTAT.[28] The authorities informed the Advisory Committee that UNAR was preparing new research activities and surveys on access to social and health services, and on issues related to discrimination and the recognition of Roma and Sinti cultures.

29.In the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen, citizens and residents are required to make, every ten years, an anonymous individual declaration of their affiliation with one of the three linguistic groups (Italian, German and Ladin).[29] Additionally, residents of the province of Bolzano/Bozen must fill in a non-anonymised individual declaration of their linguistic affiliation. This declaration is deposited with the district courts. Neither declaration allows the possibility to declare multiple affiliations and do not mention languages other than Italian, German or Ladin. In the autonomous province of Trento, an optional question on linguistic affiliation to Ladin, Mòcheno and Cimbrian is included in the local census.[30] Furthermore, in this province, a sociolinguistic survey on the status of minority languages was carried out in 2022, with the aim, *inter alia*, of developing targeted language policy guidelines for 2020-2030.[31]

30.In 2023, in the Veneto region, an initial survey on the historical linguistic minorities was conducted as part of the application of Regional Law No. 30/21.[32] The purpose of the survey was to identify the

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[25] Istat.
[26] The permanent census of Population and Housing does not involve all Italian households anymore, but only a sample every year: about 1 400 000 resident households located in 2 800 Italian municipalities.
[27] Article 3 of Law No. 482/99 refers to the territorial scope of application of the law and the criteria that must be met for a municipality to be covered by this legislation. Currently, the law applies to 1 033 municipalities (out of 7 914) in 14 regions (out of 20) are concerned. During this monitoring cycle, the number of municipalities where provisions of this law apply has remained the same.
[28] ISTAT, "the use of Italian language, dialects and foreign languages", published on 27 December 2017. See also this Excel document which has a summary of the information. According to this report, in 2015, 32.2% of the population aged six years or more express themselves in both Italian and a "dialect" with 14% mainly using the "dialect" at home, i.e. 26 349 000 persons in total. The study adds that another 6.9% use a third language.
[29] See Article 18.1 of Presidential Decree No. 752/76, as amended by Legislative-Decree No. 150/21. According to the 2024 local census, 68.61% of the population affiliated with the German linguistic group, 26.98% with the Italian linguistic group and 4.41% with the Ladin linguistic group. Of the 116 South Tyrolean municipalities, 102 have a German-speaking, eight have a Ladin-speaking, and six an Italian-speaking majority.
[30] Legislative Decree No. 592/93, Implementation rules of the special statute of the Trentino - Alto Adige region concerning provisions for the protection of the Ladin, Mòcheno and Cimbrian populations of the province of Trento, article 4; ISPAT, Survey on the number and territorial distribution of persons belonging to language communities speaking Ladin, Mòcheno and Cimbro, 2021.
[31] See CLaM 2021.
[32] Regional Law No. 30/21.

overall number of speakers, the degree of preservation and use of minority languages, and, more generally, any risks to their ongoing survival.[33]

31. Efforts have been made to improve data collection relating to the Roma and Sinti, as well as Caminanti. The National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) includes the possibility to organise territorial surveys on a sampling basis to measure the early school drop-out rates of pupils affiliating with the Roma and Sinti. These data will be used to establish educational initiatives that guarantee their access to quality inclusive general education.

32. In the absence of specific legislation authorising and governing the collection of data (except in the two autonomous provinces of the Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol region), various means are used at different levels to counter this lack of information, for instance, sociological surveys and research studies by individual ministries or NGOs. An example of this is the AlpiLinK (Alpine Languages in Contact) project, developed in collaboration between the Universities of Verona, Trento, Bolzano/Bozen, Turin, and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, which focuses on the promotion and research of the German-speaking, Romance and Slavic minority languages and dialects spoken across the Alpine regions of Italy. This initiative is funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research[34] as a 'project of relevant national interest'.[35]

33. During the monitoring visit, the Advisory Committee was alerted by interlocutors of a general decrease in the overall number of persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities. Although the reasons for this decline vary among the different minorities, depending on their individual contexts, most attribute it to an ageing population and the absence of compulsory teaching in and of their minority languages in the school curriculum, particularly in areas where they are traditionally spoken (see Article 14).

34. The Advisory Committee reiterates "the importance of collecting reliable disaggregated data to draw up, implement and evaluate effectively policies that respect and promote the linguistic needs and rights of persons belonging to different groups".[36] While the "collection, storage and use of such data must fully respect existing standards on personal data protection […], states are encouraged to collect data from a variety of sources, in addition to the population census, such as formal and informal household or school surveys, as well as independent research."[37] "Results should be reassessed periodically and analysed flexibly, in close consultation with minority representatives."[38] Declarations of multiple affiliations, not only ethnic but also linguistic, could, if duly counted and published, be a potential asset for reinforcing interethnic dialogue and demonstrating diversity within society.

35. The Advisory Committee regrets that no comprehensive data are collected at the national level on the number of persons self-affiliating with an ethnic and/or historical linguistic minority, as this would contribute to the protection, preservation and development of their languages and cultures and would facilitate the development of dedicated policies to address their respective needs and interests. While it welcomes the independent qualitative and quantitative research that has been conducted, and which has sometimes been supported at the governmental level, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the ISTAT could include non-compulsory and anonymous questions about multiple ethnic and/or linguistic affiliations in its questionnaires and collect such data within the framework of the existing legislation. Furthermore, it notes that the latest analysis carried out by the ISTAT in 2015 on "the use of the Italian language, dialects and foreign languages" could be updated and include an explicit reference to all minority languages spoken in Italy, including an analysis of the age, level of education, and number of speakers.[39]

36. The Advisory Committee recalls that a National Fund for the Protection of Linguistic Minorities, referred to in Articles 9 and 15 of Law No. 482/99, has been established at the Department for Regional Affairs and Autonomies, with annual funding earmarked in the budget law (see Article 4).[40] While this fund is not *per se* based on the number of persons affiliating with each minority, several criteria currently

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[33] See Survey on the language communities in Veneto.
[34] Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca.
[35] AlpiLinK aims to document cross-linguistically comparable data from the non-standard language varieties, e.g. dialects and minority languages, spoken in the alpine regions of Italy. The data collection in the project is conducted via online crowdsourcing. Any speaker of the investigated language varieties can register on the platform and participate in the linguistic survey by audio-recording their answers to a variety of linguistic tasks (e.g. translation, image description etc.).
[36] See ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3, The Language Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities under the Framework Convention, adopted on 24 May 2012, para. 19.
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] See ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 18.
[39] ISTAT, "the use of Italian language, dialects and foreign languages", published on 27 December 2017.
[40] Dipartimento per gli Affari Regionali e le Autonomie.

being taken into account call for a collection of quantitative and qualitative data from the national authorities (see Article 5).[41]

37. The Advisory Committee further regrets that it is not possible to declare multiple affiliations in the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen and that it is still mandatory to declare belonging to or association with one of the three linguistic groups (Italian, German and Ladin) in the census. In addition, the lack of the possibility to declare multiple affiliations in the individual declaration of linguistic affiliation remains problematic. The absence of such a declaration continues to have negative practical consequences for the individuals concerned (e.g. in civil servant recruitment, financial allocations, and the exercise of political rights). In the autonomous province of Trento, an optional question on Ladin, Mòcheno and Cimbrian linguistic affiliation is included in the census.

38. The Advisory Committee regrets the lack of reliable statistical data on the Roma and Sinti, as well as on the Caminanti, despite the recent provision in the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030)[42] to organise territorial surveys on a sampling basis. These surveys aim to measure the early school drop-out rate of Roma and Sinti pupils and to establish educational initiatives that guarantee their access to quality inclusive general education, ensuring that they receive the full ten years of compulsory education (see Article 12).

Recommendation

39. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to explore ways of collecting comprehensive and reliable national-level disaggregated data on persons affiliating with national minorities, in conformity with international standards, with a view to informing the design and implementation of state policies on national minorities.

Legal and institutional framework for combatting discrimination (Article 4)

40. The Italian anti-discrimination legal framework is primarily anchored in Article 3 of the Italian Constitution.[43] This provision is complemented by Article 6, which guarantees the protection of historical linguistic minorities, contributing to the broader framework of anti-discrimination efforts. Law No. 300/70 (the Workers Act) contains a provision banning discriminatory acts against workers on the grounds of "race", sexual orientation, disability, age, religion and personal belief.[44] In addition, a specific legal tool is provided through the criminal legislative framework on 'hate speech' which includes references to discriminatory acts of a different nature on the grounds of "race", ethnicity and religion.

41. Several national provisions also implement European Union directives, for example the Legislative-Decree No. 215/03, which specifically addresses discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of "race", ethnicity and nationality in areas such as employment, education, social security and housing.[45] Legislative-Decree No. 216/03 aims to combat discrimination in the workplace based on religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.[46] These laws apply to both private and public sectors, but they have not been framed to explicitly address discrimination on the basis of intersectional characteristics.

42. The general law on pre-trial mediation now applies to all anti-discrimination claims. In court, the alleged victims of discrimination can use a fast-track procedure.[47] In urgent cases, the judge can issue an interim order, the violation of which is a criminal offence.[48] However, in most cases, in the first instance, self-representation is no longer possible and a lawyer is required at all stages of the procedure.[49] In cases related to "race" and "ethnic origin", the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) keeps a list of associations and bodies authorised to take legal action to support

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[41] See the provisions of Article 3 of Law No. 482/99. See also Article 7 of the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 30 March 2023, *Determination of the criteria for the distribution of the funds referred to in Articles 9 and 15 of Law No. 482/99, for the three-year period 2023-2025*, clearly refers to the a) historicity of the language; b) use of the protected language as a means of expression by members belonging to the respective language minority; c) effective historical rootedness, understood as continuity over the centuries of the settlement in the territory of the protected linguistic minority.

[42] National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030).

[43] Constitution of the Italian Republic, Article 3: "All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions. It is the duty of the Republic to remove those obstacles of an economic or social nature which constrain the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby impeding the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organisation of the country."

[44] Law No. 300/70, Article 15.

[45] Legislative-Decree No. 215/03.

[46] Legislative-Decree No. 216/03.

[47] The primary mechanism is the "simplified cognition procedure" (*procedimento semplificato di cognizione*) set under Articles 281-decies et seq. of the Code of Civil Procedure (in replacement of the former Article 702-bis of the Code of Civil Procedure).

[48] See Articles 700 and 669-bis et seq. of the Code of Civil Procedure.

[49] See Article 82 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

or act on behalf of victims of discrimination.[50] In all cases of discrimination, the burden of proof is reversed once the claimant produces evidence (which may include statistical data) that can precisely and consistently establish a presumption of the existence of discriminatory acts, agreements or behaviours.[51] No class action has yet been introduced in cases of discrimination, although this possibility has been available since 2021.[52]

43. At an institutional level, there is no dedicated body specifically protecting the rights of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities protected under Law No. 482/99 in cases of discrimination. The Joint Institutional Committee for the Problems of the Slovene Minority,[53] although created to provide responses to issues faced by the Slovene linguistic minority, is not competent to respond to individual requests of persons who are victims of discrimination.

44. UNAR continues to be one of the main institutions responsible for tackling discrimination and acts as the Italian equality body at the national level.[54] UNAR is part of the Department for Equal Opportunities in the Presidency of the Council of Ministers[55] and is headed by a director appointed by the Prime Minister or a delegated minister. It has a legal obligation to report on its activities to the parliament and the government.[56]

45. UNAR plays an important role in shaping and co-ordinating governmental policies on anti-discrimination efforts and inclusion. Notably, it was responsible for the drafting and adoption of the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030),[57] and serves as a co-ordinating body for the implementation of this strategy (see Article 15). On 4 June 2025, a new National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance[58] was adopted by the Ministry for Family, Birth Rate and Equal Opportunities,[59] with the technical support of UNAR. The authorities reported that some activities and initiatives had been carried out in 2020-2025, already before the adoption of this plan. This plan is intended to implement the European Union Action Plan against Racism 2020-2025 at the national level and is prioritising six areas: work and employment; housing; education, culture, and sport; health; security and justice; communication and media.[60] UNAR is also responsible for organising campaigns[61] and projects[62] to combat stereotypes and foster social cohesion. Furthermore, UNAR has the competences to conduct studies.

46. UNAR also gathers data on discrimination and provides independent assistance to alleged victims of discrimination through its contact centre.[63] In cases in which UNAR considers that discrimination has occurred, it contacts the responsible party and provides recommendations to remedy the situation by ceasing the offending action. The power of UNAR relies entirely on its persuasion and moral authority and its mandate does not entitle it to engage in litigation proceedings.

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[50] Legislative-Decree No. 215/03, Article 6. These associations and bodies can also act through *actio popularis* against discrimination on the grounds of "race" and/or "ethnic origin" when the victim is not identified. In cases concerning other grounds of discrimination (under Legislative-Decree No. 216/03), associations and bodies standing to litigate in support of or on behalf of victims of discrimination without being registered in a list.
[51] Legislative-Decree No. 150/2011, Article 28.
[52] See Law No. 31/19.
[53] The Joint Institutional Committee for the Problems of the Slovene Minority has been created under Law No. 38/01.
[54] UNAR was created under Article 7 of Legislative-Decree No. 215/03. Its competences, initially on tackling discrimination based on ethnic origin and "race", as well as "racism of a cultural and religious nature", where extended progressively to include discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender, age, disability, religion and personal convictions. For more information, see European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Sixth monitoring cycle on Italy, adopted on 2 July 2024, paras. 1-6, and European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination, 2024 Italy Country Report on Non-Discrimination, pp. 60-69.
[55] Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità. The authorities indicate that on 1 October 2018, the Secretary General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers issued a circular reiterating the legal safeguards protecting UNAR's independence, *inter alia*, a strict definition of UNAR's competences in the primary legislation, a funding of UNAR's activities through an annual allocation established by law, a clearly defined role of UNAR's co-ordinator, considered both as a public manager and as the head of a body with specific characteristics of independence, including the management of UNAR's financial resources. The authorities recall that UNAR's independence safeguards were confirmed by the European Commission's closure, on 7 March 2019, of the EU PILOT procedure 8034/15/JUST regarding the correct application of Directive 2000/43/EC.
[56] Relazioni alle Istituzioni - UNAR.
[57] The National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) was adopted by Directorial Decree No. 90/22 on 23 May 2022.
[58] National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance.
[59] Dipartimento per le politiche della famiglia.
[60] Un nuovo Piano nazionale contro il razzismo, la xenofobia e l'intolleranza.
[61] See for instance the Action week against racisms or the Week for the promotion of Romani culture and the fight against anti-Gypsyism campaigns.
[62] See for instance the Play in my shoes, the TO.BE.Roma or the PON Inclusion projects. More information can be found in the 2023 UNAR report to Parliament.
[63] Call Contact Center.

47. During this monitoring cycle, UNAR has continued to sign co-operation agreements and memoranda of understanding with entities, institutions or associations to support and strengthen actions of prevention of all forms of racism.[64]

48. In addition to UNAR, the Observatory for Security against Discrimination (OSCAD) was set up in 2010 as part of the Department of Public Security within the Central Directorate of the Criminal Police.[65] It has been tasked with preventing, countering and monitoring hate crimes (see Article 6). To this end, it provides qualified support to victims of hate crime, in particular on the grounds of "race", ethnicity or religious belief. After receiving a report on an act of discrimination, OSCAD initiates targeted interventions at local level to be carried out by the National Police and the *Carabinieri* and monitors the development of the reported case. In addition to this, OSCAD carries out human rights training for police officers and is working towards addressing the under-reporting of crimes that are committed with a discriminatory motive. OSCAD regularly organises training activities for law enforcement officers, awareness-raising campaigns to schools or via mass media and maintains relations with private and public associations and institutions dedicated to combatting all forms of discrimination.[66]

49. In 2020 the Italian authorities also appointed a national co-ordinator for the fight against antisemitism.[67] The national co-ordinator has adopted a National Strategy for the Fight against Anti-Semitism (2025-2029) and their responsibility is to "promote and strengthen the activities of prevention and fight against anti-Semitism, also through concerted actions with persons of Jewish origin and Jewish institutions, and by carrying out the necessary co-ordination with public administrations for the matters of their respective competence".[68]

50. The Communications Regulatory Authority (AGCOM)[69] has a regulatory and supervisory function in the areas of electronic communications, audiovisual, publishing, postal services and more recently online platforms. AGCOM ensures respect for the fundamental rights of the person in the communications sector and exercises the function of user guarantees, combatting all forms of discrimination.[70] In particular, information and entertainment programmes must not contain expressions that are likely, directly or indirectly, to spread, incite, propagate or justify, minimise or otherwise legitimise violence, hatred or discrimination and offend human dignity against a group of persons or a member of a group on the basis of one of the grounds set out in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or be in violation of Article 604-bis of the Criminal Code.[71] It should be noted that AGCOM is accountable for its actions to parliament. Furthermore, with regard to the protection of human dignity and the fight against hate speech, AGCOM has already adopted a specific regulation which remains in force with reference to possible violations of the general principles regarding the protection of fundamental human rights (see Article 6).[72]

51. At regional level, regional ombudspersons (*defensori civici regionali*) act as the independent body in cases of maladministration of the public administration.[73] Regional ombudspersons can deal with cases of discrimination in their territory. However, in practice, only a limited number of cases of discrimination

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[64] Protocolli e accordi - UNAR.
[65] Osservatorio per la sicurezza contro gli atti discriminatori - OSCAD | Ministero dell'Interno.
[66] Sixth state report, p. 35.
[67] Coordinatore nazionale per la lotta contro l'antisemitismo.
[68] National strategy for combatting antisemitism (2025-2029). The strategy is developed along five lines of action: research and data collection and analysis; training in schools at all levels, in universities and in the world of sport and work; enhancement of the culture of memory; guaranteeing the safety of Jewish communities and developing knowledge of their life and worship activities; attention to the digital dimension.
[69] Agcom.
[70] Legislative-Decree No. 208/21, Article 4, para.1. Article 30 of Legislative-Decree No. 208/21 expands the tools available to AGCOM in terms of protecting fundamental human rights and combatting hate speech and delegates to AGCOM itself the definition, with a specific regulation, of suitable binding criteria in order to direct the programming of audiovisual media service providers.
[71] Criminal Code, Article 604-bis.
[72] Resolution no. 157/19/CONS.
[73] There are regional ombudspersons in almost all regions in Italy, except in Puglia and Sicily. In Basilicata, Molise and Umbria, the respective positions are vacant (in October 2025). In Trentino Alto-Adige, the regional system provides for the establishment of the ombudspersons at the level of the two autonomous provinces. The National Co-ordination of Ombudspersons of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces acts as a body responsible for ensuring co-ordination, enhancement, dissemination and valorisation of the institutional role of the ombudspersons in Italy. The Advisory Committee notes that the role played by the Protection Centre against discriminations (*Centro di tutela contro le discriminazioni*) of the regional Ombudsperson of the Province of Bolzano/Bozen (*Difesa civica della Provincia di Bolzano/Bozen),* as an independent service for people suffering from discrimination, goes beyond the competences of other regional ombudspersons (see Provincial Law No. 11/20).

concerning persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities were reported during the sixth monitoring cycle.[74]

52. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "a variety of methods may be applied by states to promote equality and supervise the implementation of equality legislation, including the creation of specific anti-discrimination bodies, ombudspersons, or other specialised institutions."[75] In this regard, the Advisory Committee emphasises that equality bodies should have both *de jure* and *de facto* independence and they should function without any interference from the state, political parties or other actors. They should be able to proactively exercise all their functions and competences, in close co-operation with minority representatives/persons concerned. In particular, these bodies should be empowered with the possibility to develop, implement and monitor regularly specific measures, strategies, and to effectively support victims in achieving legal remedy. The Advisory Committee further underlines the particular importance of awareness-raising among persons belonging to minorities in general, and amongst those communities most exposed to discrimination in particular, of the measures available to them. Such awareness-raising measures, which should include easily accessible online services, are imperative to make the legal and institutional anti-discrimination framework more accessible. Furthermore, "the Advisory Committee has consistently emphasised the importance of regularly collecting reliable and disaggregated equality data related to the number and situation of persons belonging to national minorities."[76]

53. The Advisory Committee notes that Italy has adopted a comprehensive anti-discrimination legal framework which is applicable to both the private and public sectors. The Advisory Committee further welcomes the existing possibility for alleged victims of discrimination to use a fast-track procedure, and the fact that in all cases of discrimination, the burden of proof is reversed. In addition to UNAR, which acts as a national equality body, the Advisory Committee notes the existence of several meaningful sectorial institutions tasked with addressing discrimination issues. However, the Advisory Committee notes that the institutional independence and mandate of UNAR, which has been regularly questioned by international bodies, in particular for continuing to function as a governmental entity not vested with investigative powers, is not in line with the Paris Principles.[77] It also regrets that UNAR does not have litigation competences. The Advisory Committee considers that participation of a specialised body in court cases on discrimination would contribute to ensuring that relevant standards are duly taken into account. It also considers that a follow-up of UNAR's recommendations is needed. However, the Advisory Committee appreciates UNAR's contributions and measures (through its solidarity fund) to reduce the high legal costs of procedures for individuals, which remain a barrier to accessing justice.[78]

54. The Advisory Committee further welcomes the adoption and ongoing implementation of National Strategy for the Fight against Anti-Semitism (2025-2029) and the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) and the roles played respectively by the national co-ordinator for the fight against antisemitism and UNAR (see Articles 8 and 15). Although some activities were carried out by UNAR in 2020-2025, the Advisory Committee deeply regrets that the National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance was adopted only in June 2025 to meet formally with the requirements set at the European Union level. Furthermore, it remains unclear to the Advisory Committee for which time-period the objectives and activities of the newly adopted National Plan are envisaged and how they will be financed.

