

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Study Guide
for
the Council of Europe

Topic Area: The protection of national minorities in crisis periods and conflict zone areas

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1. Welcoming Message

Esteemed Ministers,

We are delighted to welcome every one of you to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Rhodes Model Regional Cooperation 2022. Our Committee is a dynamic, adaptable group that seeks to foster political discourse to address escalating human rights issues. Thus, this year we will explore a fascinating, significant, and perennially current issue among the European democracies, namely “The protection of national minorities in crisis periods and conflict zone areas”.

After a period of turmoil on the European scene, the minorities that have been created need enormous help. Thus, by studying this study guide, and at the same time understanding the situation, you will be able to develop suitable dialogues and provide solutions for our committee’s issues. To assist you in your research, we have put a lot of thought into the current Study Guide. It will assist you in your preparation by acting as a tool and a guide. We should emphasize, nonetheless, that you are required to conduct additional independent research, particularly concerning your nation's position on the matter at hand. Remember that it is your duty as Ministers to engage in discussion, reach agreements, and put forth workable, practical solutions. Anywise, as Voltaire once said; “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it”. Consequently, we anticipate hearing your opinions on this important topic. Our Union will be stronger if it more closely resembles the next generation, which is expressly founded on principles and is courageous, as well as clever, determined, and unified. That spirit will be more crucial than ever throughout the course of the coming year.

Last but not least, we should emphasize that if you have any questions about our committee, our subject, or the method to be followed, we are always available to answer them. In light of the foregoing, we respectfully request that you adhere to the dates to enable us to offer you any necessary support.

Amicably,

the Board of the Council of Europe,

Nikolas Tsironis, Chairperson

Michaela Fournarakou, Secretary General

2. Introduction to the Committee

The Council of Europe is an international organization founded in 1949 by the Treaty of London after the end of World War II. Currently, it consists of 47 members, 27 of which are the Member States of the European Union, too.

The Council was founded on the basis of 3 principles: democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Its goals are the safeguarding and the enforcement of these values through cooperation and mutual respect among its Member States. As far as pluralistic democracy is concerned, the Council of Europe promotes democratic governance and the formation of sustainable democratic societies by achieving social cohesion and cultural diversity through education and intercultural dialogue. In terms of human rights, the Council aims at protecting, promoting, and ensuring the fundamental rights of people. One of the most crucial achievements of the CoE was the adoption of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights (ECHR) in 1950, a document that gave momentum towards a new era of human rights protection. Lastly, CoE works towards consolidating the rule of law, strengthening democratic stability and judicial efficiency.

The Council of Europe is composed of two statutory bodies: the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. The Committee of Ministers is the decision-making body of CoE and is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 47 Member States or their Permanent Representatives in Strasbourg. It chiefly deals with issues of common political interest that require international dialogue and cooperation. It is both a governmental body where national approaches to European problems are discussed equally and a forum to find collective responses to these challenges. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is the second statutory organ of the Council of Europe, and it has 324 members from the national parliaments of the Council of Europe's Member States. Both bodies cooperate in order to preserve the Council's fundamental values and make sure the Member States comply with their responsibilities.

CoE has an advisory role and cannot produce legally binding decisions. According to Article 15 of the Statute of the Council of Europe, the Committee decides upon the adoption of conventions, agreements, and a common governmental policy of the Member States with regards to matters of importance that are communicated to member states by the Secretary-General. In appropriate cases, these conclusions take the form of

recommendations to the governments of the members, who are required to give updates to the Council on their progress made towards their implementation.

To sum up, the Council of Europe plays a significant role in the creation of a common European policy among its members, as it has dealt with issues like terrorism, corruption, the protection of human rights, and the establishment of democracy in Europe.

3. Introduction to the Topic

Recent ages have seen increased migration to and within Europe as a result of wars, political upheavals, and economic hardships, giving rise to civilizations with very diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural roots. As a result, many minorities have faced discrimination and, in certain circumstances, citizenship denial. Their access to employment, housing, education, health care, and the judicial system has repeatedly been denied and continues to be denied. It is difficult for them to seek political recourse for rights violations because many of them are underrepresented in European institutions and governments.¹

The safeguarding of national minorities has always been a top priority for the Council of Europe, but with the fall of European communist regimes, the emergence of extreme nationalism, and conflicts in certain parts of Europe, the issue has gained even more relevance. Initiatives taken in this area by the Council of Europe are based on the principle that minorities' rights should be upheld by all nations. Its activities include creating standards, collaborating with other governments, bolstering and consolidating democratic stability, and fostering trust in civil society. It comprises collaboration with a wide number of organizations both inside and outside the Council of Europe, and it covers a broad range of interconnected policy issues.

The Council of Europe's most comprehensive instrument safeguarding the rights of those who are members of national minorities is the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM). Conventions are international agreements in which leaders promise to defend particular standards for their people, such as ethnic minorities, but their

¹ Council of Europe. 'The Framework Convention: A Key Tool to Managing Diversity through Minority Rights', n.d. <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806a8fe8>.

actions are independent of those of other members, which is why they are named "Conventions." The most prominent example is human rights legislation at the international and regional levels. It was approved by the Committee of Ministers on November 10, 1994, and it became effective on February 1, 1998. As of now, 39 countries are members: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Belgium, Greece, Iceland, and Luxembourg have signed it, but have not ratified it. Andorra, France, Monaco, and Turkey have neither signed nor ratified it. Regarding Kosovo, there is a unique monitoring arrangement.

States that have ratified the Convention take a variety of positions on what constitutes a national minority, ranging from a restrictive position that, for example, establishes a set list of traditional groups that are entitled to protection under the Framework Convention to an open position that includes even noncitizens. The Advisory Committee, a team of impartial specialists who help monitor the Convention's implementation, will determine whether or not state parties are not unfairly excluding certain groups who want to be covered by the Convention.

The total number of national minority populations in Europe is estimated at 105 million people or 14% of Europeans. It is nonetheless quite challenging to find reliable data on the proportion of minority groups in European states. This is due in part to the fact that many states do not break down statistics by ethnicity for a few historical and political reasons, as well as the fact that many states do not have accurate or recent census data. Almost every European country has a population that is made up of national minorities.

The most marginalized populations in Europe continue to be the Roma communities. Nearly all of the Council of Europe's members are home to the Roma. They are estimated to number around 10 million.

