

Minority Issues in the First Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

An analysis by the
UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Rita Izsák

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Foreword by the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues

As the entire international community, especially the UN family, I have followed with curiosity and great interest the first sessions and the first full cycle of the Universal Periodic Review. I was eager to see the commitment of Member States to minority issues in this revolutionary peer review process both as recommending and receiving States. One could expect in advance that the situation of minorities will often be in focus and indeed, with 895 recommendations it was the 9th most discussed topic at the 1st cycle of the Human Rights Council's UPR process. I believe that it is essential that we analyze these recommendations in more detail and draw the possible lessons so we can further improve the discussion on minority issues in the 2nd and future cycles. It is my privilege to offer this brief overview, which has been prepared by myself and is entirely based on the UPR Info database.

I must express my gratitude to the UPR Info team¹ and its director, Roland Chauville for their cooperation in overviewing the relevant recommendations in the UPR Info database so to make sure that all those addressing the situation of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities can be part of this research. A special thanks goes to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Human Rights Practicum, namely to Andra Bosneag, Kathryn Joyce, and Rachel Rosenberg for contributing to this important work.

I hope that this analysis will be interesting and useful for all those working on and being interested in minority issues.

¹ Please note: not identical with the UPR Team within the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Research methodology

This research is based entirely on the UPR Info statistics and database², which has introduced the “minorities” label into the search system from the very beginning. The Special Rapporteur on minority issues with the cooperation of the UPR Info team did their best to make sure that the labelling is in full compliance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. However, as the full database contains more than 35,000 recommendations at the moment³, there might be cases when certain relevant recommendations are not labelled under “minorities” as they should be. The Special Rapporteur on minority issues is constantly monitoring such possibilities and is working closely with UPR Info to ensure consistency. This current analysis is therefore based on the status of the database as of 1 September 2014 and does not reflect changes in labelling that might have occurred after this date. The research uses rounded numbers to ease the understanding of the reader. The research is analyzing the recommendations based on regional groups according to the United Nations geographical regional arrangement which is the following: African Group (Africa), Asia-Pacific Group (Asia), Eastern European Group (EEG), Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), Western European and Others Group (WEOG), and Others⁴.

Summary of Key Findings

The analysis of the 1st cycle of the Universal Periodic Review revealed that 112 Member States (MSs) issued 895 recommendations about national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to 137 MSs. Minorities were the 9th most discussed topic at the 1st cycle of the Human Rights Council’s UPR process and constituted 4.2% of the total 21,353 recommendations⁵. Recommendation on minorities centered on Europe, 43 European MSs received such recommendations, followed by 28 African MSs.

² <http://www.upr-info.org>

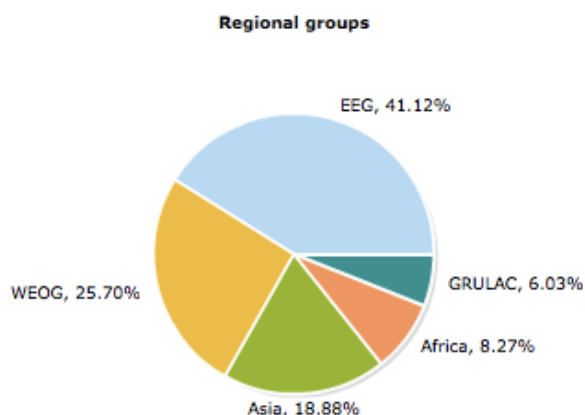
³ As of 1 September 2014

⁴ For the full list of countries, check: <http://www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml>

⁵ The first 10 most discussed issues were the following: international instruments (4317), women’s rights (3698), rights of the child (3459), torture and other CID treatment (1722), justice (1556), detention conditions (1399), human rights education and training (929), death penalty (914), minorities (895) and special procedures (881).

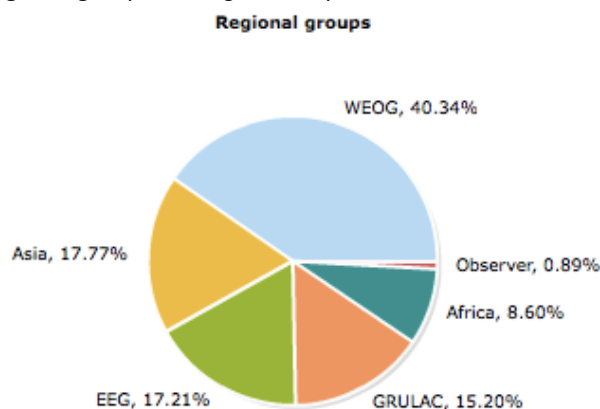
The Eastern European Group received most recommendations on minorities (368), followed by the Western European and Others Group (230) and Asia (169) (see charter below):

Regional groups *receiving* minority-related recommendations:



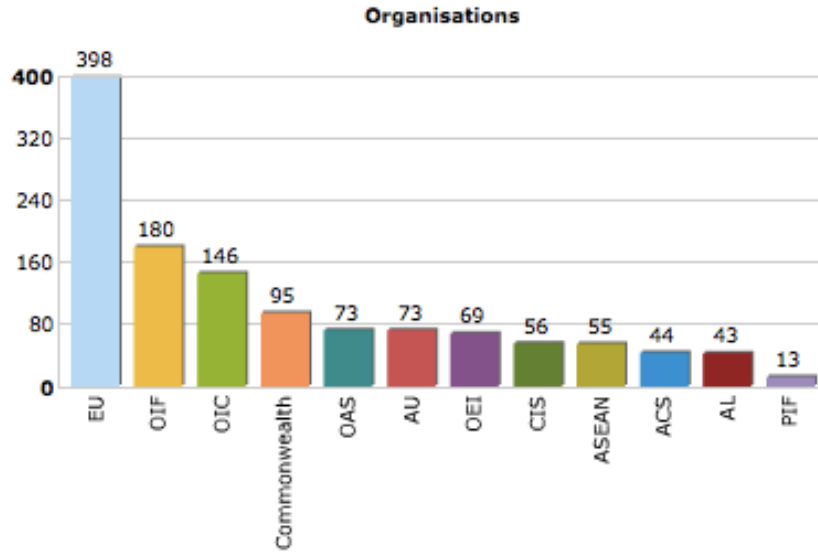
It was the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) which made most recommendations on minorities (361), followed by Asia (159) and the Eastern European Group (154) (see charter below).

Regional groups *making* minority-related recommendations:



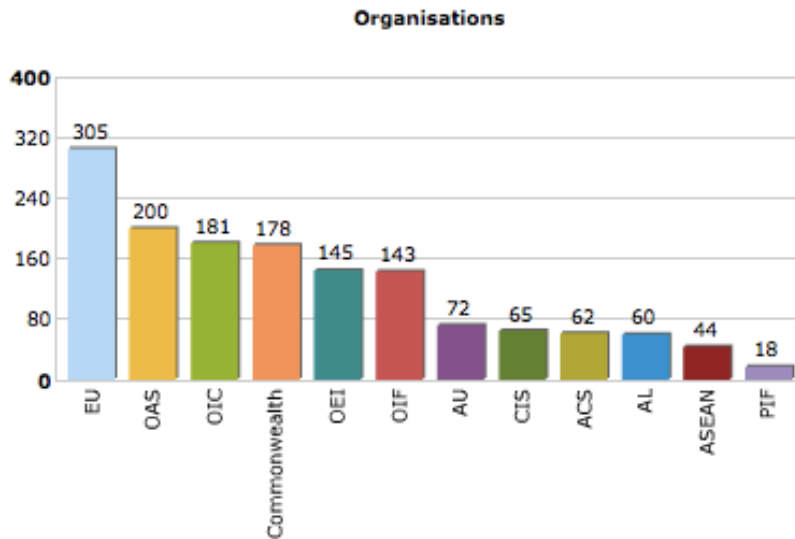
The top 3 regional organizations *receiving* most minority-related recommendations were the European Union, the International Organisation of La Francophonie and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (see full list below).

Regional organizations *receiving* minority-related recommendations













The top 3 regional organizations *making* minority-related recommendations were the European Union, the Organization of American States and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (see full list below).











Regional organizations *making* minority-related recommendations



The top 5 MSs *receiving* minority-related recommendations were: Slovakia (54), Hungary (38), Italy (29), Croatia (29) and Bulgaria (29). The top 10 recipients are the following:

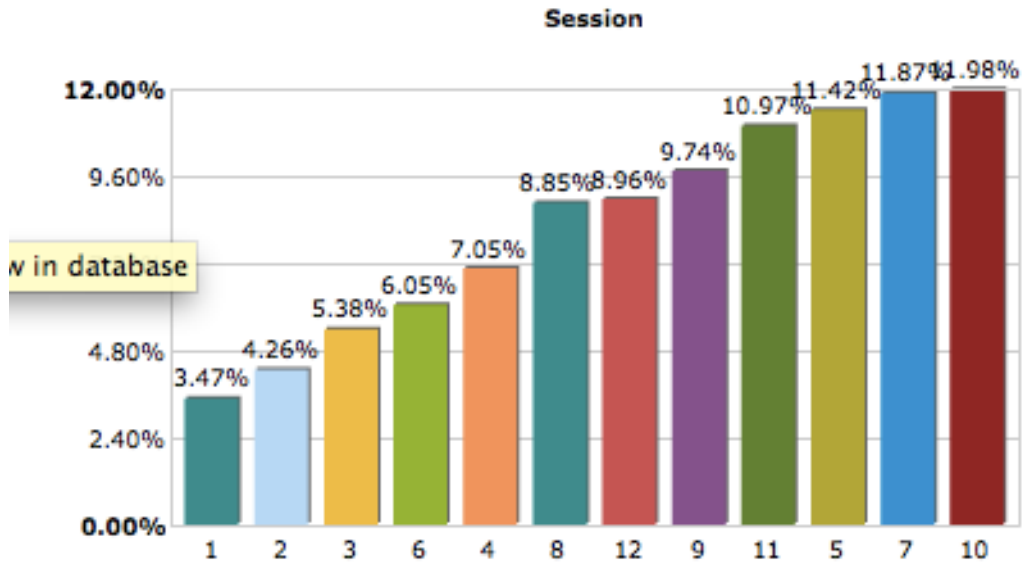
Rank	State under Review	Total Recommendations	% of 895 Recommendations
1.	Slovakia 	54	6.03
2.	Hungary 	38	4.25
3.	Italy 	29	3.24
4.	Croatia 	29	3.24
5.	Bulgaria 	29	3.24
6.	Austria 	21	2.35
7.	Georgia 	21	2.35
8.	Turkey 	21	2.35
9.	Lithuania 	20	2.23
10.	Myanmar 	20	2.23

The top 5 MSs *making* minority recommendations were: Austria (38), Canada (35), United Kingdom (33), Russian Federation (30) and the United States (29). The top 10 recommending states were the following:

Rank	Recommending State	Total Recommendations	% of 895 Recommendations
1.	Austria 	38	4.25
2.	Canada 	35	3.91
3.	United Kingdom 	33	3.69
4.	Russian Federation 	30	3.35
5.	Finland 	29	3.24
6.	United States 	29	3.24
7.	Slovenia 	28	3.13
8.	Mexico 	28	3.13
9.	Czech Republic 	25	2.79
10.	Brazil 	23	2.57

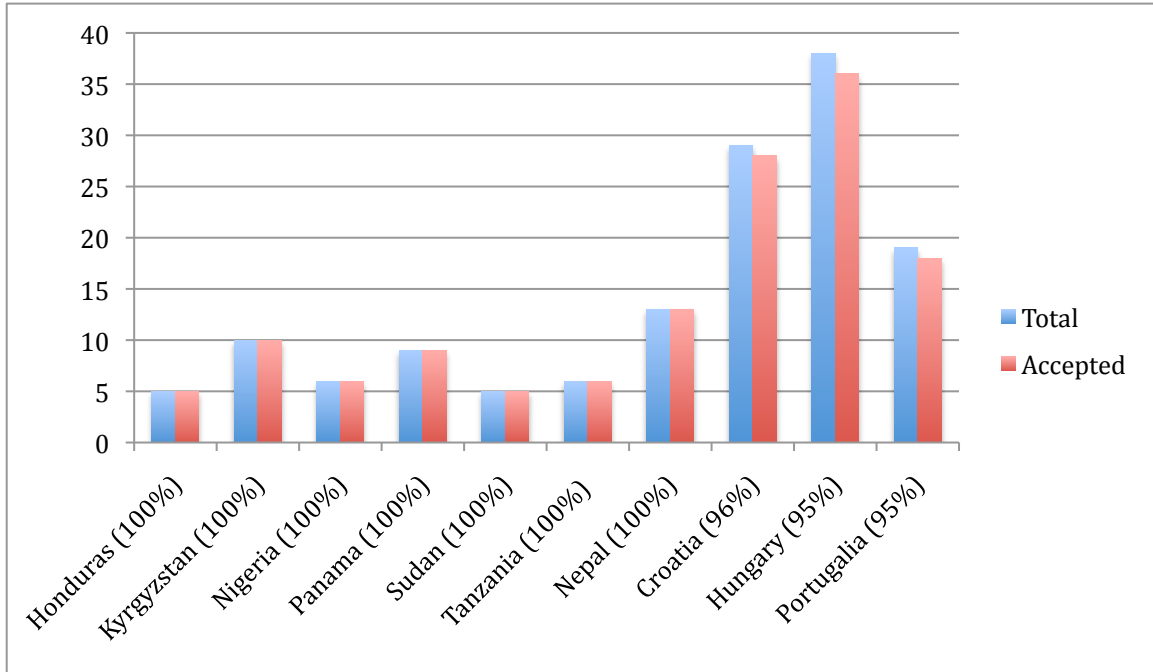
It is important to note the general rise of recommendations per each session. While the very first UPR session resulted in 430 recommendations, the 6th session in 1670, the last 12th session in 2434 recommendations. Consequently, recommendations on minorities rose gradually too: the 1st session produced 31, the 6th session 54 and the last 12th session 80 recommendations. The highest number of minority-related recommendations was made on the 10th session, namely 107. The below chart shows

the percentage of minority recommendations in each session (horizontally are the sessions, vertically the percentage of minority recommendations of all recommendations).



