

**3841. Act on Public Usage of Slovenian Language (APUSL), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 86/2004, page 10418**

Pursuant to the second indent of the first paragraph of Article 107 and the first paragraph of Article 91 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, I hereby issue the

**THE ORDER**

**on the promulgation of the Act on Public Usage of Slovenian Language (APUSL)**

I hereby promulgate the Act on Public Usage of Slovenian Language (APUSL), adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia at its session of 15 July 2004.

No. 001-22-153/04  
Ljubljana, 23 July 2004

Signed by:  
Dr Janez Drnovšek  
President of the Republic of Slovenia

**ACT  
ON PUBLIC USAGE OF SLOVENIAN LANGUAGE (APUSL)**

**1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 1**

**(Introductory provision)**

(1) The Slovenian language (hereinafter: Slovenian) is the official language of the Republic of Slovenia. It is the language of oral and written communication in all spheres of public life in the Republic of Slovenia, except when Italian and Hungarian are official languages in accordance with the Constitution of Slovenia, and when the provisions of international treaties that are binding for the Republic of Slovenia specifically allow also the usage of other languages.

(2) Slovenian, which is one of the official languages of the European Union, shall be the language by which Slovenia is represented in international contacts.

**Article 2**

**(System nature and contents of the Act)**

(1) This Act shall define the basic rules of the public usage of Slovenian as the official language in the Republic of Slovenia.

(2) In addition to this Act, the public usage of Slovenian in individual fields of public communication shall be in detail regulated by sector-specific acts, depending on the specific features of individual fields.

(3) If the usage of Slovenian in an individual field is not regulated by a sector-specific act, the provisions of this Act shall be directly applicable.

### **Article 3**

#### **(Language of national communities)**

In the territory of municipalities where the Italian or the Hungarian national community lives, the public usage of Italian or Hungarian as official languages shall be guaranteed in the manner as regulated by this Act for the public usage of Slovenian and in accordance with the provisions of individual sector-specific acts.

### **Article 4**

#### **(Language policy)**

The Republic of Slovenia shall ensure the status of Slovenian by an active language policy that includes the care to provide a legal basis for its usage, care for constant scientific and research monitoring of the living language, the care to enhance language possibilities, and the care for the development and culture of the language.

## **2. BASIC RULES AND OBLIGATIONS REGARDING THE PUBLIC USAGE OF SLOVENIAN**

### **Article 5**

#### **(Usage of Slovenian in public administration)**

(1) National administration bodies and self-governing local community bodies, holders of public service office and holders of public authorisations who decide on the rights or obligations or legal benefits of individuals and organisations shall use Slovenian in accordance with the laws regulating their tasks and authorisations.

(2) If a foreign natural person is a participant in a procedure before national administration bodies and self-governing local community bodies, holders of public service office and holders of public authorisations, in addition to Slovenian, a foreign language shall also be used according to the law.

### **Article 6**

#### **(Language usage in international cooperation)**

(1) In concluding a contract with foreign persons representing bodies, services and public authorisation holders from the first paragraph of Article 5 of this Act, the original text of the contract shall be written and signed in the Slovenian and a foreign language.

(2) In concluding and implementing treaties of public international law, the provisions of the act regulating foreign affairs and international treaties binding the Republic of Slovenia shall be applied.

(3) A foreign language may be used also in some other forms of international cooperation, if this is specifically stipulated by a sector-specific law.

#### **Article 7 (Language proficiency)**

(1) The government of the Republic of Slovenia shall issue a regulation defining the necessary proficiency of Slovenian for individual professions or workplaces in the bodies, services and public authorisation holders from the first paragraph of Article 5 of this Act. The proficiency level of Slovenian shall be proved by a certificate of an adequate Slovenian public or private school or by a special certified statement by an authorised education institution on a passed Slovenian proficiency test.

(2) The heads of bodies, services and public authorisation holders shall be responsible to ensure that the government regulation from the previous paragraph is taken into account in the internal acts of the body or the organisation and that only persons with an adequate proficiency of Slovenian shall work at workplaces where the communication with clients takes place in oral or written form.

#### **Article 8 (Proficiency of Slovenian in the procedure for acquiring the citizenship)**

In the procedure for acquiring the citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia, the proficiency of Slovenian shall be evaluated in a manner stipulated by the sector-specific law.

#### **Article 9 (Designation of legal persons governed by public law)**

The name of national administration bodies and self-governing local communities, public institutions, public enterprises, other persons of public law, and political parties shall be in Slovenian.

#### **Article 10 (Designation of public functions and titles)**

(1) Designations of political functions, professions, professional and scientific titles of individuals shall be in Slovenian.

(2) If the designations from the previous paragraph are written also in a foreign language, such designations shall not be graphically more prominent than the designations in Slovenian.

