

Information - Slovenia - Minorities



Slovenia ratified both the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as well as the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

In Slovenia the minorities have been divided into three categories:

- 1) *autochthonous communities* -
- 2) the Hungarian and Italian minorities – protected by Article 64 of the constitution
- 3) *Roma community* -
- 4) protected by Article 65 of the constitution
- 5) *other minority communities* – nationalities of the former Yugoslav republics – Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Albanians ...

The community of the Germans is not recognised as a minority in Slovenia.

Census 2002

Hungarians	6.243 persons (0,3 %)
Italians	2.258 persons (0,1 %)
Roma	3.246 persons (0,2 %)
Germans	680 persons (Pan: ca. 2.000)
Other	145.921 (7.4%)
Population -	1.964.000 persons

Election lists 2002

8.328 registered voters
3.338 registered voters

Sources:

Christoph Pan, Volksgruppenhandbuch

<http://www.uni-koeln.de/jur-fak/ostrecht/minderheitenschutz/>

State report Slovenia, European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

State report Slovenia, Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Article 11 - Slovenia Constitution

The official language in Slovenia is Slovene. In those municipalities where Italian or Hungarian national communities reside, Italian or Hungarian shall also be official languages.

Article 64 - Slovenia Constitution

(Special Rights of the Autochthonous Italian and Hungarian National Communities in Slovenia)

The autochthonous Italian and Hungarian national communities and their members shall be guaranteed the right to use their national symbols freely and, in order to preserve their national identity, the right to establish organisations and develop economic, cultural, scientific and research activities, as well as activities in the field of public media and publishing. In accordance with laws, these two national communities and their members have the right to education and schooling in their own languages, as well as the right to establish and develop such education and schooling. The geographic areas in which bilingual schools are compulsory shall be established by law. These national communities and their members shall be guaranteed the right to foster relations with their nations of origin and their respective countries. The state shall provide material and moral support for the exercise of these rights.

In order to exercise their rights, the members of these communities shall establish their own self-governing communities in the geographic areas where they live. On the proposal of these self-governing national communities, the state may authorise them to perform certain functions under national jurisdiction, and shall provide funds for the performing of such functions.

The two national communities shall be directly represented in representative bodies of local self-government and in the National Assembly.

The position of the Italian and Hungarian national communities and the manner in which their rights are exercised in the geographic areas where they live, the obligations of the self-governing local communities for the exercise of these rights, and those rights which the members of these national communities exercise also outside these areas, shall all be regulated by law. The rights of both national communities and their members shall be guaranteed irrespective of the number of members of these communities.

Laws, regulations and other general acts that concern the exercise of the constitutionally provided rights and the position of the national communities exclusively, may not be adopted without the consent of representatives of these national communities.

Article 65 - Slovenia Constitution

(Status and Special Rights of the Romany Community in Slovenia)

The status and special rights of the Romany community living in Slovenia shall be regulated by law.

REMARK: Until now no such law for the Roma has been implemented.

In practice:

Three municipalities at the coast (Italian) and three municipalities in the region Prekmurje (Hungarian) are considered *ethnically-mixed municipalities*, in which the **use of two official languages** – both Slovenian and the minority language – must be made possible.

In these municipalities the authorities work bilingually. For examples copies and official documents for the central registry must be filed in two languages, records of court proceedings have to be delivered also in Italian or Hungarian, if desired. Official documents like passports will be issued in two or three languages.

Street names and street signage etcetera must be bilingual.

There is the **right to education in the mother tongue** from preschool until secondary school. There are however two different models:

- 1) **Model of the Italian minority:** Separated schools – Italian and Slovenian in all age groups. For Italian students Slovenian is an obligatory subject, and Italian is an obligatory subject for Slovenian students. In 2002 the Italian schools had 280 students in preschool, 416 students in primary school and 287 students in secondary school.
- 2) **Model of the Hungarian minority:** Bilingual schools – both Hungarian and Slovenian. The students are together in their classes. Education takes place at the same time. There are 278 students in bilingual preschool, 1022 in primary school and 284 students in secondary school.

After secondary school, university education in the minority language cannot be guaranteed.

Roma-children shall be integrated in the general school system. Classes specifically for Roma are rare. **The main problem is the lack of teachers for Romanes.**

Situation of the media: Radio- and television programmes in Italian and Hungarian are part of the state broadcasting programme.

Both minorities have a guaranteed seat in the highest public control committee.

The state finances and supports publications and radio and television programmes produced by the minority.

Autonomy: In the Slovenian bicameral system the Italian and Hungarian minority have **each one guaranteed seat – enjoying full rights – in the National Assembly (Parliament) and the State Council (Senate).**

Decisions that concern the minority cannot be taken without their approval. The Italian and Hungarian minority have the right to establish “**organisations of autonomous self-administration**”, which are recognised as **public bodies**.

These public bodies can create establishments relevant for the minorities and can additionally assume certain responsibilities of the state (e.g. these public bodies are co-founders of the minority schools).

Central and local authorities are obliged to ask for the opinion of these two minorities. In the case the minorities are affected, even prior approval of the self-administration is required.

Other special measures

Slovenia gives persons belonging to the Italian and Hungarian minorities extra favourable loans in order to increase the economic activity in their area of settlement.

Civil servants working in the minority regions who speak the minority language, receive a higher basic salary than their monolingual colleagues.