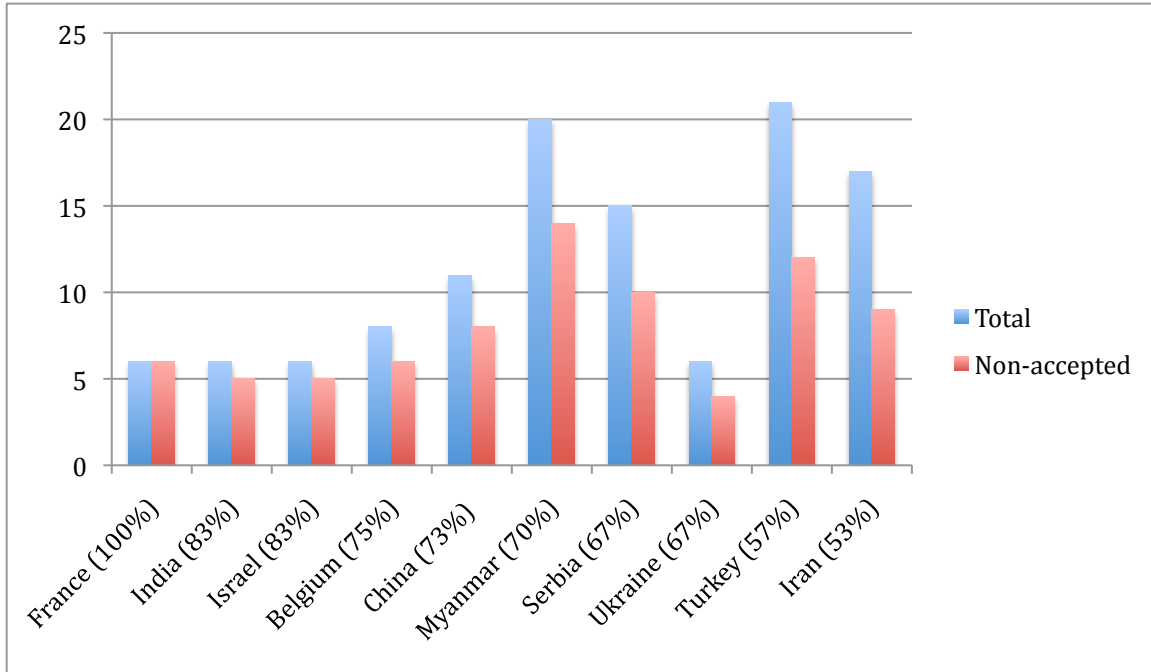
Of the recommendations on minorities, 78% were accepted, 22% were noted. 59% of MS accepted all of their recommendations but since many of these MSs received very few, often only 1-2 recommendations, the below chart shows those that have received a significant number of recommendations in their respective Regional Group and have accepted the *highest* ratio from those.

Member States with the highest number of *accepted* recommendations on minorities (percentages show acceptance ratio of all received recommendations)



Some countries have not accepted any of the received recommendations but since many of these have received very few, often only 1 or 2 recommendations, the below chart shows those that have received a significant number of recommendations in their respective Regional Group and have accepted the *lowest* ratio from those.

Member States with the highest number of *non-accepted* recommendations on minorities (percentages show non-acceptance ratio of all received recommendations)



Member States in the African region received 74 recommendations in total. Most recommendations were received by Egypt (6), Namibia (5), Nigeria (8), Sudan (5) and Tanzania (6).

Member States in the Asian region received 169 recommendations in total. Most were received by China (11), Iran (17), Iraq (11), Kyrgyzstan (10), Myanmar (20), Nepal (13) and Viet Nam (14).

Most recommendations were received by the Eastern European Group (368). Countries that received most recommendations were the following: Bulgaria (28), Croatia (29), Georgia (21), Hungary (38), Lithuania (20), and Slovakia (50).

The Western European and Others group has received 230 recommendations in total, most by Austria (21), Greece (15), Ireland (15), Italy (29) Portugal (19) and Turkey (21).

Member States in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States received 54 recommendations in total. Most were received by Guyana (7), Panama (9) and Honduras (5).

The recommendations received by these 27 top recipient Member States are summarized in the last chapter of this analysis.

Areas of Concern

A search for key words gives us a better understanding of the main areas of concern (when words are divided by slash, it is because they often appeared in different format but sometimes jointly in the same recommendation, so for the sake of accuracy, they are highlighted separately). They refer to recommendations both accepted or noted.

Areas of Concern	Times Mentioned
Access	76
Citizenship	11
Culture/Cultural	16/51
Education	119
Employment	38
Equality	19
Ethnic/Ethnicity	190/10
Hate/Hatred	12/13
Health/Health care	39/19
Housing	25
Human rights	108
Language/Linguistic	47/16
Media	15
National	148
Participation	38
Police	25
Religion/Religious	37/103
Respect	40
Segregation	7
Training	23
Violent/violence	37
Xenophobia/Intolerance	11/12

Under the keyword **access**, most recommendations referred to access to education (especially in mother tongue). Other fields such as access to civil and birth registration, health, legal aid, justice, housing, employment, social services, sanitation, electricity or water were also mentioned.

Combating discrimination in the field of **citizenship** and the need to ensure access to citizenship was the main focus of recommendations addressing citizenship.

The word **cultural or culture** referred to the need to protect and promote the cultural heritage, identity, rights and needs of minorities and cultural diversity in the society in general. Several recommendations mentioned the need for inter-cultural dialogue and inter-cultural harmony.

A very high number of recommendations addressed the field of **education**. Most of them focused on support and access to education and enforcing the principle of non-discrimination. Many recommended human rights awareness raising initiatives or media campaigns to deepen understanding of minority issues. A high percentage put an emphasize on mother tongue education and many highlighted the particular vulnerability of minority girls. A few mentioned the ban of segregation, the need for participation of minorities in educational institutions, or the importance of disaggregated data.

Most **employment**-related recommendations focused on the need to eliminate discrimination and provide access to employment. Four singled out the importance of ensuring employment opportunities for minority women and one raised the issue of disaggregated data revealing employment conditions of minorities.

Member States found it important to provide recommendations on the need to condemn all incitement to violence or **hatred**, to enact or amend national legislation banning incitement to hatred, prosecute the perpetrators of such incitement, and pay more attention to hatred also through newspaper articles. They also urged to deal with the problems of hate speech by politicians, to have proper legislation and disaggregated data on hate speech, to ensure that hate crimes and racially motivated violence are fully and effectively investigated, to encourage victims to report hate crimes and to ensure their protection from reprisal when they do so.

With just a few exceptions, most **health** related recommendations focused on access to health care. Some highlighted the need for anti-discrimination legislation or strategies to be in place. Half a dozen singled out minority women and one urged for the abolishment of separated maternity wards.

Most recommendations on **housing** urged for access to housing, one mentioned the need for social housing.

The issue of **human rights** was mainly mentioned in the context of ensuring the full range of human rights for minorities and of providing human rights education in schools and training for various officials (such as police, public authorities, prison, judiciary etc).

Recommendations on **media** were primarily focusing on the importance of awareness raising, on protection and promotion of different cultures, traditions and religions through media, on the media's role in strengthening reconciliation and tolerance, and in tackling stereotypes. Some also mentioned the importance of media access to certain

areas, the need for stable and systematic funding of minority media and for free and independent media, which reflect minority opinion.

Most recommendations related to **training** referred to the need of human rights training to be provided to law enforcement bodies and judiciary, others urged training for minorities themselves so they acquire a profession or for citizens to learn about equal treatment.

Participation was mentioned mainly in the context of public and political life and decision-making processes. In several cases, participation in cultural, social or economic life and in the labour market was mentioned too. In a few cases, focus has been on elections and one recommendation urged ensuring participation of civil society organizations representing minorities in the UPR process.

Recommendations regarding **police** mainly focused on the need for human rights training and sensitization of law enforcement officials. A large number of them referred to harassment, ill-treatment or racial profiling of police, several focused on the need to have minorities recruited into police forces. One recommendation mentioned the need to have a body that can supervise the acts of police.

Respect in most cases was related to international provisions, obligations and to the full enjoyment of human rights. In several recommendations, it referred to the need to respect freedom of religion or belief, including religious memorials and sites, freedom of expression and association. One recommendation mentioned respect for self-identification.

All recommendations about **segregation** were made to European countries. With two exceptions, all recommendations referred to educational segregation of Roma children. One focused on general school segregation of children from various ethnic backgrounds and one referred to the need to end segregation in health care facilities and in maternity wards.

Violence was mentioned in rather general terms, in the context to combat and end violence against minority groups. “Cyber-racism” and the need to condemn incitement were also mentioned. Several recommendations explicitly focused on the need to stop violence, including sexual violence against minority women.

Xenophobia/intolerance – related recommendations addressed the need to strengthen measures and have awareness-raising campaigns to fight against them, a few talked about the need for police training and actions to be taken against perpetrators of racist and xenophobic speeches and public statements.

Specific Minority Groups in Focus

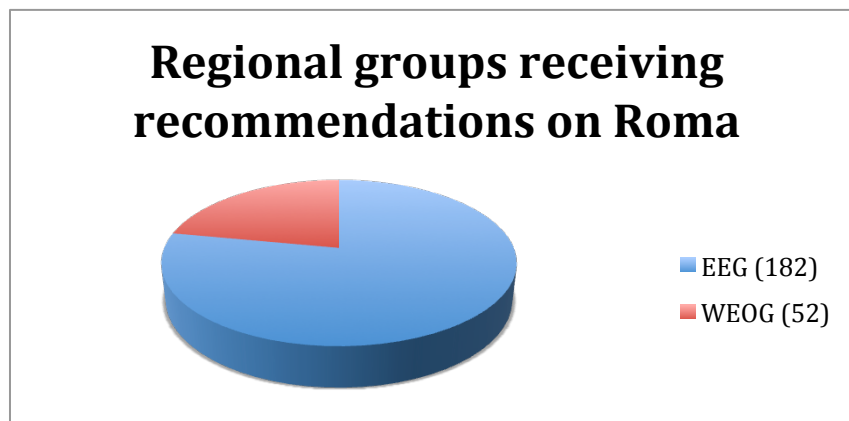
More than 25% of all minority recommendations referred to the situation of Roma. Other groups in focus included Muslims, Afro-descendants, Slovenians, Bahá'ís, Sinti, non-Muslims, Dalits, Travellers, Kurdish, Turkish, Jewish and Pygmy communities (see table below). Some recommendations referred to particular areas, see for example Tibet.

Table 2: Religious and Ethnic Minority Recommendations			
Minority	Recommendations	Accepted	Acceptance Rate
Roma	234	215	92%
Muslim	41	30	73%
Afro/African	30	30	100%
Slovenian	13	12	92%
Bahá'í	12	6	50%
Sinti	10	9	90%
Dalit	8	8	100%
Non-Muslim	8	5	63%
Traveller	7	6	86%
Kurd	6	3	50%
Turkish	6	1	17%
Serbian	5	5	100%
Jews (or anti-Semitism)	5	5	100%
Pygmy	4	2	50%
Russian	4	3	75%
Tibet	4	0	0%

Roma

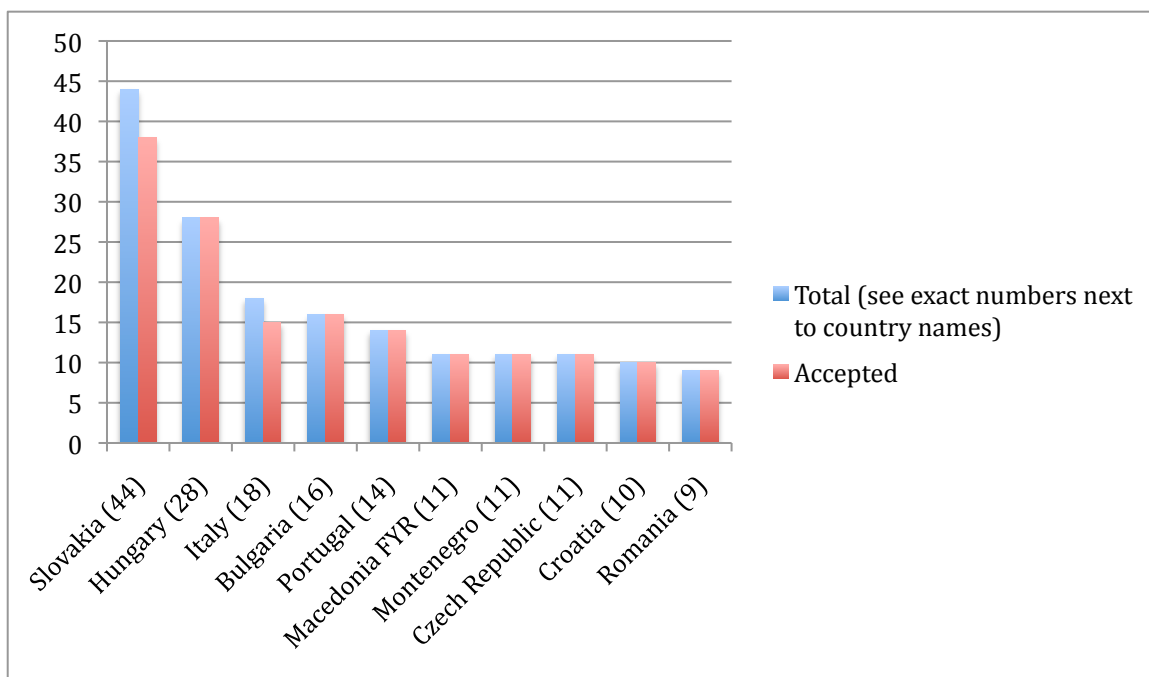
Roma were the most frequently cited minority group in the first cycle of the UPR process. It is important to mention here that although the term “Roma” usually covers several subgroups⁶, a few recommendations used references to specific Roma communities such as “Sinti” or “Traveller”. Due to the fact that the word Sinti was always mentioned together with the word Roma, they are included here. (There were 10 recommendations made on the situation of Sinti. Germany received 3 and Italy received 7. With one exception, all were accepted.) However, recommendations referring to Travellers are discussed separately at the end of this section.

As the chart shows below, a total of 234 recommendations mentioned the situation of Roma, in a total of 27 MSs, all in the Eastern and Western European region: 182 recommendations were made to the Eastern European Group and 52 to the Western European and Other Group.

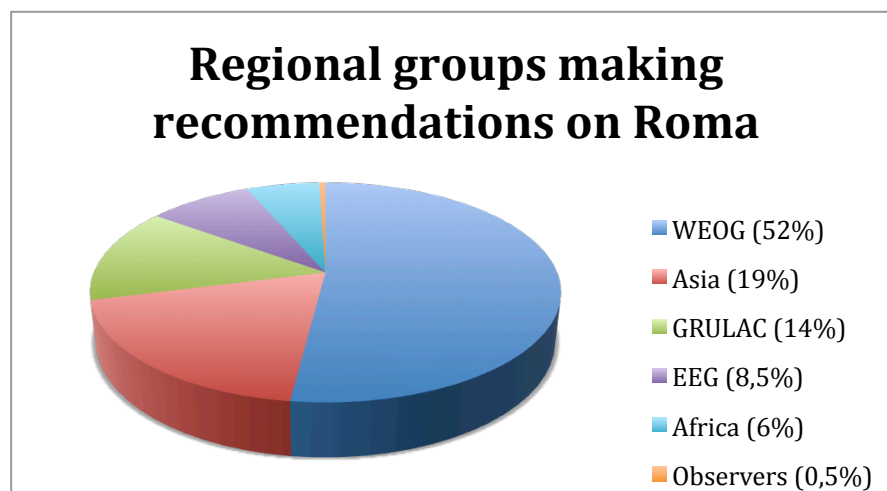


Overall, states under review accepted 218 of these recommendations, an acceptance rate of 93%. The below chart shows the top 10 MSs with most Roma-related recommendations.