#### **Article 11 (Slovenian on web pages)**

Providers of networks with a concession and networks subsidized from public funds shall not permit their Slovenian users to put presentations and advertisements on the web pages exclusively in foreign languages.

## **Article 12**

### **(Use of Slovenian in education)**

- (1) In the territory of the Republic of Slovenia education in publicly certified programmes from pre-school education to university shall take place in Slovenian.
- (2) The use of other languages in education shall be permitted in accordance with sector-specific regulations in the field of education.

## **Article 13**

### **(Promoting learning of Slovenian)**

- (1) The Republic of Slovenia shall encourage the learning of Slovenian in Slovenia. To that purpose, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall adopt a programme that shall be, in addition to the regular education programmes, aimed at language improvement of youth and adult citizens, and programmes aimed at foreign nationals in Slovenia.
- (2) The Republic of Slovenia shall take particular care of the learning and preserving of Slovenian among Slovenians living beyond the national borders of the Republic of Slovenia and their descendants.
- (3) The Republic of Slovenia shall take care of the promotion of Slovenian abroad by encouraging its teaching at foreign education institutions and by supporting those programmes and projects in the Republic of Slovenia that are aimed at asserting, promoting and developing Slovenian.

## **Article 14**

### **(Dealing with clients)**

- (1) All legal persons governed by private law and natural persons engaged in business activities shall deal with clients in Slovenian in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. If their business activities are aimed also at foreign nationals, a foreign language may be used in addition to Slovenian.
- (2) Depending on the anticipated frequency and complexity of language contacts with clients, it shall be the duty of a private employer to:
  - define the required proficiency level of Slovenian for each workplace;
  - explicitly state the required proficiency level of Slovenian when advertising vacancies for jobs for which language contacts with clients are anticipated.

## **Article 15**

### **(Texts on merchandise)**

- (1) In labelling products, legal persons governed by private law and natural persons engaged in business activities shall be obliged to communicate with the client in the Slovenian language the required information about the characteristics, sales conditions, use, and intended purpose of the product. To that end, generally understood symbols and pictures may be used. This provision shall not apply to the names of trade marks and service marks written in a foreign language.

(2) Each foodstuff, medicinal product or phytopharmaceutical product on sale in the territory of Slovenia, shall have on the packaging printed a declaration, instructions for use and all other necessary information in Slovenian. In addition, this data may be also given in foreign languages.

(3) All texts from the first and second paragraph of this Article shall be written in a visible, legible and to a user understandable manner and in the standard literary Slovenian language.

## **Article 16**

### **(Acts and internal operations of legal and natural persons)**

(1) All general acts of legal persons governed by private law and natural persons engaged in business activities shall be written in Slovenian in accordance with the sector-specific legislation.

(2) Aforementioned persons shall conduct in Slovenian their internal operations related to the rights and obligations arising from employment, to giving instructions and disseminating information to employees, and to safety at work. In the case of the employment of a foreign seasonal worker, a foreign language may also be used in addition to Slovenian.

(3) When advertising a vacancy, legal and natural persons from the first paragraph of this Article shall not require from the candidate to submit written applications only in a foreign language.

## **Article 17**

### **(Designation of legal persons governed by private law)**

(1) A business name or the name of legal persons governed by private law and natural persons engaged in business activities shall be entered in Slovenian in the company register or other official evidence, if it exists, in accordance with sector-specific laws.

(2) A translation of a business name or the name into a foreign language may be used in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia only together with the business name or the name in Slovenian. The translation shall not be printed in a graphically more prominent manner than the business name or the name in Slovenian.

## **Article 18**

### **(Names of establishments, premises and other business spaces)**

(1) Establishments, shops, catering establishments and other establishments, or other business spaces that are not designated by the registered name or the business name of a legal person governed by private law or the name and surname of a natural person, shall be designated in Slovenian.

(2) Irrespective of the provision from the previous paragraph, the name of an establishment, shop, catering establishment and other establishment, or other business space may contain words in a foreign language if these words are an internationally used expression for an individual type of business space, if they include a foreign trade mark or service mark or in the case of abbreviations known to the majority of consumers due to habitual use, if they are a component part of the overall image.

## **Article 19**

### **(Instructions)**

The Minister of Culture shall issue instructions for evaluating the adequacy of the business name or the name, which may be written in the company register or other official record on the basis of the first paragraph of Article 17.

## **Article 20**

### **(Public notices and instructions)**

(1) Public warnings, written and oral instructions, information and proclamations in the Republic of Slovenia shall be in Slovenian, and, if necessary or customarily practiced, also in other languages.

(2) In electronic communication and control equipment the choice of Slovenian shall be made possible and the Slovenian orthography taken into account.