4. Historical Background

In the years following the Second World War, protecting individual human rights was all that was required to ensure minorities' protection under international law. The international community was unable to offer separate protection for minorities for several reasons. It has only lately become apparent that minor issues should be handled separately. It is a result of a rising knowledge that peace and security are directly impacted by the position of minorities and ethnic groups, as well as the level of their protection.²

As an illustration of imposition, consider the minority-rights treaties that were imposed on several post-first world war republics. Imposition happens when a state's rulers or potential rulers are forced to comply with the desires of more powerful states. The aspirant monarchs had little choice but to accept the restrictions placed upon them to rule. Imposition against established nations breaches both the classic ideas of international law and the Westphalian concept of sovereignty because rulers are unable to decide on their own whether or not to engage in an agreement. An enduring feature of international politics has been attempting to affect how minority groups are treated in other contexts. The Ottoman (Osmanli) Empire served as Western Christendom's principal priority in these campaigns. As early as the 13th century, European kings made lone commitments to defend Christians. Starting in the 16th century, several treaties were made between the Ottoman Porte and European powers.³

The most recent wars in Europe have shown how important it is to balance security with the protection of human rights. Civil wars can start when certain human rights, particularly those of minorities, are flagrantly and persistently violated. On occasion, these civil conflicts can spread to the surrounding international environment, starting an uncontrollable spiral. In their interactions with the Ottoman Empire, the leaders of the major European states never adopted the concept of autonomy. They could only make empty vows to protect their fellow Christians in the beginning, when Europe was weak, and the Ottoman Empire was strong. Later, they ratified agreements that acknowledged Ottoman law. However, when the Porte began to fall apart, the European powers used force to compel treaties affirming their right

² SNEŽANA TRIFUNOVSKA. 'The Issue(s) of Minorities in the European Peace and Security Context'. Brill Vol. 3, No. 4 (1995 / 96), (n.d.): 283–99.

³ STEPHEN D. KRASNER AND DANIEL T. FROATS. 'THE WESTPHALIAN MODEL AND MINORITY-RIGHTS GUARANTEES IN EUROPE', n.d. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/71726469.pdf>

to defend Christians within the Empire. Greater restrictions on religious intolerance were included in the Peace of Westphalia. The Peace of Westphalia (which was made up of the independent treaties of Münster and Osnabrück) broke the Westphalian paradigm in this aspect and others; it did not support the idea of domestic autonomy. Numerous individual articles supported religious toleration, if not outright religious freedom, in Germany while verbally endorsing *cuius religio eius religio*⁴ is a Latin expression that translates as "Whose territory, his religion," denoting that the subjects were to follow the ruler's faith. The leaders of the German-speaking kingdoms and Charles V, the Emperor, agreed to adopt this idea at the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, which put an end to a period of violent strife between forces belonging to the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches inside the Holy Roman Empire). Lutheran orders were to remain Lutheran, while Catholic orders were to remain Catholic (T. of Osnabrück, V.11-V.23). The freedom to exercise one's religion in private, to educate one's children at home, or to send one's children to a foreign school was to be granted to Catholics who resided in Lutheran states or to Lutherans who resided in Catholic states. The Peace of Westphalia was a significant step in putting a stop to religious warfare, although there were disputes over its execution and efforts of unilateral defection. Beginning in the winter of 1648–1649, the Westphalia clauses came into force.

Immigration is a growing reality for the main cities that are home to national minorities in Europe, and more broadly in Western nations: Barcelona (Catalonia), Bilbao (Basque Country), Glasgow (Scotland), Brussels (Flanders), Bolzano/Bozen (South Tyrol), and Montreal (Quebec). While some of these cities have long drawn immigrants, others have just lately seen a sizable influx of newcomers. This article's main research question is whether it is feasible to implement policies that accommodate both historical minorities and migrants as allies in the pursuit of a pluralist and tolerant society and whether it is possible to reconcile the claims of historical minorities and new groups originating from immigration. In Europe, where many states have established systems of rights for "old" minority groups but have not yet developed sound policies for the integration of new minority groups originating from immigration, and where the two topics have generally been discussed in

⁴*Cuius Regio, Eius Religio*. In Boundless.Com, n.d. *cuius regio, eius religio*.

isolation from one another, studying the interactions and complementarities of these two minority groups is regarded as an important task for future research.⁵

5. Key – Terms and Definitions

1. **National Minority**⁶: The term "national minority" is not defined in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities since no universal definition has been adopted by all Council of Europe members. As a result, governments are permitted some latitude or a margin of appreciation in determining who is covered by the Framework Convention. This choice must be taken in good faith and by broad international legal norms, including the freedom of self-identification.
2. **Conflict Zone Areas**⁷: The Geneva Academy, with support from the Swiss Government, is developing criteria and indicators to identify conflict zones and high-risk areas in specific sections of a country (in compliance with international humanitarian law). For example, these places might be identified by:
 - a. whether or not there is a war, whether it is worldwide
 - b. the cessation of hostilities and the onset of peace
 - c. grave or widespread violations of human rights
 - d. civil turmoil or political repression; or
 - e. fragmented state infrastructure or weak institutions.

⁵ Roberta Medda-Windischer. 'Historical Minorities and Migrants: Foes or Allies?' Open Society Institute, n.d. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/5cc1a353-588a-46d4-8cb0-3105c5aa30a8/migrants-minorities-europe-20040601.pdf>

⁶ COUNCIL OF EUROPE PORTAL. 'Factsheet on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities', n.d. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/fcnm-factsheet>

⁷ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. 'Due Diligence: Defining "Conflict-Affected" and "High-Risk Areas"', n.d. https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Business/ForumSession2/Events/3Dec.1.SideEventProposal_GenevaAcademy.pdf. https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Business/ForumSession2/Events/3Dec.1.SideEventProposal_GenevaAcademy.pdf.

3. **Crisis Period/Situation:** A crisis is any circumstance or period that will (or might) result in a tumultuous and hazardous scenario that affects a specific person, a particular group, or the entire community.

6. Legal Framework

In this part of the Study Guide, the focus will be on the legal basis of the protection of national minorities as it is a topic that its complexity requires a multilateral treatment. Apart from what the Council of Europe has done in the sector of the protection of national minorities, this Guide will examine also European and international reaction to the topic.

6.1. Council of Europe (CoE)

The Council of Europe (CoE; French: Conseil de l'Europe, CDE) is an international organization founded in the wake of World War II to uphold human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Europe. Founded in 1949, it has up days, 47 member states.⁸

As an international organization with a specific interest in human rights, democracy, and rule of law, and the protection of these, the Council of Europe has taken many actions for the protection of the rights of the national minorities.

One of the most remarkable actions of the Council of Europe was the creation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Framework Convention). The Convention was adopted on 10 November 1994 by the Committee of Ministers, and it entered into force on 1 February 1998. It is now in force in 39 states. The Advisory Committee, the first international body committed only to the rights of minorities, oversees this first multilateral instrument with legal force devoted to the safeguarding of national minorities around the world.⁹

The Convention consists of fundamental principles, relating to people belonging to certain groups which are declared as national minorities, in the sphere of public life such as freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of

⁸ "The Council of Europe: Guardian of Human Rights, Democracy and The Rule of Law For 700 million Citizens". Www.Coe.Int, 2022. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/home>

⁹ National FCNM and Council Europe, "About The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance>.

thought, conscience and religion, and access to the media, as well as, in the sphere of freedoms relating to language, education, transfrontier co-operation, etc.

