

**Resolution CM/ResCMN(2012)1
on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National
Minorities
by Armenia**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 1 February 2012
at the 1132nd 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 Res(97)10 of 17 September 1997 setting out rules adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention;

Having regard to the voting rule adopted in the context of adopting Resolution Res(97)10;¹

Having regard to the instrument of ratification submitted by Armenia on 20 July 1998;

Recalling that the Government of Armenia transmitted its state report in respect of the third monitoring cycle under the Framework Convention on 5 July 2009;

Having examined the Advisory Committee’s third opinion on Armenia, adopted on 14 October 2010, and the written comments of the Government of Armenia received on 20 April 2011;

Having also taken note of comments by other governments,

1. Adopts the following conclusions in respect of Armenia:

a) Positive developments

Armenia has pursued a constructive approach towards the monitoring process and has taken concrete steps to disseminate the results of the first two cycles of monitoring. The authorities have also maintained an inclusive approach in communication with representatives of the national minorities.

A general climate of tolerance and understanding between national minorities and the majority population prevails in Armenia and the authorities continue to show an inclusive approach concerning the scope of application of the Framework Convention.

¹ In the context of adopting Resolution Res(97)10 on 17 September 1997, the Committee of Ministers also adopted the following rule: “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”.

Representatives of national minorities did not report intolerance towards members of their communities.

In spite of economic difficulties affecting Armenia, the authorities continue to allocate resources for promoting the traditions and the cultures of national minorities.

Church property seized under the communist regime has been returned to the Assyrian and Russian Orthodox communities.

The Armenian public radio and television services broadcast programmes addressed to national minorities, including in the languages of national minorities. In general, the representatives of national minorities indicated that the coverage of issues concerning them is fair and balanced.

Languages of national minorities are taught in schools and efforts have been made to publish textbooks for teaching minority languages. Priority in admitting candidates belonging to national minorities, who have passed the university entrance exams, has significantly improved the access of such candidates to the relevant higher educational establishments.

b) Issues of concern

Although it is welcome that the question on nationality/ethnicity asked in the framework of the census of October 2011 was made optional, it would have been more appropriate to propose an open-ended list of possible answers, in line with international standards, in order to secure the right of respondents to declare effectively each individual's choice.

The plans for the reform of local self-government in Armenia require continued consultations with representatives of national minorities to ensure that the proposed changes do not impact negatively on the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate effectively in public affairs at local level.

No comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation has yet been adopted and there remains a lack of reliable statistics in this field.

Rare anti-Semitic statements, which were voiced in some media outlets, have not prompted an adequate reaction from the authorities and the public.

The amendments to the law on television and radio, adopted in 2008, set upper limits of one hour daily for public radio and two hours weekly for public television broadcasting in minority languages, thus limiting the access of minorities to the public media.

The existing practice of translating/transcribing into the Armenian language patronymics in birth and marriage certificates and identity documents of persons belonging to the Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian national minorities does not take into account the grammatical rules of these languages and is therefore not in line with Article 11, paragraph 1, and the overall principle of inclusive interpretation of the Framework Convention

2. Adopts the following recommendations in respect of Armenia:

In addition to the measures to be taken to implement the detailed recommendations contained in sections I and II of the Advisory Committee's opinion, the authorities are invited to take the following measures to improve further the implementation of the Framework Convention:

Issues for immediate action²

- ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for future censuses, as well as other forms of data collection, to provide reliable data on the situation of persons belonging to national minorities disaggregated by age, gender and geographical distribution, in all relevant fields, in line with the principles of free self-identification and internationally recognised data collection and protection standards;
- continue to consult persons belonging to national minorities when planning and implementing the local government reform in order to guarantee that this reform does not have a negative impact on the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate effectively in public affairs at local level.

Further recommendations²

- take measures to strengthen current anti-discrimination legislation;
- continue to support cultural activities of the national minorities' organisations;
- ensure more effective monitoring of offences committed with a racial, anti-Semitic or xenophobic motive and investigate and prosecute the perpetrators;
- find ways to improve the existing legislative provisions on public radio and television in order to guarantee a minimum time-frame for broadcasting in minority languages;
- consult persons belonging to national minorities on the transcription of their names in official documents.

3. Invites the Government of Armenia, in accordance with Resolution Res(97)10:

- a. to continue the dialogue in progress with the Advisory Committee;
- b. to keep the Advisory Committee regularly informed of the measures it has taken in response to the conclusions and recommendations set out in sections 1 and 2 above.

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