

## **General Comment No. 2/2018**

### **of the Minority Ombudsman on the nationality content of collecting national heritage**

#### SUMMARY

In December 2018 the Minority Ombudsman issued a general comment on local and national practices related to the nationality content of collecting national heritage, in order to promote the identifiable, increasing and visible presentation of the values of the nationality communities living in our country in the various collections of our national treasures.

The Hungaricum Act, which defines the framework for collecting national treasures, extends the concept of national treasures to the values of the nationalities living in our country, but does not allow for the creation of a separate nationality registries. The values associated with nationalities can be displayed in one of the categories of the available so-called value pyramid.

There are many indications that nationalities are still searching for their place in this system, but the practice of the various treasure registers does not or hardly facilitates their inclusion. The nationality content in the various collections of treasures is negligible and, in practice, hardly identifiable or researchable.

The languages, material and spiritual culture, and historical traditions of the nationalities are special values the preservation, cultivation and enrichment of which is not only the fundamental right of the nationality communities themselves, but it is also in the interest of the majority society. In order to strengthen the identity of nationality communities and to avoid assimilation, it is crucial that their cultural and other values are not lost and do not merge into a large common mass without any sign.

In her resolution, the Minority Ombudsman pointed out that the current system of collecting national treasures needs to be changed at several levels to make it easier to access nationality treasures, to make them more visible in the content of the treasure registry and to make the whole system more transparent. In view of the importance of this issue and the possibilities for possible amendments to the regulation, the general comment proposes that the Parliament's Committee of the Nationalities in Hungary – with the involvement of the presidents of the national-level nationality self-governments and by consulting them – review the current practice regarding the nationality content of national treasure registers and consider developing a common position on the amendment of the regulation.