

UNIVERSITY OF ARTS IN BELGRADE

*Interdisciplinary postgraduate studies*

UNESCO Chair for Cultural Management and Cultural Policy in the Balkans

*Master thesis:*

**Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity in South Eastern Europe:  
The case of Roma as a Trans-border Ethnic and Cultural Group -  
*A Perspective from Slovenia***

by:

Špela Zajec

Supervisor:

Dr. Milena Dragičević - Šešić, PhD

Slovenj Gradec, August 2007



# I. Introduction

This thesis will address the question of the cultural development, more precisely the **management of cultural differences** in the region of South Eastern Europe<sup>1</sup>; it will focus on approach of the one of post-communist South Eastern European national states to the culture and reproduction of cultural identity/identities.

The issue of diversity management is closely interlinked with the framework of minority protection. Providing existence of minority communities, preservation of identity and respecting the rights to development of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities became a constitutive part of international protection of human rights.<sup>2</sup>

As the United Nations Development Program's 2004 *Human Development Report* declares, "managing cultural diversity is one of the central challenges of our time."<sup>3</sup> As predicted in a number of research papers, the issue of the cultural diversity is becoming more and more pressing in today's process of globalization.

The key issues addressed in the thesis in question will be: **How the issue of cultural differences is addressed in a "case country" of South Eastern Europe? What values regarding cultural diversity management and minority protection prevail; what principles and directions have precedence (as various cultural values often collide with the established minority protection systems)?**

---

<sup>1</sup> South Eastern Europe in the text indicates purely *geographical* meaning, not *meta-geographical* (*evaluative*) connotation (see Vodopivec, 2001). The term here encompasses all states in the South Eastern part of Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Klopčič, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:lB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:lB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a)

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html).

The main objective of the theses will be to discuss the issue of the cultural diversity and to identify inputs of policy approaches and practices in relation to cultural diversity in the region of South Eastern Europe; it will deal with the situation in the state of Slovenia.

In the recent history of Slovenia, characterized in the 20th century by a sequence of upheavals in ideological, political and cultural developments, the question of the cultural plurality and the management of diverse cultural (along with socio-political) life is particularly important. Slovenia is in many cases presented as the “successful story” in the transition / transformation processes of post communist states in South Eastern Europe, in the “post – Yugoslav” social, economic and political processes. The research programme investigates the issue in order to offer a complex analysis of contemporary Slovenian trends and tendencies in the area; it tries to present the holistic illustration of approaches that have direct and indirect impact on the culture of minority communities in the state.

The topic is of particular importance in the light of preparations that are underway for the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EU in 2008.

Hence, the fundamental question of the thesis is: Where is the management of cultural differences at the political agenda-setting in the state?

The first chapters of the thesis look into the vital theories of contemporary state policy reflections in the areas of management of cultural differences, minority issues; the thesis outlines the challenges of the classical liberal ideal of individual autonomy and argues for a multicultural approach. It also questions the paradoxical issue of competing principles which contemporary state policy should constantly scrutinize, re-create and re-evaluate in order to provide “normal” functioning of the state, taking into consideration that the intergroup situation is never stable but is the matter of constant transformations.

As stated above, approach to management of cultural diversity is dealt in a wider context; the tries to portray the broad framework of theoretical paradoxes / dilemmas in the area such as:

→ Conceptualization of cultural diversity itself;

- ➔ Ambiguities of attitude of imposing human (especially cultural) rights versus cultural imperialism; issue of individual versus collective rights (for instance limitation of the role of individuals, conditioned by traditional perceptions);
- ➔ The concept of “national interest”, so called “national culture” and its impact on the management of diversity in a particular state;
- ➔ The dilemma of the human right to preserve the identity of a particular cultural group versus right to cultural development;
- ➔ The issue of unity (shared features within cultural group) versus specificity (in comparison to the cultural group outside).

The thesis brings some general information on the protection regime in Europe as well as in the Republic of Slovenia; it also sketches the ethnic and cultural composition of the country of the state selected.

However, the main interest of the thesis is on the management of cultural differences from the cultural policy point of view. The concept of cultural policy (policies) in this context is perceived in a broad sense of the term, following categorization of Mitja Žagar, Miran Komac, Mojca Medvešek and Romana Bešter: cultural policy according to the authors encompasses “all policies that pay regard to any aspect of culture, be it culture in the sense of creative artistic activities (theatres, music, etc.) or in the sense of specific cultural/ethnic identity of the target groups.”<sup>4</sup> Cultural policy in this light is perceived as one of the key policies – conditioned on the framework of national constitution - that directly affect potential prospects for supporting cultural diversity in each particular country. As stated by France Lebon in 2002, for most European countries, the concept of cultural diversity has today developed into the one of the explicit cultural policy objectives – at least theoretically and purportedly.<sup>5</sup> However, as maintained by F. Lebon, cultural diversity is also a sociological and philosophical matter. It may be as old as the world, but the thing we need to focus on is

---

<sup>4</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Lebon, 2002. Available at: [http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural\\_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub\\_DGIV\\_CULT\\_PREV-ICIR\(2002\)5\\_Lebon\\_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub_DGIV_CULT_PREV-ICIR(2002)5_Lebon_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a).

the today's context, the today's perceptions; the perceptions, now developing and acquiring a positive and dynamic value – a value it has not always had in the past.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, still today, as noted by Vera Klopčič, there is no consensus on the legal management of the significance of protection of cultural diversity as the special characteristics of multicultural societies.<sup>7</sup>

The thesis in question tries to present an overview of policy measures in the Republic of Slovenia which are **directly aimed at or may have an impact on the culture of minority communities**. The thesis's aim is to inquire how the above-mentioned paradoxes / dilemmas are dealt with in the state of Slovenia. How successful is Slovenia in the management of cultural differences, in supporting minority cultures? What directions, models and tendencies are followed?

The thesis briefly outlines the cultural policy framework in Slovenia; it analyzes the cultural diversity-related agenda, discursive and procedural/institutional developments in the Slovenian state system in order to contribute to the debate over whether there is satisfactory approach towards cultural diversity in the state; it tries to offer a multifaceted analysis of Slovenian cultural directions as well as dilemmas and challenges faced.

More particular, the thesis focuses on the issue on management of cultural differences on the case of the people belonging to Romani ethnic / cultural group living on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. Why taking Romani community as a “case study”? There is a variety of reasons for (re)-consideration of position of Romani culture in the state of Slovenia (as well as in other post-communist countries of South Eastern Europe):<sup>8</sup>

First, Romani community is certainly not a specific Slovenian minority; Roma live in all states in South Eastern European region. They are often perceived as “a **transborder**

---

<sup>6</sup> Lebon, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Klopčič, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:IB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:IB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a)

<sup>8</sup> In some (mainly political) conceptions Slovenia considered to avoid to be categorized as South-European country – due to the negative stereotypes attributed to the region. However,

ethnic and cultural group”<sup>9</sup> However, they live as well as - under different names - in the most of European countries (that’s why they are sometimes called also “European minority”) and in other parts of the world. Hence, the comparison of approaches towards the group might be facilitated; the trends and tendencies might be compared. As noted by Vera Klopčič, the specificity of Romani communities reflect the variety of approaches to the management of its legal status at the international and domestic (state) levels: Romani group is – in different contexts and categorizations - defined as national, ethnic, social, or cultural group or constitutive European nation.<sup>10</sup> Second, the issue of complexity and dynamics of the community influenced the decision on the Roma as the “case minority”: As stated in numerous research papers, Roma are a highly diverse group, the most diversified of all ethnic / cultural groups in South Eastern Europe.<sup>11</sup> However, the perceptions of the group by the “outsiders” are different: Roma are perceived by a large part of majority population in a unified way, as stated at the web-site of European Roma Rights Centre, as “a homogenous mass of people”.<sup>12</sup> Hence, it is interesting to explore government actions to the culture; more particular to raise the question what is the “official” state policy position itself towards the issue: does the policy takes into consideration the group complexity and dynamics? Or it adopted paternalistic approach, as shown in many states? Third: as observed by Nicolae Gheorghe and Thomas Acton, developments in the former communist states in Eastern Europe have provided a fresh and promising milieu for experiments with Romani culture, as there the discussions on “ethnic specificity and ethnic rights” go beyond an academic interest. As maintained by Gheorghe and Acton, the geopolitics of the region are strongly connected to ethnic politics that are fiercely promoted through persistent group conflicts. In this region the Romani population is concentrated and the stereotypes and prejudices about the “Gypsies” tend to declare themselves violently, resulting in “pogrom-like” aggression on the members of the Romani communities, the exclusion of Romani groups from neighbourhoods of legal

---

<sup>9</sup> See for instance: Đorđević, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Klopčič, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a)

<sup>11</sup> See for instance Tomova: 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Roma Rights Quarterly, European Roma Rights Centre. Available at: [http://www.errc.org/Romarights\\_index.php](http://www.errc.org/Romarights_index.php).

residence.<sup>13</sup> Slovenia is absolutely not an exemption in this case as was shown also in the tragic events in 2006 / 2007.<sup>14</sup>

While the Romani minority is a “transborder minority” and in the “history the “cultural oppression of Roma is a South Eastern European tendency”. The Slovenian case is regarded as a “success story” in the transition /transformation process, as a model in front of other South Eastern European and Central Eastern European states.<sup>15</sup> The thesis will try to explore if (and how) the preferable economic conditions **delivered some of the objectives for social inclusion, and how this has an effect on cultural inclusion**, Romani cultural development. In the light of today's raising awareness (under the pressure of international community)<sup>16</sup> about the importance of social inclusion of Romani community in Central and Eastern European states - social inclusion of Roma would be impossible, as stated by Timea Junghaus, “without **cultural recognition and inclusion**. Having the space, equipment and support for cultural practice is not a luxury. It is **a basic human right**”.<sup>17</sup> Cultural pluralism, recognition of **all** existing cultural groups and identities, cultural development of all ethnic / linguistic / religious / cultural communities, open and fruitful intercultural dialogue within one state as well as between states are of crucial importance for the region, for its dynamics and stability.

---

<sup>13</sup> See: Gheorghe & Acton <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>

<sup>14</sup> For instance the case of Roma family in Ambrus raised numerous questions on the protection of Roma community in Slovenia. The measures that Government have taken for the “protection” of the Roma in the “Strojan case” to protect the Romani family from the people from neighbouring village and the resettlement of that family, including 14 children, to the Postojna centre, is highly questionable.

<sup>15</sup> **???? Budapest, 2007. Email from to Milena Dragicevic Sesic.**

<sup>16</sup> For instance initiative “Dosta”, launched jointly by Council of Europe and European Commission in the programme of Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015). The campaign “aims at bringing non-Roma closer to Roma citizens.” See: <http://dosta.org/?q=>.

<sup>17</sup> Timea Junghaus at the conference, conducted under the title The Human Rights Situation of Roma: Europe's Largest Ethnic Minority in June 2006; emphasized by Š.Z.

## II. Methodological Considerations: Research Design and Data Analysis

In order to provide an overview of the situation in the Republic of Slovenia - to identify trend lines in the policy in relation to Romani culture in the state, qualitative as well as quantitative data (statistical information) will be used; however, the overall research strategy will be of qualitative nature.

Research methodology includes:

- documentation analysis (review of the relevant legal framework; review of the relevant reports; examination of the relevant programmes, development / strategic papers, programmes, government decisions, studies and projects etc.; review of the articles and publications on the relevant topics);
- formal interviews (semi-structured interviews) with the relevant actors in the field (interviews with the representatives of the Romani community; interviews with competent representatives at the relevant governmental and research institutions).

The thesis follows a variety of models, for instance John Foote's framework of indicators on cultural diversity, social cohesion and intercultural dialogue (2005); it also pursues general suggestions for research of cultural policy issues related to cultural diversity in South Eastern Europe made by Nada Švob Đokić and Nina Obuljen (2003); furthermore, the thesis applies also some of the structural schemes of Transversal Study: Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity,<sup>18</sup> as well as of the research on Serbian cultural policy made by Vesna Djukić Dojčinović.<sup>19</sup> **SESIČ**

The study is, as already pointed out above, structured in the wider framework of cultural diversity management and minority protection. The vital issues addressed in the thesis will be: How the issue of cultural differences is addressed in a country selected? What

---

<sup>18</sup> In the study participated also three states of South Eastern European region: Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia. National reports were prepared by Antoniy Galabov on Bulgaria (2001), by Branimir Stojković on Serbia (2003) and by Mirjana Domini on Croatia (2003).

<sup>19</sup> Available at: <<http://www.policy.hu/djukic/papers.htmmodel>>.

values regarding cultural diversity management and minority protection prevail and how they are constructed? Do the public policies follow the principles of individual or rather collective rights of minority communities?

Furthermore, the key questions in exploring the conditions in **cultural policy inputs** regarding selected minority - Romani community - in Slovenia are the following:

How the cultural policy institutions in particular state addresses the questions of Roma communities and Romani culture? How the issue of complexity and dynamics of Romani identity/identities is tackled? How the specific conditions and historical traditions of Romani community (communities) are taking into consideration (if taken into consideration at all)?

Among key issues tackled in the thesis in question will be:

- ➔ The issue of **key policy actors**: Who are the main actors responsible for programmes and policies addressing the issue of promoting cultural diversity, cultural rights, intercultural dialogue at national, regional and local levels in the state? What is the relationship between those actors, bodies in charge with the various forms of cultural diversity?
- ➔ The issue of **decision making processes** - do minority community representatives (Roma) participate in decision making processes regarding issues stated above? If so, which participatory mechanisms are used; which mechanisms are in place to facilitate the participation of representatives of Romani community in cultural policy making processes (i.e. representations on committees, formal or informal consultation mechanisms)?
- ➔ The issue of **sectoral responsibility**: Where is the line between public responsibility and the responsibility of nongovernmental organizations or private sector in cultural policy concerns regarding Romani culture?

However, the thesis will focus on the state policies, **government policies and measures**, their scope and distribution. The underlying questions the study at this point will address are:

Does cultural policy specifically recognize different cultural minority groups through specific policy measures or programmes? Are there specific resources (financial, technical, infrastructure) to support specific cultural activities of cultural minority communities/groups?

What (if any) **cultural policy objectives and principles** concerning support for Romani culture and Roma communities are being posed; what **instruments**, structures and tools, development strategies, programmes, government decisions, white papers, etc. which are directly aimed at or may have an impact on the culture of the Romani community (communities)? Do the instruments / indicators prepared to measure implementation of cultural policy practices exist?

What kind of cultural expressions of Romani group members are cultural policies intended to foster (if any)? Do the policies take into consideration the plurality, complexity and fluidity, dynamics of identities and cultures in the contemporary societies or they are aimed at the fostering more or less the traditional image of minority culture, a culture, fixed in a particular time?

Moreover, in the case of Romani community (as in the case of all “vulnerable” communities in the society the issue of paternalisation is highly relevant.<sup>20</sup>

Are there any special provisions for vulnerable groups **within** Romani community (women, children) in the state policy? On what principles they are based?

Do the institutions responsible for the culture of minority groups bear in mind the concepts of human rights, which determine that every individual is free to choose about his/her identification, association and group belonging? Are basic human rights, as equal participation of all in cultural life respected? Existence of ‘group-specific’ cultural and linguistic rights, power-sharing arrangements derived from belonging to a distinct minority group - Roma?

---

<sup>20</sup> See for instance the papers of Suzana Čurin Radovič and Vera Klopčič.

### **III. Theoretical considerations – issue of definitions**

#### **III.I. Dilemmas in the conceptualization of cultural diversity**

Today, it is widely acknowledged that the vast majority most of contemporary societies is “culturally heterogeneous” but to a different extent. As maintained by Bhikhu Parekh, contemporary cultural heterogeneity, or in Parekh's term “multiculturality” is therefore “embedded in an immensely complex dialectical process”, and heavily intertwined with global economic and political forces.<sup>21</sup>

The core discussion on the management of cultural differences is unavoidably connected to the conceptions of culture and society and differences between individual cultures / societies; the issue of identity (the individual and collective aspects); the processes of cultural / social reproduction as well as reproduction of identity types, which are emerging within particular culture / society (inculturalism, socialization); processes of colonialism with the principle of monoculturalism, that has been - through the abovementioned processes of reproduction - maintained to these days.<sup>22</sup> Finally, the issue is closely linked to the notion of the human rights, its individual and collective aspects.

The issue of cultural diversity is hence exceptionally complex due to the complexity of theoretical notions of aforementioned concepts of culture, society, identity; the existence of numerous definitions of those concepts leads to “the existence of multiple definitions of cultural diversity”.<sup>23</sup> The different disciplines within social sciences field cultivated numerous definitions of the concepts of culture.<sup>24</sup> Promotion of cultural diversity, “in its broader meaning, when interpreted in the light of the concerns of cultural democracy”, involves, as stated by Tony Bennett, supporting the “right to be different of all those who, in one way or another, have been placed outside dominant social and cultural norms”<sup>25</sup> . As

---

<sup>21</sup> See: Parekh, available at: <<http://kvc.minbuza.nl>> (visited on 29 November 2006).

<sup>22</sup> See: i.e. Lukšič Hacin, 1999, p. 16.

<sup>23</sup> See: Švob-Đokić & Obuljen 2003: 1; emphasised by Š.Z.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of concepts of culture for instance see: Rajko Muršič.

<sup>25</sup> Bennet, 2001: 17. In this context T. Bennett mention disabled people, gays and lesbians, women, the poor, and the elderly as well as immigrant or indigenous groups (2001: 17). I would extend the meaning also to all people identifying themselves by any of other belongings - to a variety of sub-

maintained by John Foote, the concept of cultural diversity applies essentially to “pluralities of cultures and their respective composite parts”.<sup>26</sup>

In UNESCO's *Universal Convention on Cultural Diversity* (2001) - the declaration was adopted in 2001 by 185 Member States, and represents the first international standard-setting instrument aimed at preserving and promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue<sup>27</sup> - cultural diversity is defined as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group...that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs”. In October 2005 the UNESCO General Conference adopted the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The Convention - that entered into force in March 2007 - classifies cultural diversity as “defining characteristic” and a “common heritage of humanity” that “should be cherished and preserved for the benefit of all.”<sup>28</sup> As stated in the UNESCO web-page, besides promoting diversity in the areas of world cultural industries, the Convention attempt to “reaffirm the links between culture, development and dialogue and to create a platform for international cooperation.”<sup>29</sup> In its Preamble the Convention highlights that cultural diversity “nurtures human capacities and values”, and hence is a “**mainspring for sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations**”; Convention also recalls that cultural diversity, flourishing within a “framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, is **indispensable for peace and security at the local, national and international levels**”.<sup>30</sup>

According to *Council of Europe Declaration of Cultural Diversity* (COE, 2000) cultural diversity is expressed “in the coexistence and exchange of culturally different

---

cultural groups (also "groups of interest" like punk fans etc.), to regional belongings etc. (see also Vogrinc, 2003: 50).

<sup>26</sup> Foote, 2005: 2.

<sup>27</sup> See: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. /Online/. Available from URL: <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_diversity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_diversity)>).

<sup>28</sup> UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> UNESCO. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf>.

practices and in the provision and consumption of culturally different services and products.” The COE *Declaration* also states that “respect for cultural diversity is an **essential condition of human society**”.<sup>31</sup> National cultural policy objectives, programmes and measures that support cultural diversity, as examined by Council of Europe and ERIC Arts in Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe Compendium in order to provide an overview, and to assist national government and NGOs in their monitoring of cultural policies which support cultural diversity, are: “the pluralistic ethno-cultural linguistic identity and origin of cultural creators, producers, distributors and audiences; a diversity of artistic and other cultural content which diverse audiences can have access to through the media or other distribution channels; the diversity of actors which are involved in decision-making, regulating and /or funding creators and their works.”<sup>32</sup>

European Union (European Commission) adopted the expression “cultural diversity” in 1999 as an answer, as indicated by Maja Breznik, to a particular tendency - as a substitute to the French efforts to impose “the exemption of culture - /exemption culturelle/” in negotiations within the World Trade Organization about “the liberalization and privatization of services” - with a category of services also embracing “cultural activities.”<sup>33</sup>

Hence, the issue of the management of cultural diversity has been recognized as one of the key challenges of our era. In the *Origins of Totalitarianism*, published in 1951, Hannah Arendt legendarily foresaw the reasons why, as stated by Robert Albro and Joanne

---

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Foote, 2005: 2; emphasised by Š.Z.

<sup>32</sup> Since the beginning of the *Compendium* project, cultural diversity as a component of cultural policy making has been treated as a “transversal issue” - there are several components of related information and data found in various chapters of individual *Compendium* country profiles, like for instance: cultural minority groups, language diversity, media pluralism and artistic creativity/content production. See: Cultural Policies and trends in Europe Compendium. Available at: <http://culturalpolicies.net/web/cultural-diversity.php>. A number of data in the thesis has been gained from this source.

<sup>33</sup> See: Breznik, 2004, pp. 59, 60. France tried to impose “the exemption of culture - /exemption culturelle/” in an attempt to prevent the domain of culture from “the free flow of goods and services”, that is enforced by World Trade Organization - with European Union, according to M. Breznik, as one of the architects / promoters of this process. The European states have no shared view on this question (see: Breznik, 2004: 59, 60).

Bauer: Arendt's recognition that our **cultural identity** provides us the "place in the world," and that "the homogenizing impact of globalization" represents a "new risk for humanity - the loss of a 'place in the world;'" in other words, a "loss of one's home and political status" is, as stated by Arendt, "identical with expulsion from humanity altogether."<sup>34</sup>

Nonetheless, there are numerous who perceive "culture" as "a set of archaic beliefs and practices stubbornly standing in the way of universal human rights." In this light, globalization presents a "positive process that can dismantle all remaining strongholds—especially the Middle East, Asia, and Africa—still resistant to human rights." According to R. Albro and J. Bauer, such a neo-evolutionist perception "fails to recognize the extent to which the fact of cultural identity has become more, not less, important at the present moment in history."<sup>35</sup>

While globalization itself is not a new process, its contemporary effects are "more various, disjunctive, intense, and extensive than ever before." These days globalization is characterized by – as observed by Albro and Bauer - the "reconstruction of established nation-states and the emergence of new ones brought on by the end of the Cold War, the consolidation of the European Union, the movement from authoritarian to democratic systems of government in Latin America and Asia, and the further expansion of the free market."<sup>36</sup> The processes resulted in political crises that exposed the burning issues of "cultural and religious minorities, new challenges of political representation" amid the internal diversity of states, and the very basic question of the "**nation-state**,"<sup>37</sup> since some authors<sup>38</sup> links the

---

<sup>34</sup> See: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html).

<sup>35</sup> See: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html).

<sup>36</sup> See: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

<sup>37</sup> See: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

<sup>38</sup> For instance France Lebon, 2002.

burning issue of the cultural diversity management in these days with the **crisis of a nation – state** (due to globalised economic and financial powers seem to weaken it).<sup>39</sup>

“The invention of the nation-state” in Europe, according to France Lebon, implied a “**national culture**, achieving equality via a single dominant language and form of education.”<sup>40</sup> Europe - as “a geo-political entity” - is, according to F. Lebon, founded on the “intellectual values” of liberty and equality - as “alternative to cultural diversity.” At certain point in the history **cultural standardisation** was seen necessary to achieving them.<sup>41</sup>

In general, the notion of **state unity**, as explicated by Nicolae Gheorghe and Thomas Acton, is put into practice, among other instruments, through a “policy of cultural unity and cultural homogenisation,” often imposed by political elites to subordinate groups - represented as “culturally peripheral and socially marginal.” The process of homogenisation transforms the local and regional cultures into a “national culture”; that culture builds its “symbolic boundaries in contrast and in sometimes violent competition with ‘aliens’ and

---

<sup>39</sup> However many authors do not support the hypothesis on the weakening of the nation state, but rather emphasize the transformation of its role. See for instance the works of Jernej Pikalo.

<sup>40</sup> Lebon, 2002.