(3) ATMs, gaming machines, parking meters and other equipment intended for public use and transmitting messages in digital form shall be programmed in a manner that, following every selection and transaction in a foreign language, the display will automatically revert to Slovenian.

## **Article 21**

### **(Press conferences)**

Press conferences in the Republic of Slovenia and written statements addressed to media and other public in the Republic of Slovenia, shall be in Slovenian. If foreign journalists take part at press conferences, the statements and answers may be translated into a foreign language.

## **Article 22**

### **(Media)**

(1) Slovenian shall be the language used in media registered in the Republic of Slovenia.

(2) Radio and television programmes, or their parts, transmitted in a foreign language that are used by broadcasters established or registered in the Republic of Slovenia, shall be translated into Slovenian.

(3) If messages in a foreign language are communicated in the media in Slovenia, they shall not be presented in a more prominent manner than messages in Slovenian.

(4) Specific features and exceptions regarding the first and second paragraph of this Article shall be defined by sector-specific regulations.

## **Article 23**

### **(Advertising)**

(1) Public advertising of products and services, a presentation of an activity, and other forms of public information in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia shall be in Slovenian, in accordance with the

sector-specific law. If advertising is in particular targeting foreign nationals, foreign languages may also be used, however, variants in foreign languages shall not be more prominent than the Slovenian one.

(2) Presentation and advertising of Slovenian legal persons and natural persons engaged in business activities on the internet shall be in Slovenian.

(3) In the press, advertising, and business texts which mention places and other geographical features from the territories of neighbouring countries, where lives an autochthonous Slovenian ethnic community, the Slovenian or bilingual use of location names and other geographical proper names shall be obligatory.

## **Article 24**

### **(Public events)**

(1) Designation, announcement, and presentation of cultural, professional, education, commercial, sports, entertainment and other public events or individual parts of their programme shall be in Slovenian, and additionally also in foreign languages in the case of international events aimed in particular at foreign participants.

(2) Foreign films shall be publicly shown with Slovenian subtitles or synchronised in Slovenian. Foreign language feature and animated films targeted at pre-school children may be publicly shown only if synchronised in Slovenian.

(3) Performances of Slovenian theatres may take place in a foreign language, if Slovenian translation is also provided.

(4) The Minister of Culture shall issue instructions on the manner of conducting public events from the first paragraph of this Article, which take place in a foreign language.

## **Article 25**

### **(International events funded by public funds)**

(1) At international public events taking place in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia and funded by public funds, the organiser shall be obliged to ensure the use of Slovenian. The use of Slovenian as the working language may exceptionally be limited, however, in this case the use of Slovenian shall be provided at the information level.

(2) Proceedings of international professional seminars or other public events from the first paragraph of this Article shall have in Slovenian at least the title, the introduction, and Slovenian abstracts of articles in foreign languages.

(3) An exception from the first paragraph of this Article may be permitted by the Minister competent for the individual field, if an international event is aimed primarily at foreign performers or primarily, a foreign audience is in question.

### **3. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION BODIES**

#### **Article 26**

##### **(Tasks of ministries)**

(1) The Ministry of Culture shall monitor the implementation of this Act, formulate a language policy and ensure the conditions for its implementation. In implementing its tasks, the Ministry shall be assisted by other ministries competent for specific sectors where the obligations regarding the usage of Slovenian are regulated by the law.

(2) The Ministry of Culture shall in a systematic manner monitor the implementation of provisions on Slovenian in public usage in all laws and regulations. It shall annually report thereof to the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall inform the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia about the reports and its position thereon.

#### **Article 27**

##### **(Coordination body)**

An interministerial consultative coordination body shall be set up with the Government of the Republic of Slovenia with the aim of discussing draft bills and regulations in view of compliance with the provisions of this Act, the language policy aims, and language planning. The act on the establishment of such a body, its composition, and competences shall be adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

#### **Article 28**

##### **(National programme)**

(1) At the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia shall adopt a national programme for language policy, in which it shall determine the measures for implementing the tasks from Article 4 of this Act for the following five-year period, assess the necessary level of funding and envisage the manner of their provision.

(2) The Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall be responsible for the implementation of the national programme, and the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia shall regularly monitor its realisation.

### **4. INSPECTION**

#### **Article 29**

##### **(Competence of inspection)**

Inspection of the implementation of this Act shall be carried out by competent inspections for areas to which the individual provisions apply. The implementation of provisions of this Act for which



inspections are not stipulated by sector-specific laws, shall be carried out by the Inspectorate with the Ministry of Culture.

### **Article 30**

#### **(Right to proposal)**

Any individual or body believing that this Act has been violated may submit a proposal to the competent inspectorate to launch a procedure to check whether the Act has been implemented. An inspector may also launch a procedure in their official capacity.

