
Resolution CM/ResCMN(2025)1 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Lithuania

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 March 2025
at the 1522nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as “the Framework Convention”),

Having regard to Resolution CM/Res(2019)49 of 11 December 2019 on the revised monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention;

Having regard to the applicable voting rule;¹

Having regard to the instrument of ratification deposited by Lithuania on 23 March 2000;

Recalling that the Government of Lithuania transmitted its State report in respect of the fifth monitoring cycle under the Framework Convention on 19 July 2021;

Having examined the Advisory Committee's fifth opinion on Lithuania adopted on 15 October 2024, as well as the written comments of the Government of Lithuania received on 17 January 2025,

Adopts the following conclusions in respect of Lithuania:

The authorities are invited to take account of the observations and recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee's fifth opinion. In particular, they should take the following measures to improve further the implementation of the Framework Convention:

Recommendations for immediate action:

1. undertake awareness-raising and trust-building measures with a view to creating a climate that is conducive for persons belonging to national minorities to invoke their rights under the Framework Convention. Intensified measures should also be taken to ensure that authorities at all levels are aware of their obligations deriving from the Framework Convention;
2. adopt a comprehensive legal framework related to the protection of national minorities and thereby ensure that persons affiliating with national minorities will be able to effectively access rights enshrined in the Framework Convention;
3. provide for a legal basis and take various practical measures ensuring the right to use minority languages orally and in writing in relations with the administrative authorities and monitor implementation of these measures. To this effect, the authorities should ensure that, in the areas where persons belonging to national minorities live traditionally, this right is not dependent on whether they make up a certain percentage of the local population. This right should also be guaranteed regardless of whether the applicant speaks Lithuanian and persons belonging to national minorities should be encouraged to invoke it;

¹ On 17 September 1997, the Committee of Ministers adopted decision CM/Del/Dec(97)601/4.5, which provides: “Decisions pursuant to Articles 24.1 and 25.2 of the Framework Convention shall be considered to be adopted if two-thirds of the representatives of the Contracting Parties casting a vote, including a majority of the representatives of the Contracting Parties entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers, vote in favour”.

4. establish a legal basis for the display of topographical indications also in minority languages and co-ordinate the process of applying Article 11(3) of the Framework Convention at the national level. In doing so, the authorities should identify for each national minority the areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to that national minority, taking into account the individual situation of the national minority and the demographic structure of the area over a longer period than the census intervals, and display topographical indications in the respective minority language in these areas;
5. in close co-operation with representatives of the Roma minority, continue implementing measures aimed at improving the housing conditions, access to healthcare services, employment opportunities and employability, and access to quality education of Roma, with particular attention to women and girls;

Further recommendations:²

6. support the establishment, for each national minority, of a sustainable structure for cultural activities meeting their needs and providing them with conditions, including long-term funding, for organising cultural activities and collecting, presenting and publishing cultural works of that national minority and persons affiliating with it, including women;
7. intensify their measures to combat stereotypes and prejudice against persons belonging to national minorities and to promote respect and intercultural dialogue throughout society as a whole;
8. pursue and strengthen their efforts to combat and prevent threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence on ethnic grounds and ensure that alleged cases are promptly and effectively examined and, where appropriate, investigated and prosecuted;
9. take all necessary measures, including financial and legal, to ensure access to public and private broadcast and digital media as well as print media in minority languages for persons belonging to all national minorities. These measures should also include increased coverage of them in mainstream media and support to them for the creation of their own media;
10. amend the legislation to allow for the use of all diacritics in the languages of national minorities in the spelling of a person's first name and surname in personal identity and other documents. The authorities should also ensure that the procedures and costs related to changing these names are such that they do not discourage requests for name changes;
11. adopt legislation recognising the right to display in a minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public;
12. ensure that curricula, teacher training and educational materials in general education provide concrete information about the histories and cultures of all national minorities and extend this information to other areas of the curriculum such as foreign language teaching. Furthermore, the authorities should ensure that detailed information about these topics is provided in educational institutions attended by pupils belonging to national minorities and in the mainstream schools of the areas where those national minorities live.

² The recommendations below are listed in the order of the corresponding articles of the Framework Convention.