55. Additionally, the Advisory Committee is of the view that further work is needed to create a comprehensive official database with reports of discrimination in Italy, which could be used by both the police and the judiciary in discrimination cases and serve as the basis of governmental policies (see Article 6). The Advisory Committee acknowledges that, at this stage, the Italian authorities are not ready to collect data on ethnic affiliations at large scale and invoke legal restrictions on the collection of ethnic statistics (see Article 3). Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee contends that a different system of collecting disaggregated equality data could be envisaged.

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[74] In its 2023 annual report, the Protection Centre against discriminations of the regional ombudsperson of the province of Bolzano/Bozen pointed out that the second most frequent requests have concerned issues related to racism and discrimination based on ethnicity (p. 4). However, no particular case was identified as such regarding persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities in this territory. In its 2023 annual report, the regional ombudsperson of the autonomous province of Trento referred to one case of alleged discrimination on ethnic and linguistic minorities grounds regarding access to social and cultural services.
[75] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 28.
[76] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 66.
[77] UN, Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (Paris Principles), 1993.The authorities can also draw inspiration from ECRI, General Policy Recommendation No. 2 on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level, 2017; Venice Commission, Principles on the protection and promotion of the ombudsman institution ("the Venice principles"), 2019; Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation on the development and strengthening of effective, pluralist and independent national human rights institutions, 2021.
[78] Fondo di solidarietà - UNAR.

Recommendations

56.**The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to ensure that the equality body is fully independent, equipped with relevant financial and human resources, and vested with an appropriate and adequate mandate relevant to an equality body, including investigative powers and litigation competences.**

57.The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to raise public awareness on the anti-discrimination legislation and existing legal remedies available, as well as to collect further official data and conduct additional research on cases of discrimination.

58.The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to provide additional financial support to the solidarity fund for the judicial protection of victims of discrimination run by UNAR.

Preservation and promotion of minority cultures and languages (Article 5)

59.Law No. 482/99 remains the main legislative source for the preservation and promotion of cultural activities of the 12 historical linguistic minorities.[79] Additionally, Law No. 38/01 guarantees specific cultural rights for the Slovene linguistic minority and provides significant financial support for maintaining its cultural and linguistic heritage.[80] The Department for Regional Affairs and Autonomies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers is responsible for the governance of the annual allocation of funds guaranteed under Law No. 482/99, with assistance from a technical committee.[81] While Law No. 482/99 earmarks a maximum annual sum of €9.5 million, increased by a further €3.5 million in subsequent legislation,[82] the full sum has never actually been allocated, and a significant decrease has been recorded over the past few years. The authorities justify the reduction of funding between 2022 and 2023, from €6 million to €4.2 million, by reference to "the difficult economic situation".[83] and the transfer of residual amounts not used in previous years (€995 933 for 2021 and €1 141 573.89 for 2022). The Advisory Committee notes that the total amount of allocation was further decreased in 2024 to €2 905 823 and in 2025 to €2 760 533.[84] According to the authorities, an online platform is being set up to streamline and make the allocation mechanism more efficient. This platform will digitalise the process of acquiring funding applications from national and local administrations.

60.In their state report, the authorities informed the Advisory Committee of a substantial decrease in the funding allocated between 2022 and 2023.[85] In accordance with the rules set under Presidential Decree No. 345/01,[86] the annual distribution of funds remains project-based and is open only to state administrations, non-profit national level public bodies, local authorities, chambers of commerce, local health units and the regions on those territories the historical linguistic minorities live, excluding *de jure* private organisations such as cultural associations.[87] Public entities may apply for funding only once a year, and eligible projects may cover the following four subcategories: linguistic helpdesks, language training, topographical indications and/or cultural activities. While a project can cover multiple subcategories, only one funding per subcategory can be allocated. Furthermore, the authorities report different examples of activities being carried out for the preservation and development of minority cultures (conferences, digitisation of archival inventories, preservation of cultural heritage, festivals, etc.).[88] In the opinion of the authorities, limiting the length of funding and related projects to one year enables more effective control of funding use by the various recipient administrations and bodies.

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[79] Law No. 482/99, Articles 9 and 15. The Advisory Committee notes the existence of sectorial legislation with provisions favourable to linguistic minorities ('*dialetti*'), such as Article 2 of Decree No. 47/21 of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and for Tourism, which includes Italian dialects ("dialetti") in the notion of "audiovisual work of Italian original expression", or Articles 4(6), 5(1)h and 50(9) of Legislative-Decree No. 208/21, which states that "at local level, media services enhance and promote regional or local cultures within the framework of the country's political, cultural and linguistic unity. Linguistic minorities are protected by reserving a share of local broadcasting capacity for audiovisual media services that represent those linguistic minorities."

[80] Law No. 38/01, Article 27.

[81] Dipartimento per gli Affari Regionali e le Autonomie. See also Article 12 of the Presidential Decree No. 345/01. The technical committee is composed of representatives of government departments directly involved in the implementation of minority policies, representatives of the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), the Union of Italian provinces (UPI), the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces, the Federative Committee of Linguistic Minorities in Italy (CONFEMILI), and five experts appointed by the minister, one of whom serves as a co-ordinator of the Committee.

[82] Law No. 160/19 of 27 December 2019, Article 1(549).

[83] Sixth state report, p. 9.

[84] Sixth state report, pp. 9-11. See Public Notice aimed at enhancing the languages and cultures protected by Law No. 482/99, years 2025 and 2024.

[85] *Ibid.*

[86] Presidential Decree No. 345/01.

[87] Presidential Decree No. 345/01, Article 8. Given specific memoranda of understanding, the regions of Friuli Venezia Giulia and Sardinia receive direct allocations of funds and are entitled to disburse the funding themselves.

[88] Sixth state report, pp. 24-29.

61. A number of cultural initiatives are implemented at the local and regional levels in co-operation with an active network of committed organisations, to promote Italy's cultural and linguistic diversity.[89] Among many positive examples, the Advisory Committee notes the offer of books in French and Walser German in the regional and territorial libraries of the Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, the organisation of the annual Cimbrian Festival of Roana in Veneto, the ongoing cultural, social and economic regeneration of the village of Palù del Fersina in Trentino Alto Adige, the promotion of the Occitan culture in Piedmont, the support of theatrical activities to enhance Friulian culture and language, the publication of the daily newspaper *Primorski dnevnik* in Friuli Venezia Giulia (see Article 9), the creation of local museums about the Arbëreshe culture in Abruzzo, Basilicata, Campania and Sicily, a collection of biographies and photographic research with focus on the role of women affiliating with the Arbëreshe linguistic minority in Calabria, the support for the Croatian material and immaterial heritage through the 'Walk of the Seven Churches", designed to promote slow and sustainable tourism in Molise, and the *Aderfos Ellenico* cultural exchange between the municipality of Zollino in Puglia and the municipality of Aigialeia in Greece (see Article 18).[90] The Advisory Committee further commends the organisation of the Babel Film Festival in the municipality of Cagliari (Sardinia). This festival is the first international film competition intended solely for film productions that describe and relate to historical linguistic minorities.[91]

62. During the Advisory Committee's visit, representatives from most national minorities were positive about the support for their minority cultures. However, they pointed out several shortcomings and problems regarding the implementation of Law No. 482/99 and in particular its systematic underfunding, with regular substantial cuts. Whilst amendments to Law No. 482/99 had been envisaged, these have never materialised in practice. Representatives of the 12 historical linguistic minorities, especially those affiliating with the numerically smaller ones, expressed a reluctance for such an amendment of the legislation, for fear this would reduce funding further. Furthermore, they regretted the heavy administrative burden and delays in obtaining the funds. Some representatives considered that such funding should be earmarked to support recognised organisations representing historical linguistic minorities rather than being available to state and local administrations on a project basis.

63. Representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority pointed out that several provisions of Law No. 38/01, particularly those related to the cultural sphere, have not yet been complied with. For instance, there is still no Slovenian section at the Giuseppe Tartini State Conservatory of Trieste despite the explicit provision made under Article 15 of this law.

64. The National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) outlines several measures to preserve and promote the Roma and Sinti cultures.[92] In April 2025, the Italian authorities, and in particular UNAR, organised the second "National Week for the promotion of Romani culture and the Fight against Anti-Gypsyism" (the first edition took place in 2024).[93] Through the organisation of projects and events aimed at fostering awareness of the histories and cultural contributions of the Roma and Sinti to the national and European heritage, this week aimed to reduce bias towards persons affiliating with these minorities.[94] Moreover, the authorities have continued to raise awareness among education professionals about the cultures and traditions of the Roma and Sinti.[95] Research activities have been initiated and carried out in collaboration with the University of Verona and the University of Florence focusing on the persecutions and the schooling of Roma and Sinti in Italy.

65. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the creation of suitable conditions for persons belonging to minority groups to preserve and develop their cultures and to assert their respective identities is […] considered essential for an integrated society."[96] Budgets allocated on an annual basis and/or through competitive general grants do not allow all national minorities to have access to funds, run their cultural activities on a regular and sustainable basis or to draw up long-term plans. "Availability of financial resources for bodies involved in minority protection is essential to enable them to carry out their mission. This implies the availability of funding for consultative mechanisms, cultural autonomy arrangements

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[89] Sixth state report, pp. 63-121.

[90] Aosta - Biblioteca regionale » Système Valdôtain des Bibliothèques; hogazait.it – Il festival cimbro; PNRR - contributi per l'ospitalità diffusa - Comune di Palù del Fersina / Servizi / Provincia autonoma di Trento; Occitano - Unione Montana Valle Stura; Teatri Stabil Furlan Udine | Spettacoli dal vivo in lingua friulana; Primorski dnevnik; Associazione Culturale Villa Badessa Museo; Museo de la cultura Arbëreshe; Museo Etnico Arbëreshë; Palazzo Lusi e PLEAG; Museo Civico Barbato | Piana degli Albanesi; Futuro in Arbëria: visioni di donne; Take it slow - il cammino delle 7 chiese; Aderfos Ellenico.

[91] Babel Film Festival.

[92] Sixth state report, p. 38. See also the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030).

[93] The authorities informed the Advisory Committee that the third edition scheduled for 7-19 April 2026 would focus on the enhancement of linguistic and cultural rights through in-depth-analyses, initiatives and events.

[94] Avviso pubblico per la promozione di azioni positive per la XX edizione della Settimana di azione contro il razzismo (18 - 24 marzo 2024) - UNAR.

[95] Sixth state report, p. 38.

[96] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 25.

and government bodies involved in minority issues at all levels."[97] The Advisory Committee is of the view that the support scheme for minority cultures should allow minority organisations, including those of numerically smaller minorities, to apply for projects and have access to sustainable long-term baseline funding. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "with regard to numerically smaller minorities in particular, this obligation requires the active promotion and encouragement of the use of minority languages, and the creation of an overall environment that is conducive to the use of these languages, in order to prevent their disappearance from public life."[98] Likewise, it is particularly important that positive images of Roma and Sinti traditions and customs are portrayed to the public.

66. While the Advisory Committee welcomes that earmarked funding for historical linguistic minorities is secured by law, it is concerned that this amount has been significantly decreased over the years on the basis of Public Notices, and that even this reduced annual budget is never fully distributed in practice.[99] Furthermore, the Advisory Committee finds that the existing mechanism to allocate funding, available only to local administrations covered by Law No. 482/99 and state administration on a project basis, could be simplified to allow for pluri-annual activities and projects to be established in a planned and sustainable manner by organisations representing minorities, in accordance with their needs and interests.

67. Consequently, the Advisory Committee notes that the protection and implementation of minority rights depend greatly on the shared willingness of local, regional and national administrations and that, in practice, certain national minorities do not benefit equally from the rights laid down in the Framework Convention. This is exacerbated by the fact that persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities, mostly living in regions and provinces with an autonomous status, albeit not exclusively,[100] benefit from additional sources of funding and measures taken by the regional and local authorities, thereby disadvantaging those national minorities that are not able to benefit from such measures. In this context, the Advisory Committee regrets that, despite the possibility offered in Law No. 482/99 to set up co-operation bodies for minorities living in different regions and/or provinces,[101] this mechanism has not yet been used to the greatest extent that it would make a real difference for the historical linguistic minorities living throughout the Italian territory, particularly in regions without an autonomous status.[102]

68. The Advisory Committee considers that further support needs to be provided, including through the establishment of long-term sustainable funding mechanisms, to establish institutional structures dedicated to promoting and supporting national minority cultures, especially in the areas where they live traditionally. This would enable persons affiliating with national minorities to organise cultural activities and collect, present and publish their cultural works. In addition, it is important that mainstream cultural institutions in such areas, which are not dedicated to the respective national minority (e.g. museums, media and cultural centres, cinema), incorporate on a more regular basis the cultures of the locally present national minorities in their work (e.g. museum collections) and use the respective minority languages (e.g. on websites, in explanatory texts and audio-guides of museums). Mainstreaming the cultures of national minorities in the activities of general cultural institutions could have a positive impact on the quantity, sustainability, economic basis and reach of cultural activities related to national minorities. In addition, it could promote intercultural understanding with a view to enhancing the appreciation for national minorities and persons affiliating with them in society at large and creating a climate where persons affiliating with national minorities are accepted as society's integral and valued part (see Article 6).

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[97] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 on the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, adopted on 27 February 2008, para. 138.
[98] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 24.
[99] While the original budget was equal to €9.5 million per year in 1999, for 2025, it is now equal to €2 760 533, of which 3% must be dedicated to state administration. The remaining €2 677 717 is distributed among each linguistic minority based on the number of municipalities eligible throughout the country. It should be noted that the resources earmarked for funding the autonomous region of Friuli Venezia Giulia and the autonomous region of Sardinia are directly transferred to from the state budget to the regional budgets of the Autonomous regions of Friuli Venezia Giulia (Legislative-Decree No. 223/02) and Sardinia (Legislative-Decree No. 16/16). See the Public Notice intended for state administrations, national non-economic public bodies, local authorities, chambers of commerce, local health authorities and regions for the financing of projects aimed at enhancing the languages and cultures protected by Law No. 482/99, year 2025, 2024 and 2023.
[100] For instance, the Piedmont region has earmarked funding for the promotion of its cultural and linguistic heritage and adopted a dedicated Regional Law No.11/18 on the "coordinated provisions on culture". See in particular its Article 38. However, it should be noted that some representatives of historical linguistic minorities in this region consider that collaboration with cultural associations representing minority language speakers could be strengthened made more efficient, to avoid delayed payments and, in some cases, the cancellation of projects.
[101] Law No. 482/99, Article 3 para. 3.
[102] To the knowledge of the Advisory Committee, the only existing co-operation body is the "Unitary Committee of the German-speaking Historical Islands in Italy" (*Comitato unitario delle isole linguistiche storiche germaniche in Italia/Einheitskomitee der historischen deutschen Sprachinseln in Italien*). No such bodies exist for instance for the Ladin, Franco-Provençal or Arbëreshe national minorities.

69. The Advisory Committee welcomes that, in conformity with Law No. 38/01, the restitution of the *Narodni dom* cultural centre in Trieste to the Slovene linguistic minority was formalised in October 2022, during a high-level event in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic.[103] This building is going to house a portion (66 000 volumes) of the Slovenian National Library and is the headquarters of the SLORI Institute.[104]

70. The Advisory Committee further commends the progress made, since the adoption of the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), to raise awareness and promote the cultures and traditions of the Roma and Sinti. It particularly welcomes the activities carried out by UNAR. It is of the view that the authorities at all levels need to ensure sufficient funding to be allocated to support other projects and programmes aimed at preserving and promoting the Roma and Sinti cultures throughout the year.

71. The Advisory Committee deeply regrets that the ratification process of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is yet to be completed, more than 25 years after Italy signed this treaty.[105] It is of the view that this treaty, designed to protect traditionally used minority languages as part of Europe's cultural heritage, provides promotional measures for historical minority languages in different fields that could help the authorities to promote, in a structured way, the conditions necessary for speakers of these languages to develop the languages and cultures as essential elements of their minority identities. It would also reinforce the implementation of the language rights protected under the Framework Convention, as well as of the right to maintain and develop one's own culture.

Recommendations

72. **The Advisory Committee urges again the authorities to ensure that long-term earmarked and sufficient funding is made available for the preservation and sustainable promotion of minority languages and cultures of the historical linguistic minorities.** This should be done in close co-operation with minority representatives and through a modification of the rules set under the Presidential Decree No 345/01.

73. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to create a Slovenian section of the music college of Trieste, in accordance with the provisions set in Article 15 of Law No. 38/01.

74. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to finalise the ratification process of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

75. The Advisory Committee strongly invites the authorities to continue and further develop cultural activities aimed at raising awareness about and promoting the Roma and Sinti cultures, as well as their historic and artistic contributions to Italian and European heritage and culture.

76. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to make full use of the possibility offered under Article 3(3) of Law No. 482/99 to set up co-operation bodies for historical linguistic minorities dispersed across different regions and/or provinces.

Promotion of intercultural dialogue, mutual respect and understanding (Article 6)

77. While persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities are generally accepted as an integral part of society, in line with the provisions of the Framework Convention, the general population continues to have a limited knowledge of minority cultures and languages, especially outside the areas where these minorities traditionally live (see Article 12). Furthermore, there has been a worrying general negative trend in societal climate regarding diversity in general, which materialised in practice by an increase of hate speech in the public and political discourse, with certain political movements and parts of the population contributing to a revival of exclusionary and intolerant discourses, often invoking nationalist or identitarian themes.