Till now, 39 Member-States have signed and ratified the Convention, also there are countries such as Belgium, or Greece that have signed but not yet ratified and also countries that have not signed at all this specific Convention such as, France or Türkiye.

Also, in the framework of action of the Council of Europe, national minorities could also be protected by:¹⁰

- *The European Convention on Human Rights*, because its universally applicable individual rights can also be claimed by persons belonging to national minorities.
- *The European Social Charter*, which protects minorities in social and economic fields.
- *The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, which focuses on protection and promotion of minority languages; and
- *The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)* makes an important contribution to the fight against discrimination of persons belonging to minorities.
- *The Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, and Inclusion (CDADI)* is an inter-governmental body which advises the Committee of Ministers on the promotion of equality and the building of more inclusive societies which offer effective protection from discrimination and hate and where diversity is respected. In 2021, the CDADI adopted a study on the active political participation of national minority youth, collecting best practices and formulating recommendations to states.
- *The Roma and Travelers Team of the Council of Europe*, whose work contributes to promoting and protecting the rights of Roma and Travelers in Council of Europe member states and to fostering equal opportunities, diversity, and social inclusion by fighting discrimination and antigypsyism.

¹⁰ National FCNM and Council Europe, "About The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance>.

6.2. European legislation

One of the most significant legal instruments that protects national minorities' rights in a European level is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (EU), which in article 21, prohibits any discrimination based on language or membership of a national minority. Also, in article 22, it states that the Union shall respect cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity.¹¹ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union is the fundamental legislation, in the context of EU action, which exclusively regulates the protection of individual and social rights and is primary law of the Union.

The importance given to the different regions by the EU and its Member States is given expression by the existence of the Committee of the Regions. This institution is an advisory body for the Commission, Council and European Parliament. Regions and cities in the Member States are given a say in the EU decision-making process. The Committee of the Region is not an organ for the minorities. But they have the chance to make their interests known in the Committee of the Regions through their activities in the different areas of settlement.

Furthermore, the Council of the European Union adopted several directives against discrimination, e.g., the Council Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin from 2000 (Directive 2000/43/EC). There is no directive that directly addresses discrimination based on language or membership of a national minority.

6.3. International legislation

The United Nations have always been active on the sector of human rights and especially for the protection of some groups that their rights are more likely to be violated. Starting from 1992, when the UN General Assembly adopted with consensus the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* by resolution No. 47/135.¹² Its key provisions include that "Persons belonging to national or

¹¹ Minderheitensekretariat Volksgruppen, "Minority Secretariat: European Union (EU)", Minderheitensekretariat.De, 2022, <https://www.minderheitensekretariat.de/en/legal-framework/european-union-eu>.

¹² "Research Guides: UN General Assembly Resolutions Tables: 47Th Session (1992-1993)", Research.Un. Org, 2022,

ethnic, religious and linguistic have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination" (Article 2.1).

The declaration includes a list of rights to which persons belonging to minorities are entitled, such as:

- the right to enjoy their own culture
- the right to profess and practice their own religion
- the right to use their own language

It also contains measures that States could implement to create an environment conducive to the enjoyment of such rights, such as:

- through encouraging public knowledge of the history, traditions, language and culture of minorities existing within their territories
- enabling persons belonging to minorities to participate fully in the economic progress and development of their country

States are also asked to implement national policies and programs with due regard for minority interests.¹³

Furthermore, two UN general human rights treaties, ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Human Rights Committee) and the CRC - Convention on the Rights of the Child (Committee on the Rights of the Child), contain specific provisions for the minorities:¹⁴

Article 27 of ICCPR is the most widely accepted legally binding provision on minorities and provides the basis and inspiration for the UN Declaration on Minorities. Article 27 reads:

In those States in which ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right in community with the other members of their

¹³ United Nations, "Minorities | United Nations", United Nations, 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups/minorities>.

¹⁴ "Www.Ohchr. Org", UN Human Rights Office, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-minority-issues/international-standards>.

group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

Article 30 of CRC provides a similar standard for minority children:

In those States in which ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Given the wide ratification of the ICCPR and the CRC, every state in the world has a legally binding obligation to protect minority rights based on its voluntary commitments under international law.

It is, therefore, clear that the protection of the rights of national minorities is a subject of utmost importance for both the European and international agenda with multilateral and multi-level approach. Both Council of Europe and other international organizations have either produced legal documents that provide protection or have taken serious actions to battle any kind of discrimination against those groups.

7. Main Discussion of the Topic

7.1. Current situation

In the light of the recent and -still ongoing- Russian-Ukrainian war, the European continent is facing the problem of the protection of national minorities in conflict zone areas. A problem that had not bothered Europe since the war in Yugoslavia, is now again at the top of the European agenda and needs rapid and efficient acts. As it has been generally said by the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues of the UN Human Rights Council: *“Since Most Contemporary Violent Conflicts Involve Aggrieved Minorities, Strategies Should Address Directly the Root Causes of Exclusion and Injustice”*.¹⁵

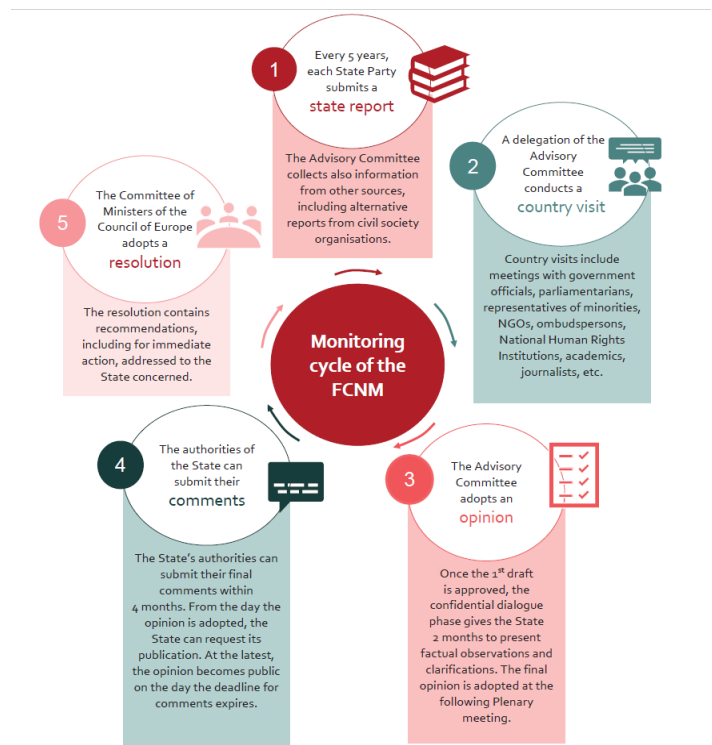
¹⁵ www.Ohchr.Org", UN Human Rights Office, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/special-rapporteur-minority-issues-most-contemporary-violent-conflicts>.