⁶ The term “Roma” used at the Council of Europe for example refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.



All regions were active in making recommendations on Roma. The Western European and Other States Group made 121 recommendations: Finland made 17, Austria made 15, and the United States made 10. The Asian Group made 44 recommendations: 23 by Bangladesh, 7 by Iran. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States made 33 recommendations: Brazil made 7, Mexico 6, Cuba 6, and Argentina 5. The Eastern European Group made 20 recommendations: 6 by the Russian Federation, 5 by Slovenia. The African Group made 15 recommendations, 10 came from Algeria. Observers made 1 recommendation, the Holy See to Hungary.



Recommendations on Roma addressed the following areas:

Forty-nine (49) recommendations to 20 Member States addressed the **education** of Roma, 47 were accepted: they mainly stressed that increased efforts need to be made to foster educational attainment of Roma and to ensure access to education, including pre-school education (to Albania, Croatia, Italy, etc). One recommended Bulgaria that there should be more efficient communication in place with Roma parents about the positive effect of education and the importance of literacy. One recommendation to the Czech Republic was to collect disaggregated data. A few mentioned the need to reduce or end segregation (to Estonia, Hungary). Germany was encouraged that national curriculum includes lessons on the contribution of Roma and Sinti to the society and its culture. One recommended to Hungary to address the formal educational gap of Roma girls and women. Slovakia noted to enact and implement new legislation as well as practical measures to end discriminatory practices against Roma in the education system perpetuating their segregation, and Austria noted to adopt measures to guarantee Roma children the right to education in their own language and in a relevant way with their own culture.

Employment came up 24 times to 13 Member States and all of them were accepted: they mainly addressed the need to ensure non-discrimination and equal access to employment (to Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic etc). One recommendation to the Czech Republic stressed the importance of disaggregated data, Hungary was recommended to consider affirmative action, Spain to increase Roma women's awareness and access to services and programmes in education, employment and healthcare. Slovakia accepted to take measures to increase employment of members of the Roma minority by public institutions.

Housing was mentioned 21 times to 9 Member States. They were all accepted. Almost all of them addressed the need to ensure access to housing and to introduce positive action in order to strengthen integration efforts in this field (for example to Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy etc). Slovakia accepted the need to increase efforts to provide adequate social housing (Austria to Slovakia, accepted).

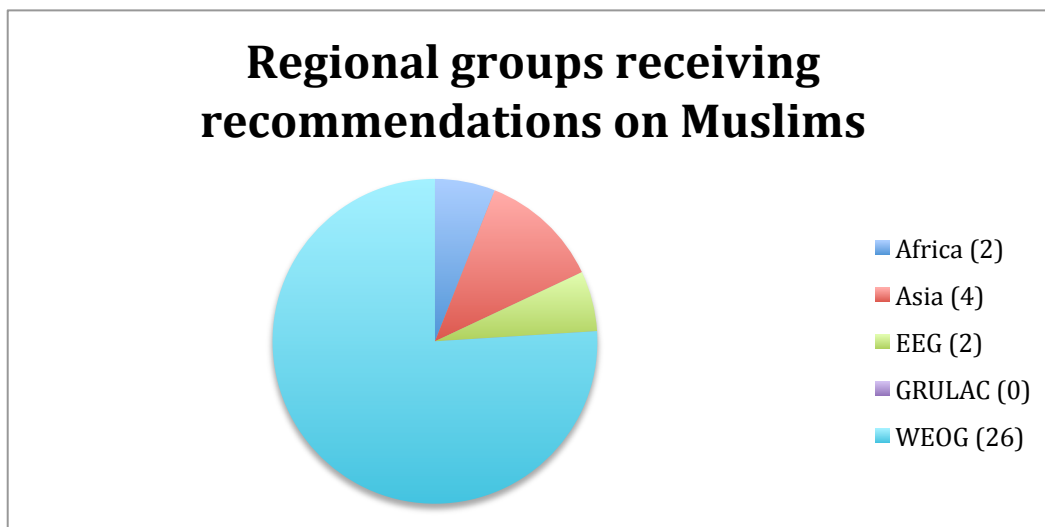
Member States made recommendations on Roma and **health care** 25 times to 13 countries and were all accepted. They mainly stressed the need for non-discrimination and ensuring access to health services (for example to Italy, Lithuania, Serbia etc). Croatia accepted to have media-campaigns targeting Roma communities on important issues including health services, Czech Republic again accepted the need for disaggregated data and Hungary accepted to prevent segregation in hospitals.

As far as **Roma women and children** are concerned, relevant recommendations are analyzed later in the chapter dealing with intersectionality.

As mentioned at the beginning, a few recommendations, namely 7 referred specifically to the situation of **Travellers**. They were all made to Ireland and were accepted with one exception. They concerned overall integration, representation, participation in decision-making, education, health care and housing of Travellers. The only one recommendation that was only noted requested Ireland to get Travellers recognized as an official minority group.

Muslims

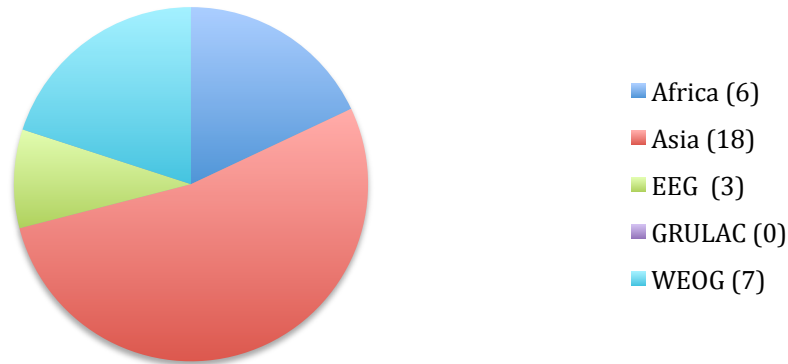
There were 34 recommendations made on Muslims in the context of minority issues. Twenty-six were accepted which constitutes 76%. Most recommendations were made to the Western European and Others Group.



Most recommendations were made to Germany (4), Greece (4) and Ireland (4). Germany and Ireland accepted all, Greece noted 2 of them. Belgium and Myanmar noted all the 2-2 recommendations they received, Comoros and Israel also noted the only one recommendation received.

Most recommendations were made by the Asian group, followed by the Western European and Others Group.

Regional groups making recommendations on Muslims



Most recommendations on Muslims (13) urged for combating racism, Islamophobia and discrimination in general and to ensure integration of Muslims (for example to Australia, Canada). Eight (8) recommendations mentioned explicitly freedom of religion and State non-interference into practicing of Islam (for example to Iceland, Germany, Slovenia). Several recommendations addressed the challenge with racial or religious profiling (for example to Canada, United States), violence against Muslims (to Australia, Canada and Germany) or the particular situation of Muslim women (to Germany, Greece, Thailand). Slovenia accepted the need to build or protect places of worship. There were a few recommendations referring to specific circumstances or concerns, for example food security (Nepal accepted), on citizenship (Myanmar noted), opening one of the historical mosques in Greece (Greece accepted), repeal legislation regarding the appointment of imams (Greece noted), allowing conversion from Islam and proselyfication (Comoros noted), give more support and consideration to Muslims, in particular on financial support, places of worship, cemeteries and other special concerns (Liechtenstein accepted).

African and Afro-descendant minorities

33 recommendations mentioned people from African origin or Afro-descendants either in the context of minorities or migrants to 15 countries. All of them were accepted. Most recommendations were made to Panama (8), Honduras and the United States both received 4-4. Most recommendations (15) addressed the need for general human rights protection, to combat discrimination and ensure integration of Afro-descendants (for example to Colombia, Dominican Republic, the United States etc). Five (5) dealt with economic, social and cultural life specifically, including access to labour market or health care (for example to Canada, Costa Rica, Panama etc). Other topics included: ill-treatment or excessive use by law enforcement officials (to Austria, United States), hate

speech (Austria accepted), land rights (Brazil accepted), violence (Australia and Honduras accepted), racial profiling (the United States accepted), birth registration (Panama accepted), one recommendation addressed the need for legal aid for Afro-descendant women (Venezuela accepted). There was one recommendation about non-Africans, which requested urgent solution for the “anomaly regarding citizenship status for residents of non-African descent” (Sierra Leone accepted).

Slovenians

Slovenians were mentioned in 13 recommendations (all by Slovenia with the exception of one from the United States). Italy accepted to implement relevant laws, including bilingual topography in areas populated by the Slovenian minority, to increase the visibility of Slovenian television programmes, and to respect the institutions of the Slovenian minority. Austria accepted to implement court decisions concerning bilingual topography and Slovenian as an official language in the province of Carinthia and noted to increase financial support there. Hungary accepted to ensure continued functioning of Slovenian media and the two bilingual Slovenian-Hungarian schools and to implement the Agreement on Guaranteeing Special Rights of the Slovenian Minority and the recommendations of the mixed Slovenian-Hungarian Commission tasked with the monitoring of the implementation of the Agreement. Croatia accepted to provide for persons belonging to the Slovenian minority all guaranteed rights.

Bahá'ís

The situation of the Bahá'í minority was mentioned in 12 recommendations to Egypt (1), Iran (10) and Yemen (1). Iran took note of 6 recommendations, all the others were accepted. Egypt accepted the recommendation regarding the expediting of the provision of all official documents, particularly identity documents to all members of its Baha'i community. Yemen accepted to continue to make all efforts to adopt effective measures to prevent the recurrence of threats against Baha'i communities.

Iran accepted to deal with ensuring fair and transparent trials of Bahá'ís, extending the rights guaranteed in Iranian legislation to all religious groups, including Bahá'ís, respect freedom of religion and judicially prosecute those inciting hatred. Iran took note on recommendations referring to acts of repression, policy of fanatic Islamism and intolerance, discrimination and persecution, intimidation or discrimination against Bahá'í children in schools, incitement to hatred and on releasing detained Bahá'í leaders and end policies of discrimination against Baha'i and other religious and ethnic minorities.

Turkish minority

Turkish minority groups were mentioned in 12 recommendations to Bulgaria (2), Georgia (4), Greece (4), Iraq (1) and Turkmenistan (1), with three exceptions, all made by Turkey. Bulgaria took note of the 2 recommendations it received to take concrete action to bring to justice those who committed human rights violations against the members of the Turkish minority in the period 1984-1989 and to take necessary action to address the impediments faced by the Turkish minority. Georgia received 4 recommendations, 1 was noted, 3 accepted. The one noted asked to take effective measures to facilitate the return of Meskhetian Turks to Georgia, and to guarantee their rights. The other recommendations accepted included the adoption of a relevant law to create appropriate conditions for the integration of the Meskhetian Turks returnees, to launch an awareness campaign and adopt a comprehensive strategy addressing issues such as language learning, access to education and employment. Greece got 4 recommendations, all from Turkey, out of which only 1 was accepted and 3 noted. The one accepted recommended the implementation of relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. The ones noted included recommendations to open Turkish-language kindergartens, to take necessary steps to ensure the election of the muftis by the Turkish Muslim Minority and to start a dialogue with the NGOs of the Turkish communities. Iraq accepted to respect and guarantee the rights of Iraqi Turkmen (and other religious and ethnic minorities). Turkmenistan accepted to eliminate all norms and practices that lead to the discrimination of members of national minorities, such as Russians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turks and Kurds.

Caste-discrimination and Dalits

Caste-discrimination was mentioned in 9 recommendations: 4 to India, 3 to Nepal and 2 to Pakistan. India took note of all the 4 recommendations: maintain disaggregated data on caste and related discrimination and strengthen human rights education, specifically in order to address effectively the phenomenon of gender-based and caste-based discrimination. Nepal accepted: to ensure full participation of ethnic groups and castes in the Constitution-making process, in particular in the Constituent Assembly; to take further steps to eliminate discrimination against vulnerable or marginalized groups, including on the basis of gender or caste; and to review and adopt relevant legislation and policies, including bills related to caste-based discrimination. Pakistan accepted to take measures to eliminate discrimination against castes and high degree of poverty suffered by castes.

Dalits were mentioned in 8 recommendations, all made to Nepal and all being accepted. They included: continue promoting the work of the National Commissions for Dalits, through the reinforcement of resources that allows them to work in an efficient manner; to improve food safety for Dalits; to ensure that Dalit children have equal access to quality education; to take the necessary legal and policy measures to end discrimination; to review and adopt relevant legislation and policies, including bills related to caste-based discrimination and the Dalit Commission; to formulate effective

strategies and programmes in order to provide employment and income-generating opportunities for Dalits; and to pay special attention to helping Dalit children and girls to complete their education cycle, and to ensure their employment opportunities.

Non-Muslims

The expression “non-Muslims” have been used in 7 recommendations, out of which 5 were accepted. The following countries received those: Nigeria (1), Sudan (1)⁷ and Turkey (5). Nigeria accepted to ensure that non-Muslims are not subjected to Sharia law and are able to practice their own religion without hindrance. Sudan accepted to foresee measures that would guarantee the right of non-Muslims. Turkey accepted to undertake effective efforts and policies to eliminate discriminatory practices, dissemination of hate speech and to stop persistent hostile attitudes on the part of the general public, including attacks to non-Muslim minorities. Turkey also accepted to allow for the functioning of non-Muslim religious communities and to take steps to prevent and combat hostile attitudes against persons belonging to non-Muslim minorities, by putting in place awareness-raising campaigns as well as education and training programmes for judges and law enforcement agents. Turkey noted the recommendations to set a time frame within which restrictions with regard to deprivation of legal personality of non-Muslim minorities and to take effective measures to combat persisting hostile attitudes and discrimination towards persons belonging to non-Muslim minorities.

Kurdish minority

Kurdish minorities were part of 6 recommendations to Syria (2), Turkey (3) and Turkmenistan (1). Syria accepted to comply with commitments enshrined in the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action, particularly as regards the prevention and punishment of discrimination against the population of Kurdish origin. Syria noted to guarantee the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of persons belonging to the Kurdish minority.

Turkey accepted to undertake effective efforts and policies to eliminate discriminatory practices, dissemination of hate speech and to stop persistent hostile attitudes on the part of the general public, including attacks towards Kurds. Turkey noted to take effective measures to combat persisting hostile attitudes and discrimination towards Kurds and to implement further reforms to ensure full recognition of the rights of the Kurdish minorities. Turkmenistan accepted to eliminate all norms and practices that lead to the discrimination of Kurds.

⁷ There is one more recommendation to Sudan also in the database as Somalia made a recommendation to both South-Sudan and Sudan in the same sentence but it was taken out from here to avoid confusion.