78. At the national level, the Italian authorities have adopted a National Strategy for the Fight against Anti-Semitism (2025-2029) and a National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) (see Article 15). During the monitoring period, a series of initiatives were carried out following these strategies, *inter alia* in the fields of education, cultural and awareness-raising activities and training courses.[106] Furthermore, there has been an ongoing dialogue between religious groups

[103] Annex no.2 of the Sixth state report, p. 21. The Narodni dom cultural centre was burned down by Fascist squads in 1920, symbolising the repression of the Slovene linguistic minority.
[104] Slori – Slovenski raziskovalni inštitut.
[105] See Bill No. 742, which was assigned to the Senate Joint Commissions on Constitutional Affairs and Foreign Affairs on 13 February 2023.
[106] Sixth state report, p. 38. In March 2024, the Italian government announced a grant of €10 million for establishing a Holocaust Museum in Rome, an allocation that was subsequently approved in October 2024 by the Italian Parliament.

and the authorities, notably with UNAR, on the creation and organisation of campaigns, events and materials.

79. In the area of education, the Ministry of Education and Merit[107] has established a National Network of Schools with Minority Languages to launch various initiatives supporting the educational institutions engaged in the development of minority language teaching (see Articles 12 and 14). This network "aims to help schools overcome and solve isolation, to promote cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity by fostering understanding, tolerance, and the broadening of knowledge and cultural interests."[108] Furthermore, in 2022, the Ministry of Education and Merit published guidelines on "Intercultural orientations: ideas and proposals for the integration of pupils with a migrant background", in line with the documents that over the last two decades have shaped the vision of an inclusive and intercultural Italian school system.[109] These guidelines draw attention to potentially vulnerable groups of pupils and students and stress what the regulations in force are, as well as the principles and ideas promoted by the authorities, such as the right and duty to education, regardless of the origin or the social conditions of the pupils and students. The authorities also collect data and suggest measures to be adopted to reduce inequalities and promote intercultural dialogue. In their state report, the authorities further mention initiatives taking place in the context of the "European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2021-2027)" programme, and in particular those which cater for the conditions and needs of Roma and Sinti pupils and students.[110]

80. The mainstream public media continue to play an important role, through their programmes, in raising awareness about minority cultures, and in promoting intercultural dialogue (see Article 9). A new contract between the government and *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI) covering the period 2023-2028 contains stronger provisions obliging RAI to provide diversity in its programming, actively fight against all forms of discrimination and hate speech and disseminate values of acceptance and inclusiveness. Furthermore, since 2024, RAI has organised, in collaboration with UNAR, events to combat discrimination and to promote cultural and social inclusion.[111]

81. At the regional level, and particularly in autonomous regions inhabited by significant numbers of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities, many initiatives and legislative measures have been established, sometimes together with the national authorities,[112] to promote intercultural dialogue, and more generally to highlight the existing societal diversity and the notion of "living together". Among the diverse positive examples provided in the state report,[113] the Advisory Committee notes, *inter alia*, the promotion of the Walser German culture or the participation of the Autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta/Vallee d'Aoste to the *Journées de la Francophonie;* activities related to handicrafts to foster Occitan language and culture in the Unione Montana Valle Varaita in Piedmont; the participation and implementation of the PRIMIS PLUS project to enhance the linguistic, cultural and natural heritage of the Cimbrian, Friulian and Ladin linguistic minorities in Veneto; the establishment of a plurilingual school in Val Canale and Canal del Ferro in Friuli Venezia Giulia; the organisation of events aimed at the valorisation of Arbëreshe customs and traditions in Abruzzo and the creation of a union of municipalities around the Griko language in Puglia.[114]

82. Regional and local authorities support projects and initiatives that highlight the diversity characterising their territory. However, the Advisory Committee was informed of how media reporting led to revived tensions between the different linguistic groups in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano/Bozen.[115] In November 2024, the local authorities of Gorizia voted against a motion to remove the title of honorary citizen granted to Benito Mussolini. The motion was made in the context of an

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[107] Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito.
[108] Sixth state report, p. 13.
[109] Intercultural orientations: ideas and proposals for the integration of pupils with a migrant background. The Italian Way to Intercultural Schools and the Integration of Foreign Students, 2007; Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign pupils, 2006, Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign pupils, 2014; Different from whom?, 2015.
[110] Sixth state report, p. 18.
[111] In onda contro il razzismo. Il linguaggio della diversità culturale.
[112] For instance, see the adoption of Law No. 30/22 (Rules for the enhancement of small agri-food productions of local origin), which in its Article 11(5) allows special statute regions and the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen in whose territory there are historical linguistic minorities to establish the Small Local Productions (PPL) labelling and logo in a bilingual form. See also Law No. 61/22 (Rules for the enhancement and promotion of zero kilometre and short chain agricultural and food products) whose Article 8(3) allows the special statute regions and autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen with historical linguistic minorities to establish the zero kilometre and short chain logos in a bilingual form.
[113] Sixth state report, pp. 63-121.
[114] See for instance Unité des Communes valdôtaines Walser; Journées de la Francophonie en Vallée d'Aoste 2025 - Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta; Valli Occitane - Produzioni valligiane, commercio, nelle valli occitane; PRIMIS; Scuola trilingue per valorizzare le minoranze della Val Canale - imagazine.it; La Notte della Taranta festival.
[115] See Merano, la nuova sindaca "rifiuta" la fascia tricolore.

attempt to promote mutual respect and cross-border co-operation, as Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia) jointly held the title of the European cultural capital in 2025.[116]

83. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the promotion of tolerance and openness towards diversity in society is essential not only for the development and implementation of successful integration strategies, but is also a central precondition for persons belonging to national minorities to self-identify as such without hesitation and proactively claim the rights contained in the Framework Convention."[117] "Effective measures must be taken to promote mutual respect, understanding and co-operation among all persons irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identities."[118] "Article 6(1) explicitly refers to education, culture and the media as particular fields of importance to the objective of promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue."[119] The latter, in particular, plays a crucial role in either promoting social inclusion of persons affiliating with minorities or reinforcing negative stereotypes about ethnic and cultural differences.[120] Additionally, an inclusive public discourse, particularly in politics, plays a crucial role in supporting this process.

84. The Advisory Committee welcomes the various measures the authorities are taking to promote intercultural dialogue and mutual respect, particularly in the fields of education, culture and media, through dedicated and targeted strategies that addresses the needs and interests of the persons belonging to groups that for various reasons might be placed in vulnerable positions. Regarding education, the Advisory Committee considers that an evaluation of the implementation of the 2022 guidelines on intercultural orientations is needed and could be carried out and complemented with further follow-up activities. An assessment of the effectiveness of the National Network of Schools with Minority Languages and its empowerment could also help the development of minority language teaching, which remain largely asymmetric across Italy (see Article 12).

85. Compared to the previous monitoring cycle, efforts have increased to portray minorities more fairly in mainstream media to promote mutual respect, combat xenophobia and avoid stereotype.[121] At the political level, there has been clear and unambiguous condemnation of antisemitic hate speech.[122] Some minorities and vulnerable groups continue to experience negative prejudices, particularly in political debates, including through discriminatory statements of politicians that are relayed by some private media outlets,[123] but also spread extensively on social networks, where expressions of racial hostility, hatred and xenophobia have become worryingly common.[124] While the Advisory Committee acknowledges the importance of open political debate on public interest issues, it emphasises that the use of discriminatory and offensive language by politicians ultimately weakens the state and its institutions. Any hate discourse by politicians or other public figures must be immediately and strongly condemned by senior government officials to ensure that a clear message is sent to the public that this is not acceptable. The Advisory Committee emphasises that all political parties must refrain from and counter hostile rhetoric, as ignoring it or aligning their discourse with exclusionary narratives allows intolerance to become normalised, severely harming societal inclusion. Finally, the Advisory Committee underlines that in the spirit of Article 6 of the Framework Convention, genuine inclusion of society is a two-way process encompassing all segments of society, including both majorities and minorities.

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[116] Il Goriziano, Mussolini cittadino onorario a Gorizia, minoranza ci riprova alle porte di Go! 2025, 7 September 2024, consulted on 6 October 2025.
[117] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 53.
[118] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 51.
[119] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 59.
[120] See also ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 63.
[121] See for instance the following initiative, RAI: In onda contro il razzismo - Parole, voci, storie per una società plurale e inclusiva. Presentato il Tavolo per l'Inclusione Culturale. - UNAR.
[122] For instance, after the Hamas terrorist attack of 7 October 2023, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, spoke publicly against antisemitism, pledged to strengthen the protection of persons affiliating with the Jewish minority, and called for clear and unambiguous condemnation of antisemitic hate speech. See statement of the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic on the occasion of the first anniversary of Hamas' attacks against the Israeli population.
[123] For instance, see the European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on the portrayal of Roma people in TV broadcasting in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania, 2023. See also ERRC, the Fight for Fair Roma Representation: Racist Content as a Human Rights Issue - European Roma Rights Centre, consulted on 3 June 2025.
[124] Among many examples, see for instance a video published by the current Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure Minister in 2023. See Dalla disinformazione al discorso d'odio - Associazione Carta di Roma, published on 9 December 2022, consulted on 3 June 2025. See also the political debate that surrounded the adoption of Legislative-Decree No. 80/25, which specifically targeted Roma women and mothers.

Recommendation

86. **The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to increase their efforts to promote mutual respect, intercultural dialogue and understanding in society through education, cultural activities and the media at national, regional and local levels. The authorities should refrain from, and promptly and unequivocally condemn, all expressions of racist and xenophobic views, including from political leaders, and act resolutely against the proliferation of hate speech, including on social media.**

Protection from hostility and violence (Article 6)

87. Italy has developed a legal framework for addressing hate speech and hate crime, particularly those based on race, ethnicity, religion or gender, in conformity with the European Union standards. Article 604-bis of the Criminal Code criminalises propaganda and incitement to violence based on racial, ethnic or religious hatred. It specifically targets individuals or groups that disseminate ideas promoting racial or ethnic hatred and violence, whether through publications, speeches, or online content. Article 604-ter of the Criminal Code and Article 90-bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure foresee aggravating circumstances for committing a criminal act with the purpose of discriminating on ethnic, national, "racial" or religious grounds or for the purpose of facilitating the activity of organisations having the same purposes.[125] Italian legislation also addresses online hate speech through Article 595-bis of the Criminal Code, which specifically targets cybercrimes, including cyberbullying.[126] In addition to the basic legislative measures applying to the general population, persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities also receive additional protection based on Article 18 bis of Law No. 482/99 (with Article 23 of Law No. 38/01 applying to persons affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority).[127]

88. According to Italy's contribution to the OSCE-ODIHR hate crime database, which is collected by the police database (SDI) of the Inter-Force Data Processing Centre (CED) as part of general crime statistics, in 2023, the police recorded 1 106 cases of hate crimes,[128] among which 771 cases of racist and xenophobic hate crime. However, since 2018, there are no data available on the number of cases of hate crime being prosecuted and sentenced.[129]

89. In terms of hate speech, several studies and surveys suggest that there has been a sharp increase in the number of cases in Italy, in particular online hate speech.[130] Racial and ethnic discrimination often intersect with discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief. Whereas persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities do typically not experience hate speech, both the public image and the portrayal of Roma and Sinti remains highly negative.

90. The Extraordinary Committee to Combat the Phenomena of Intolerance, Racism, Anti-Semitism and Incitement to Hatred and Violence was set up by the Italian Senate in June 2022. This committee has been conducting a fact-finding investigation on these phenomena, with particular attention to "the impact of artificial intelligence on the spread of hate speech, the effectiveness of the Digital Services Act in combatting hate speech, the relationship between hate speech and bullying, the definition of training courses for prevention and education on inclusion, diversity and respect."[131]

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[125] Articles 604-bis and 604-ter of the Criminal Code and Article 90-bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
[126] Article 595-bis of the Criminal Code. See also the provisions of Law No. 71/2017, as amended by Law No. 70/2024, on "Combating bullying and cyberbullying".
[127] Law No. 482/99, Articles 2 and 18 bis; Law No. 38/01, Article 23.
[128] OSCE-ODIHR, Hate Crime Reporting: Italy. It should be noted that the SDI (*Sistema di indagine*, System of Investigation) was not built for statistical purposes, but with the aim to support police officers during investigations. The number of registered incidents has slightly decreased compared to data from 2022 (1 202 cases) and 2021 (1 243) but remains significantly higher than the data collected in 2020 (919), 2019 (912), 2018 (901), 2017 (891) and 2016 (532). See also the 58th Census report on the social situation of the country/2024, chapter "Security and citizenship". The Ministry of the Interior informed the Advisory Committee that it was discussing the possibility of creating an integrated data collection and exchange system that will also facilitate the collection and analysis of information monitored by the Advisory Committee.
[129] In the context of a fact-finding investigation into the nature, causes and recent developments in the phenomenon of hate speech, with a special focus on the evolution of European legislation in this field, the Director of ISTAT's Central Directorate for Studies and Thematic Enhancement in the Area of Social and Demographic Statistics stressed on 13 April 2022 that, while such statistics are the "source of knowledge" for crime recorded in the justice system, this information has not been available since 2018, "pending new provisions identifying the processing of personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences and the appropriate guarantees, which authorise the Institute to process such specific data." See also "Numeri senza sintesi. La mancanza di un'indagine sistematica su razzismo e opinione pubblica in Italia".
[130] See for instance the 2023 annual report of the CDEC Foundation's Observatory, according to which 454 "incidents of antisemitism" were recorded in 2023, a number far higher than that recorded in 2022 (241); La mappa dell' intolleranza, 8 anno, Vox Diritti, 2024, a behavioural analysis on hate speech on social networks; Barometro dell'odio - delegittimare il dissenso, 2024, Amnesty International Italia, 2024.
[131] Senato della Repubblica, Commissione contrasto intolleranza, razzismo, antisemitismo e istigazione all'odio e alla violenza.

91.Starting in April 2025, for the first time since 2011, ISTAT has been conducting a "discrimination survey" with the aim of "studying the population's opinions regarding the spread of discrimination in society in its various forms (for aspects related to gender, health conditions, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and gender identity) and of detecting instances of discrimination suffered by people in different areas of their daily lives."[132]

92.At the institutional level, UNAR and OSCAD carry out a range of activities (for example organising conferences, campaigns in the media, collaborations with sports institutions and written publications) to promote the reporting of complaints relating to racial discrimination,[133] but also discrimination based on gender.[134] They continue to receive and investigate complaints related to these issues, in accordance with their respective competences and mandates. Furthermore, they continue to train police officers, judges, lawyers and civil society in handling hate-related offences, in particular those involving discrimination based on "race", ethnicity or religion, including online.[135] Both institutions co-operate regularly with organisations representing the Jewish and Muslim religious groups in Italy. Several measures for combatting hate speech and hate motivated violence can be found in governmental policies, but also in the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) and the National Strategy for the Fight against Anti-Semitism (2025-2029).

93.In 2023, UNAR Contact Centre[136] recorded 1 978 cases of discrimination (which, unlike the SDI of the CED were not necessarily qualified as a criminal offence), among which 948 cases based on ethno-racial grounds and 313 based on religion and personal beliefs. More than two thirds of these incidents took place online, mostly on social media. In its 2023 report to parliament, UNAR stressed that the racial-ethnic ground, which is the number one discriminating factor, has heterogeneous forms and is now prevalent in society. Most cases of discrimination concern migrants and are based on skin colour. Discrimination on these grounds occurs in public life but also in sport.[137]

94.The Advisory Committee reiterates that "minorities cannot thrive in a society in which diversity is not tolerated or even serves as a pretext for hate crimes and discrimination."[138] "Ethnically based violence must be recognised as an especially nefarious form of violence that concerns and threatens society as a whole and must thus be resolutely opposed and prevented. In order to address hate crime in a comprehensive manner, criminal codes must contain appropriate provisions that criminalise hate speech, threats and violence based on ethnic grounds, as well as public incitement to violence and hatred. In addition, racial motivation must be considered an aggravating circumstance of any offence and law enforcement agents should be appropriately trained to ensure that racially or ethnically motivated attacks and discrimination are identified and recorded, as well as duly investigated and punished through targeted, specialised and prompt action."[139] "In order to protect individuals from such attacks, it is therefore of importance that any such incidents are promptly and unequivocally condemned by senior public figures and community leaders at all levels, and that appropriate messages are communicated to the public through the media and government information channels."[140]

95.The Advisory Committee notes that the Italian legal framework for addressing cases of hate crime and hate speech conforms to international treaties and European Union directives and takes into consideration different kinds of situations, including offences based on the grounds of "race", ethnicity or religion. While challenges remain in addressing intersectional issues, the Italian authorities have adapted the legislation to better reflect the evolving nature of hate speech, particularly in the context of online platforms and social media.

96.However, the Advisory Committee remains deeply concerned by the increase in the frequency and scale of racial hate crime and hate speech and more generally about the level of intolerance in public discourse in Italy during the sixth monitoring cycle. The Advisory Committee is concerned about manifestations of intolerance, racist and xenophobic behaviours and statements, which are often

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[132] Indagine sulle discriminazioni 2025.
[133] See for instance several projects carried out during the period of reference: the REASON project, events organised for the Safer Internet Day (7 February), the INGRID project and the SUPER project.
[134] For instance, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, OSCAD publishes every year its annual report on gender-based violence. This report places a particular emphasis on intersectional issues.
[135] Sixth state report, pp. 37, 40-53 and 56. According to the authorities, as of 15 January 2024, 59 757 officers were trained directly or indirectly by OSCAD or through online training modules.
[136] Call Contact Centre.
[137] 2023 UNAR report to parliament, pp.59-60. Concerning discrimination on racial-ethnic grounds during sport events, see for instance AC Milan football match delayed in Italy after alleged racist chants from crowd | CNN.
[138] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 55.
[139] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 56.
[140] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 57.

directed at persons of African descent, persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti[141] and persons of Jewish and Muslim faiths.[142] It is deeply regrettable and worrying that such conduct is becoming increasingly common in Italian society at large, but also more specifically during sport events, online, and in the discourse of some prominent political figures, and that these are systematically relayed by some media outlets for populist ends. The Advisory Committee notes that, over the last monitoring cycle, there has been a marked increase in the negative societal attitudes towards persons of Islamic and Jewish faiths.[143] The Advisory Committee welcomes the increased focus on combatting antisemitism and islamophobia in society. It considers that increasing attention should be paid to the prevention of inter-confessional tension and that the ongoing initiatives of such nature should be expanded and consolidated further. As indicated above, the Advisory Committee regrets that the National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance was adopted at a very late stage (in June 2025). Had such National Plan been adopted for the period 2020-2025, it would have been the basis for a co-ordinated approach and the adoption of measures to combat the racist phenomena and incidents reported across the country. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to take note of the relevant Council of Europe recommendations that offer guidance on combatting hate crime and hate speech for the proper implementation of the newly adopted plan.[144]

97. Activities carried out by UNAR and OSCAD, including in law enforcement training, are important and should be intensified to strengthen protection, raise awareness, and ensure swift justice for victims of hate crimes and hate speech in the country. To that end, it is essential to develop a comprehensive and uniform data collection and statistical analysis system or tool for use by the police, the prosecution and judicial authorities.

Recommendations

98. **The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to develop a comprehensive and uniform data collection and statistical system among the police, the prosecution and the judicial authorities on the number of complaints related to hate crime and hate speech, and the number of cases being prosecuted and ultimately sentenced, disaggregated by categories of motivation and of victims.**

99. **The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to implement and evaluate the impact of the National Plan against Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in co-operation with the relevant stakeholders, so as to combat any expressions of racial hostility, hatred and xenophobia in society, including on the internet and during sports events.**

100. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to conduct a survey aimed at studying the population's opinions regarding the spread of discrimination in various forms within society.

101. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to continue to regularly carry out a diverse range of activities to raise awareness about the issues of hate crime and hate speech, through conferences, campaigns in the media, collaboration with sports institutions, and publications, as well as through the training of public officials and civil servants.