<sup>41</sup> According to F. Lebon, during the Enlightenment that culminated in the French Revolution and the emergence of the nation-states Europe developed on two key principles: political liberalism and cultural diversity Political liberalism as the foundation of European philosophy meaning “recognition of individual liberties” - for instance “freedom of worship” that generated numerous conflicts in the past However, intellectually, as observed by Lebon, liberalism has a natural tendency towards “cosmopolitanism”, towards “opening of the public space to differences.”<sup>41</sup> These principles Lebon recognizes as “the twin pillars of European identity,” potentially conflicting – and there have indeed been conflicts between them in the last two centuries. Cultural diversity has always been characteristic of Europe, but it was not always perceived as an advantage. The history we were taught it did not really make much of that diversity. In other words, the idea that cultural diversity is – philosophically, culturally, politically, socially – “a good thing” is not one of our basic, instinctive assumptions. Lebon, 2002, available at:

<[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural\\_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub\\_DGIV\\_CULT\\_PREVICIR\(2002\)5\\_Lebon\\_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub_DGIV_CULT_PREVICIR(2002)5_Lebon_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a)>.

‘strangers’ from both within and outside the geographical boundaries.”<sup>42</sup> As maintained by N. Gheorghe and T. Acton, **language, religion, folklore and traditions** become the essence and embodiment of this national culture. It often happens that a reservoir of rituals and artefacts of the peasant communities is skilfully processed by urban intellectual elite that is “produced by the national schools and employed by the expanding state ‘bureaucracies’”. According to N. Gheorghe and T. Acton the course of state and nation-building and “consolidation via cultural artefacts” employs its own rituals, often supported by the “state machinery”, including the “instruments” such as media, shows, festivals and exhibitions. Hence, the “traditions are ‘invented;’”<sup>43</sup> the peasants become members of a nation.<sup>44</sup>

Consequently, the groups who are less successful in establishing their own nation-states (such as Roma) and who are included into the other peoples’ nation-states turn out to be “ethnic” or “national minorities”. They seek to acquire, according to Gheorghe and Acton, more group rights or the “defence of basic freedoms and human rights in terms of their distinctive cultural traits, which then become ‘**ethnic cultures**’”. Those “ethnic cultures” utilize similar instruments (such as festivals, traditions schools and publications in their own language) to “affirm and preserve their specific cultures, competing with the dominant nation for the resources provided by the state.”<sup>45</sup>

Today’s round of nation-building processes places huge pressures upon states – internationally and at the domestic level - to better manage the “their internal cultural diversity”. While in some cases states have reacted to these pressures with the “suppression of ‘internal dissent’”; in others, the pressures have forced states to enter the process of – as called by Robert Albro and Joanne Bauer – a “wholesale multicultural reform.” In those contexts, cultural rights demands are slowly being recognized as an “important means for the recuperation of identity and as an essential basis for advancing claims of social justice.”<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> The starting point on the focus on “boundaries” presents Fredrik Barth and his the influential work *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* published in 1969, in which he outlined an approach to the study of focusing on the “on-going negotiations of boundaries between groups of people.” Source: Wikipedia.

<sup>43</sup> See Hobsbawm. Invented tradition.

<sup>44</sup> See: Gheorghe & Acton, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>.

<sup>45</sup> Gheorghe & Acton, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>.

<sup>46</sup> Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

The role of the state (the state perceived, in Bhikhu Parekh terms, as “the sole source of legally secured justice in society”) is - in some contemporary theories - to secure to its citizens - with the purpose of creating a non-discriminatory / multicultural environment - equal treatment in all important realms: **negative** role of state is in securing, primarily, absence of any kind of discrimination (direct and deliberate or indirect and institutionalized); but **positive** equality must entail “equality of rights and opportunities”, encompassing the whole collection of rights - civil, political, social and economic, and also cultural rights.

Cultural rights, according to Bhikhu Parekh, refer to the rights of an individual or a community to “express, maintain, and transmit their cultural identity.”<sup>47</sup> They might play an enormous role in “inscribing a right to cultural difference as a fundamental factor of our human identity”.<sup>48</sup>

While **cultural rights** are fundamental for every human being, but they are, as stated by Elsa Stamatopoulou, particularly important for minority collectives (including “indigenous peoples”). “These populations are often discriminated and marginalized and rendered vulnerable by the dominant society. In the midst of the economic, political, social and other adversities that they face, their culture becomes a source of pride and strength that allows them to continue struggling for a better life.”<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the discussion on cultural rights in the Human Rights Quarterly explores its prospective effectiveness in progressing the human rights claims of ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, and other cultural communities and it aims to show, as maintained by the editors R. Albro and J. Bauer, “that cultural rights are fundamental to the **protection of all other human rights.**”<sup>50</sup>

Social scientists recognize that the establishment and defence of cultural rights can provide a means of, first, **preserving cultural integrity and heritage**, and, second,

---

<sup>47</sup> Parekh 2000, pp. 210-211.

<sup>48</sup> See for instance the essays on the topic of cultural rights in Human Rights Quarterly 2005. Albro, Bauer. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

<sup>49</sup> See: Stamatopoulou, 2004.

<sup>50</sup> Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.htm](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.htm)>.

**achieving social justice for socially marginal groups.** For instance, more and more minority groups consider cultural rights as a means to achieving political recognition of their religious practices, traditional political and legal systems, language, indigenous knowledge, and art. But precondition - or in Charles Taylor's term's, "presumption" - must be a recognition that "all human cultures has something important to contribute": "Just as all must have equal civil rights, and equal voting rights, regardless of race or culture, so all should enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value."<sup>51</sup>

In this context, a widening spectrum of international conflicts is being characterized in cultural terms or as a failure to put adequate attention to cultural rights.

However the discussion on the issue of cultural rights is particularly burning - it raises a large amount of contradictions. As recognised by R. Albro and J. Bauer, in history there was a "weak political commitment to cultural rights" even though that they have been included in international law since 1966.<sup>52</sup> Numerous reasons why they have historically been neglected exists: cultural rights are considered as the movements with their base in the self-determination claims as "threatening to the state-based model of sovereignty". Furthermore, the fear of "balkanization" is present due to numerous nation states around the world have to deal with "conflicts over language, religion, and ethnicity", and this fear strengthens the resistance of nation-states' recognition of "culturally-based collective grievances". Moreover, the interest of transnational corporations in the global marketplace is to ignore cultural rights.<sup>53</sup> In addition, within the human rights development itself, advocates perceive cultural rights to be "in direct conflict with other human rights, particularly the rights of women." Also, there is an issue of defining cultural rights claims in order that they might become an effective foundation for legal action. As mentioned already above, there is are difficulties in defining the concept of "culture" and inconsistencies when applying cultural rights standards by states - at state and international levels. Therefore, cultural rights arguments have their

---

<sup>51</sup> Taylor, 1994: 36.

<sup>52</sup> In 1966 two UN Covenant were adopted, that include also cultural rights: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 27) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Quoted in: Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at: [http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html).

<sup>53</sup> The fact became noticeable in the conflict "between corporations and traditional peoples over the relation of cultural heritage to cultural property". Albro, Bauer, 2005.

opponents across the political sphere, and even when defended, cultural rights are perceived to be a “challenging arena for advocacy”.<sup>54</sup>

However, as maintained by Albro and Bauer, when opponents reject cultural rights as less important than questions of physical survival, they in fact reject the “fundamental condition of cultural identity”. Cultural recognition is a subject of both - “dignity and social justice;” nevertheless it also carries with it particular material duties - including recognition of minorities’ legitimate claims to “redress of the long-standing political and economic inequities that stem from their cultural marginalization”. The obligations also include the work on recognition of cultural rights as **positive** rights, when states are required to “act proactively to prevent social and economic discrimination as a result of cultural identity”.<sup>55</sup>

### **III. II. Cultural diversity in Europe and different approaches to managing it**

France Lebon emphasises the “unacknowledged universality of cultural diversity:” that Greek thought, its “philosophical basis,” was the “cradle of European culture” it is agreed by everyone. We also know that Greek thought was plural, as it absorbed many inspirations. And we know that “other peoples” – namely Romans, Celts, Vikings, Turks, Arabs, Jews, “Gypsies” for instance – shaped Europe too. However, as maintained by F. Lebon, European thought, came to prefer the “single to the multiple, unity to diversity, the universal to the particular, stasis to mobility, the eternal and immutable to change and growth.” The Christian culture worked hard to encourage, and indeed enforce, this vision. And the fact that “social, cultural, economic and political reality” was in conflict with this trends, and that various scholars rejected the majority line, did not change things.<sup>56</sup> When observing European

---

<sup>54</sup> Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

<sup>55</sup> Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

<sup>56</sup> Lebon, 2002, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural\\_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub\\_DGIV\\_CULT\\_PREV-](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub_DGIV_CULT_PREV-)

history, we witness numerous examples of violence against (cultural) diversity:<sup>57</sup> long practice of execution or exodus of people on the basis of belonging to “wrong” or “not-our” religious group, ethnic origin etc.

In the 20th century, according to Sanjin Dragojević, have in Western European countries emerged four key approaches to cultural diversity: multiculturalism; interculturalism; transculturalism; cultural pluralism (also pluriculturalism, pluriculturality).<sup>58</sup> However, complexity of the use of terms, especially of the concept of “multicultural” and “multiculturalism” in different contexts and interpretations should be stressed.

---

ICIR(2002)5\_Lebon\_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a.

<sup>57</sup> Dragojević, 2002: 11.

<sup>58</sup> See: Dragojević, 1999, 2002. As maintained by Sanjin Dragojević the term multiculturalism, in use from late 1960, is linked to “equal opportunities...which have to be assured for all the cultures that make up the cultural mosaic of a particular country” (1999: 13). According to S. Dragojević, the concept of multiculturalism - being influenced by strengthening integration processes in Europe and recognised as “a static approach” towards cultural diversity<sup>58</sup> - (as "a static approach" towards management of cultural diversity has been acknowledged as it neglects the possibility of transformation of hierarchy of cultures within one country and its focus is on preservation of cultural values, and not their exchange; Dragojević, 1999: 14) - has been from the second half of 1970s complemented by another model - **interculturalism** - invented "to define the potential dynamic interrelationship and mutual influence of different cultures - primarily within one country". (Dragojević, 1999: 13-14).

The introduction of the term **transculturalism** in the late 1980s Dragojević linked to the process of globalisation. In European context the term triggered two routes of discussion: one connected to the definition of European identity and the second the emergence of “transnational cultures” or “transnational cultural orientations”, interpreted also as cultures and cultural agents focused “beyond national boundaries, particularly to European or global cultural markets” (2002: 248-249).

The usage of the term **cultural pluralism** (also pluriculturalism, pluriculturality) appeared with the beginning of the transition period in Central and Eastern Europe, in order to promote respect and support of “all the possible cultural needs and ways of living” (Dragojević, 2002: 249).

These four concepts addressing the management of cultural diversity often contradict each other, although they are - as noted by Sanjin Dragojević - in fact complementary (1999: 16).

As indicated by M. Lukšič Hacin, in the foundation of the concept of multiculturalism are interrelated **cultural relativism**, **differentiation concept of culture** and **support for human rights**. The initial concepts clash, and this, as stated by the author, leads to the paradox of the theory of multiculturalism.<sup>59</sup>

The approach, usually referred to as “multiculturalism,” according to Nada Švob Đokić and Nina Obuljen, is aimed to promote cultural diversity “within” a particular society;<sup>60</sup> it concentrates on “basic human rights, equal participation of all minorities (ethnic, gender, etc.) in cultural life and formal legal and institutional provisions related to the issue.” As stated by N. Švob Đokić and N. Obuljen, in order to evaluate cultural policies relating to multiculturalism, also the investigation of other policies for instance educational and minority policies, as well as specifications of international legal as well as constitutional framework should be included.<sup>61</sup> **Normative** multiculturalism, according to Miodrag A. Jovanović, could be understood as “the politics of granting political and legal recognition to relevant and distinctive collective minority identities.” **Sociological** usage addresses “the sociocultural diversity that one may find in contemporary societies.”<sup>62</sup> Consistent with Bhikhu Parekh multiculturalism is not seen “neither as political doctrine with a programmatic content nor as a philosophical theory of man and the world but as a perspective on human life.”<sup>63</sup>

Today we are witnessing also the debate about the nature of the **legal measures** conceived to put into practice multicultural principles. As stated by Miodrag A. Jovanović the crucial issue is “whether to abandon the language of individual rights for the concept of collective rights.”<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Lukšič Hacin, 1999: 15, 16.

<sup>60</sup> In comparison to other dimension of cultural diversity, mainly related to “inter-culturalism,” focusing on the “cultural diversity “**between**” states, societies and/or cultures.” See: Švob Đokić, Obuljen, 2003. Available at: <http://www.ericarts.org/web/files/86/en/NSvob-Djokic.pdf>. Emphasis by Š.Z.

<sup>61</sup> Švob Đokić, Obuljen, 2003. Available at: <http://www.ericarts.org/web/files/86/en/NSvob-Djokic.pdf>.

<sup>62</sup> Jovanović, 2005: 651.

<sup>63</sup> Parekh, 2000: 336.

<sup>64</sup> Jovanović, 2005. 627. Collective rights are also referred to as a group, community rights.

Instruments of minority protection in the traditional sense are still dominated by the framework of **individual** rights;<sup>65</sup> since the endorsement of the first constitutional acts, the liberal states have followed the model, based on **individual** claims and on - in Charles Taylor's terms - "politics of universalism," emphasizing "the equal dignity of all citizens" and "the equalization of rights and entitlements"<sup>66</sup>.

Attitudes in the field of contemporary political theory reflection regarding the primacy of individual or collective rights clash.

For instance Michael Ignatieff - while raising the very paradox in individual - collective rights relations - gives individual rights an ultimate priority over the collective: he understands human rights as "a language of individual empowerment"<sup>67</sup>; human rights protect human agency - "'negative liberty', the capacity of each individual to achieve rational intentions without let or hindrance."<sup>68</sup> However he acknowledges Will Kymlicka's position that some conditions of life (i.e. the right to speak a language) can't be protected solely by individual rights.<sup>69</sup> M. Ignatieff recognizes rights "to protect shared inheritances"; he accepts that the survival of linguistic communities could be possible only if majority community recognizes the collective rights; he consents that linguistic minorities should have the right to educate their children in their language in order for the language to survive; but at the same time he emphasises that collective rights could become a source of collective tyranny (such as if parents force to educate their children in a way not freely chosen).<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, Ignatieff maintains that "**moral individualism protects cultural diversity**", as the individualist position should respect the unique way each individual choose to live his/her life.<sup>71</sup> He

---

<sup>65</sup> Idem: 625-652.

<sup>66</sup> Taylor, 1994: 37.

<sup>67</sup> See: Ignatieff: 57.

<sup>68</sup> By "rational", Ignatieff indicates intentions that don't constitute "obvious harm to other human beings". Ignatieff, 2001: 57.

<sup>69</sup> See: Ignatieff, 2001: 75-76.

<sup>70</sup> Idem: 75-76.

<sup>71</sup> In this way he promotes understanding of human rights only as "a systematic agenda of 'negative liberty', a tool kit against oppression, a tool kit that individual agents must be free to use as they see fit

clearly states that “those who seek human rights protection are not traitors to their culture” but seek the “protection of their rights as individuals within their own culture.”<sup>72</sup>

However, only a small number of today's political theorists insist on the idea that liberal states approach<sup>73</sup> - pursuing the principle of individual rights, individual autonomy and ethno-cultural neutrality, in which the state ought to be **neutral** regarding ethno-cultural differentiation<sup>74</sup> - provides adequate protection with respect to the minority groups, and that the justice could be determined “in terms of difference-blind rules or institutions without regard to the context.”

Liberal paradigm with its neutrality statement regarding the “ethnocultural identities of their citizens” and indifference to the “ability of ethnocultural groups to reproduce themselves over time”<sup>75</sup> seems to promote injustice, instead of preventing it<sup>76</sup> - following the fact, that **no policy is neutral in itself**; all of them pursue the interests of a particular dominant group,<sup>77</sup> or, in Charles Taylor's words “the supposedly neutral set of difference-blind principles of equal dignity is in fact a **reflection of one hegemonic culture**”, as only minorities, suppressed communities are forced to “take alien form”; hence the so

---

within the broader frame of cultural and religious beliefs that they live by.” Idem: 57. Highlights added.

<sup>72</sup> Idem: 76.

<sup>73</sup> Some authors (Pfaff 1993; Ignatieff 1993) argue that distinction between illiberal ‘ethnic nation’ and liberal ‘civic nations’ is that in the former the reproduction of a particular ethnocultural identity is one of the vital objectives, while the latter as regards the ethnocultural identity are neutral, and determine belonging to national unity solely in terms of “adherence to certain principles of democracy and justice” (quoted in Kymlicka: 16).

<sup>74</sup> Following this attitude, ethno-cultural differences are treated, in more or less the same way as those of religious origin - as belonging to the **private** domain of every individual, and therefore “forbidden terrain for state interference.” See: Jovanović, 2005: 626.

<sup>75</sup> Will Kymlicka uses the formulation “the myth of ‘ethnocultural neutrality’”. See: Kymlicka, 1995: 15 - 16.

<sup>76</sup> See: Jovanović, 2005.

<sup>77</sup> Kymlicka replaces the concept of “ethnoculturally neutral” model of the state with the theory of **nation-building project**, the process in which practically all liberal states attempted to spread a “single societal culture throughout all of its territory”. See: Kymlicka, 1995: 19.

called neutral society is in its basis “inhuman” (as it suppresses the identities) and extremely discriminatory.<sup>78</sup>

In the 1990s the number of new political theories that were re-evaluating classical liberal paradigm has greatly increased and, while different, they shared support for a certain type of **multicultural political paradigm**. For instance, Joseph Raz brings in the notion of “liberal multiculturalism.” Raz wrote: “‘Liberal multiculturalism’, as I call it, affirms that in the circumstances of contemporary industrial or postindustrial societies, a political attitude of fostering and encouraging the prosperity, cultural and material, of cultural groups within a society, and respecting their identity is justified by considerations of freedom and human dignity. These considerations call on governments to take action that **goes beyond that required by policies of toleration and nondiscrimination.**”<sup>79</sup> Janos Kis establishes the idea of “liberal multinationalism”, which should substitute the concept of a “nation-state” with a “co-nation state”;<sup>80</sup> Will Kymlicka introduces the concept of “differentiated citizenship”:<sup>81</sup> “In a society which recognizes group-differentiated rights, the members of certain groups are incorporated into the political community, not only as individuals, but also through the group, and their rights depend, in part, on their group membership.” These rights have Kymlicka described as types of “differentiated citizenship.”<sup>82</sup>

Kymlicka - trying to develop a liberal theory of minority rights<sup>83</sup> - recognizes five forms of “ethnocultural groups that are found within Western democracies”<sup>84</sup> and calls for

---

<sup>78</sup> Taylor, 1994: 43. Charles Taylor was the first who fully restated the **equal recognition** as the suitable mode for a “healthy democratic society”. According to Taylor the development of the modern concept of identity, has fostered - as an alternative to the “difference-blindedness” - the emergence of a notion of “a politics of difference,” in which the acknowledgement of “**unique identity**” and “specificity” of an individual or a group is required; moreover, their **distinctiveness** is - or ought to be - cherished. Idem: 36-39; highlights added.

<sup>79</sup> Joseph Raz, 1994. Quoted in Jovanović, 2005. Highlights added.

<sup>80</sup> Jovanović, 2005, p. 627.

<sup>81</sup> Kymlicka, 1995, p.174.

<sup>82</sup> Kymlicka, 1995, p. 174. Highlights added.

<sup>83</sup> See: Jovanović, 2005, p. 627.

different treatment for each of those distinct “categories” of minorities; for each of those groups proposes a special treatment. His neat categorization and proposed treatment for each of them is by far too simple and simplistic and it could be stated that its basis is discriminatory in itself: as he states for instance that if immigrants “valued cultural maintenance over material gain, they would not have come in the first place.”<sup>85</sup> As his model also completely neglects the distinctiveness of each particular cultural community, different contexts, different needs, different conceptions of “good life,” the fact that every situation of minority-majority relation is **unique** (but certainly sharing some common elements), and in the case of immigrants even denies the right to cultural survival - it must be maintained that it is not, in any way, suitable for addressing the (ethnocultural) diversity.<sup>86</sup> I strongly argue for **culturally sensitive** approach to minority issues, an approach that addresses the whole issue of complexity and dynamics of **each particular group**; I believe that no universal model is applicable in the management of diversity.

However, certainly the model of “best practices” might be extremely useful in particular contexts. In the last years, the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee for Culture has made an interdisciplinary research of this question, and has generated interesting ideas and proposals on “convergence, divergence, differences and omissions” in the cultural policies of the various states. Among other things, the research has shown that there is no one figure of cultural diversity, typically, identifiably European, by comparison with other parts of the world. According to F. Lebon, cultural diversity is the “product, not just of the great upheavals of the past, but also of the specific, distinctive adjustments which external changes have provoked in the local, everyday, cultural and social lives of the communities concerned.”<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup> Kymlicka recognizes: the national minorities (substate nations and indigenous peoples); immigrants; isolationist ethnoreligious groups ; metics; and racial caste groups. Kymlicka, 1995, pp. 23 - 47.

<sup>85</sup> Kymlicka 1995, p. 35.

<sup>86</sup> In addition, he also fully ignores the *factor of dynamics* - that needs and visions of good life change over time, and - as Bhikhu Parekh also rightly emphasised - the *internal dynamics* of each particular culture. See: Parekh, 2000, p. 340.

<sup>87</sup> Lebon, 2002, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural\\_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub\\_DGIV\\_CULT\\_PREV-](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub_DGIV_CULT_PREV-)

## **Human rights versus cultural traditions of “vulnerable categories” of people**

The issue of individual and collective rights in the framework of protection of minorities might be further dealt with in the context of so called “vulnerable categories” of people within particular ethno-cultural groups.

Feminist scholars, for instance, as stated by Agnes Kartag Odri and Branimir Stojković, raise very important questions: What should a state do in negotiations with an “ethno-cultural group on collective rights” (for instance that reinforce the “subordination, discrimination and inequality of women within the group”)<sup>88</sup> if its members “have in vast numbers declared to support the illiberal oppressive norms and practice of their group?” Should “group-specific cultural practice that violates liberally understood autonomy” of individuals be justified within the framework of constitutional democracy?<sup>89</sup>

In this particular view the issue of Romani community (communities) represents a perfectly adequate example - focusing on cultural tradition of Romani community (communities) that might sometimes collide with human rights principles.

As stated in the publication Roma Rights Quarterly, the debate about the conflict between limitations of Romani community tradition (traditions) – collective rights and the principles of individual rights with traditional practices is now taking place among Roma. The political implication of those discussions is significant – it reaches far beyond the arguments of the numerous sides in the discussion: it is of huge importance that awareness

---

ICIR(2002)5\_Lebon\_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a.

<sup>88</sup> As stated by Agnes Kartag Odri and Branimir Stojković, “collective cultural rights often (not quite overtly) strengthen the existing hierarchies.” Available at:

<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nKCjJbJuFSUJ:www.enelsyn.gr/papers/w14/Paper%2520by%2520Prof%2520Agnes%2520KartagOdri.pdf+Branimir+Stojkovi%C4%87+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=si>.

<sup>89</sup> Kartag Odri, Stojković: 15. Available at:

<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nKCjJbJuFSUJ:www.enelsyn.gr/papers/w14/Paper%2520by%2520Prof%2520Agnes%2520KartagOdri.pdf+Branimir+Stojkovi%C4%87+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=si>.

about contradictions between human rights principles and customary practices has left the private sphere.<sup>90</sup>

## Summary

In conclusion to the theoretical part of the thesis, I would like to stress that the basic concept in management of diversity is to learn how to live together harmoniously.