The situation about the respect of the rights of national minorities in the European area and also the respect of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Framework Convention), are monitored by the -abovementioned- Advisory Committee which has launched from its beginning a specific and thorough process about the gathering of data and the evaluation of those statistics. The Framework Convention and its monitoring system have contributed to improving dialogue between governmental agencies and national minorities. It has also prompted the adoption of new laws devoted to the protection of national minorities and encouraged states to improve their non-discrimination legislation and practice. The Advisory Committee is a recognized and highly respected body in the international sphere of minority protection. The Advisory Committee's opinions have emerged as a central reference in the work of other international bodies, such as the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

This monitoring procedure could be described as follows: ¹⁶

1. States are required to submit a report containing information on legislative and other measures taken to comply with the principles of the Framework Convention every 5 years. This report is examined by the Advisory Committee. If the states fail to present their reports, the Committee of Ministers can authorize the Advisory Committee to start the monitoring process, nevertheless.

2. The Advisory Committee carries out country visits in order to meet with minority organizations, other representatives of civil society, and local and national authorities.



¹⁶ National FCNM and Council Europe, "About The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance#{%2279030665%22:7%7D}>.

3. The Advisory Committee then adopts an opinion containing concrete recommendations for state action. In this process, the Advisory Committee holds a confidential dialogue which gives states the possibility to offer any factual corrections. The Advisory Committee is free to accept or reject changes offered.

4. Once the opinion is adopted, states have an opportunity to submit comments on this opinion within 4 months, after which time the comments and the opinion are published.

5. Based on the opinion of the Advisory Committee, the Committee of Ministers adopts a Resolution with conclusions and recommendations in respect of the state concerned.

This monitoring process aims to ameliorate the status of many ethnic or religious groups in Europe that have been characterized as a minority. Minorities in Europe have always been a vivid part of the European society, especially Roma people who actually are the biggest recognized minority in Europe, as late studies show.¹⁷

So, is there a feeling of discrimination towards Roma people recognized by them? Recent statistics of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) show that, in many countries where Roma people are based, there is a high percentage of people that have answered “Yes” in the question: “In the past 12 months have you ever felt discriminated against because of skin colour / ethnic origin / religion in 10 areas of life?”¹⁸

The countries with the highest percentages for this answer category are Greece, Portugal, Croatia. The countries with the lowest percentages for this answer category are Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary. It is more than clear that still discrimination exists and that’s why the monitoring system of the Advisory committee needs to be strengthen with efficient tolls and more data.

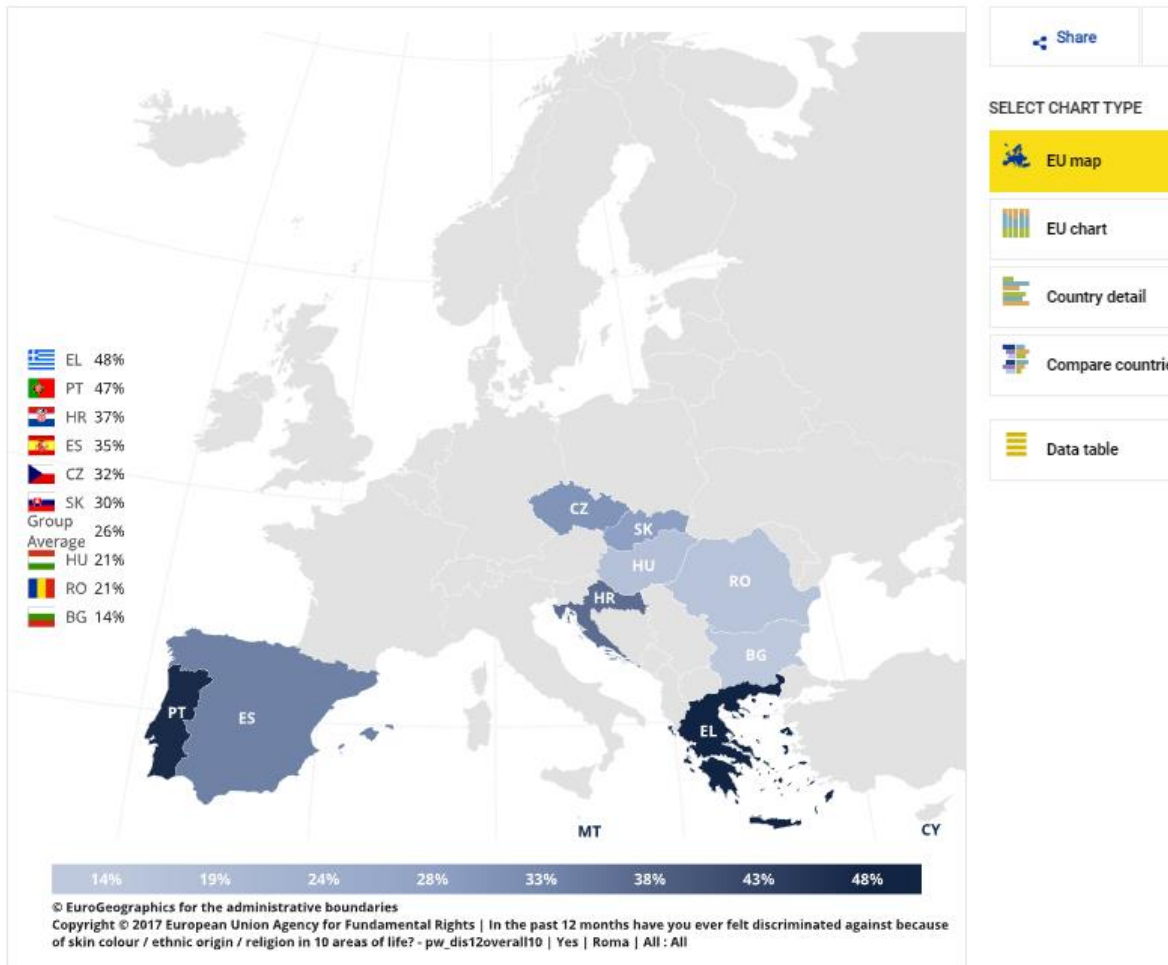
¹⁷ "Www.Reuters.Com", Reuters, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-global-roma-rights-idUSKCN1RK01Y>.

