

# Russia's Minority Language Education & the European Language Charter: the Finno-Ugric Republics

Konstantin Zamyatin, 27 Sept 2012



# Joint Programme

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2009-2011 Joint programme of the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation *National Minorities in Russia: Developing Culture, Language, Media and Civil Society* (2.7 mln euro)

- Information and training seminars, public hearings and parliamentary hearings
- Mini-project grants
- Joint working group of experts
- **Simulation** of the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) implementation in three pilot regions



# Russia and the ECRML

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Russian Federation: signed 2001, not ratified

**Russian experts** (Krugovykh report 2009):

*“The analysis performed demonstrates that the Russian legislation **fully contains** the provisions associated with the protection of regional and minority languages, which nevertheless requires some additional measures for their adaptation to the provisions of the European Charter in the Russian Federation.”*

*“Preliminary data suggest that the Charter's provisions could be applied to at least 85 of the 239 languages registered. Yet applying the Charter's provisions even to a restricted **number** of 85 languages is problematic since, given the constitutional requirement of the **equality of languages**, individual languages may not be singled out by the extent of their protection in relation to the others.”*

Table 4 Countries with twelve or more languages according to Ethnologue

Country	Number of languages	Constitutional recognition
Papua New Guinea	823	
Indonesia	726	Yes
Nigeria	505	
India	387	Yes (12)
Mexico	288	
Cameroon	279	
Congo, Democratic Republic	218	Yes (6)
China	201	Yes
Brazil	192	Yes
USA	176	
Sudan	174	
Philippines	169	Yes
Malaysia	139	
Tanzania	135	
Chad	132	
Nepal	120	Yes
Vanuatu	109	Yes
Burma	107	
Russia	100	Yes
Vietnam	93	
Peru	92	Yes
Canada	90	
Ethiopia	82	Yes
Laos	82	
Colombia	78	Yes
Côte d'Ivoire	77	
Thailand	75	
Ghana	70	
Iran	69	Yes

Spolsky (2004)



Russian Language Guide

 WorldNomads.com  
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Table 2 (cont.)

Country	State, national, official language	Other recognition	Year
Malta	Maltese	English	-1996
Mauritania	Arabic	Poular, Soninke and Wolof	1991
Moldova	Moldovan in Latin alphabet	Russian and others	1994
Mongolia	Mongolian	National minorities	1992
Mozambique	Portuguese	National languages	1990
Namibia	English	In private schools	1990
Nepal	Nepali in Devanagari script	Local mother tongues	1990
New Zealand	(English not mentioned) Māori Language Act	Minority	1990
Nicaragua	Spanish	Community languages	1987-95
Pakistan	(Urdu not mentioned)	Preservation permitted	1999
Panama	Spanish	Indigenous communities	1994
Peru	Spanish	Quechua, Aymara and indigenous	1993?
Philippines	Filipino and English	Regional	1987
Poland	Polish	National and ethnic minorities	1997
Romania	Romanian	National minorities	1991
Russia	All languages equal		1993
Serbia (Yugoslavia)	Serbian (ekavian and ijekavian dialects) in Cyrillic script	Latin script, national minorities locally	1992



Spolsky (2004)



# Minority languages in Europe and Russia

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25 ECRML member states:

**48** languages, including 30 (second) official languages

In Russia at least **85** out of 239 languages registered

- State languages of the republics (32 languages)  
(25 +13 in Dagestan)
- Languages of the indigenous small numbered peoples (37 languages)  
(including 10 with official status)
- Languages of 'national minorities' traditionally spoken in some territories (35 languages)

Krugovykh report (2009: 28)



# Languages in pilot regions:

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## **Republic of Mordovia**

Part III: Erzya, Moksha (**61** undertakings) and Tatar (**39** und.)

## **Altay Territory**

Part II: Kumandin (an indigenous small numbered people)

Part III: German and Kazakh

## **Dagestan (Russian and other 13 state languages):**

Part II: Chechen (Akhoy), Azerbaijanian, and more than 20 languages with no written form

Part III: Agul, Avarian, Dargin, Kumyk, Lezgin, Lakh, Nogay, Rutul, Tat, Tabasaran, Tsakhur



# Languages in Finno-Ugric Republics

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**Mordovia:** Erzya, Moksha, Tatar

**Mari El:** Mari, Udmurt, Tatar

**Udmurtia:** Udmurt, Tatar, Mari, *Besserman*

**Komi:** Komi, Nenets

**Karelia:** Karelian (2-3 standard forms), Veps, Finnish





# Language situation in some Volga republics (2002)

	Udmurtia	Mari El	Tatarstan	Chuvashia
Titular group in the republic (absolute)	460000	312200	2000000	889000
Titular group in the republic (share)	29.3%	42.9%	52.9%	67.7%
Language retention rate in the republic	72.8%	84%	94.2%	85.7%
Language retention rate in Russia	66.5%	76.7%	80.8%	76.5%



# International protection of languages

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LPolicy → LLaws ← LRights = [LPolicy] LRights

The UN system:

**ICCPR, Article 27:** *“persons belonging to ... minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group ... to use their own language.”*

The CoE system:

**European Convention on Human Rights (1950)**

Article 14 contains a prohibition of discrimination

**European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (1992)**

**Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)**



# International law and Russia's legislation

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**Constitution** of the Russian Federation (1993), Article 15:

*“4. The universally-recognized norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation shall be a component part of its legal system”.*

Federal Law on International Treaties (1995), Article 5.3:

*Treaties officially promulgated can be directly applied if they do not foresee the adoption of specific internal regulations*

Local legal remedies provided by country's legislation have to be exhausted, to apply for justice at an international body.