### **Article 31**

#### **(Specific inspection measures)**

(1) If the competent inspection ascertains that products have not been labelled in accordance with Article 15 of this Act, it may issue an order to stop the distribution and sale of such products until the producer, or the distributor, or the vendor labels them with adequate texts.

(2) If a legal person governed by private law or a natural person engaged in business activities at the request of the inspection fails to remove its public inscription or other text available to the public which does not comply with the provisions of this Act, such a removal may be immediately carried out by the competent public service at the request of the inspector. The cost of the removal shall be carried by the violator.

(3) A complaint against the inspector's decisions from the first and second paragraph of this Article shall not cause the decisions to be suspended.

## **5. PENAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 32**

#### **(Fines)**

A legal person or an independent entrepreneur shall be punished with a fine from 1,500,000 to 15,000,000 tolar for the infringement:

a) if the provider of a concession network or a network subsided from public funds allows the Slovenian users to put presentations and advertisements on the web pages only in foreign languages (Article 11 of this Act);

b) if when engaging in business activities in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia they do not deal with Slovenian clients in Slovenian (first paragraph of Article 14 of this Act);

c) if they do not act in accordance with the provision of the second paragraph of Article 14 of this Act;

č)<sup>1</sup> if in internal operations of natural and legal persons the regulated usage of Slovenian shall not be provided in accordance with Article 16 of this Act;

d) if a foreign language translation of a business name shall not be used in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia together with the name or the business name in Slovenian (second paragraph of Article 17 of this Act), or if their establishment, shop, catering establishment or other establishment, or other business space shall be named contrary to the provision of Article 18 of this Act;

e) if in public notices and instructions they do not take into account Slovenian in accordance with the provisions of Article 20 of this Act;

f) if they act contrary to Article 22 of this Act;

g) if they publicly advertise products and services only in a foreign language and contrary to the provisions of Article 23 of this Act;

h) if they designate, announce, or present a public event contrary to the provisions of Article 24 of this Act;

i) if they fail to provide the prescribed usage of Slovenian at an international public event which is funded from the public funds, or they fail to ensure that Slovenian is used in the title of proceedings, the introduction, and abstracts of foreign language articles in accordance with the first and second paragraph of Article 25 of this Act.

(2) The responsible person of the legal persons or of the private entrepreneur shall be punished with a fine from 10,000 to 300,000 tolar for infringements from the previous paragraph.

## **6. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 33**

#### **(Entry of revisions in the register)**

Already registered legal and natural persons who, following the enforcement of this Act, wish to enter a revision of their business name or the name in the company register or other official record, the entry shall be allowed if this revision is in compliance with the designations from the provisions of Article 17 of this Act. If the entry of such a revision is proposed within two years following the enforcement of this Act, the proposer shall be exempt from paying the tax.

### **Article 34**

#### **(Deadline for enforcement of Slovenian designations)**

(1) National administration bodies and self-governing local community bodies, and other legal persons named in Article 9 of this Act, shall ensure that their designations are in compliance with this Act within one year of its enforcement.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: the letter of Slovenian alphabet "č" is used in the translation in order not to change the order of the subsequent letters.

(2) The provisions of the first paragraph of Article 18 of this Act shall not apply to the names of establishments, shops, catering and other establishments, or other business spaces that have already been operating at the time of the enforcement of this Act.

### **Article 35**

#### **(Deadline for national programme)**

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall submit to the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia the national programme of language policy within two years of the enforcement of this Act.

### **Article 36**

#### **(Deadline for establishing the required proficiency level of Slovenian)**

A private employer shall be obliged to establish the required proficiency level of Slovenian for each workplace in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 14 of this Act within one year upon the enforcement of this Act.

### **Article 37**

#### **(Deadline for adoption of regulation)**

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall adopt a regulation from Article 7 of this Act and the establishment act from Article 27 of this Act, whereas the Minister of Culture shall adopt regulations from Articles 19 and 24 of this Act at the latest within one year following the enforcement of this Act.

### **Article 38**

#### **(Fines in the transitional period)**

(1) Until 1 January 2005 the infringements defined in Article 32 of this Act shall be punished in the following manner:

- a legal person with a fine from 1,000,000 to 10,000,000 tolar;
- an individual in relation to the operation of activity with a fine from 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 tolar;
- the responsible person of the legal person with a fine from 150,000 to 500,000 tolar.

(2) In the part referring to the sanctioning of the responsible person of an individual entrepreneur, the provision of the second paragraph of Article 32 of this Act shall start applying with the day of enforcement of the Minor Offences Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 7/03).

## **7. FINAL PROVISION**

### **Article 39**

#### **(Final provision)**

This Act shall enter into force on the fifteenth day following its publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia.

No. 001-08/00-3/5  
Ljubljana, on 15 July 2004  
EPA 1142-III

Signed by:  
Feri Horvat  
President of the National Assembly