Bhikhu Parekh's introduces the "ideal" concept of "**dialogically constituted multicultural society**," that favours no particular cultural perception over another; a society that is both community of citizens and community of communities: that promotes individual rights and freedoms and other liberal moral and political values, integral to the policy of dialogue, but also recognizing that individuals are "**culturally embedded**" and "their cultural communities are essential to their well- being". B. Parekh argues for dialogically structured political life, generating the body of "collectively acceptable principles, institutions and policies",<sup>91</sup> where the nucleus constitutes a strong concept of a common good.<sup>92</sup> (However the precondition again as already mentioned above, must be a acknowledgment that all human cultures has something vital to contribute, and that their traditional cultures have value).<sup>93</sup>

As common denominator in a dialogically constituted multicultural society and a dialogically structured political life, is a dialogue; in Bhikhu Parekh's formulation, a "commitment to the **culture and morality of dialogue**."<sup>94</sup> I agree with Parekh's requirements that the dialogue requiring "institutional preconditions", namely "freedom of expression, agreed procedures, and basic ethical norms, participatory public spaces, equal rights, a responsive and popularly accountable structure of authority, and empowerment of citizens"

---

<sup>90</sup> Available at: [http://www.errc.org/Romarights\\_index.php](http://www.errc.org/Romarights_index.php).

<sup>91</sup> Parekh, 2000: 340.

<sup>92</sup> The concept of common good encompasses the "respect for a consensually grounded civil authority and basic rights, maintenance of justice, institutional and moral preconditions of deliberative democracy, a vibrant and plural composite culture and an expansive sense of community", cherishing "interactive and dynamic multiculturalism." Parekh: 341.

<sup>93</sup> Taylor, 1994: 36.

<sup>94</sup> Parekh, 2000, p. 340.

and political merits as mutual respect and concern, self-restraint, tolerance, openness to new ideas and others' needs, and **capability to “live with unresolved differences.”**<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Idem., p. 340.

## **I.V. Cultural diversity and minority protection framework in international sphere**

As shown above, cultural diversity became a part of human rights discourse: providing existence of minority communities, preservation of their (cultural) identity and respecting the rights to development of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities became a constitutive part of international protection of human rights.<sup>96</sup> 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in its Preamble stresses the significance of cultural diversity for the “full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognized instruments”, and highlights the necessity to “incorporate culture as a strategic element in national and international development policies, as well as in international development cooperation, taking into account also the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000) with its special emphasis on poverty eradication.”<sup>97</sup>

In Europe, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) provide the main structures for monitoring minority protection regimes. Both are inter-governmental apparatuses, although input from independent monitoring institutions is also permitted.

Furthermore, in the framework of European Union, the respect for linguistic and cultural diversity is one of the cornerstones of the Union. Article 22 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights states that “the Union respects cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.” The culture must be understood as a “key element of an individual’s development

---

<sup>96</sup> See for instance: Klopčič, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:IB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopčic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:IB2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopčic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a)

<sup>97</sup> UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf>.

and of his or her capacity to function in society and, especially, to act in the economic sphere without risking exclusion.”<sup>98</sup>

Until now, the most relevant standard setting mechanisms pertaining to minority rights and (cultural) diversity and against which national measures are monitored in the Council of Europe (CoE) are the following:

- ➔ The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), adopted in 1995.
- ➔ The Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML), adopted in 1992.

However, the term “minority” is not defined in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and, as a result, is a subject to definition by the states themselves. Serious problems occur from this limitation. National legislators choose self-definition by national minorities themselves, or they create their own definition. The minorities protected by the FCNM are limited to members of so-called “national” minorities (thereby excluding, inter alia, religious minorities). Moreover, according to M.F. Pérez-Solla, the advisory body (Advisory Committee) appears to pay attention to “**historic ties**” in requesting the protection of certain groups and there is a problem to define the historic ties. Does large-scale labour immigration in recent years from a certain country “create” a new group deserving protection – is this a historic tie? In general, the advisory body has advised including other groups as minorities, where appropriate, through processes of consultation with the relevant groups.

FCNM exposes also another dilemma: Article 3 obliges State Parties to guarantee freedom to every member of a minority to decide freely whether or not to be treated as a member of the minority. This presents a legal problem for monitoring in Europe: how to interpret the **individualist approach** assumed by existing instruments?

However, current protection mechanism does not predict, in general, the recognition of **collective rights**.

---

<sup>98</sup> Quoted at the web page of European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). Available at: <http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/82/language+%26+culture+diversity/>.

Protection of **cultural rights** holds an important position in FCNM; numerous articles apply to exercising cultural rights.<sup>99</sup> For instance, Article 5 states: “The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.”

The other key international instrument in the field of cultural diversity is Council of Europe’s European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML), adopted in Strasbourg, in November 1992. As exposed at the web- page of European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), language diversity is the “core component of cultural diversity that enables representation and transmission of the fundamental aspects of cultures for acquisition by the succeeding generations of the community and for interaction with other communities.”<sup>100</sup> The Charter states that the “protection of the historical regional or minority languages of Europe, some of which are in danger of eventual extinction, contributes to the maintenance and development of Europe’s cultural wealth and traditions;” and that the “right to use a regional or minority language in private and public life is an inalienable right conforming to the principles embodied in the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and according to the spirit of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;”<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, the Charter affirms that the “protection and promotion of regional or minority languages in the different countries and regions of Europe represent an important contribution to the building of a Europe based on the principles of democracy and cultural diversity within the framework of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

---

<sup>99</sup> FCNM, 1995.

<sup>100</sup> European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). Available at: <http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/82/language+%26+culture+diversity/>.

<sup>101</sup> Council of Europe, European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. Available at: <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm>.

## IV. Cultural diversity in South Eastern Europe – (the Balkans)?

In South Eastern Europe, as in Mediterranean and Central European cultural identities are “extremely diversified” and “overpowered by particular national and ethnic identification”,<sup>102</sup> as maintained by Tsvetana Georgieva, main distinctive features of South Eastern Europe<sup>103</sup> are “multiethnicity and multicultural”,<sup>104</sup> all states in the region are multiethnic, multilinguistic, multireligious, multicultural.<sup>105</sup>

However, as observed by Sanjin Dragojević in 2002, South Eastern Europe has “a very low level of consciousness of the importance of cultural diversity”.<sup>106</sup> Existing perception is partly a consequence of the socialist strategies and policies that were for decades striving after “equality of individuals and cultures,” and that, as stated by Nada Švob-Đokić and Nina Obuljen “resulted in quantity evaluations and practical domination of ‘large’ nations’ cultures and their values”.<sup>107</sup> Socialist policies neglected the rights of ethnic/linguistic / cultural minority groups; free expression of those who did not consider themselves as a part of majority nation groups as well as those who were giving priority to any of other belongings (for instance to religious, sub-cultural, regional) not to their **nationality** was considered as contra-productive, as a threat to the political system and national culture.

After 1989 transition processes towards democracy in the region fostered tensions and conflicts (war in former Yugoslavia, expulsion of ethnic Turks in Bulgaria etc.) that were, according to N. Švob-Đokić, “wrongly ascribed to cultural values, tendencies to turn to the

---

<sup>102</sup> Švob-Đokić, 2001: 7.

<sup>103</sup> South Easter Europe here indicates merely geographical meaning, not meta-geographical (evaluative) connotation (see Vodopivec, 2001). The term encompasses all the states in the South Eastern part of Europe.

<sup>104</sup> Georgieva, 2006: 22.

<sup>105</sup> While ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic composition in today's states in South Eastern Europe is "complicated", is, according to T. Sahara, by far much simpler than it was, for instance, in the eighteenth century (See i.e. Sahara, 2006: 23).

<sup>106</sup> Dragojević, 2002: 249.

<sup>107</sup> Švob-Đokić, Obuljen, 2003: 4.

past rather than to the future, and ethnic and national identification of its society”.<sup>108</sup> At the core of the conflicts and war for the territories were **politics and economics** and the conflicts should be “analyzed in a wider context of transitional changes”. Anyway, N. Švob-Đokić agrees that “cultures did serve to highlight the most extreme, nationalistic identifications, which resulted in the narrowing or elimination of intercultural communication.”<sup>109</sup>

Even so, in the last few years the attitudes towards cultural diversity and coexistence of different ethnic / religious / cultural / religious groups in South Eastern Europe seems to be changing slightly: under the pressure of contemporary tendencies of European institutions (for instance European Union accession requirements lay great emphasis on the issues of minority management).

The consequence of all processes and trends expressing hostility towards cultural diversity in the past century - concisely mentioned above - is the fact, that for the most of the countries in today's South Eastern Europe “mapping diversity is **therefore a new experience and a new process**”<sup>110</sup>. However, South Eastern Europe with all its richness and diversities can at this moment – “historically for the first time” - if I rephrase the words of Sanjin Dragojević, witnesses “open possibilities to overcome this stage and become a visible supra-national region with its own dynamics, bringing new qualities into the overall European integration processes”.<sup>111</sup>

## **IV. I. Management of cultural differences in Slovenia**

The following chapters will discuss the issue of the cultural diversity and to identify inputs of policy approaches and practices in relation to cultural diversity in Slovenia as a example of South Eastern European country - event though that in some (mainly political) conceptions Slovenia avoids to be categorized as South-European country – due to the negative stereotypes attributed to the region.

---

<sup>108</sup> Švob-Đokić, 2000: 8.

<sup>109</sup> Idem, 8.

<sup>110</sup> See: Švob-Đokić and Obuljen, 2003: 4; emphasised by Š.Z.

<sup>111</sup> Dragojević, 2002: 251.

The chapters will try to outline what directions do Slovenia follows in regard to management to cultural differences? How the issue is addressed in Slovenia? What are the prevailing trends and tendencies in regards to cultural diversity and cultural rights? Have the principles of multiculturalism been incorporated into the strategies of the Republic of Slovenia? If so, how? The questions will be reflected more in detail on the case of Romani community (communities). What values regarding cultural diversity management and protection of Romani culture prevail; what principles and directions have precedence?

The topic is of particular importance in the light of preparations that are underway for the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EU in 2008. The key question of the thesis is: Where is the management of cultural differences at the political agenda-setting in the state?

The chapter will first outline ethnic / cultural make up of population in Slovenia and the framework of minority protection mechanism in the state. Section two will The first section explores the case for cultural rights, demonstrating that Section two presents an array of cases that represent the range of cultural rights claims and claimants as well as conflicts and contradictions that emerge in pressing these claims. Finally, the essays in section three examine the innovative work being carried out at the national, regional, and international levels to establish standards for the implementation of cultural rights.<sup>112</sup>

The issue of key policy actors, institutions responsible for programmes and policies addressing the issue of promoting cultural diversity, cultural rights, intercultural dialogue at national, regional and local levels in the state? What is the relationship between those actors, bodies in charge with the various forms of cultural diversity? Milena Dragičević Šešić and Sanjin Dragojević

---

<sup>112</sup> Albro, Bauer, 2005. Available at:

<[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html)>.

The role of state and its instruments of policy that affect cultural development uloge drzave i njenih instrumenata kulturne politike u kreiranju kulturnog razvoja<sup>113</sup> It will follow the attempt of evaluation of then role of culture, cultural mediation in the social distance between majority and minority population (the case of Romani group).

## **V. II. Trends & directions in regards to the cultural diversity in Slovenia**

### **Slovenia, respectful to “multicultural” principles?:**

#### **Population make-up and minority protection regime in the Republic of Slovenia**

According to 2002 Census, in Slovenia (only declared!) minorities make up about 10 percent of the population.<sup>114</sup> Ethnic minorities face a complex reality; the practices of

---

<sup>113</sup> See: Dragičević Šešić & Dragojević, 2004.

<sup>114</sup> Population by ethnic affiliation, Slovenia, Census 2002

TOTAL	100%
Declared	
Slovenes	83,06
Italians	0,11
Hungarians	0,32
Roma	0,17
Albanians	0,31
Austrians	0,01
Bulgarians	0,01
Bosniacs	1,10
Czechs	0,01
Montenegrins	0,14
Greeks	0,00
Croats	1,81
Jews	0,00

protection of a particular minority group vary widely. The following chapters will outline the “diversity” or of Slovenian minority protection regimes and the “hierarchy” of ethnic / cultural minorities in the state; furthermore the legislation that directly affect “minority culture” will be reviewed; later we will deal with the regime directed towards Romani community, its cultural life.

The new Slovenian Constitution from 1991 recognises only three minority groups: Hungarian, Italian, and Roma.<sup>115</sup> Only two minorities – Italians and Hungarians - are identified as “national minorities” and only three minority groups - so called

---

Macedonians	0,20
Muslims	0,53
Germans	0,03
Poles	0,01
Romanians	0,01
Russians	0,02
Russinians	0,00
Slovaks	0,01
Serbs	1,98
Turks	0,01
Ukrainians	0,02
Vlachs	0,00
Others	0,08
Undeclared	
Declared as Yugoslavs	0,03
Declared as Bosnians	0,41
Regionally declared	0,07
Others - Including persons who said they would like to remain ethnically undeclared	0,62
Did not want to reply	2,47
Unknown	6,43

<sup>115</sup> See: Compendium

“autochthonous”<sup>116</sup> communities - Italians, Hungarians, and Roma - are identified in the Constitution for special treatment. The argument of Nicolae Gheorghe and Thomas Acton might be relevant at this point: they note that State’s recognition of the “historically rooted, local minority rights must be contracted to the denial of rights to others not perceived as so historically rooted” but classified, as observed by N. Gheorghe and T. Acton, as “‘migrants’, ‘immigrants’, ‘refugees’” etc.<sup>117</sup> It seems that such a distinction, by nature, impose a discrimination.

However, most of Slovenian minorities compose the persons belonging to ethnic communities, which were constitutive nations and other nationalities in Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY),<sup>118</sup> who greatly outnumber so called “traditional” national communities. Those so called “new minorities” are also addressed as “non-Slovenes.” According to 2002 census, around 128,000 persons or 6,5% out of total population declared themselves as belonging to one of these minorities; however, more factual estimates indicate that so called “new minorities” encompasses around 200,000 persons<sup>119</sup> (10% of population).

As stated by Peace Institute report (Vlasta Jalušič), even if Slovenia is considered to have a well-functioning minority protection, many intergovernmental organizations<sup>120</sup> and non-governmental institutions<sup>121</sup> have conveyed their dissatisfaction in relation to the

---

<sup>116</sup> The issue of “autochthonous” will be dealt with in the following pages.

<sup>117</sup> See: Gheorghe & Acton, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>.

<sup>118</sup> The research on the members of the nations of so called new minorities in Slovenia was made by Institute for Ethnic Studies in 2003 (Vera Klopčič, Miran Komac, Vera Kržišnik-Bukić) Albanci, Bošnjaki, Črnogorci, Hrvati, Makedonci in Srbi v Republiki Sloveniji. Polozaj in status pripadnikov narodov nekdanje Jugoslavije v RS. Available at:

<[http://www.uvn.gov.si/fileadmin/uvn.gov.si/pageuploads/pdf\\_datoteke/Raziskava\\_Polozaj\\_in\\_status\\_pripadnikov\\_narodov\\_nekdanje\\_Jugoslavije\\_v\\_RS.pdf](http://www.uvn.gov.si/fileadmin/uvn.gov.si/pageuploads/pdf_datoteke/Raziskava_Polozaj_in_status_pripadnikov_narodov_nekdanje_Jugoslavije_v_RS.pdf)>.

<sup>119</sup> See: Census of Population, Households and Housing, Slovenia, 31 March 2003 <<http://www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/si-92.pdf>> (accessed April 17, 2003). Quoted in Jalušič, 2003.

<sup>120</sup> For instance UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe. Quoted in Jalušič, 2003.

<sup>121</sup> For instance the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF). Quoted in Jalušič, 2003.

treatment of the so-called non-autochthonous minorities in Slovenia. Adequate minority protection is provided only to the “autochthonous” national minorities. Even more, autochthonous Roma do **not** enjoy the same level of protection as Hungarian and Italian “national” minorities; different levels of protection granted to Hungarians and Italians at the one hand and to autochthonous Roma on the other are created,<sup>122</sup> as will be shown in the next pages.

In addition, the Republic of Slovenia guarantees the minority protection provided by **international instruments** only to the “**autochthonous**” ethnic communities. Such approach towards the minority protection is incompatible with the international human rights principles and standards, and “discriminatory and unjust towards the members of the ‘non-autochthonous’ ethnic minorities.”<sup>123</sup>

In its General Comment No. 23 on Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the HRC states that “the existence of an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority in a given State party does not depend upon a decision by that State party but requires to be established by objective criteria.”<sup>124</sup> In its Concluding Observations on Slovenia, the HRC convey its concern due to Slovenia provide special protection as minorities only to autochthonous Italians, Hungarians and Roma. The HRC remarks that “while this protection is welcome, all minorities are entitled to protection of their rights under article 27. Immigrant communities constituting minorities under the meaning of article 27 are entitled to the benefit of that article.”<sup>125</sup>

The vagueness of the category of “**autochthonous**” imposes numerous additional questions, especially in the case of Romani communities in Slovenia, as will be explained further in following chapters.

---

<sup>122</sup> See: Jalušič, 2003.

<sup>123</sup> Jalušič, 2003.

<sup>124</sup> General Comment No. 23 on Article 27, 50th session 1994, at para 5.2. HRI/GEN/1/Rev.5; quoted in Jalušič, 2003; emphasis by Š.Z.

<sup>125</sup> Concluding Observations of the HRC: Slovenia, 21 September 1994, at para 14. CCPR/C/79/Add.40; A/49/40, paras. 334-353 (Concluding Observations/Comments); quoted in Jalušič, 2003.

## **Legal basis that directly affects the cultural life of minorities in Slovenia**

In a legal groundwork for minority cultural policy – beside constitutional provision, the sector-specific acts provide for special minority cultural policy, guaranteeing special cultural rights.<sup>126</sup> However, the legal structure is complex:

The Slovenian 1991 Constitution established traditional rights with regard to culture, including freedom of artistic creation, cultural development and heritage protection as well as providing copyright, cultural and linguistic rights for Italian and Hungarian minorities, rights for the Romany community and assistance for Slovenes living in either neighbouring countries or around the world.<sup>127</sup>

Italian and Hungarian minorities enjoy collective rights outlined in Article 64 of the Constitution. Citizenship participation is secured at the highest political level for both of these minority groups:<sup>128</sup> each community has assigned representation in Parliament - one democratically elected representative in the National Assembly.<sup>129</sup> Hungarian and Italian languages are considered as “regional or minority languages”;<sup>130</sup> in the ethnically mixed areas, bilingualism is ever-present. Their languages are in official use in local government. Their languages are represented in the local media; their news media are entitled to financial support: the regional programmes of RTV Radio Slovenia, intended for the Hungarian and Italian communities are financed by the Slovenian Government, from the Slovenian state budget.<sup>131</sup> Hungarians and Italians have a guaranteed right to education in their native languages: there are nurseries and schools for the members of both of communities. Furthermore, they can widely use their national symbols; they are issued bilingual personal documents.

---

<sup>126</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>127</sup> Visiting arts. Slovenia Cultural profile. Available at: [http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia\\_Cultural\\_Profile/-4193.html](http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia_Cultural_Profile/-4193.html).

<sup>128</sup> Compendium.

<sup>129</sup> Slovenia. Cultural Profile. Available at:

[http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia\\_Cultural\\_Profile/-1.html](http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia_Cultural_Profile/-1.html).

<sup>130</sup> Slovenia's Declaration when ratifying Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML).

<sup>131</sup> See: Slovenia. Cultural Profile.

The “new minorities” do **not** have the status of official minority; their collective rights, granted to the “autochthonous minorities”, are **not** recognized. They enjoy their cultural rights only as citizens.<sup>132</sup> In particular, their rights provided to them – they are categorized as the members of “non-autochthonous ethnic groups” - are enclosed in the constitutional provisions on the “equality before the law, the expression of national affiliation, the right to use one’s language and script and the right to assemble and associate.”<sup>133</sup> The legal basis for their rights is Article 61 of the Constitution that stipulates that “each person shall be entitled to freely identify with his / her national grouping or ethnic community, to foster and give expression to his / her culture and to use his / her own language and scripts.”<sup>134</sup>

The legal basis for the policy regarding the cultural activities is also found in the Exercising of the Public Interest in Culture Act, 2002 (Article 65), which defines that the state

---

<sup>132</sup> See: Compendium.

<sup>133</sup> Petricusic, 2004.

Available at: <[http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/noves/hm04tardor/petricusic1\\_2.htm](http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/noves/hm04tardor/petricusic1_2.htm)>.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia – among other provisions that are of special importance for cultural / ethnic minority communities - stipulates:

#### Article 14

In Slovenia each individual shall be guaranteed equal human rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of national origin, race, sex, language, religion, political or other beliefs, financial status, birth, education, social status or whatever other personal circumstance. All persons shall be equal before the law.

#### Article 61

Each person shall be entitled to freely identify with his national grouping or ethnic community, to foster and give expression to his culture and to use his own language and script.

#### Article 62

In order to give effect to his rights and obligations, and in all dealings with State bodies and other bodies having official functions, each person shall have the right to use his own language and script in such a manner as shall be determined by statute.

<sup>134</sup> See: Compendium.

can finance programmes intended for the “cultural integration of minorities and immigrants”.<sup>135</sup>

Exercising (sometimes translated as Enforcing) the Public Interest in Culture Act<sup>136</sup> represents the first fully articulated legal basis integrating cultural objectives and the various sector-specific laws in Slovenia. The Act entered into force on November 29, 2002. The Act determines the public interest in culture and the fields of culture that provide cultural goods and public goods.

Article 8 of the Act presents foundations and documents for the definition of public interest in culture, stressing the value of cultural diversity. The public interest in culture should be put into operation in a way as to provide conditions for it.<sup>137</sup>

Article 6 of the Act stipulates “respectful attitude towards minority languages”: i.e. cultural events in regions, categorized as “ethnically mixed”, should be announced in minority languages (Italian or Hungarian language). Furthermore, Article 126 enforces a fine of 20.920 EUR on a person “that fails to announce cultural events in ethnically mixed regions also in Italian and Hungarian”) However, this protection measure refers only to the languages of the two “**national**” minorities.<sup>138</sup> Again, Article 31 of this Act – that deals with finances of public institutions - applies only to communities with minority status; it stipulates: “Means for financing of public institutions, the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities are entitled to establish for their cultural needs, are provided by the state within the frame of financial funds for Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities.” Article 65 classifies public institutions, cultural programs and projects within state’s responsibility / competence, stating that the responsibility of the state is also to finance (apart from the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities, and Roma) “cultural integration of minority communities and immigrants”. In

---

<sup>135</sup> Beside the programmes aimed at “the needs of blind, deaf and other groups of population with special needs”. The Exercising of the Public Interest in Culture Act, 2002 (Article 65).

<sup>136</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, No. 96-4807/02.

<sup>137</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>138</sup> Idem.

addition, Article 66 stipulates that municipalities are also “obliged to finance cultural integration of minority communities and immigrants”.<sup>139</sup>

Article 10 of the Public Interest in Culture Act provides the basis for the creation of a three year strategy in the field of culture, the National Programme for Culture. In the 2004, the National Programme for Culture 2004-2007 was adopted<sup>140</sup>; the purpose of the National Programme was far-reaching, encompassing “educational programmes and vocational training, private sector and business sponsorship, information technology, heritage, cultural diversity and access, the promotion of the Slovenian language and the encouragement of the production of artistic creation”<sup>141</sup>. In the Programme is clearly stated that “**any state guidance, supervision or control of culture is intolerable**”. The text continues: “With The National Programme for Culture the state defines public interest in the field of culture and sets goals and priorities of cultural policy, while it restrains itself from any judgement on cultural significance or ideological and aesthetic values. The purpose of the state support of culture is to provide conditions for creativity and to ensure accessibility of cultural goods, since a two-million market does not automatically create such conditions. Therefore state regulations in the field of culture are necessary in order to ensure a balanced cultural development. Decisions about realization of goals and priorities of The National Programme for Culture are not made by the state, but by statutory participation of cultural, professional, scientific and critical public in distribution of public funds intended for culture”.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at:  
[http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>140</sup> The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2004 – 2007 was adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia - on the basis of Article 107 in conjunction with Article 109 of the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia No. 35/02) and in conjunction with Articles 10 and 11 of the Act on Enforcing Public Interest in the Field of Culture (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia No. 96/02) - at the meeting held on 27 February 2004.