Public service broadcasting in minority languages (Article 9)

102. *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI) is the national public broadcasting company, responsible for providing radio, television and multimedia services. Its broadcast services are also available online through the digital platforms *RAI Play* and *RAI Play Sound*. RAI and the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy[145] recently signed the 2023–2028 service contract. Its Article 9, on social and cultural inclusion, provides that "RAI has as its purpose to guarantee the access to various types of

[141] In Roma in 10 European Countries - Main results, published on 25 October 2022, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) pointed out that in Italy, "one in ten Roma (10%) experienced physical violence because of their ethnic background in the year before the survey. However, this data collection was recently questioned in a report, "Under the lense: Data collection and processing on Roma communities in Italy: European methodologies", published by *Associazione 21 Luglio* in May 2025.
[142] See also several reports published in Cronache di ordinario razzismo, including the publication "More rights, less racism: A practical guide" published in 2024.
[143] Ansa, Israel-Hamas war fuelling anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim racism, consulted on 23 April 2025.
[144] Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combatting hate crime; Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combatting hate speech.
[145] Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy.

programming and to sustain the integration of minorities, as well as to promote the goal of inclusion, equality and diversity and to protect the dignity of the person".[146]

103. The 2023–2028 service contract provisions on media access for minorities and persons affiliating with them are implemented by RAI's local branches and specifically applied through separate conventions for each minority. These include the German-speaking and Ladin-speaking minorities (in the province of Bolzano/Bozen), the Ladin-speaking (in the province of Trento), the French-speaking (in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste), the Slovene-speaking and Friulian-speaking (in Friuli Venezia Giulia) and the Sardinian-speaking (in Sardinia).[147] From May 2024 onwards, Arbëreshe has also been promoted in the region of Calabria.[148] RAI is thus required to develop, in co-operation with the interested regional governments and competent regional language agencies, an operational plan with specific service agreements. For instance, in Friuli Venezia Giulia, the existing convention for Slovene focuses on enhancing and strengthening Slovene-language television and radio broadcasting, also placing particular emphasis on the use of digital platforms such as *RAI Play* and *RAI Play Sound*.[149] According to the Department of Information and Publishing of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers ("the Department of Information and Publishing"), in order to ensure the continuity and quality of the service, new agreements with updated fees were signed in October 2025, thus increasing the resources already allocated by an additional €900 000 to compensate for the cost of inflation. *RAI* considers that the 2023-2028 service contract complies with the requirements of the legislation.

104. Unlike representatives of persons affiliating with the German-speaking minority in Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, whose media access appears robust based on the range and regularity of available German-language services,[150] several representatives of historical linguistic minorities have expressed concerns to the Advisory Committee that RAI's current service contract does not fully align with the provisions of Article 12 of Law No. 482/99, despite the existence of regional agreements and conventions. In particular, the Friulian, Slovene, French and Sardinian linguistic minorities indicated that they consider the limited number of television and radio broadcasting hours to negatively impact their ability to access information in their respective language on a regular basis. For instance, the Friulian representatives indicated that, taking account of the increase in funding and broadcasting hours over recent years, there is currently a need to provide support for the production of informational broadcasts, alongside the already existing entertainment programmes, which could also be further extended.[151] Some other minority interlocutors, such as the Slovene representatives, highlighted the need to ensure adequate minority representation within the media.[152] Representatives of numerically smaller minorities, such as the Occitan linguistic minority and German-speaking minorities present outside of the Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol region,[153] have drawn the Advisory Committee's attention to their complete lack of representation and the absence of allocated broadcasting hours.

105. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the availability of print, broadcast and electronic media in minority languages has very specific emblematic value for national minorities, in particular for the numerically smaller ones. Through them, persons belonging to national minorities not only gain access to information, but minority language media also raise the visibility and prestige of the minority language as an active tool of communication."[154] Moreover, the Advisory Committee reiterates that it "values the significant role played by private and community media for the realisation of linguistic rights of persons belonging to national minorities and has welcomed the contribution made by the private sector media in the areas of integration and the general appreciation of cultural diversity in society."[155] "Moreover, it

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[146] *RAI* Contract Service 2023 – 2028, Article 9. See also Law No. 103/75, which institutionalised the protection of minority languages in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen; Article 12 of Law No. 482/99, which specifies that RAI must include programming for historical linguistic minorities in both national and regional broadcasts; Article 2 of Law No. 220/15, which reformed the RAI and guarantees television and radio broadcasting in German and Ladin in the provinces of Bolzano/Bozen and Trento, in French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and in Slovene in Friuli Venezia Giulia.

[147] *RAI* Contract Service 2023 – 2028, Article 9(4).

[148] Information received from the authorities during the monitoring visit (April 2025).

[149] Sixth state report, p. 106.

[150] The province of Bolzano/Bozen benefits not only from RAI dedicated regional channels, but also from a special TV and radio channel called "Radiotelevisione Azienda Speciale" (RAS), which broadcasts the programmes of the German-speaking public broadcasters of Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Moreover, German-language TV and radio stations, ARD, ZDF, Bayern 1, Bayern 2, and Bayern Klassik, are available in the province of South Tyrol thanks to a bilateral agreement between the South Tyrolean administration and the WDR Mediagroup, a German TV and radio service provider. The five-year contract, which began in 2023, also includes the development of an app to provide online streaming services.

[151] Table relating to funding and hours of radio and television broadcasting related to the Friulian language for the period 2020-2024.

[152] Information received from representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority during the monitoring visit (April 2025).

[153] The German-speaking communities referred to are the communities organised under the Unitary Committee of the German-speaking Historical Islands in Italy.

[154] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 69.

[155] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 45.

is important to ensure that minority representatives effectively participate in relevant decision-making processes as well as in media supervisory bodies."[156]

106. The Advisory Committee welcomes that RAI, as the national public broadcasting company, guarantees access to various types of programming and supports the inclusion of persons affiliating with minorities within mainstream media through its 2023–2028 service contract. It is also of the view that online platforms, such as *RAI Play* and *RAI Play Sound*, can significantly enhance access to media in minority languages and welcomes *RAI Play*'s initiatives in creating such new digital spaces.[157] Additionally, the Advisory Committee notes the potential benefits of collaborating with national minorities to explore the feasibility of providing subtitles in minority languages, particularly on international streaming platforms. However, it regrets that the results of these initiatives remain limited or absent for numerically smaller minorities (with the exception of Arbëreshe [only in the region of Calabria] and some dedicated funding to produce short films and documentaries in Catalan for the Catalan minority in the city of Alghero). The Advisory Committee also notes that some private and local TV and radio broadcasters have developed initiatives in minority languages.[158]

107. The Advisory Committee welcomes RAI's initiatives, including the expansion of diverse programming in minority languages and the development of RAI's digital platforms, and considers these as valuable tools for enhancing the visibility and prestige of national minorities and minority languages. However, it notes with concern that, despite the objective to increase in programming and expansion of television and radio broadcasts, also considering the ongoing shift from traditional broadcasting to the "new modality of using digital content",[159] the RAI 2023–2028 service contract allows for a very limited number of programmes broadcast in minority languages each year.[160]

Recommendation

108. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to increase their investment in the promotion and consolidation of television, radio and digital content programmes in minority languages, including through digital streaming platforms. To this effect, minority representatives, particularly the numerically smaller ones, should effectively participate in the development and implementation of future RAI service contracts.

Printed and online media in minority languages (Article 9)

109. In line with the provisions of Law No. 198/16[161] and Decree No. 70/17,[162] the Department for Information and Publishing within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers[163] continues to provide annual financial support to printed and online newspapers published in the languages of certain historical linguistic minorities. A specific budgetary line titled "Contribution to support newspapers of linguistic minorities" has been established, aiming to promote pluralism and innovation in the information sector.[164] In 2023, the Department allocated a total of €5 million in direct funding to nine newspapers

[156] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4, (2016), para. 70.
[157] There are dedicated sections of *RAI Play* for Friulan and Slovene in Friuli Venezia Giulia, for Sardinian in Sardinia, for German in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen, and for French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste.
[158] There are private TV and radio channels serving Catalan, French, Friulian, German, Sardinian, and Slovene communities. Examples of these private TV and radio broadcasters are "Catalan TV" in Catalan and "EjaTv Sardegna 2" in Sardinian in Sardinia, "TV5 Monde" in French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, "Telefriuli" in Friulan, and "RAN TV" in Slovene in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Some regional private broadcasters occasionally offer content for numerically smaller minorities to support these communities; however, these remain infrequent or limited to isolated private initiatives. It should also be noted that it is possible to have access to several programmes offered by neighbouring states.
[159] Sixth state report, p. 31.
[160] Those programmes include 208 hours TV and 4 417 hours radio in Slovene in Friuli Venezia Giulia; 78 hours TV in French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste; 40 hours TV and 120 hours radio in Friulian in Friuli Venezia Giulia; 33 hours TV in Sardinian in Sardinia; 33 hours TV in Arbëreshe in Calabria. The Advisory Committee notes that the previous conventions were simply renewed on 30 October 2023 without being amended to increase the offer. See Sixth state report, p. 31. According to the authorities, the investments are based on the funds of the Department of Information and Publishing. The future service contract will be signed in 2029.
[161] Law No. 198/16 introduced a renewed framework for the support of the publishing sector in Italy, with the explicit objective of promoting pluralism and innovation in information. Among its provisions, the law established a dedicated fund that also includes support for newspapers and periodicals published in the languages of national minorities.
[162] Decree No. 70/17 sets out the implementing rules for the allocation of public funding to publishing entities, including a specific provision dedicated to supporting newspapers and periodicals in the languages of national minorities. This ensures targeted financial support within the broader regulatory framework of Law No. 198/16.
[163] The Department for Information and Publishing within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers manages institutional communication and media policy.
[164] The budget line titled "Contribution to support newspapers of linguistic minorities" has been established in Law No. 198/16 to promote pluralism, linguistic diversity, and innovation in the information sector by supporting the continuity and development of minority language media outlets.

and periodicals in minority languages. Of these, five were in German (Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol), one in Ladin (Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol), and three in Slovene (Friuli Venezia Giulia).[165]

110. While national funding is considered valuable, it is often perceived as lacking stability. The Advisory Committee was informed by interlocutors that state-funded periodicals, and in particular those minority language newspapers and periodicals not funded by the state, primarily rely on regional and, in some cases, local funding schemes. For example, *L'Alguer* is a publication in Catalan which receives funding support from the city of Alghero,[166] while the Friuli Venezia Giulia region regularly finances the publication of the weekly magazine in Friulian language *La Vôs dai Furlans* and the monthly magazine in Friulian language *La Patrie dal Friûl*.[167] However, various factors negatively affect the long-term sustainability of minority language media outlets. For instance, representatives of the Occitan linguistic minority expressed their concerns to the Advisory Committee about the progressive decline of journalistic output in numerically smaller minority languages, particularly in a printed format. They reported that the monthly journal *Occitano Vivo*, which had been published since 1974 in the valleys inhabited by persons affiliating with the Occitan minority, is now available exclusively in a digital format, having ceased its printed edition, with its publications frequency gradually decreasing.[168] Furthermore, representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority informed the Advisory Committee during the visit about the reduction in regional funding allocated to *Primorski dnevnik*, and expressed their fear that such measures risk undermining their right to adequate access to information in Slovenian.[169]

111. The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that "minority language print editions […] have a considerable symbolic and 'emblematic' value for the community as a whole, as they confirm the existence of the language in the public sphere. In addition, the Advisory Committee has repeatedly observed that minority communities consider their minority language print media as an important means to preserve and develop their specific culture and language within mainstream society […]. The Advisory Committee has therefore emphasised the need to uphold support for such editions which, due to their small size, are often not commercially viable, as their particular significance for the minority community cannot be substituted with modern and electronic media. It has encouraged states to ensure that their general rules relating to press subsidies […] should not be applied to minority language print media that are unlikely ever to meet these conditions."[170]

112. The Advisory Committee notes that, despite the acknowledged cultural and symbolic importance of minority language print media, their continued existence is increasingly under pressure from the insecure nature of annual, project-based funding, which fails to provide the financial stability necessary for long-term planning and sustainable media production. While there are some regional funds in place, that ensure a degree of continuity, this also highlights the absence of a broader, nationally co-ordinated strategy for minority language media across the country. This challenge is especially acute for numerically smaller minorities, who often lack the institutional and economic means to publish their printed and online media outlets independently.

Recommendations

113. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to strengthen long-term and sustainable funding mechanisms to support the production of printed media in minority languages, in particular for numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities, thus enabling more reliable and pluri-annual planning. This should be done in close consultation with minority representatives, including from publishing houses.

114. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to maintain and broaden the scope of the existing financial mechanism for media in minority languages, covering both print and digital editions of newspapers and periodicals.

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[165] The list of direct contributions allocated in 2023 to publishing companies of newspapers and periodicals representing historical linguistic minorities, in accordance with Decree No. 70/17, is as follows: in German: *Die Neue Sudtiroler Tageszeitung* (daily newspaper), *Dolomiten* (daily newspaper), *Sudtiroler Wochenmagazin* (periodical), *Salto.bz* (online newspaper), *Unser Tirol 24* (periodical); in Slovenian: *Novi glas* (periodical), *Novi Matajur* (periodical), *Primorski dnevnik* (daily newspaper); in Ladin: *La Usc di Ladins* (periodical).

[166] Sixth state report, p. 132.

[167] Information received from representatives of Agenzia Regionale per la Lingua Friulana (ARLeF) during the monitoring visit (April 2025).

[168] Information received from representatives of national minorities during the monitoring visit (April 2025).

[169] Despite receiving direct support from the state, *Primorski dnevnik* faces a second consecutive cut in regional funding from Friuli Venezia Giulia of €80 000. The representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority continue to raise serious concerns about the commitment to protecting the rights of persons affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority rights and have requested for further justification, as the cuts have not been formally explained by the regional administration.

[170] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 47.

Use of minority languages in contacts with the administration (Article 10)

115. Law No. 482/99 continues to be the main legal source in the legislation regarding the use of minority languages in contacts with the administration. Article 7 of the law, states that in the territorial areas for which the law applies, the languages may be used by "members of the municipal councils and other collegiate bodies of the administration." Article 9 further indicates that "the oral and written use of the language admitted for protection is permitted in the offices of public administrations" and that "public administrations shall ensure, also through agreements with other bodies, the presence of personnel who are able to respond to requests from the public using the language admitted for protection."[171] However, Article 7.4 of Law No. 482/99 states that where documents intended for public use are written in both languages, only those in Italian are legally binding. These specific provisions of Law No. 482/99 are implemented by Presidential Decree No. 345/01, which provides, *inter alia*, for the compulsory establishment of at least one helpdesk office (*sportello*) to deal with all requests in minority languages in each municipality, in the territorial area of protection.[172]

116. A triennial earmarked state budget is used to implement the provisions of Law No. 482/99. To obtain the funding, every year, the eligible local administrations submit to the Department for Regional Affairs and Autonomies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, through the Regions, projects concerning the following areas of intervention: language desks, language training, toponymy and cultural activities (see Articles 5 and 11).[173] Until 2024, the majority of the available funds were allocated for the establishment and functioning of linguistic helpdesks (60% of the total amount), with 5% allocated for language training activities.[174] As of 2025, in accordance with the technical committee for historical linguistic minorities,[175] the share dedicated to the establishment and functioning of linguistic helpdesks should represent 30% of the total amount, and 5% should be allocated for language training activities.[176]

117. Law No. 38/01 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region recognises the right to use Slovenian in relations with local administrative and judicial authorities, as well as with the concessionaires of services of public interest in the areas of the territory where the Slovene linguistic minority is settled. This provision is implemented by Presidential Decree of 12 September 2007.[177] Article 100 of the Special Statute for Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol also guarantees the right of German-speaking citizens of the Province of Bolzano/Bozen to use their own language in relations with judicial offices and public administration bodies and offices located in the province or within regional jurisdiction, as well as with concessionaires of public interest services provided in the province.[178]

118. Regional laws were adopted in autonomous regions traditionally inhabited by persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities, with the aim of promoting and increasing public use of minority languages (see Article 3). In Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, access to public employment is subject to passing a French language proficiency test.[179] In the province of Trento, local legislation guarantees persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities the right to the effective use of their own language in their relations with public administrations and obliges local authorities to guarantee the translation into the minority language of public acts and individual acts drawn up by the administration and intended for public use.[180] In Friuli Venezia Giulia, the regional authorities have also adopted specific regional laws.[181] The right to use Friulian and Slovenian (and, on request, German) is guaranteed during the meetings of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Council. Seven municipalities of Friuli Venezia Giulia are considered "bilingual municipalities", with administrative activity carried out in

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[171] Law No. 482/99, Articles 7 and 9. The armed forces and the police of the state are not covered by this provision.
[172] Presidential Decree No. 345/01, Articles 4, 5, and 6.
[173] Law No. 482/99, Article 9. See also Article 8 of Presidential Decree No. 345/01. The exceptions to this are the state administrations, which independently submit projects directly to the Department.
[174] In 2024, 25% of the total budget were allocated to cultural activities and 10% to toponymy.
[175] Dipartimento per gli Affari Regionali e le Autonomie. See also Article 12 of the Presidential Decree No. 345/01.
[176] 60% of the total budget was allocated to cultural activities and 5% for toponymy. See the Public Notice aimed at enhancing the languages and cultures protected by Law No. 482/99, year 2025, 2024, and 2023. According to the Department of Regional Affairs and Autonomies, the modifications and adjustments proposed were made with a view to optimising policies in support of historical linguistic minorities and were due to demographic changes, technological progress, and major cultural and social changes.
[177] Article 8 of Law No. 38/01 and Presidential Decree of 12 September 2007.
[178] Decreto del presidente della repubblica 31 agosto 1972, n. 670Decreto del presidente della Repubblica 31 agosto 1972, n. 670.
[179] Regional Law No. 22/10, on 'New rules governing the organisation of the regional administration and the bodies of the single compartment of Valle d'Aosta. Sixth state report, pp. 66-67.
[180] Provincial Law No. 6/08, Rules for the promotion and protection of local linguistic minorities, Article 3. See also Provincial Law No. 3/06. Sixth state report, pp. 77-78 and 80-83.
[181] Regional Law No. 29/07 on the protection, development and promotion of the Friulian language; Regional Law No. 26/07 on the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority; Regional Law No. 20/09.

both Italian and Slovene and administrative acts also drafted in Slovene.[182] A General Language Policy Plan for the protection of Friulian, with specific provisions and measures for its use with the regional and local administrations, has also been drawn up.[183]

119. According to representatives of the historical linguistic minorities, the continuous reduction of the budget allocated to implement Law No. 482/99 does not ensure proper and long-term execution of projects planned by the regional and local authorities. While acknowledging the changes for the period 2025-2027 concerning the distribution of the budget allocated for the implementation of Law No. 482/99 (from 60% allocated for linguistic helpdesks to 30%), representatives of the historical linguistic minorities point out that the establishment of helpdesks has led to positive outcomes despite difficult contractual conditions of the personnel recruited, the general shortage of staff in small municipalities, and the rather bureaucratic and time-consuming process of drafting project proposals. They call for substantial amendments to Presidential Decree No. 345/01,[184] and have suggested that linguistic helpdesks could become offices responsible for the promotion of minority languages. Representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority consider that the establishment in 2019 of a Network for the Slovene language in the Public Sector of Friuli Venezia Giulia by the regional government has been a step in ensuring continuity in the distribution of funds, providing better co-ordination and support between the local authorities and the Central Office for the Slovene Language, with the possibility of recruiting staff.

120. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "language rights are effective only if they can be fully enjoyed in the public sphere."[185] "Protective arrangements must be in place to maintain services in the minority language, even if it is not widely used, as it may otherwise disappear from the public sphere."[186] "The Advisory Committee encourages maximum implementation of the possibilities provided by law to allow the use of minority languages in contacts with administrative authorities at local level […]. Authorities should support and actively encourage such measures by creating an environment that is conducive to the use of minority languages, including through the allocation of necessary financial and human resources."[187]

121. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that the authorities continue to promote the public use of the historical minority languages in the territorial areas where persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities live. However, it remains concerned about the constant decrease in the earmarked state budget allocated for the implementation of Law No. 482/99. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee regrets that the goal of setting up of at least one linguistic helpdesk in each municipality included in the territorial area of protection of Law No. 482/99, as envisaged in Presidential Decree No. 345/01 to address the difficulty in recruiting civil servants who can speak a minority language, has never been fully materialised, especially in municipalities where numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities live.[188] The lack of information on the number of existing linguistic helpdesks throughout the country and comprehensive data on their funding does not allow for an evaluation of their effectiveness in meeting the needs of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities.

122. The Advisory Committee understands that, in general, the staff working for linguistic helpdesks are recruited under fixed-term contracts or that these roles are outsourced. This situation results from the uncertainty created by the allocation of grants based on annual projects, which prevents mid-to-long-term recruitment. Despite the positive results achieved through the creation of linguistic helpdesks, the

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[182] In these municipalities, the right to the use of Slovene is guaranteed also during the meetings of the municipal councils, with the presence of an interpreter who provides simultaneous translation of the mayor's and councillors' speeches. The same service is also ensured during the meetings of the Gorizia City Council (Sixth state report, p. 100). A regional advisory commission has also been established under Article 8 of Regional Law No. 26/07 (Sixth state report, p. 104) on all questions and issues relating to the Slovene linguistic minority, in addition to the already existing *joint institutional committee for the problems of the Slovene minority*, the *central office for the Slovene language* (responsible for managing and coordinating the activities concerning the use of Slovenian in the public administration, with translation and interpreting services, including the *network for the Slovenian Language in the Friuli Venezia Giulia public administration*) and the permanent institutional table on issues concerning the Slovene-speaking minority in Italy.

[183] See the 2021-225 General Language Policy Plan for the Protection of Friulian2021-2025 General Language Policy Plan for the Protection of Friulian and the role played by the Regional Agency for the Friulian Language (ARLeF) regarding its implementation (Sixth state report, pp. 90-92). For the German-speaking minorities of Friuli Venezia Giulia, a regional commission has been established by Article 15 of Regional Law No. 20/09, which has advisory, proposal and evaluation tasks for the initiatives presented and implemented for the purposes of this law (Sixth state report, p. 96).

[184] Presidential Decree No. 345/01.

[185] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 51.

[186] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 56.

[187] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 58.

[188] The Advisory Committee nevertheless notes several positive examples of linguistic helpdesks for Arbëreshe in Abruzzo, Calabria, Molise, and Sicilia, Catalan in Sardinia, Croatian in Molise, French in Piedmont, Franco-Provençal in Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Friulano in Friuli Venezia Giulia, German in Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and Veneto, Greek in Calabria, Ladin in Veneto, Occitan in Calabria and Piedmont, Sardinian in Sardinia and Slovenian in Friuli Venezia Giulia. For more information or other examples, see Sixth state report, pp. 63-121. Persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti have no opportunities to use their respective languages in relation with the administrative authorities.

municipalities involved find it difficult to ensure their continuity. The organisation of training courses for civil servants appears to remain rather limited.

123. The Advisory Committee further notes that the new repartition of the triennial budget adopted for 2025-2027 places a stronger emphasis on cultural activities, which now represent 60% of the total budget, compared to 30% allocated for the linguistic helpdesks and 5% for language training activities. Noting that this decision was made in accordance with the technical committee for historical linguistic minorities, whose composition includes representatives of historical linguistic minorities, the Advisory Committee understands that the decrease in funding allocated to the establishment and maintenance of linguistic helpdesks responded to a political decision to distribute the funds differently.

124. In light of these recent changes, the Advisory Committee considers that the authorities, in co-operation with representatives of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities, as well as with representatives of regional and local authorities, should explore the possibility to amend the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 345/01, and to modify the existing allocation and distribution of funding from an annual to a pluriannual basis (see Article 5). Furthermore, the functions of linguistic helpdesks could be expanded to include the wider promotion of minority languages in areas where they operate. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that digitalisation can further help to address the situation regarding the use of minority languages with administrative authorities, for instance, through the translation of documents and forms and their publication online in all the municipalities where the conditions under Article 10(2) are met.

Recommendation

125. **The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to ensure that persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities can use their respective language in contact with all local and/or regional administrations where Law No. 482/99 applies.** The Advisory Committee further encourages the authorities to strengthen, in consultation with representatives of the historical linguistic minorities at all stages, the role and function of the linguistic helpdesks, including through the provision of sustainable, long-term and adequate human and financial resources, in particular in municipalities where numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities live.

Use of personal names in minority languages (Article 11)

126. The Advisory Committee notes that there have been no changes in the legal framework concerning the use of personal names in minority languages, which allows for their use and recognition in official documents and registers. Law No. 482/99 protects the right to have names and surnames in minority languages in official documents, as well as to the possible restoration of their original forms if this had been included in Italian in the municipal registers.[189] Furthermore, Law No. 38/01 guarantees the right of persons affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority to have their name and surname written in the correct form according to Slovenian orthography in all public documents, also providing for the procedure for restoring the surname if the Italian form was previously imposed.[190]

127. In practice, this right is implemented differently depending on the territorial area where linguistic national minorities live. In the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste or in the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen, documents are, by default, issued in bilingual format (respectively, in Italian/French and Italian/German). In the autonomous region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, identity documents are issued in bilingual format Italian/Slovene upon request.[191]

128. Representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority informed the Advisory Committee that, for some documents, technical issues continue to arise with characters and diacritical marks not found in the Italian alphabet for the correct spelling of Slovenian names (characters č, š, ž). Although they pointed out that such issues are being resolved, they nevertheless consider that awareness-raising campaigns should be carried out, especially in the municipalities of the province of Udine, for the restoration of names and surnames in their original Slovenian form.

129. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the right to use one's personal name in a minority language and have it officially recognised is a core linguistic right, linked closely to personal identity and dignity."[192] "New technologies facilitate the use of diacritic signs and alphabets of national minorities.

[189] Law No. 482/99, Articles 11.
[190] Law No. 38/01, Article 7.
[191] As of 2009, a decree of the Ministry of the Interior established that in four municipalities of Trieste – previously included in the London Memorandum of 1954 - documents were issued in bilingual Italian-Slovenian format, unless a request was made to have them only in Italian. In all other municipalities covered by Law No. 38/01, the opposite applies: identity documents are issued only in Italian, unless a request is made for a bilingual version.
[192] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 61.

States are therefore encouraged to make use of all available technical opportunities in order to offer full and effective guarantees to the rights provided by Article 11 of the Framework Convention."[193]

130. The Advisory Committee notes that the right to use surnames and first names in official documents in minority languages is guaranteed across the country, although in practice, its implementation is different depending on the status and rules of each territorial administration. Regarding the specific situation of the Slovene linguistic minority in Friuli Venezia Giulia, although the Advisory Committee is pleased to note the considerable progress that has been made, it regrets that some technical issues remain.[194] The Advisory Committee also stresses the value of all documents being automatically issued in a bilingual form (i.e. in Italian/French in the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and in Italian/German in the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen) as this is also a sign of a recognition of the presence of national minorities as an integral part of a diverse society.

Recommendation

131. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to take adequate steps to address the remaining technical issues related to diacritic signs in minority languages so as to ensure that all persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities obtain identity and administrative documents that correctly spell their names and surnames.

Displays of minority language signs and topographical indications (Article 11)

132. In Italy, the legal framework provides for the use of bilingual signs,[195] with a strong practical implementation of these measures in areas where persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities live. In Friuli Venezia Giulia[196] and in the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen,[197] bilingual (sometimes trilingual) topographical indications are widespread.[198] In the autonomous regions of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, the topographical indications are officially in French, except in the municipality of Aoste, where some bilingual topographical indications are also in numerically smaller minority languages, such as in Franco-Provençal and Walser German.[199] Bilingual topographical indications in Franco-Provençal and Walser German can also be found in Piedmont, as well as in Occitan in Piedmont, Cimbrian in Veneto, Croatian in Molise, Ladin in Veneto and the province of Trento, Arbëreshe in Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise and Sicily and Greek in Apulia.[200]

133. In the triennial 2025-2027 budget adopted to implement the provisions of Law No. 482/99, the percentage allocated for toponymy has decreased from 10% (up to 2024) to 5% of the total budget (see Articles 5 and 10).[201]

134. Representatives of historical linguistic minorities, in conformity with positions expressed concerning the funding of cultural activities or the use of minority languages with the administration (see Articles 5 and 10), consider that the continuous reduction of the budget allocated to implement Law No. 482/99 does not ensure the proper and long-term implementation of projects planned by the local and regional authorities. While these representatives are generally satisfied with access to bilingual

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[193] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 62.
[194] See ACFC, Fifth Opinion on Italy, paras.130-133; ACFC, Fourth Opinion on Italy, paras. 81-85; ACFC, Third Opinion on Italy, paras.174-177.
[195] Law No. 482/99, Article 10. See also Article 10 of Law No. 38/01 for the Slovene linguistic minority in Friuli Venezia Giulia. The Advisory Committee notes that the funds available for the implementation of Law No. 482/99 in Friuli Venezia Giulia and Sardinia are directly transferred from the state budget to these regions. Therefore, funds available for topographical indications in Friulian, German and Slovenian in Friuli Venezia Giulia and for Catalan and Sardinian in Sardinia are autonomously allocated by the respective regional authorities.
[196] The territorial scope of application of topographical signs is regulated by regional laws for each historical minority language (Regional Law No. 29/07; Regional Law No. 26/07 (in addition to Article 10 of Law No. 38/01); Regional Law No. 20/09). Different lists of municipalities, provinces, mountain communities and service concessionaires required to apply such provisions were drawn up.
[197] In the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen, a German-Italian bilingualism and a regional Ladin-German-Italian trilingualism (in Val Gardena and Val Badia) are officially in force throughout the territory.
[198] For instance, in Friuli Venezia Giulia, bilingual Italian-Friulian road signs are also used by state authorities, including ANAS - the company that deals with road infrastructure and manages the network of state roads and motorways of national interest.
[199] Regional Law No. 61/76. See in particular its Article 1 novies, which provides for the possibility to indicate varieties in minority languages and in Franco-Provençal, alongside the official names. The Regional Council has established a commission for local toponymy, which is an advisory and technical-scientific assistance body. As of October 2025, the toponyms of 49 out of 74 municipalities have been officially recognised, and there are four municipalities that have chosen to add their names in Franco-Provençal to their official names. See also the work carried out by the Regional Office for Ethnology and Linguistics (BREL - Bureau Régional pour l'Ethnologie et la Linguistique), which has created a database of approximately 76 700 toponyms in their Franco-Provençal form.
[200] Sixth state report, pp. 63-121.
[201] Law No. 482/99, Article 9. See also Article 8 of Presidential Decree No. 345/01. See Public Notice aimed at enhancing the languages and cultures protected by Law No. 482/99, years 2025, 2024 and 2023.

topographical indications, they point out the prominent role played by local and regional authorities,[202] and emphasise that the distribution of the funding set out in Law No. 482/99 is not tailored to their needs as it is too circumscribed by the rules set in Presidential Decree No. 345/01 (a limited number of applications per minority, municipality and in time). However, some representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority drew a clear distinction between road signs for which there is a minority language use, and topographical signs, where greater efforts could be made, such as in the marketing and enhancement of cultural heritage related to tourism.[203]

135. The Advisory Committee reiterates the important role that the use of minority languages in place names and topographical signs can have for the development of a sense of acceptance of diversity amongst the population, and to demonstrate that the diverse character of a specific region, traditionally and at present, is acknowledged and valued. The Advisory Committee considers that multilingual cultural and touristic signage offers considerable potential for the use of topographical names in minority languages, as it uses these languages and toponyms in a field (heritage preservation) that is appreciated in all parts of society, raises awareness of the cultural contributions made by national minorities and has a practical function. It reiterates that "bilingualism in signposts should be promoted as it conveys the message that a given territory is shared in harmony by various population groups."[204]

136. The Advisory Committee notes that the use of minority language signs and topographical indications is widespread in areas inhabited by persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities, such as in the Autonomous Regions of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Friuli Venezia Giulia and the autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen. The Advisory Committee welcomes the presence of minority language signs and topographical indications in areas traditionally inhabited by persons affiliating with the numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities, such as the Arbëreshe, Catalan, Croat, Franco-Provençal, German-speaking, Greek, Ladin and Occitan. However, the Advisory Committee regrets that the continuous reduction of the budget allocated to implement Law No. 482/99, the re-orientation of triennial 2025-2027 state earmarked budget, with a lower percentage of funding for projects on topographical indications (5%), and the rather rigid administrative procedure for obtaining annual grants under the rules set in Presidential Decree No. 345/01. Local and Regional authorities often need to provide additional financial resources to ensure that long term projects can be implemented.

Recommendation

137. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to consider the possibility of amending the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 345/01, in co-operation with representatives of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities, as well as with representatives of regional and local authorities, to facilitate the allocation and distribution of funding dedicated to the implementation of Law No. 482/99, in particular concerning the display of minority language signs and topographical indications.

Intercultural education and knowledge about national minorities (Article 12)

138. Italian legislation recognises the importance of intercultural education and provides measures for its promotion, especially relating to addressing issues related to migration. Although the measures to promote and value intercultural education relate mostly to migration,[205] these also impact persons affiliating with the 12 historical linguistic minorities.

139. Law No. 107/15[206] was adopted, amongst other objectives, to valorise and enhance language competences and to ensure inclusion in quality education of all pupils, regardless of their social, cultural and geographical backgrounds. The law also provides for the inclusion of diversity and within teacher training, with a specific emphasis placed on digital and global citizenship education as part of the

[202] For instance, according to representatives of ARLeF the Advisory Committee met during its visit, there is currently a positive spread of visual bilingualism at the local level in Friuli Venezia Giulia, with specific regional contributions in 2021, 2022 and 2024 for the purchase and installation of bilingual Italian-Friulian road signs. In 2024, ARLeF issued a public notice to promote the installation of internal and external signage (signs, writings, visual supports, public utility indications) in buildings hosting offices and public facilities. Representatives of the German speakers in the Val Canale area praised a recent collaboration with a Slovene cultural association with the view to creating road signs indicating the names of the main places of the municipalities of Tarvisio, Pontebba and Malborghetto/Valbruna in the historical languages of the valley.

[203] See the research carried out by the Slovene Research Institute (SLORI) on the occasion of the Third Regional Conference on the Protection of the Slovene-speaking Minority in November 2021 regarding the situation of topographic indications signs in Slovenian as well as information provided by ARLeF on the official toponymy.

[204] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 3 (2012), para. 67.

[205] Ministerial circular no. 301 of 8 September 1989 represents a pioneering provision, addressing issues related to migrations, and regulating, from the perspective of intercultural education, access to the right to study, learn the Italian language and the valorisation of the language of origin. See also Legislative-Decree No. 286/98 or Presidential Decree No. 394/99, which recognise foreign minors' right to education regardless of the regularity of their residence status.

[206] Law No. 107/15 on the reform of the national education and training system and delegation for the reorganisation of the existing legislative provisions.

development of intercultural competences. It also reinforces educational institutions' autonomy. Under this legislation, each school is obliged to submit a triennial educational delivery plan with details on the implementation of intercultural initiatives based on the local social, cultural and economic contexts.

140. Articles 4 and 5 of Law No. 482/99 also relate to the development of the 12 historical linguistic minorities with a prominent role for schools, including the possibility, at their discretion,[207] to implement local projects in the areas where the law applies, as well as national projects to support minority languages. In the latter case, schools can ensure the learning of the minority language and, within their organisational and didactic autonomy, establish the teaching activities of the language and local traditions, also based on requests of the parents of the pupils at both primary and lower secondary school levels (see Article 14).

141. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Merit has prepared intercultural guidelines, ideas and proposals for the "integration of students from migration contexts",[208] where it is considered "advisable to have bilingual and mother tongue books, multilingual materials, including visual ones." Moreover, in its National Guidelines for the curriculum of pre-primary and the first cycle of education for 2025,[209] the Ministry of Education and Merit has pointed out that "learning languages and comparing them with their cultures is of fundamental value in an increasingly globalised world, as it is not limited to the simple acquisition of linguistic codes and cultural knowledge in addition to those already possessed, but involves a series of cognitive, social and cultural benefits that profoundly influence the individual and society, paving the way for active inclusion in the contemporary, interconnected and multicultural world."[210] Among its general objectives, the Ministry of Education and Merit advocates for the development of a better understanding of "the value of multilingualism and interculturality as an opportunity for communication and exchange with other civilisations and societies", in particular concerning the "French-speaking minority present at the national level" and the "German-speaking minorities and German-speaking culture also in Italy".[211] The authorities reported that, after a broad public consultation (including with CONFEMILI), the draft of the new national guidelines was revised and references to minority languages were added.

142. In the context of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), the Italian authorities are committed to enhancing inclusive education and digital skills, which include intercultural competences, with a focus on improving educational equity.[212]

143. Representatives of historical linguistic minorities drew the attention of the Advisory Committee during its visit to a general ongoing lack of knowledge among the general population about their cultures and histories, particularly in regions inhabited by numerically smaller minorities. They regretted that, while teaching about minorities is encouraged, its implementation varies across schools, often depending on the regional or local composition of the student population and the initiative of individual teachers (see Article 14). The representatives highlighted that the 20% autonomous part of the curriculum is seldom dedicated to teaching in or of their language or about their culture and history. Additionally, in practice, the high degree of school autonomy in the choice of teaching and learning materials, particularly textbooks, poses the risk of an inadequate representation of historical linguistic minorities, contributing to a broader lack of societal awareness about them. In particular, Roma and Sinti representatives regretted the limited inclusion of their histories and cultures in school curricula and textbooks. They pointed out the need to introduce specific contents to history teaching to combat antigypsyism, prejudices and stereotypes within the Italian society. Interlocutors of the Advisory Committee further emphasised their wish for Roma and Sinti histories and cultures to be presented in a positive light.

144. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "states have the primary responsibility for producing their own high-quality educational materials, through which they should seek to promote societal integration and recognition of minority identities as an integral part of society."[213] "Multiperspectivity as an approach should also be included in educational materials and form part of teachers' pre- and in-service

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[207] Lingue di minoranza - MIM.
[208] National Observatory for the integration of foreign students and intercultural education, intercultural guidelines, ideas and proposals for the integration of students from migration contexts, March 2022, p. 34. The National Observatory for the integration of foreign students and intercultural education is a body established in 2006 with the aim of identifying effective organisational solutions and useful guidelines for the work of schools.
[209] Ministry of Education and Merit, New Guidelines 2025, Kindergarten and First Cycle of Education Materials for the Public Debate, 2024. See also the Guidelines for the curriculum for pre-primary schools and first cycle of education, formally adopted by Ministerial Decree No. 221 of 9 December 2025, which will come into force from the 2026/2027 school year.
[210] *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[211] *Ibid.*, pp. 60 and 61.
[212] See Piano Nazionale di ripresa e resilienza. See also Progetti in essere – FUTURA.
[213] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 on Education under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted on 31 May 2024, revising and replacing Thematic Commentary No. 1 on Education (2006), para. 31.

training."[214] "Pre- and in-service training for teachers, supported with suitable teaching materials, should be provided to ensure that educational policies are effective in practice. […] Teacher training about national minorities should be ensured by the relevant authorities for all teachers."[215] "Curricula and educational materials […] must aim to value diversity, nurture respect for difference, and seek to develop analytical and critical thinking skills. [They] are therefore key to raising awareness of national minorities and persons belonging to them."[216] "Minority cultures, histories, languages, religions and identities should be present across a wide range of subjects – literature, the arts, sciences and geography, for example – and at all educational levels."[217] "The Advisory Committee has welcomed instances where parts of a curriculum reserved for teaching about particular localities, especially their history, are also used for teaching about national minorities living there. It has also encouraged authorities to provide guidance to teachers on how to make use of such reserved parts of curricula or how they should fill in open parts of a curriculum. Likewise, age-appropriate teaching about the histories of national minorities should be included at all levels of the education system."[218]

145. The Advisory Committee welcomes the guidance on intercultural education provided in the National Indications by the Ministry of Education and Merit and considers that they reflect the aims and objectives of the Framework Convention. The Advisory Committee takes note of the Ministry of Education and Merit's position that the freedom of textbooks and school autonomy contribute to the freedom of teaching, specifically with a view to promoting multiple perspectives in history teaching and the development of critical thinking in all subjects. It also welcomes activities carried out by the National Network of Schools with Minority Languages, *inter alia* to promote cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity (see Article 6).