¹⁸ "Survey On Minorities And Discrimination In EU (2016)", European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights, 2022, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-second-eu-minorities-discrimination-survey>.

In the past 12 months have you ever felt discriminated against because of skin colour / ethnic origin / religion in 10 areas of life

Discrimination

Skip visualization



7.1.1. Rights of national minorities – Values of the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe was founded on the basis of 3 fundamental principles: democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. In that wide context, the Framework Convention was not only based but still functions. The rights enumerated in the Convention as well as the obligations of the states derive precisely from these three fundamental principles, which limit the action of the Council of Europe itself.

The rights of the national minorities as they derive from the Convention are:¹⁹

- Freely expressing ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identities

¹⁹ National FCNM and Council Europe, "About The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, [https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance#{%2279030665%22:\[3\]}](https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance#{%2279030665%22:[3]}).

- Not being discriminated against
- Enjoying freedom of assembly, association, expression, thought, conscience, and religion
- Using minority languages in contact with the authorities in areas inhabited traditionally or in substantial numbers by national minorities
- Being able to influence public decision making for issues affecting persons belonging to national minorities
- Participating in cultural, social, and economic life

Obligations of the Member States are also listed in the Convention:

- Promoting effective equality
- Preserving and developing minority cultures, religions and languages
- Promoting intercultural dialogue and protecting persons belonging to minorities from hostility or violence
- Promoting a diverse media space with broadcasting in minority languages and support to minority media
- Displaying personal names, place names and other topographical indications in minority languages
- Making education accessible to all and fostering intercultural knowledge
- Teaching of and in minority languages, in private and public schools
- Refraining from gerrymandering to restrict minority rights
- Promoting minority rights through bilateral, multilateral and cross border co-operation

The Framework Convention's rules encompass the use of the minority language in both public and private settings, as well as, under certain circumstances, in communications with administrative authorities. Additionally, in some circumstances, it covers the use of one's own name, the disclosure of sensitive information, and the use of toponyms in the minority

language. Additionally, states must support the circumstances that enable members of national minorities to preserve and advance their respective languages, customs, and cultures. In order to support languages with few speakers, in particular, this may call for proactive intervention from the state in the form of financing or other types of assistance.

All levels of public and private schools as well as all grade levels are covered by the Framework Convention's requirements for teaching minority languages. In addition to the responsibilities under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, certain requirements exist. Additionally, states are required to promote intercultural education in their curriculum, which should cover topics like civic education and the past and present contributions of national minorities to society as a whole. This ought to promote intercultural communication and raise awareness, tolerance, and the idea that society is a common space for all people. The Advisory Committee is particularly concerned in equal access to education, especially when it affects the most marginalized sections in society.

The involvement of people from national minorities in cultural, social, and economic life as well as in public affairs should be encouraged by states. In reality, this entails giving members of national minorities the opportunity to take part in discussions and decisions that have an impact on them in these areas. Positive steps, such as special seats in legislatures, or even mechanisms for involvement, such councils or forums between the government and civil society, may be necessary for this to be effective. Participation-related measures will be developed with national and local settings in mind.²⁰

7.2. Cases Studies

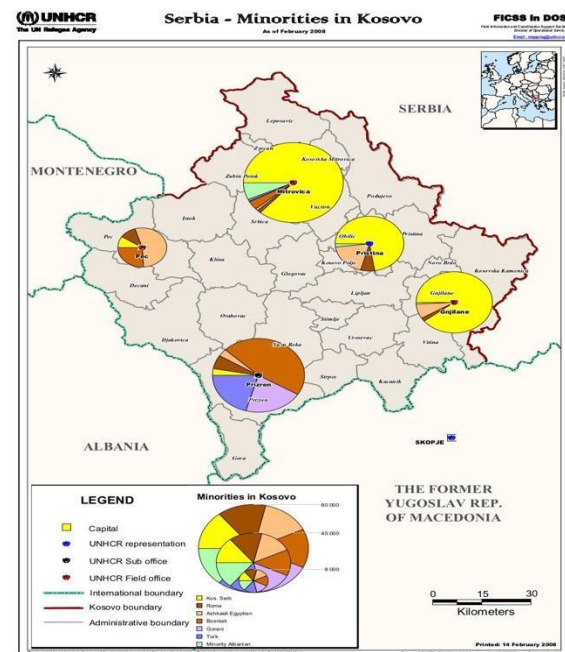
7.2.1. The Case of Yugoslavia

Three of Europe's deadliest wars since the Second World War have taken place on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Approximately a quarter of a million people were murdered, twice as many were maimed, and at least 3 million people were forced to flee their homes as a result of horrific clashes and "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and

²⁰ National FCNM and Council Europe, "About The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance>.

Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo. The Central and South-Eastern European nations have undergone a deliberate restructuring since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Consolidating democracy and establishing market-based economies were the goals. There are different levels of success for this. Nationalist sentiment has increased as a result of the demise of the previous order. Currently, it appears that the world community has chosen to demolish the Balkan "powder keg," whose detonation in Sarajevo in 1914 started the First World War. However, the Yugoslavia issue grew so severe in 1999 that it threatened the peace and stability of all of Europe and beyond. It is crucial to comprehend the historical, political, and social backdrop of Yugoslavia to comprehend concerns relating to minority rights there. While multiple civil wars have broken out between various ethnic groupings, the history of the Balkans also includes periods of peaceful coexistence between dominant and minority ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups. This report looks at both sides of the ethnic reality in the Balkans.

Conflict erupted over the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) 1999 intervention in Kosovo several human rights organizations contended that action should have been done far earlier.²¹ Others countered that it was improper for NATO to meddle in a sovereign state's domestic affairs. MRG has pushed for the international community to act sooner to stop the violence from getting worse. The conference that MRG co-sponsored in the European Parliament in February 1993 gave rise to this demand. Even then, the data indicated that since Kosovo/autonomy a's agreement was revoked in 1988, violations of minority rights had continued to escalate and that nonviolent demonstrations had had no constructive impact. Since that time, Yugoslavia's civil society and democratic institutions have come under constant attack from foreign organizations, according to local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Kosovo's ethnic tensions between Serbs and Albanians persisted into the twenty-first century. Anti-



²¹ JAN BRIZA. 'Minority Rights in Yugoslavia', n.d. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/469cbfe40.pdf>

Serb riots that broke out in many Kosovo-area cities and towns in March 2004 resulted in sporadic bloodshed. Over 4,000 Serbs and members of other minorities were forced to flee their homes because of the riots, which claimed over 30 deaths. Kosovo proclaimed its independence from Serbia in February 2008. (Yugoslavia had ceased to exist in 2003, giving way to the federation of Serbia and Montenegro, which itself dissolved in 2006). Serbia did not recognize Kosovo's independence, even though the US and several other EU members did. On February 18, 2008, when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice issued a press statement detailing President George W. Bush's intentions, the United States formally recognized Kosovo's independence and agreed to forge diplomatic ties.²²