Serbian minority

There were 5 recommendations addressing the situation of the Serbian minority, all to Croatia. Croatia accepted all of them, namely to strengthen efforts to combat racial discrimination, especially against Serb minorities; to further promote inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance, particularly with regard to the Serb minority; to apply measures to increase the participation of individuals from the Serb communities in local and regional governments; to adopt and implement fair and transparent measures for the sustainable return of members of the Serb minority; and to increase measures to integrate ethnic Serb minorities into the fabric of Croatian life, including through a broadcast media campaign to communicate and strengthen themes of reconciliation and tolerance.

Jewish communities and anti-Semitism

Jewish communities were mentioned in 4 recommendations to Germany (1), Lithuania (2) and Yemen (1) and anti-Semitism once more to Lithuania (1). They were all accepted. Germany accepted to consider taking more resolute action to prevent and punish perpetrators of racially motivated acts of violence against members of Jewish communities. Lithuania accepted to develop public awareness campaigns to combat manifestations of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, to swiftly implement the Law of Compensation of the Immovable Property of the Jewish Religious Communities of Lithuania, and to enact a more robust set of policies and procedures to combat anti-Semitism and that a public strategy be developed to dissuade prejudices and intolerance. Yemen accepted that it should continue to make all efforts to adopt effective measures to prevent the recurrence of threats against religious minorities, including Jewish communities.

Pygmies

The situation of Pygmies was addressed in 4 recommendations, to Cameroon (1), to Gabon (2) and the Republic of Congo (1). Cameroon accepted to respect international provisions in the area of the protection of minorities and vulnerable groups, particularly Pygmies. Gabon noted that it should redouble efforts to integrate the Pygmy population in the mainstream society, noted to put an end to the discrimination and grant them basic human rights. The Republic of Congo accepted to approve in the shortest period of time the new law regarding indigenous peoples with the aim of safeguarding minority rights, specifically those of the Pygmies.

Russian minority

Russian minorities were mentioned in 4 recommendations made to Latvia (1), Moldova (1), Turkmenistan (1) and Ukraine (1). Latvia accepted to maintain State preschool and general education institutions with education/teaching in Russian language. Moldova accepted to ensure the freedom of the mass media, particularly of those media outlets that function in Russian. Turkmenistan accepted to eliminate all norms and practices that lead to the discrimination of members of national minorities, such as Russians. Ukraine noted that given that Russian is the mother tongue of a significant proportion of Ukraine's population, it should consider assigning the Russian language the status of second national language.

Tibet

China noted all 4 recommendations referring to Tibet. They were the following: to resume dialogue in Tibet (from New Zealand); grant greater access to Tibetan areas for OHCHR and other United Nations bodies, as well as diplomats and the international media (from the United Kingdom); respect the fundamental rights of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet, notably freedom of religion and movement (from Switzerland); and review laws and practices in particular with regard to ensuring protection of the freedom of religion, movement, protection of the culture and language of national minorities, including Tibetans and Uyghurs (from Czech Republic).

Other examples

Christians were mentioned in 2 recommendations: Mauritania accepted to protect the Christian and other religious minorities by fostering a climate of religious tolerance and respect in the country and Israel noted to guarantee equitable protection to all places of worship in the country, including all Muslim and Christian sacred places. Angola accepted to take legislative measures to explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination, in particular against children with disabilities, girls and children belonging to the **San** communities. Rwanda accepted to reduce poverty in the **Batwa** community, and its full integration in society and noted to adopt concrete measures to avoid discrimination and protect the rights of the Batwa community and other minorities, as well as request technical assistance from the United Nations to identify their basic social needs. Indonesia noted to take further measures to address the threats against **Ahmadiyyah** families following a fatwa banning the Ahmadiyyah. Kuwait noted to end all de jure and de facto discrimination against **Beduns** by affording en masse all Beduns equal protection under law, and in particular by conferring Kuwaiti nationality on a non-discriminatory basis and allowing for the use of social services to such persons. Lao PDR noted to Deepen dialogue with UNHCR regarding the situation of individuals belonging to the **Hmong** minority returned from third countries. Myanmar noted to immediately end violence and discrimination against members of ethnic and religious minorities,

grant full citizenship rights to **Rohingyas** and end sexual violence committed against ethnic minority women. Sri Lanka noted to take measures to award Up-Country **Tamils** with the full set of civil rights, including the right to vote. Turkmenistan accepted to eliminate all norms and practices that lead to the discrimination of members of national minorities, such as **Russians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turks and Kurds**. Armenia noted to take measures to eliminate discrimination against **Yezidis**. Bosnia and Herzegovina accepted the need to amend the Constitution and election laws to permit the members of communities other than the **Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats** to run for the Presidency or become members of the House of Peoples. Macedonia FYR accepted to Continue adopting measures to improve the situation of rural women belonging to ethnic minorities, above all Roma and **Albanians**. Montenegro accepted to develop reliable statistics on the number of children belonging to the Roma, **Ashkali and Egyptian** minorities in the Montenegrin school system and guarantee their economic, social and cultural rights. Slovenia noted to take further appropriate steps to support and to enhance the status of the **German-speaking communities** in Slovenia. The Dominican Republic accepted to adopt comprehensive strategies to combat racism, including specific measures on the status and protection of persons of **Haitian** origin. St Lucia accepted to adopt measures for the greater inclusion of the **Kweyol** community and other non-English speaking linguistic minorities into the social and political life of the country through specific education and training programmes. Israel noted to ensure access of **Bedouin** populations to basic public services, such as sanitation, electricity and water. New Zealand accepted to continue to take targeted action to eliminate the socio-economic disparities that persist among its population, including those affecting **Maori, Pacific, Asian** and other groups. Turkey noted three recommendations regarding its **Greek** community, including on minority education, expropriated property, and on training of the clergy, and deprivation of legal personality of non-Muslim minorities, including the Greek orthodox minority. The United States accepted to increase its efforts to eliminate alleged brutality and use of excessive force by law enforcement officials against, inter alia, **Latino** and African American persons and undocumented migrants, and to ensure that relevant allegations are investigated and that perpetrators are prosecuted. The United States accepted to make further efforts in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination and the abuse of authority by police officers against migrants and foreigners, especially the community of **Vietnamese** origin people in the United States. Sweden accepted the need for additional measures to combat discrimination against national minorities, in particular the **Sami** and the Roma.

References to Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures

There were 41 recommendations in the first cycle that referred to Treaty Bodies and minorities at the same time. 12 were noted, the rest were accepted. 15 recommended that the state under review takes into account the recommendations or comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Committee on the

Elimination of Discrimination against Women was mentioned 9 times, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 8 times, the Committee on the Rights of the Child 7, and the Human Rights Committee 6 times.

There were 12 recommendations referring to Special Procedures and minorities at the same time. 4 of them referred to the Independent Expert on minority issues, 2 to the Special Rapporteur on housing, the rest were general recommendations.

Independent Expert on Minority Issues

Four recommendations referred to the work of the Independent Expert on Minority Issues:

- Guyana: Canada recommends that Guyana takes into account findings in the report of the United Nations Independent Expert on Minority Issues on the phantom death squad.
- Hungary: the Russian Federation recommends that Hungary ensures the collection of necessary statistical data disaggregated by ethnicity and gender in order to measure, monitor, and remedy ethnic discrimination as proposed by the Independent Expert on Minority Issues.
- Laos: New Zealand recommends that Laos ensures equitable treatment of all groups in society and, as a first step, invite the Independent Expert on Minority Issues to undertake a country visit.
- Turkey: Greece recommends that Turkey considers replying favourably to the requests for a visit of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyer and the Independent Expert on Minority Issues.

Forum on Minority Issues

None of the recommendations on minority issues in Cycle 1 of the UPR process referred to the work or recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues.

Intersectionality: Women and Children

Women

A total of 106 recommendations are labelled both under minorities and women's rights. However, 74 of them addressed minorities and women as two separate groups, usually as part of a general list of vulnerable groups (for example women, minorities, migrants, indigenous communities, rural communities etc.) so cannot be taken into account as recommendations on intersectionality. The other 32 recommendations addressed minority women indeed and used expression such as: minority women; Roma women; Muslim women; vulnerable groups of women, such as Roma; minorities, particularly women etc. so these are analyzed below.

Concerns about minority women in general were addressed in 15 recommendations. (Recommendations referring to minority girls appear in the next section of intersectionality examining minorities and children's rights.) They were the following:

- Australia accepted to end discrimination on the basis of race in particular against women of certain vulnerable groups (from Iran).
- Germany accepted to respect and promote the rights of minority women, including their freedom of religion and expression + eliminate discrimination against minority women, in particular in employment and education (from Malaysia).
- Hungary accepted to ensure disaggregated data collection by ethnicity and gender as proposed by the Independent Expert on minority issues (from the Russian Federation).
- Ireland accepted to continue efforts to ensure that women belonging to minorities continue to be the focus of government programmes (from Argentina)
- Japan accepted to address the problems faced by women belonging to minorities (from Germany).
- Macedonia accepted to step up efforts to ensure access to education, health, employment and participation in political public life for women, in particular ethnic minority women (from Malaysia).
- Myanmar noted to end sexual violence committed against ethnic minority women (from the United States).
- The Netherlands accepted to strengthen measures to increase the participation by ethnic minority women in line with CEDAW recommendations (from Ghana).
- Norway accepted to continue its advancement to ensure that the representation of women in political and public organs fully reflects the diversity of people in Norway, including women belong to minorities (from Cuba and Israel).

- Sweden accepted to intensify efforts intended to punish and prevent discrimination based on ethnic grounds in all areas of life, in particular cases affecting women belonging to ethnic minorities + address the specific needs of minorities, particularly women + take additional steps to prevent discrimination against minority women (from Argentina, Bangladesh and Bosnia and Herzegovina).
- Switzerland accepted to strengthen efforts to guarantee equal opportunities in the labour market, in particular for women from minority groups (from the Netherlands).

Roma women were explicitly mentioned in 13 recommendations. They were the following:

- Hungary accepted to intensify efforts to combat all forms of discrimination to make effective the equality of opportunities, with particular attention to women who are in the situation of more vulnerability, such as those who belong to the Roma people + prevent violence against Roma women, including their harassment at school and fill the gaps in Roma women's formal education (from Argentina and Iran)
- Italy accepted to take more effective measures to combat racial discrimination, in particular against vulnerable groups of women, especially Roma (from Chile)
- Latvia accepted to prevent violence against Roma women and girls, including harassment and abuse at school and address the gaps in their formal education (from Iran)
- Macedonia FYR accepted to implement measures to prevent and punish violence against Roma women + to improve the situation of rural women belonging to ethnic minorities, above all Roma and Albanians (from Japan and Argentina)
- Portugal accepted to ensure that all programmes, projects and measures to combat violence against women also reach Roma women (from Norway)
- Romania accepted to ensure measures to improve women's rights through education, in particular for the Roma and rural women (from Algeria)
- Slovakia accepted to take effective measures to eliminate forms of discrimination against Roma women and to tackle the root cause of discrimination and violence against Roma, especially women (from Brazil and Republic of Korea). It noted to guarantee that no women belonging to minority groups, including Roma can be subject to practices of forced sterilization and that victims of such practices are provided with the necessary reparation and noted to take concrete steps to investigate the allegations, including legal action and to prevent reoccurrence of forced sterilization of Roma women and compensate victims (from Cuba and Japan)
- Spain accepted to increase Roma women's awareness and access to services and programmes in education, employment, health care (from Israel.)

Muslim women were mentioned 3 times:

- Germany accepted to adopt necessary measures to protect the freedom of Muslim women to belief (from Qatar)
- Greece accepted to take action with regard to impediments that Muslim minority women in Thrace may face when sharia law is applied on family and inheritance law matters (from the Netherlands)
- Thailand accepted to ensure equal access to education, social security, health care and economic opportunities for women, including Muslim women (from Slovenia).

There was only one recommendation explicitly mentioning a particular other minority women group: Macedonia FYR accepted to continue adopting measures to improve the situation of rural women belonging to ethnic minorities, above all Roma and Albanians (from Argentina).

Children

There were 89 recommendations labelled under both minorities and rights of the child. In this case, a majority 61 indeed addressed intersectionality as they referred to children belonging to minority groups with expressions such as: children belonging to minority groups; minority children; minority groups, especially children; Dalit children; Roma children; Roma girls; children, including those of Roma origin; children of African descent etc.

There were 25 recommendations referring to minority children in general, 31 to Roma children, 3 to children of African descent, 2 to children belonging to religious minorities, 2 to Dalits, 1 to San children, 1 to Turkish children and 1 to Ashkalies and Egyptians (some overlapped).

General recommendations addressed the following concerns:

- Armenia accepted to ensure that children belonging to all minority groups have equal access to education and can have education in their mother tongue (from Austria, Azerbaijan and Uruguay).
- Austria accepted to take further steps to strengthen social, economic and educational support provided to school children from immigrant minorities (from Turkey).
- Belgium accepted to promote equal access to education through inclusive policies in the education system aimed at children from minority families (from Mexico).

- Belize accepted to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to prioritize effective measures to reduce poverty among minority children (from Canada).
- Bulgaria accepted to evaluate the need for tuition in a special school on the basis of the child's personal characteristics, not on his or her ethnicity and to guarantee that the implementation of the law on compulsory preschool education covers minorities (from Finland).
- Cambodia accepted to take additional measures to support access to education of minority children to help them to maintain and develop their own traditions and languages (from Morocco).
- Italy accepted to take necessary measures, including administrative measures, to facilitate access to education to children who are not of Italian origin (from Uruguay).
- Latvia accepted to continue its efforts to promote the full integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society and facilitate the naturalization and acquisition of citizenship, especially in the case of children (from Costa Rica)
- Macedonia FYR accepted to continue its efforts to guarantee free education at the primary level for all children, giving special attention to minority groups (from the Holy See)
- Malaysia accepted to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to ensure comprehensive protection of the rights of children, including those of minority groups (from South Africa)
- Norway noted to work with the Ombudsman for Children and relevant civil society organizations to create programmes to educate law enforcement officials on how to proactively address the problem of adolescents from ethnic minority backgrounds feeling stigmatized by and lacking trust in the police (from the United States)
- Slovakia noted to adopt a comprehensive legal instrument, which recognizes the rights of persons belonging to minority groups and offers the necessary protection, in particular to children, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (from Cuba).
- Slovenia accepted to strengthen appropriate measures aimed at promoting and protecting the cultural rights of certain ethnic groups, in particular the rights of children belonging to those groups (from Albania).
- St Vincent & the Grenadines noted to take steps to combat racial discrimination encountered by children belonging to certain minorities (from Haiti).
- Suriname accepted to take expeditiously efficient steps to improve access to free basic education to all children, with particular focus on those belonging to minority groups (from Slovakia).
- Sweden accepted to intensify efforts intended to punish and prevent discrimination based on ethnic grounds in all areas of life, in particular in cases affecting children belonging to ethnic minorities and to address the specific needs of minorities, particularly children. It noted to put an end to denying the

right to education of children belonging to minorities (from Argentina, Bangladesh and Cuba).

- Thailand accepted to combat discriminatory practices against children and adolescents belonging to minorities (from Uruguay).