146. Notwithstanding this, the Advisory Committee considers that the broad autonomy of educational institutions, combined with the loose framework character of the curriculum and the free choice of textbooks, may result in some minority languages and cultures not being included in teaching and learning activities, which contributes to a broader lack of societal awareness about them. All pupils in Italy, regardless of their place of residence, should have a basic understanding of the different historical linguistic minorities and the diversity of the Italian society as such. The Advisory Committee thus regrets that information provided in textbooks and other educational materials regarding the specific identities, cultures, languages and histories of minorities in Italy is limited, remaining too succinct and not translating into an actual increase in general awareness among school pupils.

147. The Advisory Committee recalls the content of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation (2020)2 on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials, which provides a useful tool to refer to Roma history in education materials in Italy.[219] Furthermore, it recalls the work carried out by the Council of Europe Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, which provides data through general and thematic reports, offers a platform for knowledge exchange and factual discussion, and promotes the sharing of good practices and successful models on history teaching.[220]

Recommendation

148. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to continue their efforts to promote mutual respect and intercultural dialogue, and to ensure that information about minority cultures, traditions, histories, religions and languages, including those of numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities and persons affiliating with them, and about their integral and valued role in and contributions to Italy's diverse society, is included in school curricula, educational materials and accompanying teacher training.

Equal access to education – Roma, Sinti and Caminanti (Article 12)

149. Under Italian legislation, all children, regardless of their legal status, have the right to education, which is compulsory up to the age of 16.[221] As a rule, Roma and Sinti children are not placed in segregated classes or special schools. The National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and

[214] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 36.
[215] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 43.
[216] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 25.
[217] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 27.
[218] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 38.
[219] Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials.
[220] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 41. See Resolution CM/Res(2020)34 of the Committee of Ministers confirming the establishment of the Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe and The Observatory on History Teaching in Europe - Observatory on History Teaching in Europe.
[221] Sistema educativo di istruzione e formazione - MIM.

Participation Strategy (2021-2030) has a specific section on access to quality inclusive general education.[222] It envisages a set of interventions aimed at improving school inclusion, to be incorporated into projects at the national and local levels.[223] The National Project for the Inclusion and Integration of Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti Children and Adolescents continues to be implemented by the authorities. Launched as a pilot in 2013 and subsequently included as part of the 2014-2020 National Operational Programme (PON) "Inclusion",[224] this project is now part of the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021-2027.[225] For the period 2024-2026, €40 million has been earmarked for strengthening policy and governance actions at the local level (across more than 30 municipalities) and facilitating initiatives for greater community involvement and participation.[226] This project is implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies,[227] in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Merit, the Ministry of Health[228] and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*.[229] It aims to overcome the fragmentation of services by promoting an integrated and multidisciplinary approach.[230] Its education module is intended to create a school environment that reduces the risk the Roma, Sinti and Caminanti pupils will drop out, and to improve their school inclusion and educational results. Training of teachers and staff and the launching of curricular activities using co-operative methods and classroom workshops are one of the main actions carried out. In 2023, more than 400 classes in 123 schools were involved, with more than 700 Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti pupils and more than 8 000 other pupils and students being involved in the participating schools.[231]

150. According to the state report,[232] this project has helped to combat early school leaving and contributed to a significant improvement in average school attendance, with tangible results in educational performance and social inclusion. Results indicate that pupils who have been included in the project for one year have an average attendance of 58% at primary school level and 38% at secondary school level, while those involved for more than five years have an average attendance of 75% (both at primary and secondary school levels). The authorities further point out that pupils participating in this project have shown greater interest in continuing their studies (to higher vocational school or higher secondary school).

151. The state report[233] also provides several examples of concrete activities carried out and programmes implemented at the regional and local level, such as the *Fiori di campo 2* project in Asti (Piedmont) or actions undertaken by the *Centro Servizi Famiglia Valpolcevera* in Genoa (Liguria). In Milan (Lombardy), the *ortles 73 Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti service*[234] is a specialised service providing educational and social assistance and support/interventions.[235] In the province of Vicenza (Veneto), the *Oltre il Campo Obiettivo Scuola*[236] and *Tutti inclusi* projects aim at providing greater inclusion in school, housing and work, with the help of professional educators and with the support of the third sector. The local authorities report that Roma and Sinti pupils have a high attendance rate, and pupils benefit from grants for the purchase of textbooks and school supplies and from free access to the canteen service. In the province of Naples (Campania), where many Roma and Sinti come from the Western Balkan countries and Romania, projects are being carried out to improve the number of children enrolling in school and to counter phenomena of exclusion. In the unauthorised camp of *Via Carrafiello* in the municipality of Giugliano (Campania), the *ABRAMO* Project,[237] with the co-operation of the regional school office (and funding from the region of Campania), assists children affiliating with the Roma community with enrolment in the schools closest to the camp. In the municipality of Lecce (Apulia), projects are implemented to collect data relating to school attendance and performance and social-

[222] National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), pp. 37-46.
[223] These interventions concern the launch of a national research project on the level of inclusion of Roma and Sinti children in the schools system; the establishment of a territorial sample survey on the level of early school drop-out of Roma and Sinti children; the co-design and share with individual family units of inclusion interventions; the continuation of cultural and linguistic mediation; interventions on teaching content; positive actions to promote continued education and training; the training of teachers and school staff.
[224] Cos'è il PON inclusione - UNAR.
[225] PN Inclusione e lotta alla povertà 2021-2027.
[226] Progetto Nazionale RSC. See Directorial Decree No. 24/24. It should be noted that the €40 million are financed by the European Social Fund plus (ESF+).
[227] Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali.
[228] Ministero della Salute.
[229] Istituto degli Innocenti.
[230] The project is divided into six project modules: co-ordination activities; participatory networking and governance; school and countering school dropout; extracurricular socio-educational activities; social activities; meals (optional).
[231] Sixth state report, p. 20.
[232] Sixth state report, pp. 20-21.
[233] Sixth state report, pp. 122-171.
[234] Portale RSC.
[235] According to the Sixth state report (p. 130), school attendance recorded during the 2022/2023 school year varied greatly between the different camps located in the municipality of Milan (from 50% in the *Via della Chiesa Rossa* camp to 70% in the *Via Impastato* camp).
[236] Oltre Il Campo.
[237] Progetto A.B.R.A.M.O. - Fondazione Siamo Mediterraneo ETS.

relational interactions with peers and adults, in order to design tailor-made educational projects that foster contacts between the educational staff and families and respond to the needs of the pupils. Furthermore, the municipality of Lecce provides financial support to remove material obstacles to education, including through a school transportation service, after-school and/or day care centres. Most of these initiatives are implemented in collaboration with NGOs and/or social workers. They often include public transportation of pupils to schools and cultural mediators.[238]

152. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "ensuring access of all persons belonging to national minorities to quality education means that states need to act resolutely to, *inter alia*, ensure that all children are duly enrolled in schools and to monitor school attainments, including absenteeism and drop-out rates, literacy, completion of studies, grades, gender disparities, access to higher educational levels and subsequently access to employment."[239] "Efforts to ensure equal opportunities are also supported through efforts to ensure the integration of society as a whole through the education system, in particular through ensuring schools are welcoming environments for all […]."[240]

153. The Advisory Committee welcomes the continued efforts made by the central, regional and municipal authorities, in co-operation with NGOs, to promote and ensure access to education for all Roma and Sinti children. The authorities have adopted a National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), for which UNAR is responsible for implementing.[241] Furthermore, the Advisory Committee commends the authorities for implementing their National Project for the Inclusion and Integration of Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti Children and Adolescents, as part of the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021-2027. The Advisory Committee considers that this integrated and multidisciplinary approach, which transversely addresses issues related to education, housing, employment and health, is adequate to address comprehensively and to respond in a coherent manner to the challenges faced by persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti (see Article 15). Such an approach has already demonstrated its efficiency and positive results in increasing the school enrolment and performance of Roma and Sinti pupils, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the families.

154. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that the National Project for the Inclusion and Integration of Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti Children and Adolescents has been expanded to new schools over the years, with an increasing number of pupils benefiting from it. It further welcomes the significant improvements in average school attendance and the tangible results in educational performance and social inclusion. However, despite the positive measures taken, the Advisory Committee notes that Roma and Sinti pupils continue to face serious obstacles to achieving equal access to education. The enrolment rate at the primary and secondary school levels remains disproportionately low among Roma, Sinti and Caminanti pupils compared to the general population. The low levels of educational achievement continue to reduce their prospects of access to the labour market (see Article 15). It is therefore essential to continue to closely monitor attendance, drop-out rates, educational outcomes across different schools, and educational pathways such as access to higher education, apprenticeships, or employment and to further develop and expand the scope of the existing programmes, which require long-term and secured national funding to provide sustainable and tangible results. The Advisory Committee acknowledges that meeting the needs of these pupils requires flexibility and differentiated solutions adapted to local contexts. In this regard, the role of regional and local authorities is key as they are often those providing help for transportation, mediation assistance, school supplies and meals.

Recommendation

155. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to implement and monitor, in co-operation with the civil society, the strategies set to ensure effective access to quality inclusive education for all pupils and students affiliating with the Roma, Sinti and Caminanti, and to further develop and expand the scope of existing programmes established at the national, regional and local levels to ensure higher school enrolment and school attainment at all levels of education.

Teaching in and of minority languages (Article 14)

156. The Italian educational system is characterised by different models. Every year, the Ministry of Education and Merit provides national guidelines for preschools and primary schools and establishes

[238] More examples can be found in the Sixth state report, pp. 122-171.
[239] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 50.
[240] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 51.
[241] Strategia RSC 2021-2030 - UNAR.

educational objectives and didactic goals.[242] However, schools and teachers have autonomy over which teaching and learning materials to use (Article 12). After the adoption of Law No. 107/15, schools also have the authority to decide on the content of 20% of the curriculum, including *inter alia* to valorise and enhance language competences.[243] They are required to submit an "educational delivery plan detailing initiatives reflecting the needs of the local cultural, social and economic context" every three years to the Ministry of Education and Merit.

157. This level of educational autonomy is particularly well-developed in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and Friuli Venezia Giulia, as well as in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen. In Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, French and Italian are the two languages of instruction on an equal footing.[244] Two schools in Aosta and Verrès issue the *EsaBac* Italian-French diploma, which qualifies students for university enrolment both in France and in Italy.[245] Since 1963, Franco-Provençal has also been included in the school system through the *Cerlogne Competition*, a school competition designed to encourage schools to teach in Franco-Provençal on various themes related to the region and the traditions shared by its inhabitants.[246] In addition, the region, through its *École populaire de patois*, organises annual courses for adults. Walser German and standard German are taught in several school facilities where persons affiliating with this linguistic minority traditionally live (in Issime, Gressoney-Saint-Jean; Gressoney-la-Trinité), sometimes within the framework of French/German multilingual programmes. German is also taught in the pre-school, primary and secondary schools of the E. Reinotti institution in Pont- Sant-Martin and students who have passed the German examination are awarded a certificate from the 'Goethe Institute' in Turin.

158. In Friuli Venezia Giulia, numerous projects have been implemented with the support of regional authorities, to strengthen the teaching of the Slovene, Friulian and German languages. In 2022, in Val Canale, the Ministry of Education and Merit launched a pilot programme, establishing of a trilingual teaching model which takes into account the linguistic context in the valley. The programme includes instruction in Italian and minority languages – Friulian and/or German and/or Slovenian – from preschool to secondary school.[247]

159. State schools with teaching in Slovenian are well established in the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia.[248] The Slovene-Italian Institute of San Pietro al Natisone in the province of Udine has been using a Slovenian-Italian bilingual model from preschool to lower secondary school and Slovenian as a language of instruction in upper secondary school for over 40 years.[249] Dedicated funding has been earmarked for the publication of teaching materials and for the recruitment of teachers who teach in Slovenian.

160. Teaching of Friulian language and culture is provided in state and private preschools and primary schools located in municipalities protected under Law No. 482/99.[250] In accordance with the regional regulation,[251] the teaching is at least 30 hours of curricular instruction per school year. At the lower secondary school level, curricular teaching is not yet available, but there is the possibility of implementing Friulian language and culture projects through a specific measure included in the regional plan for the enrichment of educational offerings.[252] The teaching of Friulian continues to be based on the "principle of opt-in", allowing families to decide whether or not their children will be registered enrolled in these classes.[253] Instruction is provided by teachers who are registered on a list established at the regional level, proving their professional, cultural and scientific qualifications.[254] In 2017, the University of Udine established a training programme for teaching in the Friulian language and the

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[242] Ministry of Education and Merit, New Guidelines 2025, Kindergarten and First Cycle of Education Materials for the Public Debate, 2024.
[243] Law No. 107/15 on the reform of the national education and training system and delegation for the reorganisation of the existing legislative provisions.
[244] See Regional Law No. 11/18, which regulates the holding of French language tests as part of the state examination of the second cycle of education in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste.
[245] Sixth state report, p. 64.
[246] See Le Concours Cerlogne.
[247] In at least one class in each school, from preschool to secondary school, the programmes offer the teaching of and in Friulian, German and Slovenian in Tarvisio, Ugovizza, and Malborghetto, and in Pontebba and Chiusaforte, the teaching of and in Friulian, German and English.
[248] USRFVG IT | Anagrafe scuole con lingua d'insegnamento slovena.
[249] See Law No. 38/01, Articles 12 and 13.
[250] Funding for the curricular teaching of Friulian applies only to preschools and primary schools within the public education system.
[251] Regional Law No. 29/07, Article 12.
[252] Regional Call for Funding of Educational Activities Related to the Teaching of the Languages and Cultures of Historical Linguistic Minorities.
[253] The Italian Constitutional Court invalidated certain provisions of Regional Law No. 29/07, including the mandatory teaching of Friulian. See Constitutional Court Decision No. 159/2009.
[254] Nearly 80% of families opt for the teaching of Friulian at the preschool and primary school levels. This percentage has remained constant in the sixth monitoring cycle. ARLeF conducts every year a broad awareness raising campaign to promote such classes. See Dîs di sì al furlan a scuele par to fi!.

teaching of Friulian culture, with a recognised certification.[255] In 2022, ARLeF prepared "guidelines for the production of educational materials for and in the Friulian language" to ensure the quality of teaching materials at the preschool, primary, lower (and upper) secondary school levels,[256] as well as the creation of "Anìn!", the first textbook for teaching the Friulian language in primary schools (volume 1 and 2, from first to fifth grades), which has been distributed free of charge every year since the school year 2022/2023.[257] The textbook is accompanied by guidelines for teachers, who receive specific training sessions through video tutorials.

161. In Friuli Venezia Giulia, the German-speaking minorities have historically been present in six municipalities (three municipalities in Val Canale: Tarvisio, Malborghetto, and Pontebba, and the municipalities of Paluzza, Sauris and Sappada). In Val Canale, the Ingeborg Bachmann Comprehensive Institute currently operates at all school levels (from preschool to high school),[258] and is involved in the pilot project by the Ministry of Education and Merit to create a multilingual curriculum. In Paluzza, a variety of activities have been introduced at municipal primary schools, with standard German lessons in all classes and programmes dedicated to various subjects and cultural activities that compare the German-Timavese variant with standard German. In Sauris, although German is not taught as a second language, language and cultural activities take place weekly. In Sappada (which has only been part of Friuli Venezia Giulia since 2017), activities include teaching the local variant (Sappadino) for one hour per week over a period of four months at the preschool level, through a 45-hour project at the primary school level, and ten hours at the lower secondary school level.[259]

162. In the province of Bolzano/Bozen, different educational models exist. Monolingual instruction is offered in German or in Italian respectively, with the compulsory teaching of the other language. A trilingual approach has been developed for areas where Ladin is traditionally spoken. This model is based on the principle of 'teaching language parity' (in German and Italian, with the additional teaching of Ladin).[260]

163. In the province of Trento, provincial guidelines and the "Trentino trilingue" plan provide dedicated hours of teaching in Italian, German and English from preschool to upper secondary school.[261] The Ladin School of Fassa[262] continues to promote the teaching in and of Ladin and the teaching of the Ladin history and culture, from preschool to upper secondary school, with the assistance of the Ladin training and teaching office (OLFED), responsible for the design and publication of teaching materials as well as the organisation of teacher training and activities.[263] The University of Trento, together with the Free University of Bolzano/Bozen and the Ladin School of Fassa, organise training courses for Ladin language teachers.[264] In the municipality of Luserna, Cimbrian is taught from preschool level to secondary school level by a native Cimbrian language specialist, including to pupils and students that are not affiliating with this linguistic minority.[265] Mòcheno is also taught in the Bersntol Valley (*Valle del Fersina*) at the preschool and primary school level, along with standard German and English. The Unitary Committee of the German-speaking Historical Islands in Italy regularly publishes materials for children. During the 2024/2025 school year, it organised a higher education course for the teaching of minority languages together with the University of Trento, mainly addressing persons affiliating with the Cimbri and Mocheni linguistic minorities, including from other regions (Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia). A network of minority schools has been established in the province to collaborate, *inter alia*, in methodological, curricular and disciplinary research, implementation of innovative projects or the production of teaching materials.[266]

164. In Sardinia, the teaching of Sardinian and Catalan is not included in the curriculum and is based on school projects under Law No. 482/99 and Regional Law No. 22/18.[267] These projects are monitored

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[255] In 2023, 48 candidates passed the competitive exam for certification of Friulian language proficiency at level C2. A first Friulian language certification exam at level B1 was held in November 2024. Interested teachers are also part of a "network of contact persons for teaching the Friulian language" established by ARLeF.
[256] ARLeF, guidelines for the production of educational materials for and in the Friulian language, 2022.
[257] Anìn! - ARLeF. In 2020, ARLeF oversaw the production of "Il libri di Maman!", with a print run of more than 20 000 copies which was distributed to more than 180 schools. In 2021, ARLeF distributed a diverse range of teaching materials, reading texts, and multimedia materials in Friulian in over 330 schools and 1 586 classes, from preschools to primary schools and lower secondary schools.
[258] Istituto Omnicomprensivo "I. Bachmann" - Tarvisio.
[259] Information received from representatives of the German linguistic minority during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[260] Minority and education in a future South Tyrol.
[261] Piano Trentino Trilingue.
[262] Scuola Ladina di Fassa.
[263] OLFED.
[264] Corso di alta formazione in Lingua e Cultura ladina e Antropologia alpina (ANTROPOLAD).
[265] The Unitary Committee of the German-speaking Historical Islands in Italy made an official request to introduce a language proficiency certificate at the end of primary and secondary school levels.
[266] The network is composed of the Ladin School of Fassa, Pergine 1 (Mòcheno minority) and schools from Folgaria, Lavarone and Luserna (Cimbrian minority). See Sixth state report, p. 79.
[267] Regional Law No. 22/18.