Understanding the very complex governmental structure that arose in 1999 and thereafter is crucial to comprehending what was done and what was not done in Kosovo. According to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 from 1999, Kosovo was still a part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Assuring the secure and unhindered return of all refugees and internally displaced people to their homes in Kosovo. The FRY, which in 2003 became the union of Serbia and Montenegro, is presently splitting into two different republics.²³

Kosovo has been run entirely independently of the FRY (which became the union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2003, currently splitting into two distinct republics following a referendum). The United Nations Mission in Kosovo established as the "international civil presence" in 1244, has served as Kosovo's primary governing body. Its responsibilities under Resolution 1244 include:

1. Promoting the formation of significant autonomy and self-government in Kosovo while awaiting a final agreement, fully taking into consideration Annex 2 and the Rambouillet Accords
2. Carrying out fundamental civilian administrative duties whenever and for however long is necessary.
3. Advocating for and defending human rights

²² OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN. 'A Guide to the United States History of Recognition, Diplomatic, and Consular Relations, by Country, since 1776: Kosovo', n.d. <https://history.state.gov/countries/kosovo>.

²³ Clive Baldwin. 'Minority Rights in Kosovo under International Rule', Minority Rights Group International. <https://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/old-site-downloads/download-158-Minority-Rights-in-Kosovo-under-International-Rule.pdf>.

4. Ensuring the unhindered and safe return of all displaced people and refugees to their homes in Kosovo.

After the old Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia fell apart, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which is comprised of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, was established under the FRY Constitution on April 27, 1992. (SFRY).⁴ However, the international world has not legally acknowledged the new Yugoslav federation as the continuation of the SFRY. It thinks that none of the successor republics symbolizes the SFRY's continuance and that the SFRY has disintegrated. The FRY Constitution supersedes the constitutions of Serbia and Montenegro as the ultimate legislation of the territory. It establishes fundamental national norms for human rights. All international human rights agreements that have been ratified by the SFRY are binding on the FRY.

Human rights are not equally respected everywhere in Serbia²⁴. For instance, ethnic minorities often have the most collective rights in Serbia in Vojvodina, both de jure and de facto. However, there are still inconsistencies between the legislation and what the Constitution declares, but they are often less of an issue in Vojvodina than in other regions of Serbia. Minority citizens in Serbia have a right to get an education from kindergarten through university in their mother tongue or native tongue. The three Constitutions all uphold this right²⁵.

The Serbian government passed several decrees and laws during the academic year 1990–1991 to implement a uniform educational program and curriculum across the Republic of Serbia. As a result, several educational institutions and infrastructures in Kosovo/a were shut down. When they rejected the textbook of the new unified curriculum, more than 18,000 teachers and other members of the staff of Albanian-language classroom facilities in schools and university departments were summarily fired. Albanians in Kosovo/a replied by setting up schools within their houses.

Despite the rules about equality and employment, racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as the dominant population. But the example of high administrative

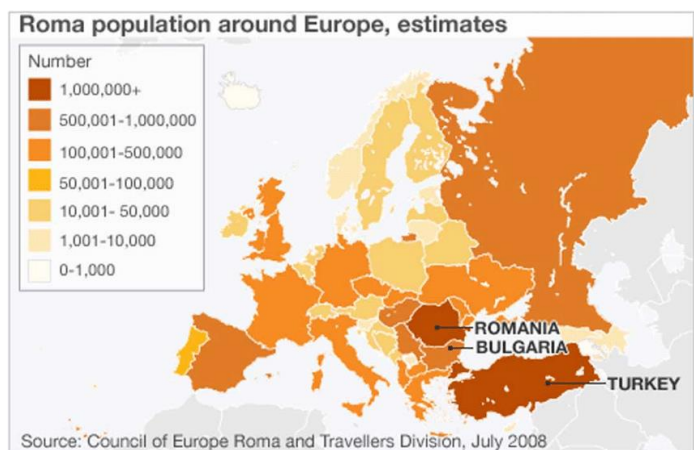
²⁴ HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH. 'Serbia/Kosovo Events of 2020', n.d. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/serbia/kosovo>.

²⁵ Clive Baldwin. 'Minority Rights in Kosovo under International Rule', Minority Rights Group International. <https://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/old-site-downloads/download-158-Minority-Rights-in-Kosovo-under-International-Rule.pdf>.

posts in the state is equally instructive. Numerous instances of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and other minorities in the FRY being fired are given in this report. Racial and ethnic minorities are discriminated against in leadership positions in state-owned businesses. Today, this has huge implications due to the privatization of state-owned enterprises and the enormous financial benefits enjoyed by CEOs. Therefore, the economic shift benefits the majority of big state-owned companies in Vojvodina, where Serbs and Montenegrins predominate in key positions, while less senior employees, many of whom are minorities, suffer.

In Kosovo, Roma is concentrated in neighborhoods around Kosovska Mitrovica, Pec, Pristina, and Prizren. In Kosovo/a, there were 45,745 Roma as per the 1991 census. Roma advocacy groups claim that the population is much greater. Compared to Roma in other parts of the area, Roma in Kosovo/a typically has a much stronger feeling of national identification.

Although there have been instances of Roma claiming to be Albanians or Serbs, this area has also had instances of Roma claiming to be Egyptians. Egyptian political figures deny having Indian or Roma ancestry; they have shown great loyalty to Belgrade and have been hostile to the Albanian parties. The UN Human Rights Office works in several nations to support Roma and Travelers' effective exercise of their human rights. It accomplishes this by assisting in the creation of government policies that promote the inclusion of Roma, enhancing the abilities of Roma—and particularly Romani women—to participate in local, regional, national, and international decision-making, and working to confront discriminatory norms and practices²⁶.



²⁶ UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. 'Advancing Roma Inclusion', n.d. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/minorities/advancing-roma-inclusion>.

7.2.2 The Case of Ukraine

Joining the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in denouncing the heinous violence against women and children, the Advisory Committee emphasized that Ukraine is a multiethnic society and that numerous national minorities reside in the most damaged areas in Ukraine's East and South. The advisory group is extremely concerned about the conflict's worsening of interethnic tensions in Ukraine and the growing mistrust between ethnic Russians and the majority population. The statement claims that this will also have an impact on those who identify as Ukrainian or members of other national minorities but prefer to converse in Russian. The Committee notes that the aggression's violations of Russia's obligations under the Council of Europe Statute "could not be starker" than those of the Framework Convention's guiding principles. The protection of national minorities is a crucial part of the global defense of human rights, according to the Framework Convention, which stipulates that its provisions "shall be applied in good faith, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and conformity with the principles of good neighborliness, friendly relations, and cooperation between states."