More than one-third of recommendations on children and minorities specifically addressed the situation of Roma children. They were the following:

- Albania accepted to continue fostering educational attainment of Roma children as indicated in the 2004 common country assessment report (from Israel).
- Austria noted to adopt measures to guarantee Roma children the right to education in their own language and in a relevant way with their own culture (from Ecuador).
- Bosnia and Herzegovina accepted to eliminate discriminatory provisions from the Constitution to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to guarantee universal birth registration under all circumstances, including for Roma children (from Czech Republic).
- Bulgaria accepted to strengthen awareness-raising campaigns aimed at preventing human trafficking, and increase the protection provided to victims, notably children and newborns, including those of Roma origin, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. It accepted to set up a policy specifically aimed at reducing the number of Roma children placed without valid reasons in establishments for children with disabilities or in rehabilitation centres and ensure that Roma children are not sent to special schools for the disabled, but instead are schooled together with other Bulgarian children. It accepted to avoid the practice of the school segregation of Roma children, for example with primary school teachers, who are speaking their mother tongue, with the objective of achieving an effective learning of the Bulgarian language and other subjects taught and to guarantee that the implementation of the law on compulsory preschool education covers Roma (Mexico, Canada, Finland and Spain).
- Croatia accepted to strengthen effective legal and administrative measures to address all forms of violence against children and, in particular, discrimination against children belonging to minorities, especially Roma (from Bangladesh).
- The Czech Republic accepted that in the implementation of public policy for Roma, it will take into account ethnic and cultural diversity and the specificities, needs, lifestyles and identity of the beneficiaries, and to consider the possibility of establishing bilingual compensatory school programmes for Roma children (from Mexico).
- Estonia accepted to consider taking necessary measures to prevent and combat discrimination towards minorities, and positively consider the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the prevention of segregation of Roma children in the field of education. It accepted to bring an end to segregation of Roma children in the field of education and pay special

- attention to the rights of Roma children to education, and implement the relevant policy instruments to ensure their enjoyment of the rights as enshrined in the Estonian Constitution (from Brazil, Finland and Denmark).
- Hungary accepted to intensify efforts to combat all forms of discrimination to make effective the equality of opportunities and treatment among all inhabitants in its territory, with particular care and attention to women and children who are in the situation of more vulnerability, such as those who belong to the Roma people. It accepted to prevent violence against Roma women and girls, including their harassment at school, and fill the gaps in Roma women's formal education and take all necessary measures to promote equality in education in favour of all members of minority groups, especially Roma children (from Argentina, Iran and Greece).
 - Latvia accepted to prevent violence against Roma women and girls, including harassment and abuse at school, and address the gaps in their formal education (from Iran).
 - Lithuania accepted to address the problem of Roma children dropping out of school, promote the Roma language in the school system, establish emergency measures aimed at integrating Roma children in regular schools and to solve the problem of the drop-out rate (Iran and Uruguay).
 - Macedonia FYR accepted to adopt provisions to address the phenomenon of school dropouts particularly among Roma children, especially girls (from Algeria).
 - Montenegro accepted to develop reliable statistics on the number of children belonging to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minorities in the Montenegrin school system, to take all necessary measures to guarantee full access to education for children belonging to Roma communities and to support their social inclusion (from Luxemburg and Italy).
 - Portugal accepted to continue strengthening efforts to ensure respect for the right to nondiscrimination of children in the country, in particular of minority groups, including the Roma and to have the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity examine further measures to prevent unlawful child labour, including the possibility of sector specific enforcement policies that target vulnerable populations, such as Roma street children (from Malaysia and United States).
 - Slovakia accepted to take effective measures to eliminate forms of discrimination against Roma girls and to take all necessary measures to ensure that all children, particularly Roma children, have equal opportunities for access to school. It accepted to adopt time-bound measures to increase access for Roma children and children with disabilities to inclusive education in mainstream schools and to step up its efforts to tackle the root cause of discrimination and violence against the Roma population, especially women and children. It noted to establish practical measures to resolve the issue of Roma children being placed into special schools for disabled children, without clearly defined selection criteria or effective independent complaint mechanisms for parents and noted to adopt a comprehensive legal instrument which recognizes the rights of persons belonging to minority groups, including Roma, and offers the

necessary protection, in particular to children, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (from Brazil, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Cuba and Japan).

- Spain accepted to ensure school integration of Roma children as expressed by CEDAW (from Israel).

Children of African descent were mentioned three times and in all cases in relation to Panama which accepted to take measures to overcome the difficulty of access to birth registration procedures and intensify the necessary measures to guarantee the right of all children to have their birth registered, in particular children of African descent, indigenous children and those who live in rural and border areas (from Mexico, Nigeria and Haiti).

Children belonging to religious minorities were mentioned in 2 recommendations: Georgia accepted to undertake effective measures to protect children, particularly those belonging to religious minorities (from Ecuador) and Tajikistan noted to repeal laws that negatively impact religious freedom, such as those that limit the right of women and minors to participate in religious activities (from United States).

Dalit children were mentioned 2 times, in both cases to Nepal which accepted to ensure that all girls, Dalit children and children belonging to ethnic minorities have equal access to quality education and to pay special attention to helping Dalit children, girls, and children belonging to ethnic minorities to complete their education cycle, and to ensure their employment opportunities after education in order to enable them to claim their rights and work as agents of change for their communities (from Finland to Nepal).

Other groups such as San, Turkish, Ashkali and Egyptian children were all mentioned 1-1 recommendation. Angola accepted to take legislative measures to explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination, in particular against children with disabilities, girls and children belonging to the San communities, and to effectively protect children accused of witchcraft (from Czech Republic). Greece noted to initiate procedures for the opening of Turkish-language kindergartens for minority children in Komotini and Xanthi (from Turkey). Montenegro accepted to develop reliable statistics on the number of children belonging to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minorities in the Montenegrin school system (from Luxemburg).

Regional Group Analysis

This section looks at those countries that received most recommendations in their respective Regional Groups, which indicates that they have the most to do concerning minority issues according to the Member States. In the African and GRULAC region, it means minimum 5, in Asia minimum 10, in EEG minimum 20 and in WEOG minimum 15 recommendations. This section is intended to reflect the broad range of various aspects of concerns about minorities in general or certain minority groups in the given country. **Countries** are highlighted in bold. Recommendations are grouped as general, specific, accepted and noted and are highlighted with underline to make it easier to have an overview of these categories. Recommendations are cited in most cases in full. If there was a list of vulnerable groups which included minorities, it is referred to as minorities “and others” to indicate that there were other groups in concern too. It also specifies the recommending State to allow the reader to take into consideration potential geopolitical factors.

Africa

Member States in the African region received 74 recommendations in total. Most recommendations were received by Egypt (6), Namibia (5), Nigeria (8), Sudan (5) and Tanzania (6). Many countries received only one (Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ghana, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo).

Egypt

Egypt received 6 recommendations, accepted 5 and noted 1.

It accepted to apply national legislation to individuals without discrimination based on their belonging to a religious minority (from Switzerland), to guarantee freedom of religion and belief to all groups and minorities, including in relevant legislation, without discrimination (from Finland), and to increase efforts to end discrimination and violence against religious minorities and prosecute those involved in incitement to religious hatred and violence (from Austria). It accepted to expedite the provision of all official documents, particularly identity documents to all members of its Baha'i community and redress laws and government practices that discriminate against members of religious minorities, and in particular urgently pass a unified law that makes construction and repair requirements equal for the places of worship of all religious groups (from the United States).

It noted to strengthen the protection of minorities and ensure an end to impunity in this context (Finland).

Namibia

Namibia received 5 recommendations, accepted 4 and noted 1.

It accepted: to adopt measures to ensure that persons who only speak non-official languages used widely by the population are not denied access to public services (from Austria and Spain); to ensure access to education, employment, health care and other basic services for the members of all ethnic communities, including the San and Himba communities (from Slovenia); and to strengthen measures to end discrimination, exclusion and marginalization of indigenous groups and minorities, in particular the San people (from Austria).

It noted to guarantee non-discrimination against persons belonging to minorities (from Spain).

Nigeria

Nigeria received 8 recommendations and accepted all.

It accepted: to end discrimination against ethnic minorities to ensure that non-Muslims are not subjected to Sharia law and are able to practice their own religion without hindrance (from Denmark); to expand programmes of education on religious tolerance in schools and monitor and protect the rights of religious minorities-promotion of the culture of religious tolerance should become the priority of the Federal, State and Local Governments (from Poland); to address the cultural and economic situation of ethnic minorities (from Germany); and to take steps to ensure an adequate political participation of ethnic minority groups as well as measures to effectively prevent the loss of land, property and resources of ethnic minority groups through, i.e. confiscation (from Germany) and to ensure the political and social-economic rights of minority groups in Niger Delta, and that consultations in this regard are undertaken with these minority groups (from the Netherlands). Nigeria accepted to regulate minority and indigenous rights on the constitutional and legislative level, to establish a National Minorities Commission and to set up a national policy for the promotion and protection of minority languages (from Slovenia); to take further steps to address discrimination against minority and vulnerable groups including reviewing issues surrounding the terms indigene-indigenous and taking action to discourage politicians from using religious, ethnic or settler indigene division for political ends (from the United Kingdom); and that within the framework of its national Inter-Religious Council and the Institute for Peace

and Conflict, to continue its commendable efforts in promoting the interethnic, inter-communal and inter-religious harmony (from Botswana).

Sudan

Sudan received 5 recommendations and accepted all.

It accepted: to incorporate robust provisions for the protection of human rights in the new Constitution, including articles on the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities (from Canada), to draft the Constitution in an inclusive process with the participation of civil society, women and minorities, to ensure to include a catalogue of human rights, in particular the freedom of speech and assembly, and to take the multiethnic and multireligious background of their population into account (from Austria). It accepted to clearly voice its intention to guarantee the protection of ethnic and religious minorities and formalize post-referendum agreements on citizenship rights which will safeguard civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights on an equal footing as citizens (from Finland) and to foresee measures that would guarantee the right to the freedom of religions to groups that will become minorities after the birth of the new State, namely non-Muslims in Sudan (from Somalia and from Djibouti).

Tanzania

Tanzania received 6 recommendations and accepted all. With one exception, they were all made regarding persons with albinism⁸.

It accepted to continue to work towards protecting and promoting the rights of marginalized and vulnerable population (from Nepal). It accepted to strengthen efforts to ensure full and complete protection and the protection of the rights of all peoples with Albinism (from Namibia and Djibouti) and to consider strengthening efforts to put a halt to incidents of killings of persons with albinism (from Brazil). It accepted to launch a nationwide education and human rights awareness campaign to prevent stigmatization of persons with albinism to ensure their security and facilitate their equal access to education and employment (from Canada and Uganda).

⁸ While the Special Rapporteur is on the view that persons with albinism do not constitute a minority group according to the UN Declaration on the Rights of People belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, given their similar experience of exclusion, marginalization and discrimination to racial minorities and that these recommendations are currently labelled under "minorities" in the UPR-Info database, the Special Rapporteur decided to include these recommendations to the analysis too.

Asia

Member States in the Asian region received 169 recommendations in total. Most were received by China (11), Iran (17), Iraq (11), Kyrgyzstan (10), Myanmar (20), Nepal (13) and Viet Nam (14).

China

China received 11 recommendations, accepted 3 and noted 8.

The ones accepted were: to adopt further measures to ensure universal access to health and education and other welfare for minority regions (from New Zealand); to continue its efforts to further ensure ethnic minorities the full range of human rights including cultural rights (from Japan); and to make more widely available to the world its experience in combining a strong state with ethnic regional autonomy (from Sri Lanka).

It has noted the rest: to strengthen the protection of ethnic minorities' religious, civil, socio-economic and political rights (from Australia); to resume the dialogue in Tibet (from New Zealand); to allow ethnic minorities to fully exercise their human rights, to preserve their cultural identity and to ensure their participation in decision-making (from Austria); to grant greater access to Tibetan areas for OHCHR and other United Nations bodies, as well as diplomats and the international media (from the United Kingdom); to simplify requirements for official approval of religious practices in order to allow more individuals to exercise their freedom of religion and belief and to better respect the religious rights of minorities (from Italy); to guarantee all citizens of China, including its minority communities and religions, the exercise of religious freedom, freedom of belief and the freedom of worshipping in private (from Germany); to respect the fundamental rights of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet, notably freedom of religion and movement and to protect the culture and language of national minorities, including Tibetans and Uyghurs (from Switzerland and Czech Republic).

Iran

Iran received 17 recommendations, accepted 8 and noted 9.

There were 4 accepted recommendations generally addressing the situation of minorities, these included: to continue its policy of promoting and protecting all rights of the members of recognized religious minorities, create opportunities to preserve their identities and further ensure their political representation and promote their greater involvement in the planning and implementation of various projects aimed at providing financial assistance for their educational and cultural needs and share its good practices regarding the protection of the cultural heritage of members of traditional

minorities (from Armenia); to guarantee the protection of the civil and political rights of all, particularly dissidents and members of minority groups (from Chile); and take all measures necessary to ensure the protection of religious minorities, including implementing the recommendations on adequate housing put forward by the Special Rapporteur after his visit in 2006 (from Denmark).

There were 4 other accepted recommendations regarding the situation of Bahá'ís in particular as well, which were: to ensure that the trials of seven Baha'is are fair and transparent and conducted in accordance with international standards, and that Iran amend all legislation that discriminates against minority groups (from Australia); to extend the rights guaranteed in Iranian legislation to all religious groups, including the Baha'i community (from Brazil); to fully respect the rights of the adherents of the Baha'i faith and to judicially prosecute those inciting hatred against them in religious environments, the media and the Internet (from Luxembourg); and to respect freedom of religion, and assure a fair and transparent trial for members of the Baha'i faith, in full compliance with the commitments undertaken as a State party to the implementation ICCPR and other human rights instruments (from Romania).

Iran has noted the rest, which were all about to eliminate discrimination, harassment, repression or intolerance against minorities (from Czech Republic, Israel, France, Germany, Mexico, Slovenia, Luxembourg, Canada, Austria), 6 of them referred to the Bahá'ís in particular as well.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan received 10 recommendations and accepted all.

It accepted: to establish a national preventive mechanism that would constitutionally-institutionally guarantee the rights of all people, particularly the rights of minorities (from Afghanistan, China, Tajikistan); to ensure full respect for minority rights in the new Constitution (Austria); and to review compliance of national legislation with ICCPR provisions (from Czech Republic). It has also accepted; to include minority communities in the process of constitution-making and the formulation of the Electoral Code; to take inclusive and longer-term measures with respect to linguistic policy, education and participation in decision-making for minorities; to publicly condemn and investigate anti-minority attacks by authorities and bring the perpetrators to justice; and to draw upon the expertise of the regional organizations (from Norway). It accepted to continue its efforts to preserve the nation's ethnic diversity and promote its cultural heritage (from Pakistan).