by the Sardinian Language Service of the Regional Department of Culture.[268] In its regional language policy plan 2020-2024, the regional government noted that "the learning and teaching of the Sardinian language should be included in a multilingual educational programme,"[269] supported several measures to be taken (pilot project to organise the teaching in and of Sardinian and Catalan during school hours: three hours per week at preschool level and at least two hours at primary and lower secondary school levels; recruitment of external professionals; teacher training and certification activities; production of teaching materials; awareness-raising measures for families; study and research at University level with the establishment of a permanent interinstitutional committee for the teaching of historical minority languages *S'Obreria pro s'imparu de su sardu* and the *Acadèmia de su sardu*).[270]

165. For other numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities, mainly in regions without an autonomous status, Law No. 482/99 continues to be the principal legislative source for protecting their minority languages in education, with activities organised on an annual project basis.[271] The state report provides diverse examples of such activities, as well as others launched on the initiative of regional and/or local authorities, such as school activities aimed at historical, cultural and linguistic enhancement for the Ladin and Cimbrian in Veneto,[272] classes at primary school level in Walser German, extracurricular workshops for Franco-Provençal in Piedmont,[273] teaching of Arbëreshe at the primary school in several municipalities in Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania and Sicily.[274] Additionally, regional authorities included in the National Strategy for Inland Areas[275] continue to implement framework programme agreements concluded with regional school offices and the municipalities concerned to enhance the linguistic and cultural heritage of historical linguistic minorities living in those areas.[276]

166. The National Network of Schools with Minority Languages (see Article 6) operates as a permanent platform for meetings and the exchange of best practices on didactic, methodological, evaluation and organisational issues in minority language teaching. As of 2025, approximately 30 educational institutions have joined the network. Furthermore, it has launched a national training and research project called "Integrated local curriculum and production of teaching materials in minority languages",[277] with the intention of responding to the need to support the training of qualified minority language teachers.[278]

167. Representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority acknowledged that state schools offering teaching in and of Slovenian are well established in the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia. They also praised the establishment of a trilingual teaching model in Val Canale, although they advocate for an increase in the number of hours taught in Slovenian. While praising the work of the Institute of San Pietro al Natisone, they wish to have the possibility to also receive their education in Slovenian at the upper secondary education level in this territorial area and more generally in the province of Udine. Furthermore, in terms of recruitment of teachers teaching in Slovenian, representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority, in addition to stressing the general lack of interest in pursuing a career in education, pointed out that many students who continue their studies at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), regularly face problems with the recognition of their diplomas in Italy and consequently choose to remain in Slovenia.[279] They regret the absence of joint guidelines between Italy and Slovenia on this issue.[280]

168. Representatives of the Friulian linguistic minority continue to emphasise that the existing 'opt-in' principle is detrimental to the teaching and learning of Friulian in Friuli Venezia Giulia, despite the high levels of interest to have children learn Friulian expressed by parents. While regretting the persistent shortage of teachers in and of Friulian, mostly due to organisational and logistical issues, they welcome the recent publication of up-to-date teaching materials at the preschool and primary school levels, and the possibility to obtain certification for teaching in Friulian, highlighting the important role played by

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[268] The Advisory Committee notes that projects based on regional fundings also cover other languages spoken on the island, e.g. Sassarian in Sassari, Gallurian in Gallura and Tabarquin in Carloforte and Calasetta.
[269] Regional language policy plan 2020-2024, pp. 42 -50; 80-85 and 90-93.
[270] *Ibid*., p. 42.
[271] Law No. 482/99, Article 4.
[272] Sixth state report, pp. 74-75.
[273] Sixth state report, pp. 71-72.
[274] Sixth state report, pp. 110, 111, 113, 117, 121.
[275] The 'National Strategy for Inland Areas' is a national development and territorial cohesion policy aimed at countering the marginalisation and the phenomena of demographic decline these "inland areas".
[276] See the 'Strategy for the Grecanica Inland Area', which aims at protecting and promoting the language and culture of the Greeks of Calabria, including through the creation of a Laboratory for research and Teaching of the Calabrian Greek language.
[277] Curricolo locale integrato e produzione di materiali didattici in lingua di minoranza.
[278] Sixth state report, pp. 14-16.
[279] Information received from representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[280] It should be noted that the Italian and Austrian authorities have made an "exchange of notes" (*Notenwechsel zwischen Österreich und Italien über die gegenseitige Anerkennung akademischer Titel und Grade*) providing for the mutual recognition of university diplomas. See also Riconoscimento dei titoli di studio e delle qualifiche professionali conseguiti in Slovenia: stato dell'arte, questioni aperte e possibili scenari, published in May 2025.

ARLeF (and the University of Udine) in this area. They consider that Friulian language should be made available at the lower secondary school level in a more systematic manner, and not exclusively through Friulian language and culture projects.

169. Representatives of the German-speaking minorities of Friuli Venezia Giulia expressed overall satisfaction with the trilingual pilot project launched in Val Canale, highlighting the role played by the Ingeborg Bachmann Comprehensive Institute in this framework. They stress the importance to closely monitoring and supporting this project and consider that it could also serve as a pilot programme for the villages of Paluzza, Sauris and Sappada, which are severely affected by depopulation. They advocate for the reinstatement of the teaching of German at the lower secondary level, in addition to primary level and the introduction of curricular or extracurricular language teaching models at all school levels.

170. In the province of Trento, representatives of the Ladin and German-speaking minorities expressed their satisfaction with the establishment of advanced university training courses for teachers teaching minority languages, which they had been requesting. They advocate for a systematic and sustainable collaboration between the Universities of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen to continue this provision.

171. In Sardinia, representatives of the Sardinian and Catalan linguistic minorities emphasised that the absence of these languages in the school curriculum remains one of the main critical issues affecting their communities, despite the possibility in the legislation. The project-based approach is detrimental to the continuity of teaching. These representatives regret that the ambitious regional language policy plan 2020-2024 has never been implemented in practice and that there are currently no actions to establish a comprehensive, organised, continuous and thorough presence of Sardinian and Catalan (in the city of Alghero)[281] in schools, despite a demand by families to see their children learn these languages. Members of the *Carta di Montarbu*,[282] a group of very diverse associations working in Sardinian and advocating for the presence of Sardinian at all school levels, regularly call on the regional and local authorities to take measures for the use of the language in education.[283]

172. Representatives of numerically smaller minorities regret that the existing educational system does not allow for the development of minority language teaching in a coherent and consistent manner. For example, interlocutors of the Advisory Committee noted that extracurricular classes of Arbëresh are carried out voluntarily by the few available teachers. The teaching in and of minority languages is generally done as an extra-curricular subject, taught one hour per week, relying on the goodwill of committed organisations/cultural associations and educational institutions' staff eager to promote minority cultures and language. These representatives have indicated to the Advisory Committee that they wish to see the teaching of their respective languages included in the general curriculum, supported by adequate teaching materials and trained teachers.

173. The Advisory Committee reiterates that the authorities "have the obligation to adopt a clear legal framework that ensures that minority language education is and remains effectively available and to remove all undue obstacles hampering access to such education […].[284] Furthermore, the Advisory Committee reiterates that "when establishing minority language education, "sufficient demand" should be the main criterion applied by the authorities. Despite this requirement implying action from persons affiliating with minorities themselves, authorities cannot take a passive approach. On the contrary, they have an important role in stimulating the demand for minority language education and in fact a duty to do so."[285]

174. The Advisory Committee further stresses that "minority language education can take different forms depending on the specific context of each language and education system, as well as the needs and interests of persons affiliating with each national minority. These can include teaching of the minority language as a subject, teaching in the minority language or the use of different bilingual and multilingual approaches involving the entire population of a state or part of a state."[286] However, "teaching of minority languages as an "opt-in" subject based on parent demand does not always sufficiently encourage minority pupils to learn their minority language while pursuing their studies […]. The Advisory Committee has argued that it is best practice to guarantee the right to learn a minority language by including minority languages in the public school system and in the mandatory part of the curriculum. This includes those spoken by numerically smaller minorities as the presence and learning

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[281] The production of teaching materials and textbooks in Catalan is mainly supported by the Institute for Catalan Studies (Catalonia, Spain).
[282] S'Indipendente, Sa Carta de Montarbu 2021: pro unu movimentu linguìsticu de su fàghere, 3 November 2021, consulted in July 2025.
[283] S'Indipendente, la battaglia per il sardo a scuola e il silenzio della politica, 17 February 2022, consulted in July 2025. See also La lingua sarda, limba irmentigàda: meno fondi alle scuole, la certificazione è un miraggio | Sardegna che cambia, 11 March 2024, consulted in July 2025.
[284] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 89.
[285] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 95.
[286] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 99.

of their language would increase its visibility and prestige."[287] Furthermore, "in order to develop sufficient competences in minority languages for minority pupils and students, an adequate number of hours of teaching of the minority language is required."[288] Continuity of learning a minority language at all levels, from preschool to university, is of equal importance. The Advisory Committee also reiterates that "the availability of qualified teachers for teaching of or teaching in minority languages requires the promotion of pre-service and in-service training of minority language teachers […]. To adequately train teachers, university courses, study programmes and research […] should be made available and provided with adequate support."[289]

175. The Advisory Committee notes that the presence of the 12 historical linguistic minorities in the education system varies from one region to another. This includes, on the one hand, schools where German is the only language of instruction in Bolzano/Bozen, and bilingual Slovenian-Italian schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia, whereas, on the other hand the smaller historical languages are not included or taught in areas where they are traditionally spoken, despite the guarantees offered under Law 482/99. This asymmetry in the general access to education in historical minority languages creates *de facto* a two-tier system in the country. This situation has been exacerbated by the fact that the minority language teaching is not included in the general curriculum and can only be optional, leaving it to the discretion of the schools. During its visit, the Advisory Committee noticed that some schools prefer to promote other activities and regret that the teaching of minority languages is in competition with other elective subjects. The Advisory Committee considers that the teaching of historical minority languages as an optional subject does not sufficiently encourage minority pupils to learn these languages while pursuing their studies. Furthermore, it is of the view that one or two hours of teaching in and of minority language is insufficient not only for the development of language competences, but also for the survival of lesser spoken minority languages. These lessons, when they are offered, often take place before or after regular school hours or even in parallel with other classes, which makes them less attractive for both students and teachers. The Advisory Committee underlines that in order to develop minority language skills as an added value for their speakers, there must be continuity in access to teaching and learning of and in minority languages at all levels of the education system, from preschool to higher education. This need is further underscored by the steady decline in intergenerational language transmission, as fewer families pass on minority languages to their children. The role of the school system becomes crucial in ensuring the vitality and continuity of these languages.

176. Another key concern is the lack of robust and long-term financial mechanisms to implement the provisions of Law No. 482/99, in particular concerning numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities that are traditionally present in regions that do not have an autonomous status. The Advisory Committee considers that existing educational activities for numerically smaller historical linguistic minorities do not offer the possibility of achieving sustainable progress and effectively meeting their linguistic needs. In practice, many of the municipalities concerned do not offer to pupils the possibility to receive teaching of or in the historical linguistic minority language under Law No. 482/99.[290] In view of the demographic challenges facing Italy (a declining overall population), it is especially important to take measures to promote the recruitment of adequately trained teaching staff, including in smaller towns and villages in regions where historical linguistic minorities traditionally live or where they live in substantial numbers, and to develop teaching materials and textbooks. The National Network for Schools with Minority Languages could serve as a tool for further consultations with minority representatives on how to better support their needs and interests, also with long term and continuous earmarked funding.

Recommendations

177. **The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to ensure the full implementation of Law No. 482/99 regarding education, to ensure that education in and/or of minority languages is offered in territorial areas where these languages are traditionally spoken.**

178. The authorities should also provide adequate funding to ensure continuity in teaching, in particular for numerically smaller languages, through the training and recruitment of teachers and the production of textbooks and other educational materials.

179. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to consider the introduction of bi- and plurilingual teaching models that take into account the linguistic situation in territorial areas traditionally inhabited by persons affiliated with historical linguistic minorities.

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[287] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), paras. 101 and 102.
[288] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 120.
[289] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 1 (2024), para. 114.
[290] In their Sixth state report (pp. 63-121), the authorities indicate that several territorial areas where persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities do not have an educational institution offering classes of and/or in the minority languages (for instance in several municipalities of Abruzzo, Calabria, Molise, Piedmont and Puglia).

180. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to create opportunities for education in Slovenian at the upper secondary level in the province of Udine, and to facilitate the recognition of diplomas for persons who completed their university studies in Slovenia, in particular for those wishing to work in education.

Effective participation in public affairs and decision-making processes (Article 15)

181. The national and regional frameworks for the participation of persons affiliating with the historical linguistic minorities in decisions affecting them have remained unchanged since the last monitoring cycle.[291] CONFEMILI remains the main organisation representing the interests of the 12 historical linguistic minorities. It is regularly involved in consultations, notably in the technical committee, which mainly focuses on the allocation of funds provided by Law No. 482/99 (see Articles 5, 10 and 11). The degree of involvement of national minorities in the decision-making processes varies greatly, depending on the region, its status, legislative arrangements and the historical traditions.[292]

182. The National Platform of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti and the Forum of Roma and Sinti, established in 2017, continue to serve as the main operational tools for dialogue between UNAR, civil society, central and local administrations involved in the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030). This ongoing strategy includes some suggested reforms of the existing system, with the overall aim of consolidating its functioning.[293]

183. Generally, interlocutors from historical linguistic minorities who the Advisory Committee met during its visit expressed their satisfaction with the role of the technical committee, although they consider that the participation of representatives of historical linguistic minorities in the decision-making process should be strengthened, and that its competences could be extended to activities that go beyond the allocation of funds earmarked for projects under Law No. 482/99, such as socio-economic and health issues and issues related to education and culture.

184. Representatives of historical linguistic minorities regret that there are no seats specifically allocated for them in parliament. Nevertheless, they point out that several political parties, including regional parties, which are represented in both chambers of parliament, represent and advocate for their interests. They are generally concerned that the entry into force of the 2020 constitutional reform, by which the size of Italy's Parliament was considerably reduced, will negatively impact the likelihood of their representation and their ability to express their needs and interest. Representatives of the Slovene linguistic minority furthermore expressed their regret that Article 26 of Law No. 38/01 has never been implemented in practice, and that the ongoing presence of one representative in the Senate is exclusively due to renewed political agreements between two political parties.[294]

185. Roma and Sinti interlocutors continue to view the National Platform of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti and its Forum of Roma and Sinti as useful tools. They nevertheless consider that they should be granted with greater responsibilities in the design, implementation, and monitoring of measures undertaken within the context of the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), applying a bottom-up methodology based on knowledge and experience in the territorial areas concerned to influence decision-making processes.

186. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the degree of participation of persons belonging to national minorities in all spheres of life can be considered as one of the indicators of the level of pluralism and democracy of a society."[295] "Bearing in mind that State Parties are sovereign to decide on their electoral systems, the Advisory Committee has highlighted that it is important to provide opportunities for minority concerns to be included on the public agenda. This may be achieved either through the presence of minority representatives in elected bodies and/or through the inclusion of their concerns in the agenda of elected bodies."[296] "Effective participation includes a wide range of possible forms, such as an exchange of information, dialogue, informal and formal consultation and participation in decision-making. It can be ensured through different channels, ranging from consultative mechanisms to special parliamentary arrangements. Particular attention should be paid to equal participation of women and men belonging to national minorities. Whatever the mechanisms chosen, persons belonging to national minorities should be given real opportunities to influence decision-

[291] See ACFC, Fifth Opinion on Italy, paras. 183-195 and ACFC, Fourth Opinion on Italy, paras. 108-112.
[292] See ACFC, Fifth Opinion on Italy, paras. 183-195 and ACFC, Fourth Opinion on Italy, paras. 108-112.
[293] National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), pp. 27-28. These changes primarily concern the modifications to administrative procedures regarding access and participation, representation and representativeness and funding.
[294] Partito Democratico FVG | Pd-Unione slovena: firmato accordo politico elettorale, 11 February 2023, consulted on 13 May 2025.
[295] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 8.
[296] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 81.

making, the outcome of which should adequately reflect their needs. According to the Advisory Committee, mere consultation is, as such, not a sufficient means to be considered effective participation."[297] "It is important to ensure that consultative bodies have a clear legal status, that the obligation to consult them is entrenched in law and that their involvement in decision-making processes is of a regular and permanent nature. While there are various models as regards the functioning of such structures, it is important to ensure that relevant regulations are detailed enough to provide for efficient and consistent consultation."[298]

187. The Advisory Committee notes that, according to the provisions of Law No. 38/01,[299] the electoral laws governing the election of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies should lay down rules to promote access to representation for candidates affiliating with the Slovene minority.[300] However, this provision has never been implemented in practice. The Advisory Committee further notes that, despite the regular consultations of the technical committee, of which CONFEMILI is a member, regarding the interests of the 12 historical linguistic minorities in Italy, representation of national historical minorities provides for a limited influence on the decision-making processes. Representatives from government departments and other public regional, provincial and municipal bodies make up the majority of the members of the technical committee, rather than representatives of the historical linguistic minorities. The Advisory Committee welcomes that the ongoing National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) plans to reform the functioning of the National Platform of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti and its Forum of Roma and Sinti, and to improve the participation with relevant representatives of persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti and interested NGOs, thereby addressing shortcomings identified in the past.

Recommendations

188. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to implement the provisions of Article 26 of Law No. 38/01 requiring electoral laws for the Senate of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies to promote access to representation of candidates affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority.

189. The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to review the composition of the technical committee to strengthen the participation of representatives of historical linguistic minorities in the decision-making process and to extend its competences to all minority-related fields of interest, such as socio-economic issues, health, education and culture.

Housing conditions – Roma and Sinti (Article 15)

190. One of the key pillars of the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) is the improvement of housing conditions, which the authorities consider to be central, along with access to health, education and employment.[301] Implemented by UNAR, the strategy aligns with the Council of the European Union recommendation of 12 March 2021.[302] Furthermore, specific measures and projects targeting Roma, Sinti and Caminanti children and families have been developed under the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021-2027 (see Article 12).[303] In conformity with these objectives, several regional and local authorities have undertaken actions to close informal and formal settlements, such as the Chiesa Rossa settlement in Milan (metropolitan city of Milan)[304] and the Scordovillo settlement in Lamezia Terme (province of Catanzaro, Calabria),[305] offering alternative housing solutions for the families concerned, together with additional measures to guarantee access to education, employment and healthcare.[306] According to the authorities, given the gradual reduction of settlements and the increase in dispersed housing across the territory, UNAR provides technical support to local authorities to promote long-term solutions that move beyond an emergency-based approach.

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[297] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), paras. 70-71.
[298] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 107.
[299] Law No. 38/01, Article 26.
[300] The main organisations representing the Slovene linguistic minority are represented in the Permanent Institutional Panel on Issues concerning the Slovene Speaking Minority in Italy, established in 2012, which is the principal consultative forum for discussions and analysis of issues concerning the implementation of Law No. 38/01 and other issues related to protection of rights of persons affiliating with the Slovene minority.
[301] National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030).
[302] Recommendation of the Council of the European Union on Roma equality, inclusion and participation.
[303] National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021–2027.
[304] Sixth state report, p. 128.
[305] Sixth state report, p. 166.
[306] Sixth state report, pp. 122-171.