<sup>141</sup> Visiting Arts Cultural Profiles – Slovenia.

<sup>142</sup> The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2004 – 2007, 2004: 3. Available at: <  
<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nMatTnrQVpwJ:vzd.gov.si/vrs//util/bin.php%3Fid%3D2006051915593666+National+Programme+for+Culture,+2004-2007&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=si>>.

The main task of cultural policy, as set in National Programme 2004 – 2007 was “to remain open to new initiatives, to provide conditions for contemporary and diverse creativity, and to encourage coexistence of different forms, styles and ideas in contemporary cultural production.” Still in the same time, as stated by the Programme, “cultural policy has to preserve, revive and update the cultural heritage from which Slovenians emerged as a nation with an independent state. Finding balance between both priorities is the third goal of our cultural policy.”<sup>143</sup>

However, the National Program for Culture 2004-2007 is coming to an end, and it is still uncertain what the new directions and priorities will be after that period.<sup>144</sup>

Moreover, regarding the legal grounds that directly affect the cultural life of minorities in Slovenia, Librarianship Act<sup>145</sup> should be mentioned. The Librarianship Act entails public libraries in ethnically mixed areas to support library activities for members of Italian and Hungarian communities and Roma (Article 25); doing that the libraries should guarantee this population the “possibility of communication in their own language”. The programmes of activities should libraries create in consent with members of minority communities. Article 33 of the same law stipulates that “within public library service, national library collects, catalogues, keeps and loans the basic national fund of library materials in Slovenian language, on Slovenia and Slovenians, of Slovenian authors and publishers, of members of Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities, Roma community and other minority communities in Slovenia as well as foreign literature”.<sup>146</sup>

Media Act<sup>147</sup> specifies in Article 4 that the Republic of Slovenia “supports media in disseminating the programs, important for the implementation of the right of citizens of RS, Slovenes abroad, members of Slovene national minorities in Italy, Austria and Hungary,

---

<sup>143</sup> Idem.

<sup>144</sup> Compendium. Available at: <  
<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/slovenia.php?aid=41&curln=103>>.

<sup>145</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, No. 87/01.

<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>147</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, No. 35/01.

members of Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities in the Republic of Slovenia, and for Roma living in Slovenia, to be informed.”<sup>148</sup>

## **The question of cultural diversity and a notion of a “nation” as a political issue in public debate**

Approach towards cultural differences in Slovenia, and in particular **Romani community** - as noted by Jure Trampuš already in 2004 - presents the context of gaining (or loosing) political power. Janez Janša - the current Prime Minister of the state - before winning the elections in 2004 considered the Roma as community having far too many rights and gaining the status of “supermen”.<sup>149</sup> Besides, in his opinion the Roma threaten “Slovenian national substance”. Janša was mentioning “civilizational issues”, emerging between Romani and Slovenian settlements; in his terms the “clash of civilizations” between Roma and Slovenians originates from the fact that the minority culture is “privileged”; that the law is not the law for all, and that we live in the country where is “undesirable to be Slovenian.”<sup>150</sup>

It seems that the situation have worsened in the light of current power of right radicalism in the state. The opinion of the current Prime Minister comes also to significance in the light of the 2006 / 2007 “Romani crisis”<sup>151</sup> and the adoption of the cover act on Romani community - that, as it seems, will hardly fulfil the expectations, as will be explicated in the following pages.

---

<sup>148</sup> Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>149</sup> In the original: “nadjudje”. Trampuš, 2004. Available at: [http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure\\_trampus/](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure_trampus/)

<sup>150</sup> Trampuš, 2004. Available at: [http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure\\_trampus/](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure_trampus/).

<sup>151</sup> So called Romani crisis indicates events when the Romani extended family with 14 children were “forced to abandon their land...when a mob from Ambrus and other nearby villages surrounded their homes, threatening to kill them and demanding their eviction.” Source: International Herald Tribune.

It appears that the notion of a “nation” as reflected in public debate in Slovenia, in media and education system, is (mainly) defined in the **primordial** terms<sup>152</sup> - by emphasizing the “ancient” nature of current ethnic / religious, and “common – sense” division in the state; main classifications in the state seems to be a division on “Slovenians” and those who do not fit in this category - “Non-Slovenians” (however the category “Non-Slovenians” in some definitions label merely people from Former Yugoslavia).<sup>153</sup>

For instance, majority of the media products avoid tackling with fluidity and multiple forms of ethnic / religious / cultural identity in the state. The model of a nation is build on so called “**ethnic** model of a nation” - as observed by D. Stojanović in the “Balkan nations” in general.<sup>154</sup> A concept of a nation reflect a narrow notion of **Slovenian** “national

---

<sup>152</sup> Numerous (contradictory) traditions of enquiries into the **issue of ethnicity** were cultivated (i.e. “primordialists”, “instrumentalists”, “transactionalist”, “ethno-symbolic”); essentially, two broad groups with a number of alternative approaches have been developed: the “*primordialists*” perceive the ethnic identity as basically a “biologically given,” as a “natural phenomena,” based on “common objective cultural attributes” (Rex, 1995; quoted in Taras, Ganguly, 2002, p.11), giving importance to “primordial ties” – to “‘overpowering’ and ‘ineffable quality’ attaching to certain kinds of tie, which the participants tended to see as exterior, coercive, and ‘given.’” “Primordality” is ascribed by individuals to the “ties of religion, blood, race, language, region and custom; it does not inhere in these bonds” (Geertz; quoted in A. D. Smith and Hutchinson, 1996 8). Clifford Geertz also indicates that the “drives” for efficient modern state and for “personal identity”, based on “primordial ties” are interlinked (quoted in A. D. Smith and Hutchinson, 1996 8)

Conversely, the “*instrumentalists*” consider ethnicity as “a social, political, and cultural resource for different interest- and status-groups” (A. D. Smith and Hutchinson, 1996, p. 8), or in words, a device employed by individuals, groups, or elites, to acquire some large, most often material end (Lake, Rotchild, 1998; quoted in Taras, Ganguly, p.12). In this perspective is significant the role of “ethnic entrepreneurs” – for offensive or defensive objectives, or responding to “threats or opportunities” for themselves or their communities – invoking particular ethnic symbols (and often manipulating them) to set up political developments, in which some collective objectives are followed (see: Taras, Ganguly, 2002, p.12).

<sup>153</sup> For instance on this topics see the works of Tonči A.Kuzmanić: Rasizem in ksenofobija, ki da ju v Sloveniji ni; v: Poročilo skupine za spremljanje nestrpnosti, Mirovni inštitut, Ljubljana, 2001. Kuzmanić, Tonči A., Bitja s pol strešice, Slovenski rasizem, šovinizem in seksizem, Open Society Institute (Mediawatch), Ljubljana (1999).

<sup>154</sup> Stojanović, p. 27, emphasis Š.Z.

interest” and “national ties”; the Slovenian nation seems to be a virtue in itself – an idea of national interest of Slovenians seems to be in the Coady’s terms, the “moral fulcrum”.<sup>155</sup> The model is based on “romanticist assumptions, stemming from the image about ... national past, tradition, national culture, language, customs.”<sup>156</sup> Historical awareness plays a significant role in people’s lives and effortlessly become an instrument of legitimizing policy, that is inclined to present itself as the manifestation of “authentic” and “historical,” the values perceived as “the only proper values of a nation.”<sup>157</sup> The role of “ethnic past or pasts” and its “**national culture**” is extremely important in defining present cultural communities – following ethno-symbolist approach.<sup>158</sup>

For instance, in the National Programme for Culture (2004-2007) – in the foreword on “Slovenian culture, its role and perspectives” it is exposed that “...it is now widely acknowledged that cultural growth represents a firm base for the spiritual and material progress of **Slovenians**. The fact that political awareness of national rights has been established through major aspects of cultural development is also important for the vital role of culture in **Slovenian national community**. The first fundamental freedom established through culture was the right to use our own language, and was followed by other freedoms, eventually leading to the national independence. Even though Slovenian culture developed in conditions which were not always favourable for the national growth and even though Slovenians had to fight for existence, it became an important stimulus of Slovenian historical development and created space for freedom of speech and creative pluralism. Throughout Slovenian history culture has represented what contemporary theorists define as unifying, independent, creative, dynamic, diverse, provocative and critical social force. One of the main features of Slovenian culture is also that it represents the vehicle for development of the language as the most important characteristic through which Slovenians can define

---

<sup>155</sup> Coady, 2002, p. 15.

<sup>156</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>157</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>158</sup> Ethno-symbolist approach for instance explores the perseverance, transformation, renaissance of ethnic groups, and the role of “ethnic past or pasts” in forming present cultural groups. I.e. Armstrong 1982, A.D. Smith 1986 (in A. D. Smith, Hutchinson, 1996, p. 10).

themselves as being different from their neighbouring nations speaking other languages.”<sup>159</sup> Hence, today “culture still remains the source of **Slovenian national identity** and the central point of identification, where creativity, self-awareness, different expressions, critical opinions and reflections converge, and, above all, culture creates room for the visions of future, in which it becomes the source of individual creativity, social progress and cohesion. Taking all this into consideration, our cultural policy must pay special attention and constantly observe the fundamental element of **our cultural identity**, which at the same time presents the basis of our **national identity, the Slovenian language**. Not only because Slovenian cultural territory does not coincide with Slovenian state borders and because the number of Slovenians in the neighbouring states is diminishing, but also because smaller national languages face the danger of marginalization in the processes of globalization and integration, protection of Slovenian language has to remain the first priority of our cultural policy.”<sup>160</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2004 – 2007, 2004: 1. Available at: <<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nMatTnrQVpwJ:vzd.gov.si/vrs//util/bin.php%3Fid%3D2006051915593666+National+Programme+for+Culture,+2004-2007&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=si>>.

<sup>160</sup> Idem. Emphasis added.

# **Policy system with direct or indirect impact on the cultural life of Romani community (communities) in Slovenia**

## **Burning dilemmas in respect of the culture of Romani community (communities) in Slovenia**

Specific for Romani community in the state of Slovenia is that the Roma symbolize an “**Absolute Other**” in the state.<sup>161</sup>

In the domain of the culture, cultural life, cultural expressions of Romani community (communities) numerous dilemmas and controversies might be found, reflected mainly in the expressed doubts about:

- Issue of sectoral responsibility / organization; gaps in visions and policies of Slovenian institutions dealing with (the culture of) Roma;
- problem of distinction between “**autochthonous**” and “**non-autochthonous**” Roma;
- Issue of “special measures” and patronization on the part of state;
- Dilemmas of integration, intercultural dialogue, preservation, cultural development
- Issue of efforts aimed at preservation of Romani culture versus cultural development
- Issues in the field of language and media;
- Issue of Romani participation: differences between the cultural needs of Romani communities, their “**actual interests**”<sup>162</sup> and the state visions and strategies.

The chapter – while trying to illustrate how the institutions in a state address the questions of Roma community (communities) and Romani culture - will outline the basic legal provisions on the protection of Romani community; furthermore the sectoral responsibility and measures of the government will be examined in regards to the cultural life of Roma:

---

<sup>161</sup> More on the topic see for instance the research of the authors: Erjavec, Karmen, Hrvatin, Sandra B. in Kelbl, Barbara: Mi o Romih, Diskriminatoriski diskurz v medijih v Sloveniji, Open Society Institute, Ljubljana (2000).

<sup>162</sup> See: Klopčič.

First, the issue of key policy actors / institutions will be exposed, exploring who are the main actors responsible for policies directly addressing or indirectly affecting cultural life of Roma at national, regional and local levels in the state. What is relationship between those actors? What are their perceptions of Roma community (communities) in Slovenia and its culture? What their **visions** and **policies** are in regards Roma community (communities) and its culture? What (if any) **cultural policy objectives** and **principles** concerning support for Romani culture and Roma communities are being posed? What **instruments**, structures and tools, development strategies, programmes, decisions etc. are directly aimed at or may have an impact on the culture of the Romani community (communities)? Do the instruments / indicators prepared to measure implementation of cultural policy practices exist?

Moreover it will be interesting to examine what kind of cultural expressions of Romani community members are encouraged: Do the government policies take into consideration the plurality, complexity, fluidity and dynamics of Romani identity/identities, do they foster cultural development, or they support more or less the traditional reflection of Romani culture, fixed in a particular time? What visions of Romani cultural expressions have priority by governmental institutions (if any)? How the specific conditions and historical traditions of Romani community (communities) are taking into account (if taken into account at all)? Do the visions of governmental bodies reflect the needs of Romani community (communities)? Do Romani representatives participate in decision making processes? If so, how?

## **Governmental measures, legal framework & institutional organization – affecting cultural life of Roma**

### **Legal protection of Romani group in Slovenia**

As already stated above, providing existence of minority communities, preservation of identity and respecting the rights to development of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities became a constitutive part of international protection of human rights.<sup>163</sup> The specificity of Romani communities, as posed by Vera Klopčič, reflect in the

---

<sup>163</sup> Klopčič, available at:

management of its legal status at the international and domestic (state) level, various definitions and categorisations Roma as national, ethnic, social, or cultural group or constitutive European nation.<sup>164</sup>

The Romani group in the Republic of Slovenia is a “sizable ethnic minority” that in spite of its long presence has been inadequately and insufficiently integrated and is “one of the groups most vulnerable to social exclusion.” The official information mentions 3.246 citizens of Romani ethnic origin. However, it is unofficially estimated there lives between 6.500 and 7.000 members of Roma community in the country, “since many Roma have not officially registered as members of the Roma community in the census.”<sup>165</sup> Moreover, according to the minority protection experts, in Slovenia live about 10.000 people belonging to the Romani ethnic / cultural group.<sup>166</sup>

The Romani community (communities) in Slovenia faces difficulties in numerous areas (such as poor housing conditions, low employment rates, poor education opportunities). The Government in 1995 adopted the “Programme of measures for assistance to Roma”,<sup>167</sup> that encompasses activities of executive bodies in the area. Also other government programmes of social inclusion and the whole spectre of anti-discrimination legislation are of huge importance for improvement of the position of Roma.<sup>168</sup>

The major challenge is, as observed by Vera Klopčič, at the same time a) to provide **equal treatment of all citizens** and b) to assist in **integration of Roma** by special measures, while taking into consideration “different way of life, tradition and culture of

---

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a).

<sup>164</sup> Klopčič, available at:

[http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:1B2g4L2Lc5AJ:www.gov.si/dsvet/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf+romi+slovenija&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=si&client=firefox-a).

<sup>165</sup> Youth Bridging the Gap: Reaching out to the Roma Available at: <[http://roma.iapss.org/about/roma\\_people.php](http://roma.iapss.org/about/roma_people.php)>.

<sup>166</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute.

<sup>167</sup> “Program ukrepov za pomoč Romom”. See Klopčič. The programme will be later explained more in detail.

<sup>168</sup> Klopčič,

Roma”. Due to socially deprived position of the largest part of Romani community, the measures for improvement of the position of Roma mostly directed towards management of elementary living conditions – accommodation, provision of financial means, education.<sup>169</sup>

The basic provisions on the protection of Romani community in the Republic of Slovenia - the legal basis for current regulation - are specified in Article 65 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Article stipulates: “The status and special rights of the Roma Community living in Slovenia shall be regulated by law.” That the status of Roma would be managed by special act was stipulated already in the Constitutional Amendments in 1989; that was repeated in Slovenian Constitution in 1991.<sup>170</sup> As mentioned by Brankica Petković from the Ljubljana Peace Institute, the Constitution certainly does not provide an adequate solution – it only postponed the management of the status of the Roma. The right to **recognition** – that the Romani community exists and has the right to the development can not be gathered from constitutional provisions.<sup>171</sup> However the **mentioning itself** in the Constitution is a huge success of Slovenian experts on Romani issues – so called “Romologists” (for instance Pavla Štrukelj).<sup>172</sup>

Hence, the protection of special rights of the Romani community has been implemented through provisions that are included in the legislation in various areas – in the sector-specific acts<sup>173</sup> that together shape also the image of the cultural life of Romani

---

<sup>169</sup> Klopčič,

<sup>170</sup> Trampuš, 2006. available at:

<[http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure\\_trampus/index.print.html-12](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure_trampus/index.print.html-12)>.

<sup>171</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute Ljubljana, 22 June 2006.

<sup>172</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute.

<sup>173</sup> Local Self-Government Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 72/93, ..., 100/05),

Local Elections Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 72/93, ..., 22/06),

Voting Rights Register Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 52/02, 11/03, 73/03),

Act on Enforcing Public Interest in the Field of Culture (Official Gazette RS, No. 96/02),

Organisation and Financing of Education Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 12/96, ..., 98/05),

Kindergarten Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 12/96, ..., 100/05),

Elementary School Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 12/96, ..., 70/05),

group.<sup>174</sup> The relevant institutions (including Ministries) are responsible for carrying out the provisions, as will be described in detail in the following chapters. In Slovenia operates also a Commission for the Protection of the Roma Ethnic Community in the Government.

At the **local** level, the special rights to the Roma that “**traditionally** reside in the Republic of Slovenia” are also provided in the Statutes of 19 municipalities.<sup>175</sup>

Furthermore, the Local Government Act<sup>176</sup> stipulates that Romani communities should have their “councillors” in the municipalities where they live.<sup>177</sup> In the process of this Act adoption, actively participated the “umbrella organization” of the Roma living in Slovenia - Union of Roma (“Zveza Romov Slovenije”), as assured by representatives of the Union. The Act, according to the representatives of the Union, presents a significant achievement for Romani community in Slovenia, despite some problems faced in its implementation.<sup>178</sup>

There are two issues here: the law is not respected in total<sup>179</sup> (even though the Act amending the Local Government Act provides “efficient sanctions” in cases where legal provision are not respected by a municipality – “possible sanctions” are “dissolving

---

Public Media Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 35/01, ..., 96/05),

Librarianship Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 87/01, 96/02)

Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 93/05),

Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act, adopted 15 June 2005. Source: Office for Nationalities Available at: [http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about\\_the\\_office/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about_the_office/).

<sup>174</sup> For instance Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act (adopted on 15 June 2005, approved on referendum 25 September 2005, entered into force on 12 November 2005), specifies among others that: “according to this Act public service comprehends creating, preparing, recording and broadcasting ..... radio and television broadcasts for the Roma Community (broadcasts for Roma)”.Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act.

<sup>175</sup> Murska Sobota, Rogašovci, Puconci, Tišina, Cankova, Lendava, Črenšovci, Beltinci, Kuzma, Dobrovnik, Turnišče, Novo mesto, Črnomelj, Kočevje, Trebnje, Krško, Metlika, Semič, Šentjernej.

<sup>176</sup> Official Gazette RS, No. 72/93, ..., 100/05.

<sup>177</sup> See also: Compendium. Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/slovenia.php?aid=241>.

<sup>178</sup> Union of Roma / Zveza Romov Slovenije; e-mail by Romeo Horvat; representative of Union of Roma.

<sup>179</sup> For instance Municipality of Grosuplje has not Roma councillor yet.

municipal council or dismissing a mayor”). Furthermore, the issue of the “**traditional** Roma residents” or “autochthonous Roma” is even greater and it will be discussed further.

In 2007 cover act on Romani community - specific act on the rights of the Roma, Roma Community Act, was adopted by the National Parliament. The story of a specific act on the Romani group in Slovenia has a long history. Already in 1989 in the Constitutional Amendments was stipulated that the status of Roma would be managed by special act; that was repeated in Slovenian Constitution.<sup>180</sup> The state recognized that the Romani community has – along with general rights, also special rights due to its specific position; and that introducing of so called positive discrimination is necessary. However some of popular Slovenian political parties cynically do not recognize the special position of Romani community; furthermore they have even created their own Roma community act, embracing one single article: “Roma has no special rights and no special position.”<sup>181</sup>

The Government Communication Office in December 2006 submitted official statement on the “Roma issue in Slovenia” - it happened when the “Roma problems” were in the national spotlight. The statement states that the “Government...has decided to prepare an ‘umbrella act’ on the Roma community, and in this way end the period in which there was no will to realise the aforementioned constitutional provision.”<sup>182</sup> It is highlighted that “in particular that none of the 25 European Union member states protects their Roma community with a special act. Slovenia will be the first in this field, and an example to others.”<sup>183</sup> According to the Government, the Act<sup>184</sup> – while it is founded on the “prohibition of

---

<sup>180</sup> Trampuš, 2006. available at:

<[http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure\\_trampus/index.print.html-l2](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure_trampus/index.print.html-l2)>.

<sup>181</sup> For instance Zmago Jelinčič, Slovenian National Party. See: Trampuš, 2006. Available at:

<[http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure\\_trampus/index.print.html-l2](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure_trampus/index.print.html-l2)>.

<sup>182</sup> <http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/background-information/roma-issue/>

<sup>183</sup> Government Communication Office, December, 2006.

Available at: <<http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/background-information/roma-issue/>>.

<sup>184</sup> The aim of the act is, as claimed in Government official statement, to “regulate the status and special rights of the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia, the responsibility of state bodies and local government bodies for its implementation and the organisation of the Roma community for exercising their rights and obligations.” Government Communication Office, December, 2006.

Available at: <<http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/background-information/roma-issue/>>.

discrimination in any sphere of social life, and in particular in the spheres of employment, upbringing and education and social security”...“specifies that, in order to overcome the development lag and for successful inclusion in society, members of the Roma community, in addition to the rights and obligations of all Slovene citizens, shall have additional rights specified by sectoral laws, in the fields of education, improving living conditions, culture, health and social security and the right to participate in decision making in public matters that concern the Roma.” Furthermore “the act will also regulate cultural and informative activities.”<sup>185</sup>

Articles that directly refer to the culture of Romani community are as follows: under the section on the competences of the state bodies and the bodies of self-governmental local communities in the implementation of special rights of Romani community (Article 4 paragraph 3) it is stipulated that the “the Republic of Slovenia supports preservation and development of Romani language and cultural, informative and publishing activities of Romani community”. Furthermore, Article 7 (1) specifies that in the municipalities where the representative of Romani community in the Council is elected - consistent with the Self-Government Act - particular working body is established in the Council in order to monitor of the position of Romani community; and as stipulated in Article 8 paragraph 4, this working body also “deals with the questions related to preservation of Romani language and culture”.<sup>186</sup>

Article 13 specifies financial aspects of implementation of special rights of Romani community; financial means are provided in the budget of the state of Slovenia; in financial plans of direct users of the state budget and as the means provided to municipalities (as stated in Article 7 in the act) for financing of “transmitted tasks”. An amount of means is brought into line with the governmental programme for implementation of special rights for members of Romani community and it is defined in the budget of Republic of Slovenia.

According to Article 14 means for activities of special working bodies in the Councils of self-governing local communities are provided in the budget of self-governing

---

<sup>185</sup> <http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/background-information/roma-issue/>.

<sup>186</sup> Zakon o romski skupnosti v Republiki Sloveniji (ZRomS-1), stran 4602. Official Gazette RS 33/2007 13. 4. 2007.

local communities. Paragraph 2 stipulates that the means for financing of the needs of members of Romani community, granted by municipalities, are provided in the budget of Republic of Slovenia, consistent with the provisions of the Act that specifies financing of the municipalities.<sup>187</sup>

The Act – that has been prepared, according to the Government Communication Office, “in close cooperation with the roma community and on the basis of wide public debate” - was created at the Office for Nationalities.<sup>188</sup>

However, it generated numerous critics from legal experts, who warn that the act is not consistent with the main purpose of the protection principles – due to the act does not provide special rights but pose limitations. The act was also criticized by minority protection experts, such as Miran Komac from the Institute for Ethnic Studies. M. Komac notified in the act is **not** included the provision on positive discrimination. Furthermore, the act has not been tested in the “actual life” – among population it deals with – the Roma; no simulation of implementation of the law in everyday life has been carried out.<sup>189</sup> Some even warn of potential segregation as possible result of the Act, as stated by M. Komac.<sup>190</sup> As stated in critical Slovenian newspaper, the legal normative to improve the position of Romani group by the act is “not holistic, not well conceived, and created only for ...more ‘European’ image of current Slovenian Government.”<sup>191</sup>

---

<sup>187</sup> Idem.