The Russian Federation was expelled from the Council of Europe because of the aggression. The Russian Federation continues to be a Contracting Party to the Framework Convention and is thus bound by its requirements and subject to its monitoring mechanism. This is because the Framework Convention is available to non-member nations. If the situation permits, the Advisory Committee will continue to pay special attention to how these events affect people who are members of national minorities in the Russian Federation.



Ethnic minorities made up 10 million 757 thousand 456 individuals, or 22.2% of the total population, in Ukraine as of the most recent census (2001). In Ukraine, there are members of over a hundred different ethnic minorities, including Jews, Crimean Tatars, Gagauz, Hutsuls, Boykos, Romani, Poles, Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, and Russians. Russia has accused Ukraine of infringing the rights and freedoms

of Russian ethnic communities by having representatives of those groups on Ukrainian soil. According to the findings, even in the absence of wars, Ukraine "would not have stayed within its existing borders owing to egregious abuses of the rights of the Russian-speaking people." Russia has been making assumptions about Ukraine's aggressive ethnic policy intended to incite Poland and Hungary to invade western Ukraine.²⁷

Tens of thousands of Crimean Tatars and more than 1 million residents of the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts became internally displaced after Russia's illegitimate annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the outbreak of the Donbas conflict.²⁸ "Russian has triumphed as a lingua franca rather than a sign of ethnicity" in these historically multiethnic areas (Mirimanova 2018, 64). The city of Mariupol in the Donetsk oblast serves as an example. It used to have a mostly Russophone population before the war. However, in addition to Ukrainians and Russians, the city and its neighboring villages were home to the country's biggest Greek community as well as smaller minority populations of Jews, Armenians, and Bulgarians.²⁹

Donbas is made up of the eastern Ukrainian oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk, which border the Russian Federation. The Joint Forces Operation (JFO) was launched in April 2018 after the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) was created in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts following the start of the War in Donbas in April 2014.³⁰

When the War in Donbas began, national and international organizations significantly increased their assistance for civil society. They thus had a dramatic growth in population in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, particularly between 2016 and 2019.

Civic hubs, cultural institutions, and civic platforms began to emerge, enabling local participation, knowledge exchange, and interaction between public activists and residents. To give communities access to other information sources, virtual platforms were developed

²⁷ UKRAINE CRISIS media center. 'Ethnic Minorities Challenged by the Russian War against Ukraine', n.d. <https://uacrisis.org/en/ukraine-in-flames-76>

²⁸ By Tamara Qiblawi, Nathan Hodge, Tim Lister, and Ivana Kottasová, CNN. 'Why Donbas Is at the Heart of the Ukraine Crisis'. CNN World, n.d. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/19/europe/donbas-ukraine-russia-intl-cmd/index.html>.

²⁹ Sergiu Constantin. 'Ethnic and Linguistic Identity in Ukraine? It's Complicated'. Eurac research. Science Blogs (blog), n.d. <https://www.eurac.edu/en/blogs/mobile-people-and-diverse-societies/ethnic-and-linguistic-identity-in-ukraine-it-s-complicated>.

³⁰ Volodymyr Lukichov Tymofiy Nikitiuk Liudmyla Kravchenko. 'Civil Society in Donbas, Ukraine: Organizations and Activities'. DCAF-Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, n.d. <https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/CivilSocietyDonbas.pdf>.

in addition to these. 37 Additionally, specialized civil society groups were founded with a focus on addressing social problems and protecting vulnerable people, such as IDPs. Additionally, public initiatives were set up to promote the armed forces and keep an eye on reform projects and anti-corruption activities.

7.3. The aftermath of the conflict situation to the national minorities

7.3.1. The effects of the war in national minorities

The devastating effects of a war are always visible in all sectors of the modern society and even more so in the minority groups that make it up. It is more than clear that the vulnerability that is inherent in these groups makes them the “perfect” victim for situations and pathogens of the modern world such as wars, and state conflicts in general. Effects and damages could be found in all aspects of everyday life and of course violations of the abovementioned rights are always a true situation. As it has been stated, one often weapon of war criminals against other States is *“the skillful exploitation of existing political, social, and economic tensions between majority and minority groups in different countries that has been used to undermine morale and national unity”*.³¹

A conflict situation between States could directly affect the core of the individual and social rights of the people belonging to minority groups. The effects of war minimize the protection that those groups have, a protection that most of the times is already inefficient and not enough. As the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war is still evolving, the problems are starting to reveal on by one. Minorities in Ukraine are trapped in a situation where they either the option of staying and come across the difficulties that occur from the violation acts of Russia or fly away from the country. There are precisely three problems that are occurring from this situation as they are observed in the example of Ukraine: a) The first is the overarching process of autocratization in the world, b) the second is an aggravated degree of activism

³¹ Gerhart Saenger, *The Effect Of The War On Our Minority Groups*, ebook (repr., American Sociological Review, 2022), 1-9, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2085444?saml_data=eyJzYW1sVG9rZW4iOiJiMTYxN2UzZi1iOGVkdTQzMjgtYml0My1iMWE2MGlxNjA2MTMiLCJlbWFpbCI6InRzaXJvbmluQGxhdy5hdXRoLmdyIiwiaW5zdGI0dXRpb25JZHMlOlsiZTM0ZjkzYWUtOjWNI0C00NjNmLTkxYTMtYTFmOWE2NjU3NDYyIl19#metadata_info_tab_contents.

and intervention by kinstates vis-à-vis co-ethnic minorities in neighboring countries, and the c) last is the added effect of geopolitics.³²

The first aspect of autocratization has been studied extensively by political scientists using various democratic metrics across time. However, the phenomena should not be studied just for its restriction of democratic rights or free elections. Another factor worsening minority difficulties now is how those same authoritarian nations are utilizing co-ethnic minorities overseas as a weapon for both their home and international policies. The final conundrum that Russia's entry into Ukraine raises has to do with the larger geopolitical issues that are ultimately motivating Putin's action. Putin's claimed intentions to "denazify" Ukraine and the and protect the Russian may be seen as a crazy attempt to resurrect the Russian empire or just as a permanent halt to Western advancements, but the truth remains that geopolitical objectives support or eclipse these intentions.³³

These situations have lead thousands of people belonging to minority groups in Ukraine to leave forcefully the country. The number of Roma who have left Ukraine at this time may be as high as 100,000, according to figures that are currently available. At the same time, it is thought that around half of this number returned to the nation despite the fact that hostilities were still in an active phase. This is due to several factors. First, there is essentially little direct military activity in the western portion of Ukraine, particularly Zakarpattia, where many Roma reside. Therefore, a large number of displaced individuals from this area believed it was possible to relocate. The second primary reason is the desire to reunite with family because most male citizens between the ages of 18 and 60 are not permitted to leave Ukraine owing to the introduction of martial law. Finally, another important reason lies in the hardships and discriminatory treatment that many members of the Romani minority face as refugees.³⁴

Seen the abovementioned, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, publicly condemned in the strongest way Russians'

³² ECMI Minorities Blog. Minorities And The War In Ukraine: Navigating The 'Perfect Storm'?", Ecmi.De, 2022, <https://www.ecmi.de/infochannel/detail/minorities-and-the-war-in-ukraine-navigating-the-perfect-storm>.