191. Updated data collected by NGOs and international institutions show an overall improvement in the housing situation of the Roma and Sinti populations in Italy.[307] In 2024, approximately 13 100 Roma and Sinti individuals lived in formal and informal settlements across the country, representing a 17% decrease from the previous year and a 53% decrease compared to 2016.[308] Recent local actions include the revision of the relocation plan in Scordovillo (Lamezia Terme), following interventions from NGOs [309] and the implementation of initiatives targeting the inclusion of Roma minors in Pontedera (province of Pisa, Tuscany).[310] Among those residing in segregated settlements, around 11 100 live in municipally managed areas, primarily in 38 large-scale substandard housing settlements and 64 macro-areas across 75 municipalities in 13 regions.[311] Common issues reported in these settlements include limited access to water, electricity and basic services, substandard housing structures and waste accumulation.[312]

192. Despite measurable progress in the reduction of segregated settlements, NGOs working to promote and preserve the rights of persons affiliating with Roma and Sinti continue to express concern regarding the quality, sustainability and inclusiveness of housing transition policies. They reported to the Advisory Committee that while relocation from camps to formal housing is often framed as a success, it does not always lead to improved living conditions or greater social inclusion. In many cases, families transferred to social housing have encountered discrimination and protests from neighbours, administrative hurdles in accessing basic services, and a lack of culturally sensitive support.[313]

193. Roma and Sinti interlocutors of the Advisory Committee pointed out the instrumental role of NGOs in facilitating dialogue and supporting the transition. However, they also stressed the importance of fully and directly involving the families concerned in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of housing interventions,[314] as past experiences have shown that limited consultation sometimes reinforces and exacerbates feelings of exclusion and mistrust toward public authorities. They pointed out the persistent lack of official recognition of the Roma and Sinti as national minorities, which undermines the long-term effectiveness of inclusion measures.[315] Furthermore, while forced evictions decreased in recent years, they remain a source of anxiety and disruption, particularly where alternative accommodation is not guaranteed, often leading to precarious living conditions.[316]

194. The Advisory Committee reiterates "the importance of taking effective measures to put an end to discriminatory practices which lead to segregation and marginalisation […] of persons belonging to national minorities in housing matters."[317] "In doing so, the authorities should provide for adequate participation of the persons concerned in decision-making on housing and related programmes designed to improve their socio-economic situation, in order to ensure that the needs of the Roma and Sinti minorities are adequately catered for. Such policies should be adequately funded. It is equally important […] to ensure that local authorities comply with existing antidiscrimination legislation in housing matters as measures which perpetuate segregation are often taken locally."[318]

195. The Advisory Committee notes that ensuring the full inclusion of Roma and Sinti in housing policies requires approaches that go beyond the physical closure of settlements and that necessitate long-term solutions that promote genuine inclusion and stability. It is important that relocation measures are developed in close co-operation with the families concerned, taking into account their specific needs, family structures and cultural practices. The Advisory Committee notes that, in some cases, relocations have led to new or different forms of segregated or inadequate living conditions, particularly where alternative housing is located in marginalised areas or lacks basic services. Roma and Sinti representatives and other relevant actors need to be actively involved in the planning, implementation

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[307] ECRI, Sixth monitoring cycle on Italy, para. 80.
[308] Associazione 21 Luglio, Report 2024 "Bagliori di Speranza", The numbers of the Roma community in informal and formal settlements in Italy.
[309] See Scordovillo relocation plan.
[310] In Pontedera, local initiatives address the housing inclusion of Roma minors by combining accommodation support with educational and social services, co-ordinated by health and social agencies in collaboration with civil society. Moreover, the city is part of the Council of Europe Intercultural Cities Network.
[311] Associazione 21 Luglio, Report 2024 "Bagliori di Speranza", The numbers of the Roma community in informal and formal settlements in Italy.
[312] *Ibid*., p. 17.
[313] Information received from NGOs working to promote and preserve the rights of persons affiliating with Roma and Sinti during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[314] Associazione 21 Luglio, Report 2024 "Bagliori di Speranza", The numbers of the Roma community in informal and formal settlements in Italy.
[315] Information received from representatives of persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[316] European Committee of Social Rights, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) v. Italy, collective complaint no. 244/2025, decision on immediate measures, 2 July 2025. This case concerns the eviction of approximately 550 Roma individuals from the Via Carrafiello settlement in Giugliano (metropolitan city of Naples, Campania), without adequate alternative housing or essential services.
[317] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 58.
[318] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 60.

and monitoring of housing programmes. The Advisory Committee also highlights the importance of mediation and local support mechanisms to facilitate transitions, prevent tensions, and build trust between communities and institutions and the local populations.

Recommendation

196. **The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to further strengthen, in close consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including Roma and Sinti representatives, integrated housing policies that go beyond settlement closures and promote long-term inclusion, with adequate living conditions and access to essential services, and to duly take into account the needs and interests of persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti.**

Effective access to employment and health – Roma and Sinti (Article 15)

197. As part of the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021 – 2026 and the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), UNAR has launched the ACCEDER-E project, to facilitate access to the labour market for individuals at risk of discrimination, particularly focusing on Roma and Sinti populations. The project's implementation was entrusted to *Invitalia*,[319] the National Agency for the Development. The project has been rolled out over the biennium 2022-2023 on a national scale, and the implementation actions covered 13 out of 20 regions, with two areas of intervention: personalised training programmes aimed at promoting the socio-professional inclusion of disadvantaged individuals, and professional internships with the provision of bonuses for hiring.[320] UNAR also collaborates with the National Institute for the Promotion of the Health of Migrant Populations and for the Fight against Poverty-Related Diseases (INMP)[321] to improve access to healthcare for, *inter alia*, Roma and Sinti, and migrant populations. UNAR has also launched several initiatives and is planning further interventions using European funds, particularly under 2021-2027 Inclusion National Programme, aimed at strengthening access to health services and improving the situation of the most vulnerable households, with particular attention to women and minors, as well as improving local capacities to counter discrimination.[322] At the regional and local levels, several projects have aimed to increase the level of employment of Roma and Sinti,[323] and to guarantee their access to healthcare services.[324] In their state report, the authorities have acknowledged that further action is required to improve the socioeconomic situation of Roma and Sinti.[325]

198. According to representatives of NGOs working to promote and preserve the rights of Roma and Sinti the Advisory Committee met during its visit, the employment rate among Roma and Sinti is precarious, in particular for the 30 000 persons (out of 180 000) identified by NGOs as having a nomadic lifestyle.[326] These NGOs assert that this situation results from low educational attainment levels, widespread discrimination and prejudice, and informal work in unregulated sectors. While they praise the important role of social co-operatives in countering illegal and undeclared work and welcome the

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[319] Accedere | Invitalia.

[320] From January to April 2023, 27 training courses were held with a total of 218 participants. From May to August 2023, 72 participants were selected for on-the-job internships with companies, co-operatives and associations. Companies had the opportunity to apply for hiring bonuses for the recipients of the interventions. See Sixth state report, p. 39.

[321] INMP.

[322] See, *inter alia*, the organisation of the 3rd edition of the Conference Health Literacy and Human Rights on 5 December 2025 in Rome, which led to the creation of the Rome Coalition on Health Literacy and Human Rights network.

[323] Sixth state report, pp. 122-171. Examples include employment inclusion projects conducted in the metropolitan city of Turin (Piedmont), together with the social co-operative Liberitutti, labour insertion projects, such as the *oltre il campo* and *tutti inclusi* projects carried out in the province of Vicenza (Veneto), and social inclusion projects in the province of Reggio Emilia (Emilia-Romagna). Activities carried out by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, UNAR, the Ministry of Education, Merit, and Health, as well as with the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, both within the PON Inclusion 2014-2020 and the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021-2027, have led to a strengthening of policies at the local level, with the involvement of over 30 cities, with the promotion of an integrated and multidisciplinary approach. It should be noted that significant resources (€40 million) have been allocation for the period 2024-2026.

[324] Sixth state report, pp. 122-171. Examples include prevention services (counselling, awareness-raising on alcohol, addiction and drugs) taking place in co-operation with the local health authority, or interventions allowing for free access to care or social support in the municipality of Genoa (Liguria), the multi-sectorial approach followed by the metropolitan city of Milan (Lombardy), the elaboration of a strategic plan in the municipality of Sandrigo (province of Padua, Veneto) to take co-ordinated urgent actions to respond to the lack of hygiene and health conditions, the organisation of periodical meetings of the 'Roma Women's Table' with local NGOs and the municipality of Trento (province of Trento, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol) with the aim of comparing and co-ordinating interventions in favour of Roma women, the adoption of a 'Citizen Action Plan for Overcoming the Camp System 2023 - 2026' by the metropolitan city of Rome (Lazio), which is the basis, *inter alia*, for actions aiming at providing access to housing, social inclusion and health promotion; access to work and education, and awareness raising activities carried out by the municipality of Lecce (province of Lecce, Apulia) such as the prevention of uterus cancer project, aimed at encouraging vaccination against papilloma virus.

[325] See for instance the ongoing situation in some Roma and Sinti settlements in the metropolitan city of Naples (sixth state report, pp. 157-160) or in different individual case in the province of Vicenza (Veneto) (Sixth state report, pp. 140-141).

[326] According to UNAR, the information on the number of Roma pursuing a “nomadic lifestyle” appears to be overestimated and has not been confirmed.

existence of some local incentives,[327] they regret that these initiatives are limited in scope and not generally available. Considering the high level of discrimination in the job market, many Roma and Sinti choose not to report their experiences.

199. NGOs further point out the unequal access to healthcare for Roma and Sinti, as settlements are often located far from urban centres. Generally, persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti tend to access services through hospitals rather than through primary care physicians, which severely limits continuity of care.[328]

200. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "participation in social and economic life covers a wide range of issues, from access to adequate housing, health care, social protection (social insurance and social benefits), to social welfare services and access to work […]. It is also important to recall that persons belonging to different minority groups face different obstacles to their participation in socio-economic life. Persons belonging to some groups, such as the Roma and [Sinti…], are more at risk of suffering forms of exclusion from socio-economic life than persons belonging to other national minorities or the majority population. These groups may require specific measures to address their needs. […] Effective participation in social and economic life requires, inter alia, that State Parties […] promote their equal access to employment and market opportunities and to a range of public services, including social housing and health care."[329] "Persons belonging to certain national minorities face particular difficulties in their access to health care, a situation which results from different factors, such as discrimination, poverty, geographical isolation, cultural differences or language obstacles. Difficulties in the access to health care have a negative impact on the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in socio-economic life."[330]

201. The Advisory Committee notes that the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030) and the National Plan for Inclusion and the Fight against Poverty 2021-2027 provide clear guidance to address issues related to access to employment and healthcare for Roma and Sinti. On this basis, various ongoing projects are carried out at the national, regional and local levels, in co-operation with relevant NGOs and various stakeholders. These projects have an overall positive impact, although challenges remain. Persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti, in particular women, remain significantly underrepresented in the labour market. The Advisory Committee further notes that additional concrete actions are needed to promote and improve employment opportunities for these persons, such as job counselling, training courses and social and work integration projects of collective utility. Economic opportunities based on self-employment could be valued and promoted, especially among women and youth, through micro-credits, under the supervision of social co-operatives.

202. The Advisory Committee welcomes initiatives taken to improve the healthcare situation of Roma and Sinti and considers that the multi-level approach adopted by the National Roma and Sinti Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy (2021-2030), which simultaneously addresses issues related to health, housing, education and employment, has produced some positive results. However, it also notes that access to healthcare remains difficult and that projects carried out directly in Roma and Sinti settlements are still subject to the political willingness of national, regional and local actors to initiate such targeted projects. This indicates that more awareness-raising measures are necessary to combat stereotypes and ensure the effective and non-discriminatory access to, and continuity of, healthcare.

Recommendation

203. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its call on the authorities to intensify their efforts to promote sustainable employment opportunities and to take measures to address practical barriers to healthcare for persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti, in particular for women and youth.**

Cross-border contacts and bilateral co-operation (Articles 17 and 18)

204. Italy has signed numerous bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries and carries out several activities in the fields of education, science and culture.[331] These agreements place a specific emphasis on languages that are spoken by persons affiliating with historical linguistic minorities. On this basis, the national, regional and local authorities, as well as NGOs have organised various activities and projects, in particular where Law No. 482/99 applies.

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[327] See for instance the *borse lavoro* initiative (employment grants).
[328] Information received from representatives of persons affiliating with the Roma and Sinti during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[329] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), paras. 24-26.
[330] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 2 (2008), para. 61.
[331] See, *inter alia*, First state report, received on 3 May 1999, p. 75.

205. The rights of persons affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority are not only protected under the Italian Constitution and Law No. 38/01, but also by international legal provisions such as the London Memorandum of 1954 and the Treaty of Osimo of 1975.[332] Moreover, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Italian Republic and the Republic of Slovenia was signed in Ljubljana on 25 May 1995, focusing on education, including the secondment of teachers teaching in Italian schools with Slovene as a teaching language.[333] In Friuli Venezia Giulia, the Central Office for the Slovene Language is collaborating with the Coastal Self-Governing Community of Italian Nationality in Slovenia and the Italian Community of the Istrian Region in Croatia. This region also supports smaller bodies and organisations of the Slovene linguistic minority registered in the *Register of Organisations of the Slovene Minority*, which mainly organise educational activities and services, and promote the development of cultural and youth activities, including cross-border exchanges.[334] Since 2019, the State Archive of Gorizia has been actively engaged in initiatives aimed at safeguarding and promoting its archival heritage, with a specific focus on facilitating access for Italian citizens affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority and Slovenian citizens from across the border.[335] In 2020, the formalisation of the restitution of the *Narodni dom* cultural centre in Trieste took place in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic and the President of the Republic of Slovenia, with the signing of the transfer agreement taking place in October 2022. This act represented an important gesture of reconciliation with the past and a step forward also in promoting and supporting memory policies in the region. In 2025, the neighbouring cities of Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia) were jointly designated as the "European Capital of Culture 2025", *inter alia* to “to transcend their boundaries on a journey of reconciliation […and…] overcome the physical and cultural barriers between […] societies to prove that cross-border governance has a positive impact on the growth of European suburbs, which are essential pieces of the European Union mosaic”.[336]

206. On 26 November 2021, the French and Italian authorities signed the Quirinal Treaty, which entered into force on 1 February 2023.[337] This treaty has enhanced bilateral co-operation, including through shared initiatives to combat hate speech and the promotion of exchanges between the countries, especially for young people and the promotion of the use of French and Italian respectively in the border regions. Additionally, Valle d’Aosta/Vallée d’Aoste and the French province of Haute-Savoie signed a cross-border co-operation agreement in January 2025, in the context of the European Union Interreg. France-Italy ALCOTRA programme.[338] This agreement refers to, *inter alia*, tourism, climate change, youth, education and social inclusion, culture and heritage, sustainable development, institutional relations, and the French-speaking world. Exchanges are also taking place with the French- and German-speaking canton of Valais in Switzerland.[339] International co-operation is boosted by participation in various European programmes (ESF, Erasmus+), as well as by Valle d’Aosta/Vallée d’Aoste’s membership of the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF).[340]

207. In 2018, the regional authorities of Friuli Venezia Giulia established a Regional Language Desk for German, which is, *inter alia*, fostering international and cross-border relations with German-speaking countries and German cultural institutions.[341] In Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, there is a long-standing international co-operation with German-speaking countries. For instance, the Cimbrian minority collaborates with the civil society registered association C*imbern Kuratorium Bayern* in Velden (Germany).[342] There are several twinning agreements between Italian municipalities and municipalities from German-speaking countries, such as the twinning agreement between the municipalities of Roana and Velden (Germany) or between the municipalities of Luserna and Tiefenbach (Germany).[343]

208. Furthermore, in the context of the European Union Interreg programmes, several projects are being implemented with a specific emphasis on the preservation of minority histories and cultures.[344] In Molise, the implementation of the Take it slow European co-operation project aims to enhance the cultural heritage - both material and immaterial - of the Croatian-Molise territories.[345] The municipalities

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[332] Memorandum of understanding between the Governments of Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Yugoslavia regarding the Free Territory of Trieste; Treaty on the delimitation of the boundary line for the part not indicated as such in the Peace Treaty of 10 February 1947.
[333] See Fourth state report, p. 39.
[334] Sixth state report, pp. 102-104.
[335] Sixth state report, p. 25.
[336] About GO! 2025.
[337] Treaty between the Italian Republic and the French Republic for enhanced bilateral co-operation.
[338] Alcotra 2021 - 2027.
[339] Convention de Coopération entre la République et Canton du Valais et la Région Autonome Vallée d'Aoste.
[340] Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).
[341] Sixth state report, p. 95.
[342] Cimbern Kuratorium Bayern e. V.
[343] Information received from representatives of persons affiliating with the German minorities during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[344] For a general overview, see Programmes - Interreg EU.
[345] Sixth state report, p. 110.

of Greci (Campania), San Marzano di San Giuseppe (Puglia), Firmo/Fermes (Calabria), Caraffa di Catanzaro (Calabria), San Nicola dell'Alto - Shen Kolli (Calabria) have ongoing exchanges with muncipalities in the Republic of Albania.[346] The municipality of Zollino (Apulia) holds cultural exchanges with the municipality of Aigialeia in Greece (see Article 5).[347] In June 2022, the municipality of Alghero (Sardinia) renewed an agreement signed with the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Spain), which focusses on sport, artistic, and educational exchanges, collaboration on environmental issues, and a commitment to maintaining Catalan studies at the University of Sassari. The *Generalitat de Catalunya* has also a permanent Office in Alghero. Alghero is also twinned with the municipalities of Tarragona and Palma de Malloca (Spain).[348]

209. Although no information has been provided regarding bilateral co-operation with other states in the field of Roma policy implementation, the Advisory Committee notes with interest that the authorities participate in the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM).

210. The Advisory Committee reiterates that "the responsibility to protect minority rights, as part of general human rights, lies primarily with the state where the minority resides".[349] Furthermore, the Advisory Committee reiterates that the conclusion of bilateral agreements, as well as informal cross-border co-operation, can contribute to the promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, effectively complement the protection measures it takes at the national level and support the development of the infrastructure for national minorities, particularly in areas such as education.

211. The Advisory Committee notes with interest the various examples of bilateral and multilateral co-operation that respond to the needs and interests of the historical linguistic minorities, as well as the close contacts that persons affiliating with them maintain with cultural and educational establishments in neighbouring and other countries. It particularly welcomes that the European Capital of Culture 2025 has been awarded to the neighbouring cities of Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia), as this promotes a shared cultural space and underlines the excellent cross-border relations between these countries. However, while a bilateral agreement has been concluded for the mutual recognition of diplomas between Italy and Austria, a similar bilateral agreement, in conformity with European Union standards,[350] would provide better opportunities for persons affiliating with the Slovene linguistic minority, who completed their university studies in Slovenia, to work in Italy, in particular in pursuing a career in education (see Article 14).

Recommendation

212. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to enhance and strengthen the effectiveness of bilateral and multilateral co-operation and dialogue between neighbouring states in the field of minority protection, particularly in border regions where persons affiliating with national minorities reside in substantial numbers.

[346] Sixth state report, pp. 116-119.
[347] Sixth state report, p. 116.
[348] Information received from representatives of persons affiliating with the Catalan minority during the monitoring visit (April 2025).
[349] ACFC, Thematic Commentary No. 4 (2016), para. 36.
[350] The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area.

The **Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities** is an independent body that assists the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in evaluating the adequacy of the measures taken by the Parties to the Framework Convention to give effect to the principles set out therein.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 10 November 1994 and entered into force on 1 February 1998, sets out principles to be respected as well as goals to be achieved by the states, in order to ensure the protection of national minorities. The text of the Framework Convention is available, among other languages, in Albanian, Catalan, Croatian, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Romani, Slovenian.

This opinion contains the evaluation of the Advisory Committee following its 6th country visit to Italy.

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