<sup>188</sup> Government Communication Office, December, 2006.

Available at: <<http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/background-information/roma-issue/>>.

<sup>189</sup> Additionally, Komac “utopically” proposed the provisions, granted to other “national minorities” – Italians and Hungarians. See: Trampuš, 2006. available at:

<[http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure\\_trampus/index.print.html-l2](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure_trampus/index.print.html-l2)>.

<sup>190</sup> Trampuš, Mladina.

<sup>191</sup> Trampuš, 2006. available at:

<[http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure\\_trampus/index.print.html-l2](http://www.mladina.si/tednik/200646/clanek/slo---jure_trampus/index.print.html-l2)>.

## **The policy system related to the culture in the Republic of Slovenia: Overview of a structure**<sup>192</sup>

The section will outline the system that directly impact or has influences on the management of (diverse) cultural expressions, on the cultural life, on the (re)production of minority cultures in Republic of Slovenia.

The design and implementation of the policies that have impact (direct and indirect) on the cultural life in Slovenia is an outcome of different processes and contacts between the Governmental bodies such as Ministry of Culture, Parliament, the arm's length bodies, local governments (municipalities), cultural institutions, NGOs, individual artists and their associations.<sup>193</sup>

### ***State level -institutions with Roma-related competence in the field of culture***

In Slovenia at the **state - national level**, responsibility for the design and implementation of cultural policies, including the management of cultural differences, is distributed between the legislative (the National Assembly), and the executive (the Council of Ministers) institutions. The central executive organ competent to initiate legislation in the sphere of culture and formulate the key principles of national cultural policy is the Ministry of

---

<sup>192</sup> Partly I follow the model of Vesna Djukic-Dojcinovic cultural policy of Serbia 1989/2001. Available at: <<http://www.policy.hu/djukic/papers.htm>>.

<sup>193</sup> If we look into the past: in 1980, democracy was replicated through the regime of self-management that turned itself into a “closed cultural subsystem reflecting the corporative state.” In 1990s, the self-management system was eliminated; the responsibility for cultural policy was given back to public authorities. The socio-political governance framework was converted into a “representative democracy”, with the decisions being taken by elected politicians at the national and the local level. As a consequence, a number of interest groups lost some privileges once enjoyed under the one-party system: a considerable amount of their rights to impact the cultural policy decision-making process has been abolished. In the new system, the role of so called “expert public” is limited to mainly “advisory” one. See: Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Available at: <<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>>.

Culture.<sup>194</sup> However, when trying to outline the issue of state approach to cultural life of Romani group, we must focus also on other institutions with Roma-related competence, in which the culture is not the primary focus, but have directly influence on the culture of Roma.

In Slovenia at least two major institutions are competent to design and implement the strategies with deep and far-reaching impact (direct and indirect) on the cultural life of minority communities:

- ➔ the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Nationalities
- ➔ the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

The **Office for Nationalities** is, as set at the web-page of the Office, “an independent professional service within the Government of the Republic of Slovenia”. The responsibilities of the Office are, as stated at its web-page, a “global supervision of the realization of the provisions of the law on the protection of nationalities, monitoring the practical effects, drawing attention to problem areas, preparing suggestions and initiatives for the Government and other state bodies, and preparing analyses and reports on the wider issues of the protection of nationalities, together with the relevant ministries.”<sup>195</sup>

Furthermore, some responsibilities are “exclusively in the domain of the Office for Nationalities, most of all those which are not covered by different ministries;” among others financing the main self-governing organizations of the Italian and Hungarian National Communities, co-financing of the bilingualism and other constitutional rights in those municipalities, where both National Communities live autochthonously, co-financing of the mutual cultural organisations residing in Croatia, co-financing of the Italian and Hungarian radio and TV programmes.

Regarding Romani community in Slovenia – Office’s dealing with Roma is narrow; the subject of the Office’s activities and assistance are only those Roma who live in Slovenia “**traditionally, historically**”. As claimed at the Office’s web page, the Office has

---

<sup>194</sup> Idem.

<sup>195</sup> Office for Nationalities [http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about\\_the\\_office/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about_the_office/)

“also some responsibilities regarding the Roma Ethnic Community that lives in Slovenia traditionally, historically” encompassing:

- financing of the main Romani organisation (Roma Union of Slovenia),
- indirectly co-financing of the Roma associations all over the country and
- co-financing of the Roma activities in the field of media.<sup>196</sup>

The ambiguity of the category “**autochthonous**” in the case of Romani group (groups) raises numerous questions; it is the case of protection of minority groups in Slovenia in general. As already stated in the previous chapters, the concept of “**autochthonous**” is nowhere legally determined in Slovenian legislation<sup>197</sup> and according to V. Jalušič, that results is that the differentiation of the minorities is not legal.<sup>198</sup> However, the Office for Nationalities divides Roma community on autochthonous and non- autochthonous.

According to the Office’s web-page, only in few regions in Slovenia live so called “autochthonous” Romani communities (in the regions of Prekmurje, Dolenjska, Bela krajina and Posavje).

Romani communities in the two largest Slovenian cities, Ljubljana and Maribor, are **not** considered to be “autochthonous” but rather “new” communities; hence they are out of the responsibility of the Office. Hence, considerable number of Romani communities in Maribor and Ljubljana do not enjoy the constitutional protection neither special provisions; they are not entitled to the benefit of the collective rights granted to “autochthonous” groups.

This division is - when “describing” the “origin of Roma and their settlement in Slovenia” – “justified” by the Office for Nationalities as follows: “The historical data mention Roma living on the territory of today’s Republic of Slovenia already in 15th century. But from 17th century onwards the information about them is more frequent; they are also mentioned in different Registers (Register of Births, Register of Deaths, Register of Marriages etc.). Research shows that the Roma living in Slovenia today came from three

---

<sup>196</sup> Office for Nationalities [http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about\\_the\\_office/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/about_the_office/)

<sup>197</sup> Articles 61 (Profession of National Allegiance) and 64 (Special Rights of the Italian and Hungarian Ethnic Communities in Slovenia). Quoted in Jalušič, 2003.

<sup>198</sup> Jalušič, 2003. Highlights added.

different directions: the ancestors of the Roma living in Prekmurje came to this region across the Hungarian territory, the Dolenjska group of Roma came across the Croatian territory, and in Gorenjska there were small groups of Sinti that came from the North across the Austrian territory. Even though primarily these groups were nomads or semi-nomads, and in the past they frequently changed the position of their settlements, today we can firmly talk about specific regions where these groups settled indefinitely: in Prekmurje, Dolenjska, Bela krajina and Posavje. In these regions the Roma Ethnic Community lives **traditionally, historically**, and has preserved its more or less permanent and specific settlement”.<sup>199</sup>

A huge issue arises at this point: what actually “autochthonous” means - how to classify the “autochthonous” Roma? What does it **actually** mean to “live **traditionally, historically**” in Slovenia? And what does it mean that Romani communities in Prekmurje, Dolenjska, Bela krajina and Posavje - who suppose to live “**traditionally, historically**” - “preserved its more or less permanent and specific settlement” – what implications does the statement have? That the “new” minorities in Ljubljana and Maribor are not “settled indefinitely”; that they are still “nomads or semi-nomads”?

Yet, the Office recognizes the complex issue of categorization of Romani community: “Due to course of history and other circumstances there are significant differences among the Roma living in Slovenia, based on tradition, specific way of life, level of socialization and integration into their everyday environment.” It is considered that the “conditions among the Roma living in the northeast part of Slovenia are significantly better than those in the southern part.”<sup>200</sup>

Still, as set at the Office’s web-page, some **shared features** “common to the majority of the Roma living in Slovenia” might be found: they are “poor or without education, mainly without employment, facing grave difficulties in the field of housing conditions”;<sup>201</sup> hence, it is recognized that the unifying element of Romani community in Slovenia is its **social position**: its de-privileged position towards the majority of population.

---

<sup>199</sup> Office for Nationalities. Available at: [http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities\\_national\\_communities/roma\\_ethnic\\_community/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities_national_communities/roma_ethnic_community/).

<sup>200</sup> Idem.

<sup>201</sup> Idem.

The major function of the Office of Nationalities is, as stated by Brankica Petković, a political function - **state building function**,<sup>202</sup> and that function is a determination factor when taking into focus the approach of the institution towards the Romani community.

As stated at the Office's web-page, in order to overcome the difficulties faced by Romani group in Slovenia, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted "several measures and other official documents".<sup>203</sup>

Very significant is the programme called "Program of Measures for Assisting the Roma" adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in November 1995. The programme is still relevant. "With this program the Republic of Slovenia showed its awareness of the need to regulate Roma issues consistently." However, the cultural rights are not included in the programme, for instance cultural access to culture etc. As observed by the Office, "Roma encounter problems particularly in the areas of living standards, education, and employment".<sup>204</sup> Culture was not exposed at that point.

---

<sup>202</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute Ljubljana.

<sup>203</sup> Idem.

<sup>204</sup> In July 1999 the Government again evaluated the implementation of the Government Program of Measures for Assisting the Roma (1995), and established that this programme was still relevant. Hence, it commissioned all state agencies to "proceed with their activities towards resolving the problems concerning Roma issues:

- regarding Roma issues reconciliation of municipalities where Roma live and state agencies is needed and is of great importance,
- all ministries and government offices are bound to within their competence treat Roma issues with special care and they need to include these issues into the national programs within their filed of work,
- Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning and the Ministry of Finance are tasked to assess all possibilities of assuring a special budgetary item where sufficient funds for helping municipalities regarding housing conditions would accumulate,
- those ministries that have at their disposal the budgetary funds for the stimulation of the development of local communities are tasked when allocating funds to these communities to consider the necessity of establishing sufficient housing conditions for Roma as well as for those residents that are not Roma, and whose conditions are worsened by the proximity and

Though, the obstacles in the realization of the 1995 assistance programme, as noted by researcher Vera Klopčič, presented the insufficient financial means for local communities and the inadequate participation of Roma representatives in the monitoring process of assistance measures implementation.<sup>205</sup>

In 2004 the Office for Nationalities – together with other state bodies - prepared the Report on the Status of Roma that was discussed by the Government; and, consequently, decisions were adopted with the purpose of a “more rapid solution of Roma issues”. Among the decisions adopted by the Government in October 2004 were the following:

- necessity to “continue with the effort to improve the status of the members of the Roma Ethnic Community, and with better cooperation among state bodies, local community agencies and the members of the Roma Community”;
- necessity to “establish conditions that would enable the Roma to respect the values of the majority population, and would enable the **majority population to accept with tolerance the distinctness and cultural diversity of the Roma**”;
- necessity to “consistently execute valid regulations (acts and other regulations, international documents that are part of the legal system of the Republic of Slovenia) and directives (Program of Measures for Assisting the Roma from 1995, Government decisions from 1999 etc.), concerning the **autochthonous** Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia”;
- necessity to “realize the implementation of the decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted on 30 May 2002, according to which the respective ministries and government offices must be provided with additional funds to be earmarked for municipalities with autochthonous Roma population for resolving Roma issues;

---

the bad conditions in Roma settlements. These residents (of the non-Roma settlements) are supposed to obtain some kind of ‘annuity’ due to this circumstances,

- state representatives in the managements of certain funds (e.g. Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for Regional Development and Preservation of the Settlement of Slovene Rural Areas, Housing Fund of the Republic of Slovenia) are tasked to propose appropriate action.”

See: Web-page of the Office for Nationalities.

<sup>205</sup> Klopčič.

- in relation to **autochthonous** Roma Community it is necessary to utilise in greater extent the possibilities offered by the European Funds, etc.”<sup>206</sup>

Significant is, that the cultural diversity and distinctiveness of Romani community is mentioned. Still, as seen also from the quoted lines, the emphasis is on the measures, directed towards “autochthonous” Romani community living in Slovenia.

Second institution with the direct impacts on the culture of minority communities, **Ministry of Culture**, takes - regarding the protection of (ethnic) minorities and especially the Romani community - much broader view - in comparison to the Office for Nationalities.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for “cultural policy formulation and implementation”. It creates proposals for the government; government then submits draft laws to the parliamentary procedures.<sup>207</sup>

Civil society and experts might participate in the creation of cultural policies in following ways:

- through membership in the minister’s advisory bodies for various cultural domains;
- through the National Council for Culture;
- through the Cultural Chamber of Slovenia; and
- through participation in the governance framework of public institutions.

---

<sup>206</sup> Other decisions adopted by the Government were:

- “Ministries and government offices should within their competence consistently include suitable measures for the solution of Roma issues into their programs,
- the State should within its resources devote special attention and aid to the fields of housing conditions, education and employment of the Roma”. Office for Nationalities. Available at: [http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities\\_national\\_communities/roma\\_ethnic\\_community/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities_national_communities/roma_ethnic_community/). Emphasis by Š.Z.

<sup>207</sup> Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe.

Available at: <<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>>. After the last changes made in legislative procedure in 2002 the role of the Ministry of Culture was substantially reduced in the process: the key role is assumed by **Parliamentary Committee for Education, Culture and Sport** (working body comprised of deputies from all political parties of the Parliament).

The National Council for Culture and the Slovene Cultural Chamber were set up to “include the voice of the public (mostly artists) into the new policy process.” The Chamber has “an open membership”; whilst the Council is appointed by the Parliament (7 members, public figures). However, both, the Council and the Chamber, faces numerous challenges: the Chamber exists more or less “on paper”; without any clearly defined role so far. Also the Council lacks visibility as it is “in the shadow of the Ministry of Culture due to its dependence on administrative ministerial support for its functioning”.<sup>208</sup>

Within the Ministry of Culture operates a special department in charge with the cultural activity of the “national” minorities, Romani groups, and other minority communities, the **Sector for Minority Cultural Rights and the Development of Cultural Diversity**.

As described in 2002 article by the director of the Sector for Minority Cultural Rights and the Development of Cultural Diversity Suzana Čurin Radovič, cultural policy in relation to minorities has been a component of cultural policy framework ever since 1974.<sup>209</sup> More and more social groups with “minority status”, in need of special protection in the domain of culture, have been included in the programme. This has been linked also to the increased awareness on the cultural rights. Specific features of the programme gained more attention in the sense that special measures (normative, organizational, financial) were completed in dialogue with representatives of minority ethnic communities.<sup>210</sup>

---

<sup>208</sup> Compendium.

<sup>209</sup> Special programme for cultural activities of Italian and Hungarian minorities was set up already in 1974. Čurin Radovič 2002; quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. The working area was expanded for the first time in 1992 - for the first time the proposals of immigrant groups were included. In 1993, the programme incorporated also the cultural activity of Roma community. A special department was officially set up within the sector of cultural and artistic programs at the end of 1990s (in 1998). In 2001 the department became an independent unit within the Ministry. Ministry of Culture, Slovenia. Available at: [http://www.mk.gov.si/en/working\\_areas/minority\\_cultural\\_rights\\_and\\_the\\_development\\_of\\_cultural\\_diversity](http://www.mk.gov.si/en/working_areas/minority_cultural_rights_and_the_development_of_cultural_diversity). Also: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>210</sup> See: Čurin Radovič 2002 quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

Today, the Ministry of Culture creates conditions for implementation of special cultural rights of:

- constitutionally defined national communities;
- Romani community;
- cultural rights of the members of other minority communities in RS.

The Romani community (communities) in the state is **not** categorized, and it is not divided on the “autochthonous” and “non-autochthonous” Roma - as assured by Marjetka Prezelj, expert adviser on Roma issues in the Sector for Minority Cultural Rights and the Development of Cultural Diversity. **All Romani groups**, their associations, are the subject of Ministry of Culture’s policies and programmes; all Romani associations may apply for funding through public tenders as will be explained later. Furthermore, Ministry might also finance the projects of other institutions (not Romani ones) aimed at the Romani audience; however that is not the case very often.

The support for cultural diversity at the Ministry is based on the definition of the “wealth of cultural life and cultural rights as a component of **human right to participate in cultural life.**”<sup>211</sup>

---

<sup>211</sup> In the Sector for Minority Cultural Rights and the Development of Cultural Diversity the following tasks are performed:

- preparing expert groundwork and regulations as well as monitoring domestic and European legislation falling within the working area of the Sector,
- developing and enforcing modernisation within the established EU concepts on the protection and promotion of cultural diversity,
- bringing awareness to the minority members regarding their rights and executing mediation for preventative conflict resolutions,
- developing special measures due to special circumstances in which the minority groups, not only ethnic but also vulnerable and hindered groups, operate culturally,
- monitoring the development of minority cultures and creating conditions for their promotions and recognition within the wider society,
- preparation of proposals for expert materials that are deliberated by the government and by the parliament of the Republic of Slovenia and by the Council of Europe, European Union and the United Nations,

The Ministry, as set in the web - page of Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe is the most active of all ministries in efforts to create a “special model on the protection of cultural rights of **all minorities**, which is a result of combining theoretical and practical experiences originating from particular issues and their needs.” The model is based on the recognition that an “active intervention on the part of the government in complex social situations is necessary in order to facilitate positive intercultural and interethnic relationships.”<sup>212</sup>

Ministry of Culture’s public policy for protection of cultural rights of “special social groups” encompasses – beside general directions of the principles of human rights – also the particular principles as the for creating conditions for cultural rights originating from the norms about the “special groups.” Members of those groups are perceived as the **subject of their own interests**, participating in creating decisions in relation to them through representative and other organs”.<sup>213</sup> Still, there is no Romani representative at the Ministry of Culture.

Public policy at the Ministry is carried out within two programmes:

➔ Special programme aimed at “protection of special cultural identities;”

- 
- cooperating with domestic and international governmental and non-governmental expert organisations and with individuals,
  - preparing and harmonising principals, goals and measures in the area of minority group cultural policy,
  - preparing and executing individual programmes for individual minority groups,
  - co-developing proposals for integration and monitoring the minority groups integration programmes,
  - cooperating with the Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for Cultural Activities and with local communities,
  - independently managing the budget to ensure the resources for financing cultural activities of minority communities. Source: Ministry of culture. Available at: <http://www.mk.gov.si/en/>.

<sup>212</sup> Compendium. Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>.

<sup>213</sup> Ministry of Culture. Available at: <http://www.mk.gov.si/en/>. Emphasis added.

- ➔ Integration programme directed towards “providing availability of cultural goods and services as well as access /availability for creativity also for the members of special social groups, in the way needed”.<sup>214</sup>

The special groups to whom special care is provided by the Ministry of Culture are:

- ethnic minorities;
- “disabled as hindered / impeded (“ovirane”) groups and
- children as vulnerable group”.<sup>215</sup>

Regarding the procedures, Ministry annually announces calls for project funding - through public tenders:

- official invitations for tenders (“razpis;” with a deadline for each applicant; the funding depends on the competition criteria) and
- an appeal (“poziv;” funding until the financial means are available; defined particular quota, all the projects that achieved required number of points get the funding). As observed by M. Preželj, an appeal is more convenient for the Romani community projects.

The whole procedure is the following: the Ministry sends a notice when the official invitations for tenders are announced (there are the lists of interested groups at the Ministry). Romani associations that apply are directed by the expert advisor M. Preželj according to the project objectives. When the applications are submitted, they are checked by the expert advisor Preželj and evaluated by the expert committee (competition committee). The committee - which is appointed by the Minister - evaluate the applications on the basis of evaluative criteria and in accordance to the objectives of the programme. The evaluation of the project is founded on the following criteria:

- prospect for successfulness,
- effectiveness,

---

<sup>214</sup> Ministry of Culture. Available at:

[http://www.mk.gov.si/si/delovna\\_podrocja/kulturne\\_pravice\\_manjsin\\_in\\_razvoj\\_kulturne\\_raznolikost\\_i/predstavitev\\_podrocja/](http://www.mk.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/kulturne_pravice_manjsin_in_razvoj_kulturne_raznolikost_i/predstavitev_podrocja/).

<sup>215</sup> Idem.

- suitability.<sup>216</sup>

There is no legal basis for representatives of Romani community at this stage - at the process of evaluation. Under particular conditions, for instance special project, representative of Romani group might present the project in front of a commission.<sup>217</sup> The final decision is given by the Minister. Ministry finances the projects approved in total – meaning 100 %.

Furthermore, “constant evaluation and improvements to achieve actual, and not only formal, equity for participation in cultural life” are the components of the programme framework. This is especially important as the absence of policies in other areas gives an impression that cultural policy measures are expected to “compensate them”.<sup>218</sup>

In the context of **Integration programme**<sup>219</sup> Romani groups might apply for the funding through the public official invitations for tenders (“razpis”) in other Sectors at the Ministry as well. However, the requirements (conditions) there are more difficult.

“Vulnerable categories” of people **within** Romani group are not particularly covered by the Ministerial programmes; there are no special measures to expose - for instance - **women** as the target group. Though, according to M. Preželj, in the case that the project, aimed at the vulnerable groups, appears, it is supported.<sup>220</sup>

The activities of Ministry of Culture are defined / limited with the 2002 Act on Public Interest: *Enforcing the Public Interest in Culture Act* – in comparison to the activities of

---

<sup>216</sup> Uspešnost, učinkovitost, primernost. An interview with M. Preželj.

<sup>217</sup> As it was a case of the project of Romani association Amala; an interview with Marjetka Preželj.

<sup>218</sup> However, the burning issue of financial means for “new minorities” remains. Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>.

<sup>219</sup> The Integration programme is conceived to assure “access to cultural goods and services and access to creativity also for the members of special social groups”. Quoted in Zagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>220</sup> An interview with Marjetka Preželj. There exists a Women’s forum in the framework of the Union of Roma.

the Office for Nationalities, which depend only on the negotiations of its director<sup>221</sup> (**Transparency** is an issue in the functioning of the Office: no civil society body has the view into financial functioning of the Office; no civil society body has the influence on its functioning; participatory mechanisms are not well developed).<sup>222</sup>

The share of financial means distributed to the Cultural Diversity Sector within Ministry of Culture is based on the Constitution, actual needs, as defined in the reports. As assured by Marjetka Preželj, expert adviser in the Sector, national communities participate in the process - before the approval of annual budget they are asked for an opinion.<sup>223</sup>

However, there has been a change in the funding procedures: until 2006 there has been a common budget for all minority communities, while in 2006 the cultural programmes of minorities were identified as a sub-programme in the national budget for culture, which is divided into for separate areas:

- Cultural activities of so called “official minorities” – Hungarians and Italians;
- Cultural activities of the Romani community;
- Cultural activities of other ethnic minorities (i.e. “new minorities”);
- A programme for blind and deaf people.<sup>224</sup>

This modification, special budget for communities, enables, according to M. Preželj, better distribution of financial means among the communities. The sum is defined by the commission and the Minister of Culture.

In last few years the financial means allocated to the Cultural Diversity Sector increased.<sup>225</sup> In 2006, from a total budget of 100 000 euros, “official minorities,” together with Romani population, received around 80%, while other minority groups received 20%. “Official” or “national” minorities are entitled to **structural** support (for their institutions and

---

<sup>221</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute Ljubljana.

<sup>222</sup> Idem.

<sup>223</sup> An interview with Marjetka Preželj, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>224</sup> Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>.

