

**CONSULTATION SEMINAR
on the
“DRAFT COMMENTARY ON PARTICIPATION OF
PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES
IN CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS”**

**The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention
for the Protection of National Minorities**

Bolzano/Bozen, 2-4 October 2007
European Academy of Bolzano, Drusus Allee/Viale Druso 1

PROGRAMME

Following its first thematic commentary on minority education adopted in March 2006, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter ‘Advisory Committee’) started to work on the theme of participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social, economic life and in public affairs.

A preliminary draft of the thematic commentary has been prepared on the basis of the country-specific Opinions, and in particular, on the provisions of the Framework Convention relating to effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities. The draft commentary was sent for written consultation to minority organisations as well as other stakeholders in June/July 2007. As a result, around 20 written contributions have been submitted to the Secretariat of the Framework Convention and are to be considered by the Advisory Committee’s working group on participation.

Further to the written consultation, the Advisory Committee decided to organise an exchange of views on participation with minority organisations and other stakeholders. This meeting is jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the European Academy of Bolzano (EURAC) and hosted by the latter. It is intended to provide participants an additional opportunity to contribute to the discussions on the draft commentary by sharing their experiences regarding participation at national level.

A revised version of the draft commentary will be prepared taking due account of the outcomes of the previous consultations and of the current seminar. The new draft will be discussed by the Advisory Committee at its next plenary meeting in November 2007. It is envisaged to adopt the commentary in the first half of 2008.

Tuesday 2 October 2007

Arrival of participants in Bolzano/Bozen

11:30-12:00 Registration of the participants

12:00-13:00 Book presentation and discussion by Mr Thomas Benedikter
World's Working Regional Autonomies. An introduction and comparative analysis
(EURAC, Seminar 1 2 3)

13:00-14:00 Lunch buffet
(EURAC, Foyer Seminar 1 2 3)

14:30-17:30 Registration of the participants

15:00-17:00 Meeting of the Advisory Committee's working group on participation
(EURAC, meeting room - Geschäftsführung)

17:30-18:30 Opening of the seminar (open to the public)
(EURAC, conference hall)

Chairperson: Mr Joseph Marko, Head of the Minority Rights Institute/EURAC, member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Speakers: Mr Werner Stuflesser, President of the European Academy Bolzano (EURAC)
Introductory Remarks

Mr Alan Phillips, President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
Introductory Remarks

Mr Florian Mussner, Member of the Local Government of South Tyrol
'The Protection of national minorities and South Tyrol Autonomy'

18:30-19:30 EURAC Annual Minority Rights lecture by Mr Alan Phillips, President of the Advisory Committee: *'Consultation as a tool for the work of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention'*

19:30 Welcome dinner
(Foyer Seminar 1-2-3)

Wednesday 3 October 2007

9:00-12:00 PLENARY SESSION

Chairperson: Mr Gabriel Toggenburg, European Academy of Bolzano

9:00-9:30 Introductory session
(Eurac, conference hall)

Issues to be addressed

- Introduction of the first draft of the Commentary on participation
- Aim of the meeting and working methods

Presentation by Mr Alan Phillips, President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

**9:30-12:00 Effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities:
main challenges and issues**

Issues to be addressed

- Participation as a key principle of the Framework Convention
- Relations between Article 15 and other articles of the Framework Convention: Cross-cutting issues
- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the monitoring of the Framework Convention

Presentation by Mr Joseph Marko, member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Discussions (coffee break from 11:00 to 11:30 in Foyer Seminar 1-2-3)

*Reference documents: the first draft Commentary (paragraphs 1 – 5; 52 – 54 and 81 – 101)
Compilation of excerpts from ACFC Opinions in respect of Article 15*

12:00-13:30 Lunch (Foyer Seminar 1-2-3)

13:30-16:30 WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP 1
PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES
IN CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

Chairperson: Ms Ilze Brands-Kehris, First Vice-President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

*Rapporteur: Ms Annelies Verstichel, expert
(Eurac, conference hall)*

Issues to be addressed

- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in employment
- Access to housing
- Access to land and property
- Access to health care
- Access to social services and provisions
- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural life
- Obstacles to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in socio-economic and cultural life

Discussions

Reference document: the first draft Commentary (paragraphs 55 -80)

WORKSHOP 2
PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES IN PUBLIC
AFFAIRS

Chairperson: Ms Emma Lantschner, European Academy Bolzano

*Rapporteur: Mr Francesco Palermo, member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
(Eurac, meeting room - Geschäftsführung)*

Issues to be addressed:

- Electoral arrangements and effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities
- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities through consultation mechanisms
- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public administration
- Participation of persons belonging to national minorities through decentralisation and local forms of government
- Obstacles to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public affairs

Discussions

*Reference documents: the first draft Commentary (paragraphs 6 -51)
Compilation of excerpts from ACFC Opinions in respect of Articles 4 and 15*

16:30 -17:00 Coffee break (Foyer Seminar 1-2-3)

17:00-19:00 PLENARY SESSION

*Chairperson: Mr Joseph Marko, Head of the Minority Rights Institute/EURAC, member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
(Eurac, conference hall)*

17:00-18:00 Presentation of the findings of the workshops

- Workshop 1: Ms Annelies Verstichel
- Workshop 2: Mr Francesco Palermo

Discussions

18:00 Concluding remarks by Mr Alan Phillips, President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

20:00 **Dinner hosted by the South Tyrol Local authorities, Haselburg**

Thursday 4 October 2007

Departure of participants from Bolzano/Bozen

9:00-11:30 Meeting of the Advisory Committee's working group on participation
(Eurac, meeting room – Geschäftsführung)

12.00 **Lunch in the EURAC cafeteria for the members of the working group**