Myanmar

Myanmar received 20 recommendations, accepted 6 and noted 14.

The accepted ones included: to continue cooperation with human rights mechanisms and the international community in promoting and safeguarding the rights of multiethnic people in Myanmar (from Laos); to ensure that ethnic and religious minorities are granted fundamental rights and end discrimination against persons belonging to these minorities (from Slovenia); to continue its efforts to engage with various ethnic groups and address their humanitarian and socio-economic needs as an integral part of its democratization and reconciliation process (from Thailand); to ensure that ethnic minorities are granted fundamental rights and are enabled to enjoy their culture, religion and their language freely and without any form of discrimination (Poland); and to solve long-standing conflicts between the Government and ethnic groups in a peaceful manner (from Czech Republic). It accepted to further strengthen the promotion and protection of the human rights of the Myanmar people and the ethnic groups in Northern Rakhine State (from Bangladesh).

The ones noted were recommendations to take appropriate measures and immediate steps to end de facto and de jure discrimination, violence, forced assimilation, persecution (from Pakistan, Austria, Italy, France, United States) and to investigate and punish all cases of intimidation, harassment, persecution, torture and forced disappearance against minorities (from Uruguay). Some recommendations addressed certain minority groups or territories: to ensure full protection of civilians in conflict areas and to prevent such conflicts in the future by the creation of a democratic environment (from Czech Republic), to exert more efforts to promote and protect the rights of Muslim minorities (from Jordan); to modify the Citizenship Law of 1982 to ensure all minorities equal rights as citizens and remove all restrictions imposed on the Muslim minority in Rakhine State (from Switzerland); to impede the access to humanitarian aid in the regions where persecuted and discriminated ethnic minorities live (from France); to grant full citizenship rights to Rohingyas and end sexual violence committed against ethnic minority women (from the United States); and to allow access for international organizations to ethnic minority areas (Norway).

Three noted recommendations referred to political participation: to end harassment, religious discrimination, arbitrary arrest, torture, and imprisonment of peaceful political activities by ethnic minorities (from Sweden); to allow full participation by all ethnic and democratic groups, including the National League for Democracy and Aung San Suu Kyi, in the political life of the country, allowing the start of a genuine process of national reconciliation (from the United Kingdom); and to ensure the free participation of representatives of all political parties, including the National League of Democracy as well as other non parliamentary political parties, representatives of ethnic groups and other relevant stakeholders across society in an inclusive political process (from the Czech Republic).

Nepal

Nepal received 13 recommendations and accepted all.

Generally it accepted: to ensure full participation of ethnic groups and castes in the Constitution-making process, in particular in the Constituent Assembly (from Poland); to do all that is necessary to accelerate the drawing up of the various legal texts to reaffirm and reinforce the equality between all ethnic, cultural and linguistic components of Nepali society (from Algeria); to take more effective measures to increase the involvement of the indigenous peoples, minorities and vulnerable groups in the civil service, law enforcement agencies and local authorities (from Malaysia); and to take further steps to eliminate discrimination against vulnerable or marginalized groups, including on the basis of gender or caste, by enacting laws to criminalize all forms of discrimination (from the United Kingdom).

The rest addressed the situation of Dalits in particular too: to continue promoting the work of the National Commissions for Women and for Dalit, through the reinforcement of resources that allows them to work in an efficient manner and to effectively realize their mandate (from Bolivia and Slovenia); to improve food safety of vulnerable groups, particularly Dalits, Muslims and others (from Hungary); to ensure that all girls, Dalit children and children belonging to ethnic minorities have equal access to quality education (from Finland); to take the necessary legal and policy measures to end discrimination, including of women, children and Dalits (from the Netherlands); to review and adopt relevant legislation and policies, including bills related to caste-based discrimination, the Women's Commission, the Dalit Commission, to ensure full compliance with international human rights standards (from Norway); to formulate effective strategies and programmes in order to provide employment and income-generating opportunities for the population, in particular, the rural population, Dalits and ethnic minorities (from Malaysia); and to pay special attention to helping Dalit children, girls, and children belonging to ethnic minorities to complete their education cycle, and to ensure their employment opportunities after education in order to enable them to claim their rights and work as agents of change for their communities (from Finland).

Viet Nam

Viet Nam received 14 recommendations, accepted 13 and noted 1.

It accepted general recommendations such as: to give priority and pay special attention to the problems faced by different minority groups, in particular their student communities (from Pakistan); to continue to help ethnic groups to increase awareness

of their rights and responsibilities so that they can improve their living conditions and better enjoy their rights (from China); to continue to pay special attention to the disadvantaged sections of the society, in particular ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities, so as to ensure their fuller participation in the socio-political life of the country (from India); and to continue to make further efforts to advance the human rights of socially vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities and others (from Japan).

The other accepted recommendations referred to educational, health, economic, cultural or language rights in particular: to adopt various measures for prevention and early diagnosis of transmissible diseases and pandemics, notably HIV-AIDS, by giving priority to vulnerable groups, particularly national minorities and others (from Benin); to take supplementary measures to support access of minority children to education by helping them maintain and develop their traditions and languages (from Morocco); to further increase the use of ethnic languages in schools and the mass media (from the Philippines); to continue its efforts in poverty reduction paying particular attention, inter alia, to vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities and others (from Azerbaijan); to continue to take measures to provide education and health care, especially in mountainous areas and for ethnic minorities and with their involvement (from Cuba); to continue its efforts to preserve the languages and culture of ethnic minorities (from India and Nepal); to continue efforts to inform the wider society about the laws concerned and about the rights of women in general, and widely use the mass media to raise awareness of gender equality and publish the appropriate documents in ethnic minority language (from the Russian Federation); and to continue the momentum on the provision of quality goods and services, especially in education and health and in the disadvantaged areas that are difficult to access and those with a high preponderance of minorities (from Zimbabwe).

The only recommendation noted was to take further measures to prevent violence and discrimination against ethnic minorities (from Sweden).

Eastern European Group

Most recommendations were received by the Eastern European Group (368). Countries that received most recommendations were the following: Bulgaria (28), Croatia (29), Georgia (21), Hungary (38), Lithuania (20), and Slovakia (50).

Bulgaria

Bulgaria received 28 recommendations, accepted 23 and noted 5.

Accepted general recommendations were: to adopt and implement firmly all necessary measures to improve and ensure respect of the rights of people belonging to minorities (from Switzerland); to redouble efforts for the effective implementation of criminal provisions relating to acts of ethnic discrimination against persons belonging to minority groups (from Mexico); to take more resolute action to prevent and punish perpetrators of racially motivated acts and propaganda that targeted ethnic minorities and foreigners (from Malaysia); to develop effective measures to overcome continuing discriminatory patterns against ethnic minorities and others through education and training (from Spain); to evaluate the need for tuition in a special school on the basis of the child's personal characteristics, not on his or her ethnicity (from Finland); and to fully respect all international obligations by accepting the legally binding United Nations documents and by respecting the decisions of the other United Nations bodies and other organizations at the national level in regard to minority rights (from Macedonia FYR).

One specific recommendation was on religious minorities: to take necessary measures to ensure that local authorities respect the religious freedom of minority religious groups and treat all religious groups equally (from the United States). Another specific recommendation was to promote the identity of the Armenian minority by further addressing its educational, religious and cultural needs (from Armenia).

The rest were focusing on the situation of Roma: to continue to give political attention, commitment and concrete action; strengthen the implementation of policies and programmes focused on the inclusion of Roma; fully ensure the enjoyment of human rights by Roma; combat discrimination and violence; guarantee access to basic health and social services, education, housing and employment; ensure that due consideration is given in all policymaking processes to the impact on Roma of proposed legislation; ensure necessary resources to facilitate the implementation of programs; and to use more actively existing or new platforms for involving the Roma community in policy formulation and implementation at both the local and central levels (from Slovakia, Canada, Morocco, Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands). Several recommendations addressed Roma children in particular: to set up a policy specifically aimed at reducing the number of Roma children placed without valid reasons in establishments for children with disabilities or in rehabilitation centres (from Canada); to ensure that Roma children are not sent to special schools for the disabled, but instead are schooled together with other Bulgarian children (from Finland); to avoid the practice of the school segregation of Roma children, for example with primary school teachers, who are speaking their mother tongue, with the objective of achieving an effective learning of the Bulgarian language and other subjects taught (from Spain); to communicate more efficiently to Roma parents the importance of literacy and the positive effect of education on the children's future by using the help of school assistants with a Romani background and guarantee that the implementation of the law on compulsory preschool education for all children covers the Roma as well as other minorities (from Finland). One recommendation was to strengthen awareness-raising campaigns aimed at preventing human trafficking and increase the protection provided to victims, notably

children and newborns, including those of Roma origin, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Mexico).

The recommendations that were noted included: to gather statistics on the various groups accessing public services in order to obtain an accurate picture of the use of services by different minorities (from the United Kingdom); to take concrete action to bring to justice those who committed human rights violations against the members of the Turkish minority and to address the impediments faced by the Turkish minority in exercising its religious freedoms (from Turkey); to enshrine in its Constitution the protection of rights of national and ethnic minorities (Nigeria); and to fully implement the obligations from the Framework Convention for National Minorities of the Council of Europe and allow the registration of OMO Ilinden PIRIN and allow fully enjoyment of all rights to the Macedonian minority and other minorities, by fulfilling cultural and other related rights (from Macedonia FYR).

Croatia

Croatia received 29 recommendations, accepted 28 and noted 1.

General recommendations included: to undertake measures to improve the quality, capacity and effectiveness of the justice system to prevent the abuses of the rights of national minorities (from Serbia); to take further measures to combat discrimination against minorities and ensure that they are genuinely put into practice in the field (from Switzerland); to ensure the effective implementation of the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, and take additional measures to ensure the effective integration of minorities into society (from Austria); to continue positive efforts with a view to promoting equality and nondiscrimination against different national minorities (from Cuba); to take necessary measures to guarantee and continue providing free legal aid to the most vulnerable citizens (from France, Pakistan and Occupied Palestinian Territory); to strengthen effective and transparent measures to prevent and punish all forms of discrimination against minorities (from Mexico); to take measures aimed at fair and adequate representation of all minority groups in all public bodies, including the judiciary and human rights coordination bodies at the country level (from Poland); to tailor and design tuition in special schools on the basis of the child's individual needs rather than ethnicity (from Finland); and to adopt measures aimed at strengthening the work of the Council of National Minorities so as to address the situation of particularly vulnerable racial and ethnic groups (from Argentina).

Specific recommendations on the Roma population included: to give special attention to educating Roma girls, many of whom are often unable to finish school because of their gender (from Finland); to continue the main measures adopted to eliminate discrimination against the Roma minority, as contained in the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 (from Spain); to promote greater tolerance and

understanding among the majority population about the rights of the Roma community (from Bangladesh); to reach out to the parents of Roma children to make sure that they fully understand the importance of education also by using school assistants with a Roma background and continue to pay special attention to the situation of the Roma minority by strengthening its efforts and to provide equal access to citizenship (from Finland).

Others addressed the situation of other particular minorities (as well): to strengthen efforts to combat racial discrimination, especially against the Roma and Serb minorities, in particular in the areas of education, employment, housing, citizenship and political participation (from Ecuador); to further promote inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance, particularly with regard to the Serb and Roma minorities (from Brazil); to provide for persons belonging to the Slovenian minority all guaranteed rights (from Slovenia); to adopt and implement fair and transparent measures for the sustainable return of members of the Serb minority (from Poland); to make efforts to resolve difficulties in repossessing property and acquiring citizenship for returnees, in order to ensure the successful integration of minorities into Croatian society (from Republic of Korea); and to increase measures to integrate ethnic Serb and Roma minorities into the fabric of Croatian life, including through a broadcast media campaign to communicate and strengthen themes of reconciliation and tolerance (from the United States).

The only noted recommendation was to strengthen the efforts aimed at ensuring equal access to citizenship and ensure that the administrative procedures and legislative provisions on citizenship do not put at a disadvantage persons of non-Croat ethnic origin (from Poland).

Georgia

Georgia received 21 recommendations, accepted 15 and noted 6.

General recommendations accepted included: to take steps to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue and cooperation; to strengthen non-discrimination campaigns and to enhance participation of minorities; promote culture of tolerance and cooperation among different ethnic and religious groups; foster greater socio-economic inclusion of minorities; ensure their participation in the social, economic and cultural life of the country and that they are adequately represented in State institutions and public administration; and provide information, as requested by the International Labour Organization, on the implementation of measures to promote the participation of ethnic minorities in the labour market in the public and private sectors (from Philippines, Brazil, United Kingdom, Pakistan, Bolivia, Serbia, Kazakhstan).

Specific recommendations included: to ensure that the policy of promoting the Georgian language is not pursued to the detriment of the linguistic rights of minorities

(from Pakistan); to promote social, cultural and political respect and tolerance for religious minorities and undertake effective measures to protect children, particularly those belonging to religious minorities (from Ecuador); and to address the problem regarding the confiscation of places of worship and related properties of religious minorities (Holy See).

The situation of Meshketian Turks was addressed in 3 recommendations: to adopt a relevant law to create appropriate conditions for the integration of the Meskhetian Turks returnees; to launch an awareness campaign to explain the historical reasons for their return so as to avoid any intolerance against them; and the need for a comprehensive strategy addressing issues such as language learning, access to education and employment in favour of the integration of Meskhetian Turks (all from Turkey). One other recommendation accepted was to promote the rights of the Armenian minority in line with the recommendations of various international mechanisms with close consultations with representatives of the Armenian community and the Armenian Apostolic Church (from Armenia).

Recommendations noted included: to take effective measures to facilitate the return of Meskhetian Turks to Georgia, to guarantee their rights, implement the recommendations of treaty bodies and take concrete measures to increase the representation of national minorities in the Government and administrative bodies (from the Russian Federation); to take steps to ensure the legal recognition of all religions and grant each religious minority the possibility of legal registration with a specific ministerial office as a legal public entity (Holy See); to eliminate discriminatory laws and adopt legislation on the status of all languages existing in Georgia (Bangladesh); and to prohibit discrimination and the use of stereotypes against minority groups, so as not to qualify them publicly as "enemies", particularly in the media (Bolivia).

Hungary

Hungary received 38 recommendations, accepted 36 and noted 2.

The general recommendations accepted included: to continue to revise the criminal law to bring it fully in line with relevant international and regional obligations and in particular to ensure the protection of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (from Switzerland); to take steps to ensure that the constitutional changes concerning minority rights will not entail lowered guarantees compared to the current legal framework (from Norway); to continue the implementation of the measures to effectively protect minorities (from Chile); to persevere in its policy of promotion and protection of the rights of minorities and vulnerable persons (from Morocco); and to ensure the collection of necessary statistical data disaggregated by ethnicity and gender

in order to measure, monitor, and remedy ethnic discrimination as proposed by the independent expert on minority issues (Russian Federation).