<sup>225</sup> The budget is approved by National assembly – following the proposals of the Ministry of Culture. An interview with Marjetka Preželj, Ministry of Culture.

regular activities), while all others have to apply and to compete for project founding through public tenders.<sup>226</sup>

Besides the financial means of Ministry of Culture, additional project funding is provided via the “national Public Fund for Cultural Activities.”<sup>227</sup>

The sum of 25 000 euros was allocated for the following projects in 2005, for:

- “organisation of cultural events and touring of cultural groups and artists;
- preparation of seminars, workshops, lectures, summer camps; counselling, supporting, informing in the field of cultural activities; and publishing of periodicals and other publications.”<sup>228</sup>

### **Issue of “special measures”**

Viewpoints differ most in relation to the origins for the adoption of special measures for the protection of Roma. Can the **paternalistic approach** on the state’s part, reflected, as stated by Vera Klopčič, in the “gradation of protective functions, role of the state and state institutions,” possibly be effective in the prevention of social exclusion, or is this a way of “strengthening the barriers and mutual prejudice between Roma and non-Roma”?<sup>229</sup>

What “positive discrimination” in the domain of protection Roma community actually means? Should the provisions on improvements of social position and the extermination of social exclusion of Romani group have precedence before any other measures in the domain of social protection for other population? Is providing of suitable living conditions for Roma responsibility of the state or the local communities?<sup>230</sup>

---

<sup>226</sup> Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>. An interview with Marjetka Preželj, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>227</sup> Idem.

<sup>228</sup> Idem.

<sup>229</sup> See: Klopčič.

<sup>230</sup> See: Klopčič, Available at: [http://www.dsrs.si/dejavnost/posveti/posvet\\_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf](http://www.dsrs.si/dejavnost/posveti/posvet_01072004/VeraKlopacic.pdf).

Recently, in those discussions - consistent with European legal framework for cultural diversity and cultural heritage - the better opportunities for understanding of specificities of Romani culture are indicated, especially, as noted by V. Klopčič (one of the leading Slovenian researchers in the area of Romani group) in the domain of expert treatment. Only step by step and only in few segments is changing the approach of majority population towards the egalitarian partnership in the management of Romani community - from the obligation to the acceptance of the “assistance measures” – (“ukrepi pomoči”) to providing equal opportunities for education, employment and participation of Roma in public life, in cultural and political life.<sup>231</sup>

### **Approach to cultural differences - culture as an aspect of social inclusion?**

In 1986 and 1993 Milton Bennett developed a *model of intercultural sensitivity* - as a “framework to explain the reactions of people to cultural difference”.<sup>232</sup> Using models from cognitive psychology and constructivism, he structured these observations into six levels of “increasing sensitivity to cultural difference”. Each level points out a particular cognitive formation that is articulated in certain types of attitudes and behaviour in relation to cultural difference. The underlying postulation of his model is that “as one’s experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one’s competence in intercultural relations increases”.<sup>233</sup>

The first three stages of the model are perceived as **ethnocentric**, meaning that one’s own culture is experienced as “central to reality in some way”; the second three stages are perceived as **ethnorelative**, meaning that “one’s own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures”.<sup>234</sup>

---

<sup>231</sup> See: Klopčič,

<sup>232</sup> Referred to from: Dragičević Šešić, Dragojević, 2004.

<sup>233</sup> Available at:

<http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/NewSiteCCSVI/regionalcooperation/aeve/DevelopmentalModelofInterculturalSensitivity.pdf>.

<sup>234</sup> The first three model stages - perceived as **ethnocentric** – are **Denial**; **Defense**; and **Minimization**. As explicated by the model, “**Denial** of cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture is experienced as the only real one. Other cultures are avoided by maintaining psychological and/or physical isolation from differences. People at Denial generally are disinterested in cultural difference,

The highest ethnorelative stage is **Integration**. Integration of cultural difference is a state “in which one’s experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. People at the stage of Integration often are dealing with issues related to their own “cultural marginality”. This stage - not automatically “better” than the Adaptation stage (see: the footnote) - in most situations demands intercultural competence; however, it is common “among non-dominant minority groups, long-term expatriates, and ‘global nomads’”.<sup>235</sup>

The model has been used successfully for more than the last decade to create a curriculum for intercultural education and training programmes.<sup>236</sup>

---

although they may act aggressively to eliminate a difference if it impinges on them. **Defense** against cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture (or an adopted culture) is experienced as the only good one. The world is organized into “us and them,” where “we” are superior and “they” are inferior. People at Defense are threatened by cultural difference, so they tend to be highly critical of other cultures, regardless of whether the others are their hosts, their guests, or cultural newcomers to their society. **Minimization** of cultural difference is the state in which elements of one’s own cultural world view are experienced as universal. Because these absolutes obscure deep cultural differences, other cultures may be trivialized or romanticized. People at Minimization expect similarities, and they may become insistent about correcting others’ behavior to match their expectations”.

Other two – beside Integration stage - **ethnorelative stages** are: **Acceptance** and **Adaptation**. **Acceptance** of cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. Acceptance does not mean agreement—cultural difference may be judged negatively—but the judgment is not ethnocentric. People at Acceptance are curious about and respectful toward cultural difference. **Adaptation** to cultural difference is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture. One’s worldview is expanded to include constructs from other worldviews. People at Adaptation are able to look at the world “through different eyes” and may intentionally change their behavior to communicate more effectively in another culture. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/regionalcooperation/aeyve/DevelopmentalModelofInterculturalSensitivity.pdf>

<sup>235</sup> Idem.

<sup>236</sup> Idem.

In the European Union's "Lisbon Strategy"<sup>237</sup> there has been an important change, since its launch in March 2000, as stated by Ulrike Schmidt, "in terms of putting more emphasis on **culture as an important aspect of social inclusion**."<sup>238</sup>

The European Commission has recently focused on the significance of culture in the promotion of the **inclusion of ethnic minority groups and immigrants** and has recognized **culture as a key policy domain to be evaluated**, arguing that access to culture is "a core part of human existence and is thus crucial for fostering a positive sense of identity."<sup>239</sup>

Numerous questions are raised at this point, based on the key one: at which stage is the state of Slovenia when taking a structure of *intercultural sensitivity model*? How the favourable economic conditions – in comparison to other South Eastern post-communist countries – delivered some of the **objectives for social inclusion**, and how this influence **cultural inclusion**? What is the impact of culture on promoting social inclusion of ethnic minorities? First of all, what are the **actual** policy trends and tendencies in Slovenia regarding minority culture, Romani culture?

As already stated in previous chapters, Article 10 of the *Exercising Public Interest in Culture Act* from 2002 (first fully articulated legal foundation that includes cultural objectives and the various sector-specific acts in Slovenia) provides the basis for the establishment of a three year strategy in the field of culture.<sup>240</sup> The *National programme for culture 2004-2007* adopted in 2004, while focusing on the **Slovenian** culture and language, also highlights the cultural pluralism, cultural diversity. As it is asserted in the document, "the openness of cultural policy to other cultures, international exchange, the cultural rights of national communities, minority communities and vulnerable groups...make an important contribution to the development of cultural identity".<sup>241</sup>

---

<sup>237</sup> "Lisbon Strategy" - also known as the "Lisbon Agenda" or "Lisbon Process" - an action and development plan for the European Union.

<sup>238</sup> Schmidt, 2007. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007\\_Schmidt.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007_Schmidt.pdf).

<sup>239</sup> Quoted in Schmidt, 2007. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007\\_Schmidt.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007_Schmidt.pdf).

<sup>240</sup> Visiting Arts Cultural Profiles - Slovenia

<sup>241</sup> National Programme for Culture, 2004-2007.

Among “general priorities of cultural policy in the period 2004 – 2007” is promotion of cultural diversity an important aim of cultural policy. Promotion of cultural diversity is, according to the resolution, one of the main objectives of Slovenian cultural policy in that period. As it is stated in the chapter 3, “an important goal of cultural policy is the promotion of cultural diversity, creative pluralism and cultural goods. This is one of the goals stipulated in Article 151 of the Amsterdam Treaty from 1997, on which the idea of European integration is based and which is also described in the UNESCO document *Our Creative Diversity* (1993). **The openness of cultural policy to other cultures, international exchanges, cultural rights of ethnic communities, minorities and vulnerable groups, as well as cultural activities of Slovenians outside the Republic of Slovenia contribute considerably to the development of cultural identity.** From this point of view the implementation of this goal is important also for the creation of programmes including the European dimension and applying for international funds. This goal is especially important from the aspect of the common Slovenian cultural territory, since Slovenian culture has always been known for its rich internal diversity”.<sup>242</sup> Also measures and indicators in the achieving the objectives of promotion of cultural diversity are determined.<sup>243</sup>

---

<sup>242</sup> The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2004 – 2007, 2004: 3. Available at: <<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nMatTnrQVpwJ:vzd.gov.si/vrs//util/bin.php%3Fid%3D2006051915593666+National+Programme+for+Culture,+2004-2007&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=si>>.

Emphasis added.

<sup>243</sup> Measures and indicators as determined in the achieving the objective of promotion of cultural diversity are:

Measures:

- “recognition that a large number of creative works, regardless of their genre, audience, aesthetic taste or ideology, fall in the category of public interest in the field of culture;
- priority to support deficient genres, works with diverse ethnic content, minority cultures and programmes and projects of vulnerable groups;
- ensuring the accessibility of cultural and creative goods;
- providing appropriate administrative support to artists and organisers applying for international funds;
- priority to support programmes drawing resources from international funds.

Indicators:

- participation of minority cultures, projects and programmes of vulnerable groups and deficient genres in programmes and projects supported by The Ministry for Culture;
- the scope of the definition of the public interest in culture;

The chapter 2 of the National Programme for Culture refers directly to ethnic groups, Romani communities and other minority ethnic communities. It states: “The public interest for culture in the field of ethnic communities, Roma communities, other minority ethnic communities and immigrants comprises: activities of cultural institutions, the founders of which are the central organizations of the national communities, publishing, librarianship, preservation of communities’ mother tongues, activities in all other cultural fields, cultural contacts with their parent states, international cooperation of communities and minorities in culture, and communities’ mutual cooperation”.<sup>244</sup>

The Programme defined two general goals, linked to the Romani community and other minority ethnic communities:<sup>245</sup>

- ➔ “Promotion of cultural diversity - by the year 2007 at least half of public institutions in the field of culture will include contents with diverse ethnic topics into their programs”.

This means that by 2007 should at least a half of public institutions in the domain of culture would incorporate “ethnic topics” into their programmes. One of the most vital elements of cultural diversity is “respect and promotion of ethnic diversity”. The purpose is directed towards the inclusion of programmes and projects of different minority communities’ members into the programmes of public institutions, as well as into “sensitising these for ethnic topics”.

- ➔ “Increasing the share of contents on ethnic diversity in public cultural programmes and projects”, which means:

a) “promotion of cultural pluralism. It is necessary to guarantee cultural rights as part of human rights, to promote cultural pluralism, and to ensure the conditions for special treatment

---

- number of programmes and projects drawing funds from international sources”.

The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2004 – 2007, 2004: 3. Available at: <<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nMatTnrQVpwJ:vzd.gov.si/vrs//util/bin.php%3Fid%3D2006051915593666+National+Programme+for+Culture,+2004-2007&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=si>>.

<sup>244</sup> Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>245</sup> Second report submitted by Slovenia pursuant to article 25, paragraph 1 of the framework convention for the protection of national minorities, July 6, 2004. Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

of cultural rights of minority communities, with emphasis on the conditions, necessary for their cultural creativity and access to cultural goods”.<sup>246</sup>

This should produce a “higher degree of creativity, greater cultural diversity, social cohesion, greater quality of living, promotion of cultural cooperation with the neighbouring states and the states of former Yugoslavia in different spheres”, etc.;

b) “providing conditions for authentic expression of cultural needs of various minority communities, promotion of minority cultures, and basic conditions for the promotion of their cultural identities;

c) increasing of the share of minority programs, supported by the Ministry of Culture and local communities;

d) accessibility of information on minority cultures. Low accessibility of information is one of the key obstacles to promotion of cultural pluralism. Better access to information will be achieved by support to programs and projects, which will bring adequate information support to the cultural activities of minority communities. Expected effects of such support are: increase of the awareness of cultural rights, decrease of conflict situations within minority communities, better knowledge of the majority nation on minority communities' activities, higher accessibility to cultural goods”.<sup>247</sup>

Furthermore Slovenian National Action Plan on Social Inclusion might be also relevant indicator of social / and cultural inclusion of minority groups. The thesis summarizes the basic findings of the report on Slovenian National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (2004-2006) in terms of the impact of culture on promoting social inclusion of ethnic minorities.<sup>248</sup> The report was made by the Institute of Ethnic Studies in Ljubljana.

---

<sup>246</sup> Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>247</sup> Idem.

<sup>248</sup> The study was made in the framework of the country reports submitted under the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) project: “The Aspect of Culture in the Social Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities: Assessing the Cultural Policies of six Member States of the European Union.” Project was conceived in order to “enhance cultural policies and NAPs with the overall goal to promote greater inclusion of members of ethnic minorities and Roma/Sinti groups in the socio-economic life of the European Union.... to evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of these policies in the six member states through the piloting of an index of Common Inter-Cultural Indicators”.

The issue of indicators has been a key part of the social policies adopted under the Lisbon Strategy (2000) including the OMC on Social Inclusion and ongoing efforts to develop and refine social

As stated in Slovenian report on Slovenian National Action Plan on Social Inclusion, in the Slovenian Plan “**access to and participation in cultural activities** is considered an important factor in **promoting inclusion and in preventing and reducing poverty and exclusion.**”<sup>249</sup>

As observed by the authors of the report, the Slovenian National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (2004-2006) takes into consideration the role of culture and cultural activities; however it does **not** specify a direct connection “between participation in cultural activities and increased social inclusion.” Instead a **cultural rights approach** is stressed: “Ensuring access to cultural assets and the conditions for creativity derives from the cultural dimension of human rights, and the state is therefore implementing activities to enable all kinds of access to cultural assets and creativity in all the areas of culture that it covers.”<sup>250</sup>

---

indicators continue under the auspices of the European Commission. One of the main objectives of the OMC Project is to contribute constructively to this effort in the area of cultural indicators. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>249</sup> Idem.

<sup>250</sup> National Action Plan, p. 14; quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

The policy goals to promote access to culture for minority ethnic groups, as declared in Slovenian National Action Plan are the following:

➔ Long-term objective:

“Promoting cultural diversity in public programs and raising the share of programs for ethnic minorities supported by the Ministry of Culture; developing amateur culture and increasing the number of cultural associations and the average number of those attending by 10% until 2007; increasing organisational efficiency of amateur culture (help from expert mentors, adequate premises).”

➔ Priority objectives in the period 2004 – 2006 were:

“Ensuring the conditions for adequate treatment of the cultural rights of ethnic minorities,

Promoting the development of minority cultures and improving information;

Promoting cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and local communities;

Supplementing and developing the regional network of cultural links;

Improving social cohesion and awareness of diversity, improving access to cultural goods and conditions for creativeness irrespective of the location.”

➔ Measures and priority tasks to achieve the declared objectives:

The Slovenian government, according to the report, perceives inclusion and co-operation in cultural activities as one of the significant domains that may “positively contribute to the social inclusion of individuals or groups”.<sup>251</sup> As stated in the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion, “inclusion in cultural groups has strong socialisation significance, since it enables the self-assertion of those groups of society and individuals that in their everyday working or family environment do not achieve personal satisfaction and affirmation or for biological (youth, old people, disabled), age or other reasons are pushed to the margins. Cultural appreciation programs act in the function of social cohesion. This is manifested primarily in the form of social life accompanying cultural activities, as a counter to the growing trends of alienation”.<sup>252</sup>

In the sphere of promoting access to culture for the **most vulnerable ethnic groups** in Slovenia, the National Action Programme 2004-2006 posed general measures, which complicate the evaluation of the implementation. However according to the Slovenian report on National Action Programme, the “policies to promote cultural pluralism and the development of minority cultures in Slovenia are being implemented;” the progress might be observed in a variety of areas:

- ➔ The amount of financial means allocated for the policies has increased in the last years;
- ➔ Growing number of minority cultural associations have been able to gain financial means for the cultural projects from the Ministry of Culture;
- ➔ A number of projects that indicate the presentation of minority cultures in Slovenia and abroad contribute to greater accessibility of information on the minority groups' cultural activities has also been increasing.<sup>253</sup>

---

“Fulfilling the conditions for financing of what are called new minorities (for the most part comprising people who settled in Slovenia from the former Yugoslav republics);

Fulfilling the concept of cultural diversity in the function of improving the quality of life for all.”

<sup>251</sup> Idem.

<sup>252</sup> National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (2004-2006): 14-15; quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

<sup>253</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

## **Evaluation of the measures determined in National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2004-2006 to improve access to culture<sup>254</sup>**

Due to the vagueness in defining the measures and priority tasks envisaged in the National Action Plan, the project of the Institute for Ethnic studies established a set of indicators that relate to the proposed measures, as well to (some of) the afore mentioned objectives in general (long-term and priority objectives). The indicators of the evaluation “how much has been done to promote the cultural diversity in public programmes, to promote access to cultural activities for the Roma and the new ethnic minorities in Slovenia, to promote the development of their cultures and improve information about their activities” are the following:

- ➔ “Increase of the amount of financial means, dedicated by the state to the financing of Roma community and new ethnic minorities' projects”;

As observed by the Institute for Ethnic studies, the financial means for the culture of minority communities have been increasing since 2003. In particular, it is noticeable the increase within the special minority program of the Ministry of Culture in 2005, when the total amount, intended for ethnic communities' culture, increased through rebalance by 248.402 EUR.

Total amounts provided by the Ministry of Culture is transmitted, as already explained in previous chapters, within special programme for minority communities' culture and the means that the Ministry of Culture reserved for the projects of minority communities within the Integration program.

Hence, the Roma community obtained 3.275,75 EUR in 2002, 2.086,46 EUR in 2003, 4.420,80 EUR in 2004, and 2.420,30 EUR in 2005.<sup>255</sup> Other minority ethnic communities and immigrants have so far not been included in the integration program.

As already explained in previous chapters, minority ethnic communities' associations can apply with their projects to the competitions of the *Public Fund for cultural activities* of the

---

<sup>254</sup> The summarizes the research outcomes, made by Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

<sup>255</sup> Ministry of Culture, June 2006; quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

RS. The Fund financed the projects in the total amount 18.778,17 EUR in 2005,<sup>256</sup> in 2006, projects totalling 19.821,40 EUR were supported.

→ “Improvement of the financing conditions of new ethnic minorities”;

Increase in financial means provided by the state for financing of the minorities’ projects can be perceived as improvement of conditions of cultural projects financing.

Furthermore, very positive indicator might be perceived the expansion of the **number of beneficiaries** – associations, entitled to applying to the Public Funds (Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities) public competition (due to the fact that the conditions no longer require at least 5 years of work in culture, but only 3.<sup>257</sup> Moreover, the Ministry of Culture discussed the reduction of the demanded period to 1 year).

There must be mentioned also complicated application procedures for project funding provided by the state - Ministry of Culture. The volunteers working in the cultural associations of ethnic minorities in many cases could not manage the procedures as observed by the director of the Cultural Diversity Sector, Suzana Čurin Radović.<sup>258</sup> Hence the Ministry introduced “professional help or counselling”, it can also be perceived as “improvement of conditions for the financing of cultural projects”. co-operation with the Ministry of Culture and the personal endeavours of the employees of the Ministry, who are there to help them with the applications for the projects are well accepted by the minority community members as observed by researchers at the Institute for Ethnic studies.

→ “Increase of ethnic diversity of contents included in the special program of the Ministry of Culture”;<sup>259</sup>

The special programme of the Ministry of Culture encompassed the same number of minority ethnic communities in 2005 as the year before.<sup>260</sup> The number of associations of a variety of

---

<sup>256</sup> The First NAP Report 2006: 22; quoted in by Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

<sup>257</sup> Idem.

<sup>258</sup> Čurin Radović, 2002: 235; quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

<sup>259</sup> Source: Report of the Ministry of culture on the implementation of the National program for culture 2004-2007 – for the year 2005. Quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

<sup>260</sup> There was, however, a change: in 2005, the cultural association Migjeni (of Albanian community) was included into the special programme, and the African centre was not - due to the “incomplete application”. Idem.

minority communities which applied for funds with their cultural projects increased significantly in comparison to earlier years (in 2005 ten more than in 2004).

This is partly the consequence of the possibility that Romani associations could – unlike in the previous years – started registering their cultural projects independently, and no longer through the Union of Roma of Slovenia, due to the modification in the tenders: as reported by the Ministry, two Romani associations registered independently in 2005. In addition, the number of other non-governmental organizations, applying for funding with their cultural projects, which deal with ethnic minority communities has raised as well (3 in 2005 - 1 more than in 2004).

Furthermore, various new cultural activities of national communities were supported, as well as new topics of cultural projects of the Romani community and other minority ethnic communities were introduced.

Regarding Romani community, in addition to the central Romani journal, a journal of a local Romani association was registered and co-financed.

As regards other minority ethnic communities, their activities encompassed also new cultural projects, such as: literary evenings, internal newsletters (majority of minority ethnic community publishes the newsletter), ethno shows, workshops, lectures, concerts; they introduced different ways of associations' presentations (films and brochures), they also set up websites, as well as organized events at anniversaries of important personalities.

In short, the Ministry reported a considerable increase in the “cultural diversity” of the special programme, from the perspective of **activities** (forms of activities, using also contemporary means of expression) as from the perspective of **initiators**.

➔ “Increase in the number of projects within the special programme, which contributes to the presentation of minority cultures in Slovenia and abroad and contributes to greater accessibility of information on the minority communities cultural activities”.<sup>261</sup>

A number of projects which present minority cultures in Slovenia and abroad has increased. Also, a number of projects, permitting minority communities to “present themselves in different ways”, were incorporated into the special programme of the Ministry of Culture.

---

<sup>261</sup> Report of the Ministry of culture on the implementation of the National program for culture 2004-2007 – the year 2005. Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

There were 18 such projects conceived with the Romani community (34% within the Romani sub-programme; 7 more than in 2004), out of total 28. Those projects were reaching the domains of publishing; press conferences, presenting books, newspapers, newsletters, CDs; music workshops; participation at festivals in Slovenia and abroad; cultural associations' performances; exhibitions; lectures on characteristics of minority cultures; radio programmes, information centres; internet portals, etc.

Ministry of Culture finances Internet portals with the information on minority communities' activities; the number of minority associations' Internet Portals supported by Ministry increased in regard to previous years (to 2004); it also increased the number of "registered and co-financed Internet journals and newsletters" of minority associations.<sup>262</sup> Those Internet sources "greatly contribute to the information spreading between association members".

The importance of Roma information centre ROMIC, set up in 2004, is outstanding. ROMIC, weekly broadcasting 25-minute TV programme on current events in the Romani community, is also financed by a special programme of the Ministry of Culture.

➔ "Number of programmes and projects, co-financed by the Ministry of Culture and local communities (the share of co-financed projects within all minority programs and projects, financed by the Ministry of Culture)".

The government and those local communities which have articulated their willingness to finance Romani cultural projects (and those of the "new ethnic minorities") have been allocated certain financial means for these ends each year.

5 cultural projects in the domain of Romani group were co-financed by municipalities (Novo mesto - 3 projects; Črešnovci; Črnomelj), that amounts to 9,4% of all the projects, financed within the Romani sub-programmes of Ministry of Culture. In comparison, the share of cultural programme, co-financed by local communities within the programme for (national communities - Italians and Hungarians - is 18,6%; as (rightly) concluded by the researchers at the Institute for Ethnic Studies, the municipalities, populated by "national communities" are more generous.

### **Issue of local level integration- Issue of integration of minority programmes at local level**

---

<sup>262</sup> 11 in 2005, 4 more than in 2004. Idem.

The Ministry of Culture lead discussions with the Public fund of the RS for cultural activities in order to achieve “better integration of minority programs at local level”, with the assistance of the local Fund offices.

Ministry of Culture also invite other co-financers, sponsors and donors. As stated in the report, in 2005 these were: Employment Service of Slovenia, American embassy, German embassy, Republic of Austria, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, different associations, companies and individuals.

Still the project bearers had to invest substantial means of their own - in 42,8% of all cultural projects of the Ministry of culture special programme. That certainly presents a huge problem, due to financial conditions of majority of Romani population.