There were no cases with language demands charged against the Russian Federation neither under UN treaties nor under CoE instruments.



# International obligations of Russia: *language*

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities  
(1995)

Russia: signed 1996, in force 1998, 3rd monitoring cycle

CoE CM 2nd resolution 2007: “ensure that initiatives aimed at protecting the **Russian language** do not present undue obstacles to the use of minority languages”

Third RF State Report 2010:

1. *Development of legislative framework of the Russian Federation for the protection of national minorities.....6*
2. ***Prevention and counteraction of extremism in international relations..... 11***
3. *Development of civil society and cooperation ..... 24*



# Russia and the FCPNM

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## Third RF State Report 2010:

*“The refusal of federal executive bodies to use in Russia so called **“language nest”** technique applied in Finland can also serve as an example of efforts taken to ensure equal access to education for persons belonging to national minorities.*

*The above technique is aimed at learning by the Finno-Ugric minorities of their native languages. However, its mechanism creates closed language environment within the frames of pre-school institutions where children plunge into native language from the early childhood. In multinational environment of Russia this would significantly reduce their socialization opportunities and, accordingly, would entail violation of the principle of equal opportunities of education, further employment etc. and is **considered as segregation of children on ethnic grounds.**”*



# Russia and the ECRML: *Mordovia*

Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life	Their application towards the languages on the territory of the Republic		
Article 8 – Education	Erzya	Moksha	Tatar
a) 1) to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages	YES	YES	
3) to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient			YES
b) 2) to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages	YES	YES	
3) to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum			YES
c) 2) to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages	YES	YES	
3) to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum			YES



# Russia and the ECRML: *Mari El*

Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life .	Their application towards the languages on the territory of the Republic		
Article 8 – Education	Mari	Tatar	Udmurt
<p><b>a)</b> 4) if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of pre-school education, to favour and/or encourage the application of the measures referred to under i to iii above</p>	YES	YES	YES
<p><b>b)</b> 2) to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages</p>	Partially	Partially	Partially
<p>3) to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum</p>	YES	YES in the areas of their dense population	YES in the areas of their dense population
<p><b>c)</b> 3) to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum</p>	YES	YES in the areas of their dense population	YES in the areas of their dense population



# Russia and the ECRML: *Mordovia*

Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life	Their application towards the languages of the Republic		
Article 8 – Education	Erzya	Moksha	Tatar
<i>d) 2) to make available a substantial part of technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages</i>	YES	YES	
3) to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum			YES
<b>e) 2) to provide facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects</b>	YES	YES	YES
<b>f) 2) to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education</b>	YES	YES	YES
<b>g) to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language</b>	YES	YES	YES
<b>h) to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party</b>	YES	YES	YES
<b>i) to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible ...</b>	YES	YES	YES

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# Russia and the ECRML:

## *Mari El*

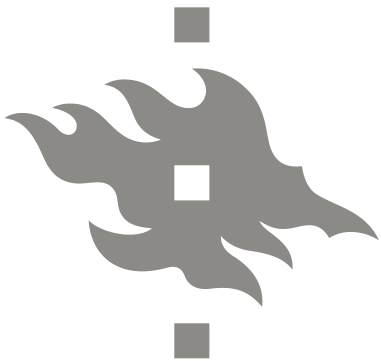
Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life	Their application towards the languages on the territory of the Republic		
	Mari	Tatar	Udmurt
<b>Article 8 – Education</b>			
<b>d)</b> 3) to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum	Partially		
<b>e)</b> 2) to provide facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects	YES		
<b>f)</b> 3) if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of adult education, to favour and/or encourage the offering of such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education	YES		
<b>g)</b> to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language	YES	YES	YES
<b>h)</b> to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party	YES	YES	YES



# Russia and the ECRML: *Finno-Ugric Republics*

Formal measures	<i>De facto</i> applied measures to promote the use of the titular languages in public life of the republics				
Article 8	Mordvin	Mari	Komi	Udmurt	Karelian
<b>1 a (iii – iv?)</b>	(ii)	(ii)	(ii)	(ii)	(ii)
<b>1 b (iv)</b>	(ii + iii)	(ii + iii)	(iii)	(iii)	(iii)
<b>1 c (iv)</b>	(iii)	(iii)	(iii)	(iii)	(iii)
<b>1 d (iii)</b>	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
<b>1 e (ii)</b>	+	+	+	+	+
<b>1 f (iii)</b>	+	+	+	+	+
<b>1 g</b>	+	+	+	+	+
<b>1 h</b>	+	+	+	+	+
<b>1 i</b>	-	-	+	-	-
<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-

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