³³ ECMI Minorities Blog. Minorities And The War In Ukraine: Navigating The 'Perfect Storm'?", Ecmi.De, 2022, <https://www.ecmi.de/infochannel/detail/minorities-and-the-war-in-ukraine-navigating-the-perfect-storm>.

³⁴ "ECMI Minorities Blog. The Response Of International Organisations And Roma Civil Society To The Plight Of Ukraine's Roma Refugees In Europe", Ecmi.De, 2022, <https://www.ecmi.de/infochannel/detail/ecmi-minorities-blogthe-response-of-international-organisations-and-roma-civil-society-to-the-plight-of-ukraines-roma-refugees-in-europe>.

Federation aggression towards the people of Ukraine by stating that: “the *Russian Federation authorities used issues of minority rights as a pretext for the invasion*”. Also, it stated that: “*The Advisory Committee is deeply concerned that the war has exacerbated in Ukraine the situation for interethnic relations, deepening the mistrust between persons identifying as ethnic Russians and the majority population. This will have an impact also on those persons who identify with other national minorities or as Ukrainian but use Russian as their main language of communication*”.³⁵

Except from geopolitical and rights violations, war affects the socio-economic life of people belonging to minority groups. Civilian populations can experience significant and long-lasting microeconomic effects as a result of conflict. People who live in conflict zones may get wounds, lose their lives, and have their property damaged, but they may also be forced to flee their homes and lose their means of subsistence. Given the age-specific components of many human capital investments, children are particularly negatively impacted by the loss of physical capital and the worsening of economic conditions. Men, women, and children who are involved in violent combat suffer from fatalities, wounds, disabilities, and psychological stress. These consequences of violence may frequently be sufficient to lower crucial thresholds in previously vulnerable households. If the household is unable to replace labor or capital, these may become hard to overcome and may continue for generations if they have a major negative influence on children's education and health.³⁶

It is easy to see, from the above, that the effects of the war not only make the already marginalized minority groups even more vulnerable, but also completely exclude their members from the wider socio-economic life of the country in which they live. It is imperative, especially for the member states of the Council of Europe, in these times of the developing Russian-Ukrainian conflict, to take care both to ensure the protection of the rights of their own minorities and to contribute to the international protection of affected minorities groups.

³⁵ National FCNM, concerned about the war deepening mistrust in interethnic relations Advisory Committee deplores Russia's usage of minority rights as a pretext for invading Ukraine and Council Europe, "Advisory Committee Deplores Russia'S Usage Of Minority Rights As A Pretext For Invading Ukraine, Concerned About The War Deepening Mistrust In Interethnic Relations", National Minorities (FCNM), 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/-/advisory-committee-deplores-russia-s-usage-of-minority-rights-as-a-pretext-for-invading-ukraine-concerned-about-the-war-deepening-mistrust-in-intereth>.

³⁶ “How Does Violent Conflict Impact on Individual Educational Outcomes? The Evidence so Far - UNESCO Digital Library, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000190710>.

7.3.2. Actions that the States could do strengthen the protection of national minorities

As it is already mentioned, the Member States have the obligation to contribute to the international aim of protecting the national minorities in danger of the effects of war. It is for that reason that it is of utmost importance that the Member States of the Council of Europe must, first of all, respect and follow the basic legislative text of the Council, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and facilitate the work and the evaluation rounds that the Advisory Committee makes. By respecting the Convention and follow the obligations that derive from it, the Member States will ensure at a very sufficient level the rights of their national minorities.

Also, in the context of interior acts, the States could enforce their national policies on the protection of national minorities, as domestic law can, in many ways, be applied more efficiently and faster than international obligations deriving from a convention.

The promotion and defense of minority identities are essential to their rights. By fostering and defending their identity, people can avoid forced assimilation and the extinction of the cultures, faiths, and languages that form the backbone of the world's diversity and are thus a part of its legacy. Diversity and numerous identities must be safeguarded, valued, and tolerated in order to avoid assimilation. Minority rights aim to protect distinctive identities while making sure that any favorable treatment of some groups or individuals within them does not cover up discriminatory practices and laws. Therefore, affirming that minorities improve society via this variety and taking constructive action to respect cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity are necessary.³⁷

8. Conclusion

All things considered; the Council of Europe works to advance human rights through international agreements. Through independent expert monitoring organizations, it keeps track of member states' development in these areas and provides suggestions. Our Committee focuses on the European Union's (EU) Charter of Fundamental Rights, which, in

³⁷ PYN, "Why Are Minority Rights Important?," Political Youth Network (blog), November 20, 2018, <https://politicalyouthnetwork.org/why-are-minority-rights-important-2/>.

article 21, forbids any discrimination based on a person's language or their membership in a national minority as one of the important legal instruments that safeguard national minorities' rights at the European level. Minorities have been produced as a result of the shocking events that have occurred in Europe from the second world war to the present, and they frequently find themselves in challenging circumstances. The Council of Europe and its legislation are now working to defend a wide variety of minorities that the current Russian-Ukrainian war has brought to light. In order to propose answers and suggestions for the protection of minorities not only in Europe but also in the global system, all member states are thus encouraged to recognize, respect, and adopt the Council of Europe's principles.

9. Points to be Addressed

1. What is cultural and linguistic competence, and how the Council of Europe can contribute to this?
2. In what other ways the Council of Europe safeguards national minorities?
3. Is it possible for every country to follow the Resolution 1244?
4. How the Member States could ensure the protection of the rights of their national minorities, in general?
5. How could the Member States contribute to the battle against violation of the rights of the national minorities of Ukraine?
6. How could the Member States facilitate the monitoring process of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe?
7. How the conflict situation affects the socio-economic life of the members belonging to a national minority, and how the member states could strengthen their role in the society?
8. What could be the possible effects of not respecting the Framework Convention of National Minorities of the Council of Europe and how this phenomenon could be prevented?
9. In which ways the Member States could prevent future conflict situations as a way to protect their national minorities?

10. What could the Council of Europe do, in its framework, to aim the battle of Ukraine against the violation of the rights of their national minorities?

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