Second issue is that - although the National Action Plan determines the “promotion of cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and local communities” as one of the priority goals for the period 2004 – 2006, there are no concrete measures predicted to promote this cooperation in the domain of culture. The Ministry of Culture does not cooperate with local municipalities, as stated by M. Prezelj from the Cultural Diversity Sector.<sup>263</sup> It does not encourage local communities to co-finance cultural activities of minority communities. Whether or not minority communities’ projects will be co-financed by local community, principally depends upon the project bearers; their capability to persuade local authorities to provide some finances for the project.<sup>264</sup>

## **Burning issue of the trends in the state: cultural preservation versus cultural development**

In the Slovenian policy the dilemmas of finding “equilibrium between contemporary creation and cultural heritage preservation” are very challenging; becoming, as stated in the Compendium of Cultural Policies, an “ever more sensitive question since

---

<sup>263</sup> An interview with M. Prezelj, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>264</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter in 2006.

traditional values are attaining a stronger position in the patriotic development of the young Slovenian state under the right wing coalition.”<sup>265</sup>

What are the tendencies in the domain of minority culture? Does the state support so called folkloristic view or emphasis is on the cultural development, social integration? How much the state support for the cultural activities of the minority groups contributes to the improved social inclusion of these groups?

As maintained by Brankica Petković from Peace Institute Ljubljana, in Slovenia it is a great emphasis on the “**folkloristic aspect**”. As stated in Slovenian report, in Slovenia “more attention is being paid to the **preservation of cultures of ethnic minorities** than to their integration into the mainstream cultural space.”<sup>266</sup> It is evident that the existing “cultural policy” (policy to promote ethnic minorities’ access to culture), as observed by Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter from the Institute for Ethnic Studies, deals mostly with creating of conditions for the **preservation of the minority cultures** and with providing financial means for cultural activities of ethnic minorities. As noted by above mentioned researchers, “the cultural policy neglects potentials of the human and social capital of ethnic minorities. Culture is **not** recognized as a factor that contributes to the personal growth of an individual, a factor that could provide for employment possibilities in the field of culture and arts, etc. The connection between participation in cultural activities and social inclusion is **not** established.”<sup>267</sup> The present situation, as seen by the researchers Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter is a “**non-integration** of ...the Roma in the cultural space.”<sup>268</sup>

Ethnic minorities, in particular Romani community and “new” ethnic communities often do not have the opportunities and means to “participate in the host culture” neither they have the opportunities and means to “preserve their native cultures”. As rightly stated by researchers from Institute for Ethnic Studies, “both are needed and should be supported by the state if it wants to encourage and enable a real intercultural dialogue in a society”.<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>265</sup> Compendium. <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/slovenia.php?aid=41>

<sup>266</sup> Idem.

<sup>267</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at:

[http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf). Emphasis added.

<sup>268</sup> Idem.

<sup>269</sup> Idem.

## **Trends in Romani community: cultural identity formation - cultural preservation versus cultural development, intercultural dialogue**

A majority of the Roma (as well as members of the new ethnic minorities) in Slovenia want to preserve their native culture(s). In order to preserve Romani culture, Roma have set up a number of cultural associations in Slovenia; the main objective of most of them is, as already stated above to **preserve their culture, their cultural identity**.

It seems that the awareness on the importance of preserving “traditional Romani culture” **enhanced** among Romani population in Slovenia in the recent years.

It seems that their culture start to become a “source of pride” based on recognition that - in Charles Taylor’s terms - “their traditional culture has value.”<sup>270</sup> It seems that the culture transformed also in the strength “to continue struggling for a better life,” which is of huge importance due to their discriminated and marginalized social position.<sup>271</sup>

The role of culture in organization of Romani population in Slovenia it is closely connected to the **establishment of Romani cultural associations** – as the **way of organizing Romani population** in the state. Founding Romani associations as the basis of the organization of the Romani population has emerged especially in the past few years (five, six years).

Increasing number of Romani associations might be partly attributed to the efforts of the Office for Nationalities that have, as exposed at their Internet portal, “concentrated on organising Roma and establishing Roma associations”. Following observations made by the Office for Nationalities, “experience in working with members of the Roma Community has shown that the endeavours of Slovenia’s national authorities and municipalities cannot achieve optimum results in resolving Roma issues without including Roma themselves in

---

<sup>270</sup> Taylor, 1994: 36.

<sup>271</sup> See: Stamatopoulou, 2004. Elsa Stamatopoulou referred to the minority populations in general. See: Stamatopoulou, 2004.

these activities.”<sup>272</sup> By being active in Romani associations – while borrowing the words of Carol Bellamy from UNICEF - the Roma are given the “opportunity, support and guidance to become their **own agents of change, within their world and their time.**”

Associations, ceremonies, symbols, etc play an essential role – in **preservation, confirmation and renewal of individual’s ethnic identification**; cultural, sport, religious associations, local self-managing communities etc., where members of minority communities gather, plays a significant role in this process. Collective events such as celebrations, often appearing in a standard / stable shape, based on traditional model, “consolidate cultural foundations, renew and strengthen the feelings of belonging and solidarity.” Participation in association’s gatherings of ethnic communities affects the “individual elements of group identity and identification.”<sup>273</sup>

Roma associations operate in 19 municipalities, as stated by representative of the Roma Union of Slovenia; in the municipalities Murska Sobota, Črnomelj and Puconci operate more than one Romani association in each<sup>274</sup> (other municipalities where operate Romani associations are Novo Mesto, Velenje, Maribor, Krško, Rogašovci, Tišina, Kočevje, Semič, Metlika, Kuzma, Ljubljana, Črenšovci, Dobrovnik, Cankova, Lendava, Trebnje).

Outcomes from the founding of Romani associations are, as set at the web – page of Office, “not yet satisfactory, as activities are only aimed at culture and cooperation in resolving issues encountered in their environments”. However, an important effect of attempts to organise Roma was that “the community’s interests are now represented in municipal administration and municipal councils”;<sup>275</sup> furthermore, the Romani associations play important role also in reversing feelings of helplessness among the Roma community as the factor of empowering Roma as vulnerable group in Slovenia.

As explained at the Office for Nationalities Internet portal, the leaders of the Romani associations are the co-speakers at the **local** level; while the representatives of the

---

<sup>272</sup> Office for Nationalities. Available at:

[http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities\\_national\\_communities/roma\\_ethnic\\_community/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities_national_communities/roma_ethnic_community/).

<sup>273</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>274</sup> Zveza Romov; e-mail from Romeo Horvat, a representative of Union of Roma.

<sup>275</sup> Office for Nationalities.

**Roma Union of Slovenia** that covers a majority of Romani associations in Slovenia<sup>276</sup> are the co-speakers of the **state agencies**:<sup>277</sup> 38 Roma associations have been established in Slovenia until 2005,<sup>278</sup> and most of them (22) are united into Union of Roma, an “umbrella organisation” for Romani associations in Slovenia.<sup>279</sup>

The Union of Roma is, as stated above, a partner in the negotiations with national authorities - it serves as a “collocutor of the state bodies” (including Office for Nationalities); it also assumed a coordinative role – it directs and coordinates the activities of Romani associations. The Union of the Roma of Slovenia has three forums:

- a) The Roma Counsellors' Forum - a working body within the Union of Roma of Slovenia, established in 2002, a kind of network of Romani municipal counsellors;
- b) political forum;
- c) women’s forum<sup>280</sup> - that is of particular importance in the light of protection of vulnerable groups **within** a minority society (in this case - women).

The Union also organises cultural events and meetings of Roma every year, and<sup>281</sup> it is active in fostering the establishment of “local” Romani associations.<sup>282</sup> Only in last few years more than ten Romani associations were founded.<sup>283</sup>

---

<sup>276</sup> At the Office’s web – page is however set that the Union of Roma covers all Romani associations, what is not accurate.

<sup>277</sup> In 2002, consistent with the provisions of the Statute of the Roma Union of Slovenia, the “Forum of Roma Councillors” was established. The Forum presents “a working body within the Roma Union of Slovenia linking Roma councillors and municipalities in which Roma are represented”. See: Office for Nationalities.

<sup>278</sup> Associations are set up consistent with the Associations Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 60/95). Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>279</sup> The Union of Roma Associations of the RS was set up in 1996 incorporating 4 Romani associations. In 2000 the union renamed into Union of Roma of Slovenia, which then connecting 6 associations. Klopčič and Polzer (eds.), 2003: 305-306. Quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>280</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>281</sup> Office for Nationalities.

<sup>282</sup> Zveza Romov; e-mail from Romeo Horvat, a representative of Union of Roma.

<sup>283</sup> Idem.

However, the issue of authority **within** Romani community (communities) need to be highlighted at this point: in Slovenia we notice a **concentration of power in Romani community**. For instance, the “key figure” in public life, Jožek Horvat – Muc is, among other functions, serving as the president of Romani Union - crown Romani organization, as the editor-in-chief in Romani information centre ROMIC, the editor of Romani newspaper Romano Them (Romski svet) etc.<sup>284</sup> As explained by Brankica Petković, such situation might become harmful for Romani community (communities). The “key figure” by becoming the steady component of political establishment of majority population may lose the competence of analytical consideration of situation, the ability to identify community needs and start changing their environment (in the fear not to worsen situation).

Furthermore, the **lack of communication and (political) dialogue between** Romani groups in Slovenia – between the Romani communities in the region of Prekmurje and those in the South East Slovenia region – as expressed by the representatives of Romani community (communities)<sup>285</sup> - seems that further weaken the political influence of the Roma in Slovenia.

However, very important is, that the Union of Roma perceives the concept of Romani community in a **holistic sense**, as assured by the representatives of the Union; the Union might cover **all Romani organizations** in Slovenias, without a division, which is introduced by Slovenian governmental institution Office for Nationalities (“traditional” and “autochthonous” Roma versus those perceived as the “new” minorities, as already pointed out in previous chapters).

The large majority of **Romani associations** perceive as their basic / primary objective - the “**preservation of culture**”, or as in the words of the representatives of Roma Union, they mostly deal with the “preservation of language, and their cultural heritage, as

---

<sup>284</sup> Interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute, Ljubljana.

<sup>285</sup> Interview with representatives of Romani community in Novo Mesto, including Roman Tasič, Romani counsellor in Novo Mesto.

well as with their **national identity** (as well as with organization of events and improvement of Roma in their local environment).”<sup>286</sup>

Preservation of Romani culture recognizes many features of cultural expressions: dances, language, stories, songs, practical skills; artifacts; arts and crafts. These forms of expressions are celebrated, and these patterns of use hold clues for twenty-first century management systems originating in “**traditional Romani knowledge**” (or “traditional Romani culture”).

**Folklore groups** operate in the largest majority of Romani associations in Slovenia: the most of them encompass musical and dance groups.<sup>287</sup>

For instance, as stated at the web-page of Romani association from Maribor, Romano Pralipe, the association - set up in 1996 with the purpose to preserve “Romani cultural identity, interpersonal assistance and management of position of Roma in Slovenia,” - among the most important activities carrying out by the association are cultural activities - folklore: music, dance, theatre, etc.<sup>288</sup> Romani Association Romani Union (Murska Sobota), that was founded in 1992 and is the first association established within the Union of Roma of Slovenia – beside carrying out its political activities – has even three folklore groups, a theatre group, (and it is also active in publishing and media. It publishes the bulletin Roma Nevipe – Romske novice).

The Romani Camps are organized in Murska Sobota each year in the summer; in 2003 for the first time the Romani Camp was also organized in Novo mesto. The content of the camps is also a **traditional Romani culture**, the **folkloristic** aspect of Romani culture.

---

<sup>286</sup> Representatives of Romani Union.

<sup>287</sup> Some association such as Inter Kuzma (Kuzma) promote **sports**: The Small Football Roma Club is active within the above-mentioned Association.

<sup>288</sup> However, its efforts are directed towards the holistic improvement of the position of Romani inhabitants in Maribor and the surrounding. See: Web-page of Romano Pralipe Maribor. Available at: [http://www.kreart.si/romano\\_pralipe/](http://www.kreart.si/romano_pralipe/).

In September 2003 the first Romani **museum** in Slovenia was opened in the municipality of Črenšovci - in the Romani settlement Kamenci.<sup>289</sup> The Romani Association Romano Pejtašaugo in Kamenci provide the cultural programme including music, dance, fortune-telling etc.

Still, there are some exceptions in regards to cultivating folkloristic aspect of Romani culture, for instance the Romani Association Amala (Ljubljana), the basis of which present musical activities (the President of the association Traja Brizani is the leader of the musical group Amala, composed of professional musicians). The mission of the association, founded in 1996, is to preserve and continue the rich Romani musical heritage while presenting it in a more **contemporary way**.<sup>290</sup>

### **Challenges of Romani Associations in Slovenia**

As already state in previous chapters, for minority groups, culture is not merely “artistic creativity” but rather signifies “lifestyle as a whole”.<sup>291</sup> As stated by Commission of the European Communities “access to and participation in cultural activities plays a very important role in promoting inclusion and in preventing and reducing poverty and exclusion... Participation in cultural activities is a key way in which people can define and develop their own identities. People can represent themselves to others and engage in symbolic exchange. It is well documented how active involvement in cultural and arts activities can be a tool in helping people who are isolated and marginalized to gain skills and self-confidence. Cultural projects can also contribute significantly to the regeneration of disadvantaged communities and to creating employment opportunities.”<sup>292</sup>

In particular for the Romani community (communities) in Slovenia it could be claimed that through the cultural associations the Roma are involved in the activities of the

---

<sup>289</sup> Office for Nationalities. Available at:

[http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities\\_national\\_communities/roma\\_ethnic\\_community/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities_national_communities/roma_ethnic_community/).

<sup>290</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>291</sup> Idem.

<sup>292</sup> Commission of the European Communities, COM (2006) 62 final, p. 122.

local communities; their cultural associations characterize “collocutors” to the local authorities in the subjects related to the solving of Romani social problems.<sup>293</sup>

However, the functioning of Romani cultural associations in Slovenia faces many challenges / problems:

➔ Financial problems

Most of the associations are being financed by their own means (donations); only modest contributions are made by the Ministry of Culture, the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities and local communities. The Act on the Implementation of Public Interest in the Field of Culture<sup>294</sup> and Associations Act<sup>295</sup> stipulate that the associations in different fields of culture are entitled to have an option to gain the status of an “association in public cultural interest,” if their activities go beyond the implementation of interests of their members. That provides to associations, according to Slovenia National Action Plan report, a “more equal status”, while to the civil society is given an “influence upon the solving of important social issues, participation in decisions regarding public financial means, and influence over public interest activities.”<sup>296</sup> However, only few associations have acquired the status of an association of public interest so far.

The associations face lack of infrastructural support, which would contribute to the raise in quality of their work.<sup>297</sup>

As suggested in the Slovenian report on National Action Plan, for the preservation of minority cultures – rather than financing of the individual cultural project of minority artists – **permanent financing** of association activities is required, that would provide for the “preservation, transmission of language, traditions, culture”. The need, as exposed by the minority representatives, is to establish a long-term non-project organization and financing of different activities, providing an opportunity of “creation of a social network” connecting sports associations, cultural groups etc.<sup>298</sup>

---

<sup>293</sup> Bačič 1999: 38. Quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>294</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, No. 96-4807/02.

<sup>295</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, No. 60/95, 89/99.

<sup>296</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>297</sup> Idem.

<sup>298</sup> Idem.

→ The work in cultural associations is not perceived in a positive way, as “socially ‘desired’”; the consequence is the work depends on amateur - voluntary work of a few individuals - “enthusiasts”; while some minority community intellectuals avoid being exposed.<sup>299</sup>

→ Issue of access to information channels.

The representatives of minority communities in general emphasize that they had “no access to information channels through which to inform the public on their work”. The minority associations cannot afford to pay advertising in influential media such as public television and large circulation newspapers as it is far too expensive. Hence, they use mail (mostly to their members), Internet facilities, posters and “free-of-charge publications of events on informative pages of major newspapers”. However, doing this, information can only reach a limited circle of people.<sup>300</sup>

### **“Discovering ethnic mythology” of Romani groups**

Furthermore, another important function of cultural associations - in gatherings of minority community members in general - is, that in these processes the **myths of ethnic origins** are transmitted; in particular those myths that reaffirm the “long-lasting and uninterrupted existence of an ethnic community.”<sup>301</sup> As maintained by Anthony D. Smith and Hutchinson, myths and symbols play crucial role in unifying processes of any group, guaranteeing populations’ “**continuity**” over generations.<sup>302</sup>

The tendencies of “**discovering ethnic mythology**” of Romani groups<sup>303</sup> are known in numerous cases in South Eastern Europe and wider; however, they are also present in Romani communities in Slovenia.<sup>304</sup>

---

<sup>299</sup> Idem.

<sup>300</sup> Idem.

<sup>301</sup> See: Južnič 1993; Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>302</sup> See: A. D. Smith, Hutchinson, 1996, p. 10

<sup>303</sup> Certainly Romani groups are not the only ones following such tendencies, but the thesis focuses on the Roma.

It seems that the **basis** or, in other words, a **unifying element** of Romani identity in Slovenia / their “ethnic mythology” is based on the two premises:

- ➔ The hypothesis on a journey and
- ➔ Construction of Roma as **victims**.

For instance, a great example represents the web-page of the Maribor Romani Pralipe association. The web-page explains “the history of Roma” - in their words: “something small on the history of Roma.” “As known by everyone, the Roma are the nation which decided to travel around the world and to return back to their country.” But their country “has disappeared. This journey lasted long centuries until now. In the past they divided into tribes, each travelling its own direction. They have lost their way; the primary goal of the journey has lost its sense... They realized, that they had no their homeland any more. They became nomads. That changed them.” The journey started in “India and its surroundings. Some of them finished their journey in Turkey, Romania, Russia, Austria, Germany, Belgium. Some of them succeeded to come to England, even to America. They made a living by circus, singing, women with dancing, but also by illegal works. They had to survive. The families got bigger in the journeys, travelling from village to village, from town to town, from country to country.”<sup>305</sup>

Moreover, the flexibility and dynamic of a group is exposed: “Roma are dispersed all around the world. Among them are the rich, the poor, the good, those who behave badly, as well as those, who still live in the huts and tents.”<sup>306</sup>

At the web page of above-mentioned Romani associations from Maribor, is also reflected the second unifying element, **construction of Roma as victims**; the approach of majority situation towards the Romani community: “The Roma had been desired nowhere. The people perceived them as uncivilised, uneducated, lacking a stable culture. They were a nation without a land, and a nation without recognition in the world...Romani nation suffered

---

<sup>304</sup> Interviews with Ilona Tomova, Sociological Institute, Sofia; Antonina Zhelyazkova, International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations, Sofia.

<sup>305</sup> Romani association Romano Pralipe Maribor. Available at: [http://www.kreart.si/romano\\_pralipe/index.php?section=8](http://www.kreart.si/romano_pralipe/index.php?section=8).

<sup>306</sup> Idem.

a lot due to its way of life. In England, France they have been burned at the funeral piles, people threw stones at them; they have been turned away. They continued travelling in the hope to find a land where they could get settled themselves, where they could get recognition, where their children could have a better life.”<sup>307</sup>

### **Cultural mobilization of Romani population as a component of political mobilization**

It has been noted by many scholars that the Romani population is increasingly becoming a component of a “**political mobilisation**” process, manifested throughout Europe. **Cultural affirmation** is a component of this process, as maintained by Nicolae Gheorghe and Thomas Acton.

In Slovenia, as in a number of other countries<sup>308</sup> we can identify the indicators (or symptoms) of the cultural mobilisation of Romani community (communities) which “preceded and accompanied the process of nation and state-building”. Emerging Romani political elite is now engaged, according to N. Gheorghe and T. Acton in a kind of “self-rallying” process. In a number of countries we can witness cultural celebrations, publications in and about the Romani language, readings in Romani folklore, and textbooks for Romani children in schools, etc.<sup>309</sup>

As observed by Gheorghe and Acton, “the unity of ethnic struggles is always illusory, but, to participants in those struggles, creating, strengthening and maintaining that unity often seems the prime task.” This **illusion** of ethnic unity is a consequence of a common threat, racism. Unifying element in these struggles is “a common experience of discrimination”. And as “insofar as culture is experientially determined”, according to Gheorghe and Acton, “that common identity will become an increasing reality”.<sup>310</sup>

---

<sup>307</sup> Idem.

<sup>308</sup> An interview with Ilona Tomova, Sociological Institute, Sofia.

<sup>309</sup> Gheorghe & Acton, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>

<sup>310</sup> Gheorghe and Acton compare the movement with anti-Black racism. As set by the authors, in many ways, both - “anti-Gypsy racism and Gypsy anti-racism” (or “Gypsy nationalism” or “Gypsy communalism”, not) are as diverse as “Black anti-racism and anti-Black racism”. The efforts of Romani intellectuals in many countries to create a “common Romani political struggle” may seem

However, at this point – in recognition of the illusion of ethnic unity, as a solution the concept of intercultural mediation might be seen relevant, as formulated by Milena Dragičević-Sesić and Sanjin Dragojević. Intercultural mediation deals with inside interior relations in the framework of multiethnic NGO; mediating the worth and the idea that the group would like to promote in the local community between different groups of population through socio-cultural animation; identifying the problem and setting up a dialogue on the problem-solving processes through public communication (raising awareness) by establishing public platform; pressure on the public authorities for concrete solutions and introduction of relevant procedures into decision-making processes at all levels; establishing condition to exceed the ethnic identities and enabling discussion on the issues of regional and European significance / character; constructive involvement of international community into the regional and local processes of interethnic communication, especially in the standard-setting procedures related to the methods of decision making and communication.<sup>311</sup> By those activities the activists of NGOs enable inclusion and cooperation of different ethnic groups into the activities of importance for wider population, without discrimination at any basis (ethnic, cultural, social, educational, etc. basis). In order the mediation achieves its full effect, central communication public space, or use media space as the platform for meeting different ethnic groups when there is no trust between ethnic groups.

Instruments of mediation, are street theatres, carnivals, project installations, sculptures in the public space, media discussions, interviews etc., followed or preceded by workshops – those activities of NGOs that enable direct contact, information exchange and consolidating the thoughts around a common problem etc. In the process of mediation there is no “pure shapes of diffusion of culture”, but they have to be complemented by workshops, discussions, theatre participative forms etc. as well, in these time, marketing techniques. That method might be used also in the education for recognition and acceptance of differences (diversity awareness training), that step-by-step community transform from odbijanja of the Others to the level of intercultural communication, equal dialogue and cooperation with the Other.

Cultural mediation framework as posed for the position of BiH by Milena Dragičević-Sesić and Sanjin Dragojević, 2004, might be also used for the case of majority - Roma relations context, in Slovenia should be conceived to “eliminate prejudices and non-understanding

---

remarkable; yet, Romany activists are exposed to the “same political logic as other ethnic activists”.

Available at: <http://www.geocities.com/~Patrin/multiculturality.htm>

<sup>311</sup> Dragičević-Šešiić, Dragojević, 2004.

(indifference) towards the Other, recognition of its worth, the need and aspiration, and enabling the conditions for the atmosphere of cooperation between different ethnic groups.” Through mediation the common project would develop, that would establishing tolerance.

### **.The Role of media - information / issues in regards to Romani culture**

In particular, the role of today’s media is huge. The media in its variety of forms provide **a crucial role for all communities** - in the important fields of cultural reproduction, identity and language (with provision of information and news, entertainment, discussions etc.). It seems that the state policy recognizes the importance; there are some attempts in providing access to media for minority communities.

Indicators for minority protection in the media field are: access to the “mainstream” media (public and private); covering of topics related to minorities; and minority media.

### **Multifaceted Issue: a) The issue of Roma *in* media and b) Media *for* Roma**

The issue of the Romani community’s image in the media is closely linked to the notion of a nation; as already explained in previous chapters, it seems that the notion of a “nation” as reflected in media and education system is defined in the primordial terms – stressing the “ancient” nature of “Slovenian” culture, while avoiding to tackle with fluidity and multiple forms of ethnic / religious / cultural identity in the state. The overall approach of Slovenian “mainstream” media towards the ethnic minorities is founded on excluding notion of the Slovenian nation. The Roma (and especially “new” ethnic minorities) in media and cultural space are not considered as part of Slovenian nation and there is evident a “distance between majority population and ethnic communities.”<sup>312</sup> It seems that in most cases a clear distinction between “Us”, Slovenian nation, and “Them”, in our case, Roma exists, eventhough, that in the case of ethnicity, the existence of an “ideal boundary line” between “indigenous” and minority culture<sup>313</sup> (in our case Romani culture) might be questionable.

