



Hungary

Statement by Hungary at the OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting Vienna, 29-30. October 2015

SESSION II: Integration of diverse societies and The Ljubljana Guidelines

Hungary shares the view that integrating diversity is a fundamental aspect of both conflict prevention and respect for minority rights. Social integration assumes that the distinctive identity of minorities can be maintained, while at the same time minorities should be part of the society at large. In view of the multiple aims of integration and the multitude of factual situations, there are no ‘one-size-fits-all-solutions’ in this field.

The situation of traditional national minorities is often overlooked at international fora. For traditional national minorities that developed their national identity and institutions for centuries, living on the same territory, integration as a community represents a solution that makes possible avoiding forced assimilation of minority groups. Integration as a community is a constructive element for the promotion of peace and stability, while integration at individual level can easily lead to assimilation and thus possibly become a source of tension and security threat. Traditional national minorities thus need to better integrate into society as a community. The report entitled “The situation and rights of traditional national minorities in Europe” discussed by the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe last year underlines that the historically based needs of traditional national minorities (e.g. guaranteed in the Hungarian Fundamental Law) are to be considered as vested rights and respected as such. They need to preserve their own culture and language by maintaining and running the institutions developed during centuries, and by maintaining or reacquiring the official status of their languages.

According to the Ljubljana Guidelines, education is one of the most important tools for furthering integration and social cohesion. Education indeed plays a primary role in cultural reproduction, socialisation and identity formation. When striving to find an appropriate balance between respecting established rights of national minorities to receive instruction in their language and the need to create a common educational space with equal opportunities for all, governments should not lose sight of the 1996 Hague Recommendations on education. The recommendations focusing on education rights of national minorities provide that the medium of teaching should ideally be the mother tongue with gradually introducing the language of the majority into the curricula. This knowledge is indispensable for minority students to become more competitive. The teaching of the official/state language should be appropriately adjusted to the special circumstances and needs of minority education environment. In this respect we deem it important to include minority topics to the state curricula and textbooks in order to raise awareness that our societies are multi-ethnic societies.

To sum up, OSCE participating States should refrain from adopting integration policies towards traditional national minorities resulting in feeling of alienation within the minority

community. We find it important to identify challenges common to all participating States, but at the same time respecting the specificity of each country and national minority.