

**UN-FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES**  
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**Austrian Statement, Monday 15 December 2008:**  
**Mag. Edith Mühlgaszner, MAS**

III) Essential requirements for an effective education strategy

To the 8<sup>th</sup> recommendation under this item, namely that states should recognise the adequate recruitment, training and incentivisation of teachers to work in areas inhabited predominantly by members of minorities, we would like to report the situation in Austria:

**Teacher training**

This is a fundamental and basic thing of the whole system. The possibility is given in the institution of the Pedagogical High Schools. At universities there is given the possibility to study minority languages for teaching in grammar schools.

Teachers of bilingual schools must prove the teaching profession examination in both languages (in German and the minority language), because they must do the bilingual instruction during the full time.

In the future it would probably become a problem to have enough teachers knowing the minority-language because only a third of parents who know the minority language in reality speak the language with their children. So many children start to learn the language at school and the teacher students have not such good knowledge for instance of the Croatian, Slovenian, Slovak, Czech or Hungarian language as some years before. Therefore it will be necessary to offer additive courses for language learning at the Pedagogical High School.

A clear handicap for the teachers represents the very limited offer at school books and learning materials. This means that teachers have to make and develop books and materials in working groups themselves. Another problem is the production of materials because of the too small edition number it is very expensive and it is not always possible to print them. Therefore materials are in many cases copied by teachers themselves.

In the eighties and nineties in our country started a reorientation process in the population, so that today the awareness for learning languages, specially for minority languages led to the situation that parents are more interested on a bilingual education in the kindergarten and on bilingual instruction at school. Also the adults show more and more interest in learning a minority language.