---

<sup>312</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>313</sup> Idem.

Due to the characteristics of contemporary lifestyle, boundaries between individual cultures might be more flexible and dynamic.

Moreover, there exists a persistent tendency of distant, also negative attitude of the majority population towards “expressions of ethnic diversity in public.”<sup>314</sup>

In addition, Roma (as well as the members of new minority communities) rarely get a chance to have their voices heard, to express their opinions on their position in media. There is a “general lack of access to public discourse” that is an important factor of social power. Even when topics linked with ethnic minorities are being discussed, central media usually rely upon “official” sources.<sup>315</sup>

Reports on ethnic minorities are all very often packed with prejudice and stereotypes, focusing on the presentation of negative features of individual communities, on violence, drugs, crime, mass immigration, that threaten the “Slovene national nucleus”.<sup>316</sup> A small amount of information on Romani group and its activities, that are free from prejudices and stereotypical views, is covered by “Slovenian” media.<sup>317</sup>

Together with “traditional” media there also new technologies – Internet – assist in spreading hostility.<sup>318</sup>

The process of commercialisation of media also contributes to negative reporting on ethnic groups - sensationalist viewpoint increases sales and protection of human rights is quickly forgotten.

---

<sup>314</sup> See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at:  
[http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

<sup>315</sup> Idem.

<sup>316</sup> Idem.

<sup>317</sup> The problematics has been dealt especially in the publications by Peace Institute Ljubljana, see for instance: Erjavec, Karmen, Hrvatina, Sandra B. in Kelbl, Barbara, 2000, Mi o Romih, Diskriminatorski diskurz v medijih v Sloveniji, Open Society Institute, Ljubljana.

<sup>318</sup> The authors of the report stressing the burning issue of the “hostile speech at Internet forums and chatrooms, and other illegal contents spread via Internet.” See: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

Even more worrying is the fact that there are rather few minority members, particularly Roma, among journalists.<sup>319</sup>

Still, we must point out that the state (especially Office for Nationalities) pays some attention to providing information **to** the Roma and **about** the Roma. As exposed by the Office for Nationalities, the Romani community is “**occasionally** provided with information in the Roma language”.<sup>320</sup>

Information regarding Romani issues in the printed media, radio and sometimes in the television programmes are aimed at “awareness-raising and educating the Roma Community”; still they also provide the “majority population with information about the situation, life and problems of the Roma and about their particular features”.<sup>321</sup>

Two radio stations, the Murski val from Murska Sobota and the Studio D from Novo mesto have been preparing regular weekly programmes for the Roma for eight years uninterruptedly. The radion station Murski val covers the region of Prekmurje, and the Studio D the regions of Dolenjska, Bela Krajina and Posavje. Both languages, the Slovenian and Romani, are used in the programme, while providing information on the “work and life of the Roma, reports on their cultural, sports and other events, including Roma music and original contributions by Roma authors”. The programme – that has been well accepted by the Roma as well as by other audiences - is financed by the Office for Nationalities from the budgetary funds of the Republic of Slovenia.<sup>322</sup>

Office for Nationalities has also been financing Romani TV programmes since 2002 (the cable TV-IDEA from Murska Sobota in the region of Prekmurje; the TV Vaš Kanal from Novo mesto for the region of Dolenjska, Bela Krajina and Posavje). The content of the TV broadcasts are “similar to Roma radio programs”; still - as the TV beside sound carries also picture - are therefore “more easily accepted by broader audience”.<sup>323</sup> Positive is, that the

---

<sup>319</sup> Idem.

<sup>320</sup> Idem.

<sup>321</sup> Idem.

<sup>322</sup> Idem.

<sup>323</sup> Idem. TV IDEA broadcast a programme on Roma (20-30 minutes), titled Drom-Pot once a month;

Roma broadcasts of both TV stations are distributed also to other interested TV stations in Slovenia - through regional TV stations exchange. With the year 2002, half hour TV programme (Romano dikhijpe) on the “work, life and problems of the Roma community” produced by Studio TV AS began to be broadcast on cable TV in the regions populated by Roma (Prekmurje, Dolenjska, Maribor).<sup>324</sup>

Until now, the Romani TV programmes are broadcasted “only by **local** studios in areas populated by Roma”.<sup>325</sup> However, as set at the web – page of Office for Nationalities, we might expect that in the future, after the implementation of the Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act (which entered into force in November 2005) “also the national RTV will gradually produce Roma radio and TV programs”.<sup>326</sup>

Also the significant role of the Peace Institute Ljubljana – research institution, focused on contemporary social and political studies – in media concerns must be pointed out. The Peace Institute provides assistance in media matters: for instance, the Institute, with Center for Media Policy, has prepared (in cooperation with Roma Union from Murska Sobota) the programme for the improvement of Romani community’s access to media, a education programme / training for Romani radio journalists.<sup>327</sup> The project was carried out in 2003 and 2004.

---

While TV Vaš kanal 30-minute Romani programme Za soncem – Šu kham. See: Idem.

<sup>324</sup> Periodical report of the RS on the implementation of European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages. Accessible at:

[http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal\\_affairs/local\\_and\\_regional\\_democracy/regional\\_or\\_minority\\_languages/2\\_monitoring/2.2\\_States\\_Reports/Slovenia\\_report2SL.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/local_and_regional_democracy/regional_or_minority_languages/2_monitoring/2.2_States_Reports/Slovenia_report2SL.pdf), p. 20 (June 14, 2006). Quoted in: Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>325</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Emphasis added.

<sup>326</sup> Office for Nationalities. Available at:

[http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities\\_national\\_communities/roma\\_ethnic\\_community/](http://www.uvn.gov.si/en/minorities_national_communities/roma_ethnic_community/).

<sup>327</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute. Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).

The Peace Institute also published the handbook for Romani radio journalists: “Prvi radijski koraki, Priročnik za romske novinarje in novinarke” in 2004.<sup>328</sup>

The problem huge exposed by Brankica Petković from the Peace Institute is, that – when Romani participate in creating media products – they participate only as lower-rank collaborators, **without decision-making competences** (not as editors, or responsables for financial aspects).<sup>329</sup>

As observed by Brankica Petković, it seems that the radio is most appropriate media form for ethnic minorities, especially Roma; still, an issue of broadcasting frequencies of local radio stations supported by the state remains – there is a huge problem to gain frequencies.<sup>330</sup>

Furthermore, information in the Romani language are also provided in **printed form**; for instance the Roma Union of Slovenia four times a year published the Romani newspaper Romano them (Romani world). The periodical is published partly in Romani and partly in Slovene language. Romani Union from Murska Sobota has been periodically publishing the newspaper Romano nevijpe - Romske novice, focusing on the news on the “society’s activities and other interesting news from the lives of the Roma people” for a more than a decade.<sup>331</sup>

In recent years also Roma publishing activities began to flourish.<sup>332</sup> For instance Romani authors in Slovenia, as listed by Romani journalist in Romani newspaper Romano Them, Roman Cener Srna are: Jožek Horvat Muc, poet Romeo Horvat-Popo, Jože Livijen, Mladenka Šarkezi, Slavko Baranja – Lujzi, Rajko Šajnovič, Sašo Nizirovič etc.<sup>333</sup>

---

<sup>328</sup> Prvi radijski koraki, Priročnik za romske novinarje in novinarke, 2004, Peace Institute; the authors are: Bojan Golčar, Jozek Horvat, Neva Nahtigal, Aljaz Pengov Bitenc, Brankica Petković, Marko Prpić, Tanja Taštanoska.

<sup>329</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković

<sup>330</sup> An interview with Brankica Petković, Peace Institute.

<sup>331</sup> Office for Nationalities.

<sup>332</sup> Idem.

<sup>333</sup> Cener-Srna, 2006: 21, 21.

Jožek Horvat Muc, write theatre plays, such as *Sedmi dan*, *Loli pauba/ Rdeče jabolko*, *Ratvalo paunji /Krvava voda*, *Paramisi / Pravljice*. Jožek Horvat Muc, according to Roman Cener – Srna, by “preserving the legends of Roma” gets closer to “Romani soul.”<sup>334</sup>

Also, the Romani information centre in Slovenia ROMIC, set up in October 2003 by the Roma Union of Slovenia, presents a positive example. The Centre’s main objective is, as stated at the ROMIC web-page, “to inform the Romani people and also the main population. Information centre is also here to preserve the Roma language and the worth.”<sup>335</sup> The activities of ROMIC encompass a Roma radio studio with radio production, and library activities.<sup>336</sup>

The information centre gathers literature on Roma and literature by Romani authors. Archival materials on VHS and DVD, photographs, etc. are catalogued in documentation centre (documentary archives). The Centre tries to supply information for Romani population, as well as majority population. The Centre is of great importance for the “preservation of Roma values and language”.<sup>337</sup>

The Centre has its own music production; different cultural events (concerts, literary evenings) are organized in the Centre,. Radio ROMIC currently produces and offers programmes (half hour program ‘Šunen Le Romen’) to eight radio stations in Slovenia (Radio Študent, Ljubljana, Radio Marš, Maribor, Radio Odeon, Črnomelj, Radio Maxi, Ljutomer, Radio Kaos, Ljubljana, local TV stations TV Idea, Murska Sobota, and TV Lendava).<sup>338</sup>

Programmes about Roma and for Roma are prepared also by some more “cosmopolitan” radio stations such as student radio stations Radio Marš in Maribor<sup>339</sup> and Radio Študent in Ljubljana.<sup>340</sup>

---

<sup>334</sup> Idem.

<sup>335</sup> ROMIC, Roma information center in Slovenia. Available at: <http://www.romic.si/>.

<sup>336</sup> The establishment of the centre was supported by the Office for Nationalities from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

<sup>337</sup> Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>338</sup> Idem.

<sup>339</sup> Available at: <http://www.radiomars.si/program/skupnosti/romanokrlo/>

<sup>340</sup> Radio Marš (Radio Student, Maribor) from 2000/2001 broadcasted every Sunday a 1-hour programme, titled Romano Krlo, produced by the Roma living in Maribor. “The program is in Roma

There emerge also Romani **language issues**. It seems that the language itself – as an extremely important aspect of cultural identity - in Slovenia is, in Angela Gango's terms, a "politically charged subject". As observed by European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), the "traditional unitary nation-state ideology (state-nation-language)" is challenged by liberal notions of choice and multiculturalism, transforming the issue of language into a political struggle. Still, while the formula "language equals nation" may not continue in the future, the formula "language equals power" is becoming stronger. In many societies the state/official language is the only language accepted as a medium of communication in official circles.<sup>341</sup> This is not the case in Slovenia - in ethnically mixed areas are "official" languages also Hungarian and Italian. As already pointed out, Hungarian and Italian minorities in Slovenia are also entitled to "bilingual administration and education;" the Roma do **not** enjoy these rights;<sup>342</sup> the Romani - in contrast to Hungarian and Italian languages – is also **not** recognized as "regional or minority language" in Slovenia's Declaration when ratifying Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

Nevertheless, there are some very positive developments in the language matters; one of the most important are the few media outlets that broadcast in Romani language and the efforts for standardization of Romani language are in progress – at "amateur" level: for instance Jožek Horvat Muc prepared a Romani dictionary.

---

and Slovene languages, so more people can listen to it. It is created by Roma community members, who are completely autonomous, but also helped by other radio staff. Roma are also offered free-of-charge basic training to acquire elementary skills of radio production and better language. When acting as journalists, conditions are given for easier contact making with representatives of various institutions, and thus better chances for solving their own problems; often, however, they encounter the insensibility of competent officials." Radio Študent (Ljubljana) produced weekly 1-hour programme Romano drumo. Sunday (above all musical program) is prepared by Roma living in Ljubljana, Haris Tahirović, a Macedonian Roma, who has been programme editor since 2004, when he participated at the Peace Institute training, organized for Romani journalists (with financial aid of the European Union). See: Nahtigal, N.: Usposabljanje Romov za profesionalno radijsko novinarstvo. Medijska preža 20/21, November 2004. Quoted in Žagar, Komac, Medvešek, Bešter, 2006.

<sup>341</sup> ECMI. Available at: <http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/82/language+%26+culture+diversity/>.

<sup>342</sup> Youth Bridging the Gap: Reaching out to the Roma Available at: [http://roma.iapss.org/about/roma\\_people.php](http://roma.iapss.org/about/roma_people.php).



## Conclusion

Approach to cultural diversity in Slovenia exposes numerous dilemmas, it is closely connected to the “endangered Slovenian national substance” and exclusive notion of the Slovenian nation.

Moreover, the particular groups of ethnic minority communities (including Romani population, as well as the members of “new” minority communities) faces additional challenges in the areas that also deeply influence the cultural expression, cultural (re)production: I would expose the **lack of clear vision in regards of support for Romani community (communities)** as the most urgent: (at least) two Government bodies, that directly or indirectly affect culture of Romani community (communities) Office for Nationalities and Ministry of Culture have completely different visions, and perceptions on the Romani community itself: while the Office for Nationalities - with its narrow function of state – building differs “autochthonous” and “non-autochthonous” Roma, while the Ministry of Culture takes the broad, “all-inclusive” approach. There is no cooperation between them.

As could be gathered from the policy system that influences the cultural life of minorities in Slovenia, the official state policy has **no clear, coherent vision in regards of support for cultural diversity, for protection of minority communities**. The competent state institutions have contradicting viewpoints, approaches to dealing with cultural diversity in the state. Constitutional provisions itself – while differing ethnic minorities in the state - might also be seen discriminatory. This certainly does not foster multicultural principles in the state; neither it contributes to the stability and well-functioning of the state. In order to ensure stability and security anywhere “minority group members must feel that they have the same potential and protection as everyone else and that they are equally served by the national system under which they fall”.<sup>343</sup> This is not the case in Slovenia.

---

<sup>343</sup> ECMI. Available at: <http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/82/language+%26+culture+diversity/>.

## VII. Bibliography

Robert Albro, Joanne Bauer. Introduction. In *Human Rights Dialogue*: "Cultural Rights" (Spring 2005). April 22, 2005. Available at:

[http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2\\_12/a\\_intro/5136.html](http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_12/a_intro/5136.html).

Breznik, Maja. 2004. *Kulturni revizionizem. Kultura med neoliberalizmom in socialno odgovorno politiko*. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.

*Cultural Profiles Project Cultural Profile Slovenia*. Available at: [http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia\\_Cultural\\_Profile/-4193.html](http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk/slovenia/Directories/Slovenia_Cultural_Profile/-4193.html).

Breznik, Maja. 2004. *Zaton kulturne politike*. In 2000. Ljubljana: Društvo 2000.

*Cultural Policies in Europe: A Compendium of Basic Facts and Trends*. Strasbourg: The Council of Europe. /Online/. Available from URL: <<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/>>.

Čurin Radovič, Suzana (2003) *Identitete, človekove pravice in evropske integracije*. In 2000, 153/154/155, p. 64-86, Ljubljana, Društvo 2000.

Čurin Radovič, Suzana (2002). *Analiza stanja na področju kulturnih dejavnosti narodnih skupnosti, romske skupnosti, drugih manjšinskih skupnosti in priseljencev*. In: Grilc, Uroš (eds.) *Analiza stanja na področju kulture in predlog prednostnih ciljev*, Ljubljana: Ministrstvo za kulturo Republike Slovenije.

*Differing Diversities. Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity*. Tony Bennett (ed). 2001. Strasbourg: The Council of Europe.

*Decade of Roma Inclusion* /Online/. Available from URL: [http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/focus\\_areas/decade](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/focus_areas/decade).

Dragičević Šešić, Milena *Cultural policies in Eastern and Central Europe* /Online/. Available from URL: <<http://www.encatc.org/downloads/Cultural%20policies%20ES-Europe.pdf>>

Dragičević Šešić, Milena, Dragojević, Sanjin, (2004). *Intercultural Mediation*. Sarajevo, OKO.

Dragojević, Sanjin. 1999. Pluriculturalism, multiculturalism, interculturalism, transculturalism: Divergent or complementary concepts? In *The Challenges of Pluriculturalism in Europe*. Susanne Baier-Allen, Ljubomir Čučić (eds). Center for European Integration Studies. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft.

Dragojević, Sanjin. 2002. *The Process of Pacification in Southeastern Europe: Challenges and Issues from a Cultural Point of View*. In Culture and Social Cohesion in the New Millennium. CIRCLE/CCRN. Canadian Journal of Communication. Vol 27 (2002), 243-251.

Dragojević, Sanjin. 2001. South Eastern Europe: An Existing or Constructed Region? Challenges and Issues. In *Redefining Cultural Identities. Collection of papers from the course on Redefining Cultural Identities: The Multicultural Context of The Central European and Mediterranean Regions, Dubrovnik, 10-20 May 2000, edited by Nada Švob-Dokić*. Zagreb: Institute for International Relations.

Dorđević, B. Dragoljub (2004) *Romas as Transborder Ethnic and Cultural Group*. In *Romas & Others, Others & Romas: Social Distance*, Sofia: Institute for Social Values and Structures

Dorđević, B. Dragoljub, Filipović, Marijana (2006) *The Roma and Ethnocultural Justice: Towards a Model of Integration*. In *Forced Ethnic Migrations on the Balkans: Consequences and Rebuilding of Societies*, Conference Proceedings 22-23 February, 2005, Sofia, International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations.

*European Roma Rights Centre* /Online/ Available from URL: <<http://www.errc.org/>>

Foote, John. 2005. *Indicators for Monitoring Cultural Diversity, Social Cohesion and Inter-Cultural Dialogue within the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe* (ERICarts and Council of Europe) Draft for Discussion, January 31, 2005.

Georgieva, Tsvetana. 2006. *Migrations in the History of Multiethnicity and Multiculturalism in the Balkans* (Bulgarian sources). In *Forced Ethnic Migrations on the Balkans: Consequences and Rebuilding of Societies*. Conference Proceedings 22-23 February, 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria. Sofia: International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations.

*International Network on Cultural Policy*. /Online/. Available from URL: <[http://206.191.7.19/iicd/brochure\\_e.shtml](http://206.191.7.19/iicd/brochure_e.shtml)>.

Jalušič, Vlasta, **Minority Protection in Slovenia: general evaluation**, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Ljubljana.

Kartag Odri, Agnes & Stojković, Branimir. *The Paradox of Multicultural Pluralism and the Value of Equality*. Available at:

<http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:nKCjJbJuFSUJ:www.enelsyn.gr/papers/w14/Paper%2520by%2520Prof%2520Agnes%2520Kartag-Odri.pdf+Branimir+Stojkovi%C4%87+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=si>.

Komac, Miran, Medvešek, Mojca (2004) *Percepcije slovenske integracijske politike*, Ljubljana, Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.

Klopčič, Vera (2004) *Romi v Evropi*. In *Del tuha, romski pozdrav* (Janko Kleibencetl) Murska Sobota, Franc-Franc

Klopčič, Vera *Europa, Slovenija in Romi*. Ljubljana, Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.

Klopčič, Vera, *Nekatere značilnosti sodobnega položaja Romov, izkušnje na področju izobraževanja, poklicnega usposabljanja in zaposlovanja Romov v Sloveniji* / primeri dobre prakse / Some Characteristics of the Status of Roma in Slovenia - Experience in the Field of Education and Employment/ Examples of Good Practice.

France Lebon, *Cultural Diversity - Interculturality – Cultural Policy*, Expert Colloquy Dialogue serving intercultural and inter-religious communication, Council of Europe Directorate General IV: Education, Culture and Cultural Heritage, Youth and Sports Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage Cultural Policy and Action Department Strasbourg, October 2002 available at: [http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural\\_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub\\_DGIV\\_CULT\\_PREV-ICIR\(2002\)5\\_Lebon\\_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.129.104/search?q=cache:vwEwAuvZjj4J:www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/culture/action/dialogue/pub_DGIV_CULT_PREV-ICIR(2002)5_Lebon_E.PDF%3FL%3DE+Transversal+Study+Cultural+Policy+and+Cultural+Diversity&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=si&client=firefox-a).

Liegeois, Jean-Pierre, Gheorghe, Nicolae (1995) *Roma /Gypsies: A European Minority*, MRG.

Love, Arnold J. (2001) *Assessing the implementation of cultural diversity policies* Research position paper 2. In *Differing Diversities* (ed. Tony Bennett).

Lukšič - Hacin, Marina (1999) *Multikulturalizem in migracije*, Ljubljana, Založba ZRC

Medvešek, Mojca and Vrečer, Natalija (2005). *Percepcije sociokulturne integracije in nestrpnosti: nove manjšine v Sloveniji*. In: *Percepcije slovenske integracijske politike*. (Eds.) Komac, Miran and Medvešek, Mojca. Ljubljana, IES, pp. 271–377.

Mucica, Delia (2003) *Cultural Legislation. Why? How? What?* Report, Council of Europe.

Nunev, Joseph *Romany Child and Romany Family Environment*, Sofia, International Center for Minority Problems and Cultural Interactions.

Petricusic , 2004. Slovenian Legislative System for Minority Protection: Different Rights for Old and New Minorities, by Antonija Petricusic. Available at: [http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/noves/hm04tardor/petricusic1\\_2.htm](http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/noves/hm04tardor/petricusic1_2.htm).

*Policies for Culture. Policy Resources for Culture in South East Europe*. /Online/. Available from URL: <http://www.policiesforculture.org/>.

Schmidt Ulrike, *The Aspect of Culture in the Social Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities: Assessing Language Education Policies under the EU's Open Method of Coordination*. Available at: <[http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007\\_Schmidt.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2007_Schmidt.pdf)>.

Tetsuya Sahara. 2006. Forced Ethnic Migrations and Modernity in the Balkans. In *Forced Ethnic Migrations on the Balkans: Consequences and Rebuilding of Societies*. Conference Proceedings 22-23 February, 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria. Sofia: International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations.

Švob-Đokić, Nada; Obuljen, Nina. 2003. *Comparative cultural policy issues related to cultural diversity in South East Europe. Mapping the approaches and practices*. A cultural policy paper commissioned by *Policies for Culture*. /Online/. Available from URL:

Švob-Đokić, Nada. 2001. Diversity and Identity. On Redefining Cultural Identities in the multicultural context of the Central European and Mediterranean Regions. In *Redefining Cultural Identities. Collection of papers from the course on Redefining Cultural Identities: The Multicultural Context of The Central European and Mediterranean Regions*, Dubrovnik, 10-20 May 2000, edited by Nada Švob-Đokić. Zagreb: Institute for International Relations.

Jure Trampuš, 2004. *Romi ogrožajo nacionalno substanco: Za Janšo ima Romska manjšina preveč pravic in dobiva celo status nadjudi*. MLADINA, 16. avgust 2004. Available at: [http://www.mladina.si/tehdnik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure\\_trampus/](http://www.mladina.si/tehdnik/200433/clanek/slo-tema--jure_trampus/).

Peter Vodopivec, 2001. *O Evropi, Balkanu in Metageograiji*. In *Imaginarij Balkana* (Maria Todorova). Ljubljana: Inštitut za civilizacijo in kulturo.

Vogrinc, Jože. 2003. *Čemu "nacionalna identiteta" in "nacionalni interes" v kulturni politiki*. In *Nacionalna identiteta in kultura*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za civilizacijo in kulturo.

Žagar, Mitja, Miran Komac, Mojca Medvešek, Romana Bešter: *The Aspect of Culture in the Social Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities. Evaluation of the Impact of Inclusion Policies under the Open Method of Co-ordination in the European Union: Assessing the Cultural Policies of Six Member States*. Final Report Slovenia. October 2006. Available at: [http://www.ecmi.de/download/working\\_paper\\_33.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/working_paper_33.pdf).