

Forum on Minority Issues
Statement of the delegation of the Republic of Moldova

12th Forum on Minority Issues
Geneva, 28-29 November 2019

Dear Chair!
Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today, according to the latest population census of 2014, around 20% of the population of the republic is comprised of representatives of national minorities!

A key event for modern Moldova in the field of minority rights protection was the adoption in 2016 by the government of the Republic of Moldova of the Strategy for strengthening interethnic relations in the Republic of Moldova for 2017-2027 and the Plan of action for its implementation in 2017-2020.

The Republic of Moldova, through current legislation, guarantees the right to education to all citizens, as well as the right to choose the language of education and teaching.

- (1) The learning process in the system of education is carried out in the Romanian language and, within the capabilities of the system of education, in one of the languages of international communication, or, in accordance with section (2), in the languages of national minorities.*
- (2) In areas where people belonging to national minorities traditionally or in significant numbers reside, in the event of sufficient demand, the state ensures, to the extent possible within the system of education, that people belonging to these minorities have appropriate opportunities available to study the language of their minority group or to study in this language at the required level of education.*

The right to education and teaching in one's mother tongue is guaranteed by the establishment of the required number of educational institutions, classes, and groups, as well as the conditions for their functioning.

The ethnocultural component of the education of national minorities is one of the priorities of the polycultural system of education. The mother tongue, literature, history, culture, and traditions of Ukrainians, Russians, Gagauz, Bulgarians, and Roma are all required school subjects, which national minorities study 4 hours per week at the primary and secondary education levels.

In summary of what has been previously mentioned, I would like to note that in the Republic of Moldova much has been achieved in relation to legislative guarantees of linguistic rights and the right to mother tongue education.

I will provide a few illustrative examples of the promotion of the languages of national minorities in practice:

- Existence and dissemination of a wide assortment of audiovisual materials in the languages of minorities;

- In 2016, the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Strategy for strengthening interethnic relations, and all final documents as part of the Council of Europe monitoring cycle were published for the first time in the languages of 5 national minorities: Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, and Romani;
- Free use of the languages of minorities in the activities of ethnocultural organizations of national minorities, for example for holding ethnocultural activities, etc.;
- Existence and functioning of Sunday schools for the study of minority languages.

These and other examples prove that the Republic of Moldova fully fulfills its obligations to ensure the linguistic rights of national minorities in accordance with existing national legislation, international standards, treaties, and conventions on human rights and the rights of national minorities, and ethnic and linguistic groups.