Almost all other recommendations referred to the specific situation of Roma, including to place special emphasis on addressing the socio-economic disadvantages of the Roma, to strengthen measures directed towards their protection from discrimination and further integration to take concrete and stern action to ensure equal treatment for all in the society, to achieve their full social integration and enjoyment of human rights (from Argentina, Belarus, Pakistan, Uruguay, Chile, Morocco, Thailand, Sweden, United States). On hate crimes, Hungary accepted: to intensify measures to prevent and tackle racial hatred, extremism, hate crimes and violence against discrimination against religious and ethnic minority groups, including the Roma people (from Australia, Bangladesh, Republic of Korea, Uruguay, Indonesia, Sweden, Thailand); to make efforts to actively combat anti-Semitic and anti-Roma rhetoric, including by ensuring law enforcement and judicial authorities are made aware of guidelines on identifying and investigating racially motivated crime (United Kingdom); and to implement measures to encourage Roma and other victims to report hate crimes and, when they do, to protect them from reprisals (Indonesia). Some recommendations addressed education in particular: to introduce national measures to reduce school segregation and actively promote participation in society through education among the Roma community (from Norway); to fill the gaps in Roma women's formal education (from Iran); to take all necessary measures to promote equality in education in favour of all members of minority groups, especially Roma children (from Greece); to take measures to guarantee the right to equal education for Roma children (from Finland); and to commit to improving school results of Roma pupils by 2015 (from Canada). Roma women were addressed in 4 recommendations: to intensify efforts to combat all forms of discrimination to make effective the equality of opportunities and treatment among all inhabitants in its territory, with particular care and attention to women and children who are in the situation of more vulnerability, such as those who belong to the Roma people (Argentina); to prevent violence against Roma women and girls, including their harassment at school (from Iran); to investigate, and in the future prevent, cases mentioned by CESCR of the denied access of Roma to health services and their segregation in hospitals, including the existence of separate maternity wards for Roma women in some hospitals (from the Russian Federation); and to put emphasis on combating violence against Roma women (from Spain).

There were 3 recommendations on the Slovenian minority: to implement fully the Agreement on Guaranteeing Special Rights of the Slovenian Minority in the Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian National Community in the Republic of Slovenia and the recommendations of the mixed Slovenian-Hungarian Commission tasked with the monitoring of the implementation of the Agreement; to ensure stable and systematic funding for the media of the Slovenian minority in Hungary, namely for Radio Monoster/Szentgotthárd, the Porabje weekly and the Slovenian TV programme; and to ensure urgently, through stable and systematic funding, continued functioning of the

two bilingual Slovenian-Hungarian schools in Gornji Senik/Felsőszölnök and Stevanovic/Apátistvánfalva (from Slovenia).

The two recommendations noted were: to reconcile policies related to ethnic Hungarians abroad with neighbouring countries primary responsibility for minority protection (from Norway) and to revoke the condition which requires a minority group to have lived in the county at least one hundred years in order to be considered a national minority, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (from the Russian Federation).

Lithuania

Lithuania received 20 recommendations, accepted 15 and noted 5.

The general recommendations accepted included: to guarantee the protection of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (from Switzerland); to strengthen government policy aimed at ensuring inter-ethnic harmony and culture diversity (from Belarus); to develop public awareness campaigns to combat manifestations of discrimination and racism, including xenophobia, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and other forms of intolerance in order to further protect and strengthen the rights of members of minority groups (from the United States); to support and develop educational programs and institutions for national minorities (from the Russian Federation); and to develop a close dialogue with all minorities regarding language education issues (from Norway).

Several recommendations focused on Roma which included: to address the problem of Roma children dropping out of school, and promote the Roma language in the school system (from Iran); to establish emergency measures aimed at integrating Roma children in regular schools and solve the problem of the drop-out rate of these children (from Uruguay); to use more actively existing or new platforms for involving the Roma community in policy formulation, implementation and actively pursue an increase in the number of Roma in all public institutions (from the Netherlands); to further consider measures to secure the integration of the Roma community (from Sweden); to implement policies and actions aimed at the effective integration of the Roma community which would include the employment, education, security, social and health sectors, emphasis on the promotion of the Roma language, and the regularization of their identity documents (from Mexico); to continue to fund programs aimed at integrating Roma and take further steps to address the on-going social exclusion of Roma (from Australia); and to reinforce policies for the integration of minority groups, particularly Roma, in line with CERD recommendations (from Chile).

Other 2 specific recommendations were: to swiftly implement the Law of Compensation of the Immovable Property of the Jewish Religious Communities of Lithuania (from the United Kingdom) and to enact a more robust set of policies and procedures to combat

anti-Semitism, and that a public strategy be developed to dissuade prejudices and intolerance towards the Jewish population and its culture, including with respect to Jewish memorial and commemorative sites within Lithuania (from Canada).

Recommendations noted were: to sign, ratify and implement the provisions of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; to adopt a new Act on National Minorities in order to precisely stipulate the rights and obligations of persons belonging to national minorities; to ensure full compliance of the Lithuanian legislation and practice with international law which guarantees every person belonging to minority the right to have his or her name in official documents written in minority language; to enable national minorities to freely use their languages in public domain, including topographical indications in minority areas; and to abandon the practice of applying the so-called retrogressive measures whereby members of national minorities are deprived of their rights and freedoms which they had been enjoying and exercising earlier, sometimes for many decades (all from Poland).

Slovakia

Slovakia received 54 recommendations, accepted 47 and noted 7.

The general recommendations that were accepted included: to provide human rights training and education for members of the judiciary, police and prison personnel, in particular focusing on the protection of human rights of ethnic minorities and others (from Czech Republic); to reinforce measures to combat incitement to discrimination and racial violence including through criminal prosecution of those involved in violence against minorities and immigrants, and provide adequate reparation for the victims of such acts (from Angola); to ensure that children belonging to minority groups have equal and adequate access to education, health and other services (from Iran); to adopt measures to ensure that the education plan and teaching materials have an inter-cultural perspective (for all), bearing in mind the culture and history of different minority groups (from Mexico); to ensure that minority groups are not disproportionately affected by the financial and economic crisis (from the Netherlands); to continue and strengthen the measures to come to terms with the problems of discrimination that still persist, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by all minority groups (from Sweden); to address the status of persons belonging to minorities within Slovakia through greater engagement and effective use of European Union funds, expert level cooperation and strengthening of national procedures (from the United Kingdom); to continue its efforts and strong policy to address all forms of violence and discrimination against women, minorities and other vulnerable groups (from Kazakhstan); and to continue its efforts to promote and protect the rights of national minorities (from the Russian Federation).

All the other accepted recommendations referred to the situation of Roma and included: to pay particular attention to Roma; continue address their socio-economic inequalities; reinforce its policies and strategies and take measures to eliminate all sorts of discrimination against them; provide for efficient administrative procedures to make use of the significant financial means available through European Union funds and other sources for projects supporting the development of the Roma and provide incentives; develop programmes to effectively improve access to health services, to ensure that children have equal and adequate access to education, health and other services; to continue efforts to change the stereotype and traditional perception of Roma by the majority population (from Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Iran, Switzerland, Slovenia, South Africa, Jordan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Singapore, Turkey). Slovakia also accepted regarding hatred against Roma: to effectively investigate all reported cases of harassment of members of the Roma by the police forces (from Austria); organize targeted vocational training programmes, in particular for young people, to increase the employability of the members of the Roma community and improve their access to the labour market (from Austria); conduct thorough criminal investigation and prosecution of the police officers involved in the mistreatment of six Roma minors in Kosice (from the United States); to reinforce measures to combat incitement to discrimination and racial violence including through criminal prosecution of those involved in violence against minorities and immigrants, and provide adequate reparation for the victims of such acts (from Angola); to effectively apply legal and other measures to protect Roma and other minorities from violence and police mistreatment and establish a strategy to prevent xenophobic acts and violence involving ethnic or other minorities in consultation with relevant partners (from Canada); to intensify its actions to address the problem of racially motivated crimes and excessive use of force by police against the Roma community and persons belonging to other vulnerable groups (from the United Kingdom). Several recommendations focused on Roma education: to take concrete measures to improve the realization of the right to education by the Roma children, taking also into account special education needs (from Finland) and adopt time-bound measures to increase access for Roma children to inclusive education in mainstream schools (from New Zealand). Two recommendations were about Roma women in particular: to take effective measures to eliminate forms of discrimination against Roma women and girls (from Brazil) and to step up its efforts to tackle the root cause of discrimination and violence against the Roma population, especially women and children (from the Republic of Korea).

Noted recommendations were: to enact and implement new legislation as well as practical measures to end discriminatory practices against Roma children in the education system perpetuating their segregation, and to establish practical measures to resolve the issue of Roma children being placed into special schools for disabled children (from Austria, Japan and New Zealand); guarantee that no women belonging to minority groups, including Roma, can be subject to practices of forced sterilization, that victims of such practices are provided with the necessary reparation, take concrete steps to investigate the allegations, including legal action, and to prevent reoccurrence of the

coercive sterilization of Roma women and compensate victims (from Cuba, Japan); and to develop more legislative guarantees in order to fully comply with the provisions of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (from Hungary).

Western European and Other States Group

This group has received 230 recommendations in total, most (minimum 15) by Austria (21), Greece (15), Ireland (15), Italy (29) Portugal (19) and Turkey (21).

Austria

Austria received 21 recommendations, accepted 17 and noted 4.

General recommendations accepted were: to take further steps to fully implement a National Action Plan for better integration and protection of the rights of immigrant minorities, follow ILO recommendations in this respect, and strengthen social, economic and educational support provided to the school children from immigrant minorities (from Turkey); and to create a comprehensive system for the collection of data that would allow assessing the situation of vulnerable groups and minorities (from the Russian Federation and Israel).

There were several specific recommendations regarding incitement to hatred: to unequivocally condemn all incitement to violence or hatred and ensure that provisions for addressing agitation against a national or ethnic group are clearly stipulated under Austrian law (from Sweden); to take necessary steps to combat manifestation of neo-Nazi, right-wing extremist and xenophobic incidents directed against members of minority groups (from the Czech Republic); to take further resolute action to deal with the problems of reported instances of hate speech by politicians, targeting migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons of African origin in a comprehensive manner (from Indonesia); and to draft or amend national legislation to prevent incitement to hatred and attacks against all minority groups (from Israel and Egypt).

Specific group concerns were addressed as well: to ensure the full respect of the rights of migrants and minorities such as the Roma, including by strengthening the measures against acts of racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance (from Cuba); to investigate complaints of all ill-treatment by ethnic minorities, including Africans and Roma, and hold perpetrators responsible (from Namibia); and along with the ILO recommendation, continue providing information about the situation of Roma minority, adopt effective measures to integrate Roma minority into the economic, social and cultural life of the country (from Ecuador). The Slovenian minority was in focus in 4 recommendations: to improve its implementation of the Constitutional Court ruling

regarding the use of the Slovenian language in Carinthia province (from the United States); to take immediate steps to implement all decisions of the Constitutional Court concerning bilingual topography and Slovenian as an official language in the province of Carinthia, ensure full implementation of the rights of minorities on its territory in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Saint-Germain and Austrian State Treaty, and provide financial support to the Slovenian-language music school in the province of Carinthia on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the German-language music school (from Slovenia).

Noted recommendations were: to take further steps to increase awareness-raising campaigns and enhance education of the principles of non-discrimination and tolerance in school curriculums, including teaching of mother tongue for immigrant minorities; to collect and generate disaggregated data on manifestations of racism and discrimination with a view to evaluating the situation regarding minority, racial, and ethnic groups in Austria (from Brazil); to adopt measures to guarantee Roma children the right to education in their own language and in a relevant way with their own culture (from Ecuador); and to increase financial support for the Slovenian minority in the provinces of Carinthia and in Styria to the 1995 level in real terms (from Slovenia).

Greece

Greece received 15 recommendations, accepted 9, and noted 6.

General recommendations were: to take measures to strengthen legal and institutional mechanisms aimed at preventing, punishing and eliminating all forms of discrimination, including based on gender, racial and national origin, and religion (from Argentina); to take appropriate measures to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, particularly in the case of national, ethnic and religious minorities (from Mexico); to uphold respect for and protection of the rights of all individuals to self-identification, freedom of expression and freedom of association, including for the members of ethnic, religious and linguistic groups that are not officially recognized as minorities (from Slovenia); and to collect disaggregated data on the dissemination of hate speech against minorities (from Egypt).

Specific group recommendations were made on Roma and Muslims: to continue its work for the realization of human rights of the Roma population in the country and to focus on implementation of adopted strategies at a local level as well as on countering discrimination by private actors (from Sweden) and to take measures to provide Roma with increased opportunities for education and employment (from the United States); to take action with regard to the impediments that Muslim minority women in Thrace may face when sharia law is applied on family and inheritance law matters (from the Netherlands); to consider opening of one of the historical mosques in Thessaloniki, where significant number of Muslim population live and to execute the judgments of

the European Court of Human Rights regarding the applications of the Turkish Union of Xanthi, the Cultural Association of Turkish Women of Rodopi and the Evros Minority Youth Association (from Turkey).

Noted recommendations were: to ensure equal rights for minority citizens such as the Roma, particularly the right to vote (from Australia); to implement effectively the National Action Plan for migrants and protect the rights and interests of migrants without prejudice to their status, and minorities including Muslims and Roma population (from Bangladesh); to take necessary steps to ensure the election of the muftis by the Turkish Muslim Minority, to revise the relevant legislation concerning the Waqfs in consultation with the minority with a view to enabling the minority to directly control and to use its own Waqf properties, to initiate procedures for the opening of Turkish-language kindergartens for minority children in Komotini and Xanthi, to start a dialogue with the NGOs of the Turkish communities in Rhodes and Kos for the solution of their problems in the field of religious freedom, and resume Turkish-language education which has been denied since 1972 (from Turkey).

Ireland

Ireland received 16 recommendations, accepted 15 and noted 1.

General recommendations were: to continue its efforts to ensure that migrants and women belonging to minorities continue to be the focus of government programmes specifically geared towards the protection of their rights (from Argentina); to maintain the strategies of holistic health and provisions of health care, with special emphasis on vulnerable groups, despite the budget cuts due to the economic crisis (from Chile); and to adopt necessary measures to legally recognize the human rights of all minorities and ethnic groups that are residing in the country (from Ecuador).

There were several specific recommendations about Travellers: to strengthen the measures to improve the representation, education and protection of Travellers (from Chile); to continue its work for the full realization of their human rights (from Sweden); to continue pursuing appropriate policies designed to provide for equal opportunities to their members, with special focus on access to health care, education and housing, including ensuring Travellers' participation in public life related decision-making process (from Slovakia); to improve social and economic conditions (from Pakistan); to strengthen the legal framework for the protection of the rights of children and the rights of vulnerable groups such Travellers and others (from Peru); to introduce a complete integration policy (from the Czech Republic).

Other specific recommendations were to: take measures to tackle racial discrimination, to combat more resolutely all forms of racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance against foreigners and religious minorities, including Muslims and to fight Islamophobia and support its Muslim citizens, by enabling them to practice their religion (from Iran);

to support its Muslim citizens in enabling them to practice their religion (from Turkey); to strengthen its efforts to protect the human rights of those from sub-Saharan Africa (from Indonesia); to investigate the reports of "knife stabbings" against people mainly from sub-Saharan Africa and ensure that the perpetrators are prosecuted and, when convicted, punished with appropriate penalties (from Azerbaijan).

The only recommendation noted was to recognize Travellers as an official minority (from Slovakia).

Italy

Italy received 29 recommendations, accepted 26 and noted 3.

General recommendations were: to continue its efforts to strengthen a culture of tolerance to eliminate all forms of discrimination against vulnerable groups (from India); to intensify efforts to combat racial discrimination and intolerance targeting foreign nationals and minority groups, including by investigating promptly and taking action against the perpetrators of racist and xenophobic speeches and public statements (from Malaysia); to Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, in order to permit the Subcommittee for Prevention to conduct visits to places of detention, including those with the populations originating in national minorities in order to help the Government improve conditions in these centres (Mexico); to take further measures to protect and integrate persons belonging to minorities and others, including by carrying out investigations into violent attacks against such individuals (from the United Kingdom); to take necessary measures, including administrative measures, to facilitate access to education to children who are not of Italian origin (from Uruguay); to take the measures necessary to prevent discrimination against minorities (from Uzbekistan).

Most accepted recommendations referred specifically to the situation of Roma too, generally: to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the Roma community, adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, take further measures to the integration of Roma to ensure their equal access to employment, education, housing and health care and ensure Roma participation (from the United States, Russian Federation, Finland, Bangladesh, Australia, the Netherlands). On hatred: to condemn strongly the attacks on migrants, Roma and other ethnic minorities, ensuring that the attacks are investigated fully by the police and that those responsible are brought to justice (from Norway); to continue to work to end intolerance and social discrimination against Roma and, in this regard, ensure that police and local authorities are trained to respond appropriately to allegations of crimes involving Roma and avoid inappropriate ethnic profiling (from the United States); to ensure that attacks on migrants, Roma and other ethnic minorities are thoroughly investigated and those responsible are brought to justice (Pakistan); to take administrative and legal measures against perpetrators of racially motivated acts, targeting the Roma, Sinti, migrants and Muslims (from Bangladesh). Education and

housing were addressed specifically: to ensure equal rights for members of the Roma and Sinti minorities, to ensure that all Roma and Sinti children are enrolled in school, and to make efforts to encourage regular school attendance by these children (from Sweden); to investigate all alternatives to forced evictions of Roma and Sinti people, including through thorough consultation with those directly affected (from Australia). Migration aspects: to pay special attention to the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the pilot project for the repatriation of a number of Roma, originally from Serbia, currently living in camps located in central and southern Italy, in order to facilitate the most appropriate remedies for the Roma population in a dignified and efficient manner (from Serbia). Regarding Roma women, Slovakia accepted to take more effective measures to combat racial discrimination, in particular against vulnerable groups of women, especially Roma and migrant women, as well as measures to reinforce the respect of their human rights by all available means (from Chile).

A few recommendations dealt with the Slovenian minority: implement fully law No. 38-01 on the protection of the Slovenian minority in Italy, and Law No. 482-99; Implement fully the visible bilingual topography in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia autonomous region populated by the Slovenian minority; increase the visibility of Slovenian television programmes throughout the Friuli-Venezia Giulia autonomous region, as stipulated in article 19 of law No. 103-75; respect the institutions of the Slovenian minority by special treatment and inclusion in decision-making processes kindergartens, schools and theatres; Restore Slovenian names to road signs in villages in the Resia-Rezija community (from Slovenia).

Noted recommendations were: to increase efforts to reach out to and ensure the rights of members of minorities, particularly the Romani community (from The United States); to protect the Roma and the Sinti as national minorities, and to ensure that they are not the object of discrimination, including through the media (from Cuba); to take all measures necessary to ensure the rights of the Roma people under article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, specifically by amending the 1999 Act, which lays down this creation of connection with a specific territory (from Denmark).

Portugal

Portugal received 19 recommendations, accepted 18 and noted 1.

General recommendations were: to adopt further measures to provide police, prison and judicial staff with human rights training with specific focus on protection of human rights of ethnic or national minorities and others and strengthen the accountability of such personnel for their proper conduct, particularly when dealing with cases of hate crimes (from the Czech Republic); to collect and generate disaggregated data on actual manifestations of racism and discrimination with a view to evaluating the situation

regarding different racial, ethnic and minority groups (from Brazil); to intensify its efforts to expand and strengthen the training of law enforcement officials and to enhance public awareness in relation to respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities (from Republic of Korea); to strengthen measures aimed at combating racial profiling and discriminatory practices towards racial-ethnic minorities and immigrants, particularly by police and border control authorities (from Brazil).

The rest of recommendations referred to the particular situation of Roma (as well). Generally: to eliminate discrimination against Roma, continue efforts to promote and protect their rights, and develop a comprehensive strategy to effectively improve the situation of the Roma community in areas such as housing, education, employment and health care with the consultation of Roma and ensure their equal opportunities (from the Netherlands, Iran, Bangladesh, Belgium, Ghana, Finland, Australia, Algeria, Cuba). On Roma children: to continue strengthening efforts to ensure respect for the right to nondiscrimination of children in the country, in particular children and families living in poverty and children of minority groups, including the Roma (from Malaysia); to have the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity examine further measures to prevent unlawful child labour, including the possibility of sector specific enforcement policies that target vulnerable populations, such as Roma street children (from the United States). On Roma women: to intensify efforts to strengthen programmes, projects and other measures to prevent discrimination against vulnerable groups, including some Roma women and others (from Argentina); to strengthen its efforts to fully implement legislation on violence against women and children and prosecution and convictions of perpetrators and to ensure that all programmes, projects and measures to combat violence against women also reach Roma women (from Norway). Regarding law enforcement: to take appropriate measures to improve the relations between law enforcement officials and the Roma to prevent the risk of excessive violence by law enforcement officials, notably through the establishment of an independent institution responsible for supervising the acts of the police (from Belgium).

The only one recommendations noted was to strengthen measures to prevent the disproportionate use of force by the police through the incorporation of representatives of ethnic minorities in the security forces and to punish such acts (from Argentina).

Turkey

Turkey received 21 recommendations, accepted 9 and noted 15.

The general ones accepted were to: undertake effective efforts and policies to eliminate discriminatory practices, dissemination of hate speech, including threats on resorting to forceful means such as deportation, to stop persistent hostile attitudes on the part of the general public, including attacks towards Roma, Kurds and non-Muslim minorities,

also by taking demonstrable steps to prevent and combat such attitudes through information campaigns, awareness-raising and education, among others (from Armenia); to ensure the protection of religious minorities in accordance with international human rights standards and obligations, and eliminate discrimination based on religious affiliation and provide possibilities for the teaching of minorities languages (from Austria); to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and uphold minority rights with a view to fully aligning law and practice with international human rights standards (from Denmark); to allow for the functioning of non-Muslim religious communities, especially the ones that are already recognized as minorities, without undue constraints, in line with the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, to consider replying favourably to the requests for a visit of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers and the Independent Expert on minority issues, to take steps to prevent and combat hostile attitudes against persons belonging to non-Muslim minorities by putting in place awareness-raising campaigns as well as education and training programmes for judges and law enforcement agents (from Greece); and to fully respect the right to choose and express religious beliefs freely, including for members of both recognized and unrecognized religious minorities (from the United States).

It noted generally: to consider reviewing the definition of national minorities in order to bring it into line with international standards and take targeted measures to eliminate discrimination based on national and ethnic origin, and to revive initiatives for minorities for developing measures to remove the restrictions on the use of languages other than Turkish in political and public life (from Austria); to engage in open-ended consultations with the full range of ethnic and religious minority groups on measures to improve respect for all human rights of persons belonging to minorities (from Canada); to set a time frame within which restrictions with regard to, among others, the deprivation of legal personality of non-Muslim minorities, including the Greek orthodox minority, will be lifted so that members of these minorities can fully enjoy their human rights and take effective measures to combat persisting hostile attitudes and discrimination towards the Roma, Kurds and persons belonging to non-Muslim minorities (from Cyprus); to develop human rights education and training to members of the police, military, prison and detention staff and judiciary in order to include specific focus on the protection of persons of minority ethnicity and others and review compliance of its national legislation with the principle of nondiscrimination, in particular with regard to persons of minority ethnicity to adopt a comprehensive antidiscrimination legal framework specifically protecting against discrimination on these grounds, and lead long-term awareness-raising campaign on these issues among the public (from the Czech Republic); to allow children of Greek citizens working in Istanbul to attend the Greek minority schools and take all necessary measures to return properties to the members of the Greek minority in the islands of Gokceada and Bozcaada that were expropriated (from Greece). Specifically on ICCPR Article 27, it noted: to withdraw its reservation to article 27 of ICCPR on minority rights, and ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

(from Austria); to implement further reforms to ensure full recognition of the rights of the Kurdish and other minorities, including by withdrawing its reservation to article 27 of the ICCPR (Ireland); to withdraw its reservation to article 27 of ICCPR on minority rights, and ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (from the Netherlands).

Group of Latin American and Caribbean States

Member States in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States received 54 recommendations in total. Most were received (minimum 5) by Guyana (7), Panama (9) and Honduras (5).

Guyana

Guyana received 7 recommendations, accepted 6 and noted 1.

It accepted: to adopt law and mechanisms to combat discrimination against groups in vulnerable situations (from Argentina); to ensure Afro-Guyanese people's rights (from Haiti); to strengthen the efforts aimed at protecting Amerindians from marginalization and at defending their issues and not subject them to any discrimination (from Libya); to continue to review and bring into line its domestic legal framework with international human rights norms to which Guyana is a party, in particular to make progress towards nondiscrimination against minorities and others (from Nicaragua); to take concrete steps to protect members of vulnerable groups from violence, encouraging more reporting of offences, more sympathetic handling of cases by the police and more convictions with appropriate sentences (from the United Kingdom); to strengthen and enforce its various commitments to embracing its cultural diversity and ensuring the safety of and equal opportunities for all citizens (from the United States).

The only noted recommendation was to take into account findings in the report of the United Nations Independent Expert on Minority Issues on the phantom death squad (from Canada).

Panama

Panama received 7 recommendations and accepted all.

It accepted to: continue and further develop public policies and programmes to enhance the inclusion of Afro-Panamanians in all aspects of life in Panama (from Jamaica); to take concrete and practical normative and institutional measures to guarantee the

rights of Afro-Panamanians and to overcome the difficulty of access to birth registration procedures, particularly for children of African descent, and adopt new measures to guarantee a greater presence of and better participation by women and minorities in public administration, particularly in elected position (from Haiti); to continue working on the design and implementation of programmes to promote the rights of specific groups, such as the project entitled 'Policy and plan to fully integrate the Afro-Panamanian population' (from Colombia); to continue its efforts to combat impunity and violations of human rights, with particular attention to the rights of indigenous populations and persons of African descent (from Brazil); to intensify the necessary measures to guarantee the right of all children to have their birth registered, in particular children of African descent (from Mexico and Nigeria); and to redouble efforts to enhance the positive results in the area of economic, social and cultural rights to provide more benefits to the most vulnerable populations, in particular children, indigenous peoples, people of African descent and the rural population (from Peru).

Honduras

Honduras received 5 recommendations and accepted all.

It accepted: to continue pursuing the promotion of human rights, particularly through the assistance to indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples and other measures (from the Holy See); to take urgent action to develop a specific policy to protect the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples and address the key question of racism (from Nigeria); to ensure that the eligibility criteria for indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples to receive the benefits of the Presidential Programme on Health, Education and Nutrition in a culturally appropriate manner are made fair, non-discriminatory and all-inclusive (from Ghana); to make efforts to take into account the need to integrate indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples into the labour market (from Angola); and to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to effectively protect the human rights of persons belonging to Afro-Honduran peoples and others, in particular with regard to violence against such persons and their access to the labour market (from Austria).

Some observations

The Special Rapporteur welcomes the many recommendations made regarding various minority groups globally in the 1st cycle of the UPR process and she observes a growing number of recommendations regarding minorities. At the time of the writing of this analysis, the 2nd UPR cycle already produced 788 minority recommendations although it is only half way through. She wishes to draw comparisons between the attention given to various minority groups and country situations in the UPR process and the complaints she receives and the communications she issues to the various Member States accordingly, but since she took office as of 1 August 2011 and the 1st UPR cycle ended in October 2011, she can only make such an analysis after the 2nd cycle will be ended.

The Special Rapporteur can nevertheless make certain observations. First of all, it is clear that geopolitical factors played a significant role in who is recommending what to whom. With no doubt, those minorities that have a kin state enjoyed a stronger attention and received more recommendations for the protection of their human and minority rights than those who do not have a kin state. One exception is the Roma population; attention given to their situation is remarkable. And while the overall situation of Roma in Europe is certainly of high concern, it is interesting that Member States outside of Europe who also have Roma populations received no recommendation on them.

Intersectionality between freedom of religion or belief and religious minorities is rather complex as is the case always. There were very few recommendations that referred explicitly to the freedom of religion of minorities: for example to “ensure that persons belonging to religious minorities are free to practice their faith” which was accepted by Comoros. Many recommendations contained references to religious groups that constitute a minority, for example to “work to combat the danger of Islamophobia in society” accepted by Austria. And quite many recommendations used general expressions and, therefore, did not get labelled under ‘minorities’ in the database, for example “adopt legislation and measures to allow the free practice of religions in Sudan and in South Sudan” accepted both by South Sudan and Sudan which clearly expressed a concern regarding those religious groups which became a minority after the emergence of the two separate States. This is why the above analysis on religious minorities should not be regarded comprehensive – many more recommendations labelled under ‘freedom of religion or belief’ could be relevant to minorities as well. In any case, it is somewhat surprising how little attention was given to certain religious minorities who are clearly persecuted in several countries.

Recommendations

Given the many existing challenges of and violence against minorities in all corners of the world, it is desirable that Member States in the UPR process continue giving sufficient attention to the situation of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. However, further improvements could be made:

1. Member States should use the Joint Communication Reports, thematic and country reports by relevant Special Procedure mandate-holders (on minority issues, freedom of religion or belief, racism, housing, food etc) as references so that their relevant findings can be taken into consideration;
2. MSs should be more precise in their recommendations and try to address specific concerns separately so it becomes easier to measure progress made by the State under Review in the next cycle;
3. The outcome recommendations of the UN Forum on Minority Issues should be better utilised in formulating more concrete recommendations;
4. When certain and specific concerns are relevant to minority groups, MSs should make that clear so they can appear in the UPR database and can be part of the next surveys;
5. Geopolitical factors should be minimized and objectivity increased;
6. Religious and linguistic minorities should benefit from stronger attention.