

CASE LAW MOSAIC

QUARTERLY INFORMATION BULLETIN OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN HUNGARY, 2021/4

Complaint about the higher education admission procedure and the national language examination

The **Ruthenian nationality advocate of the Parliament submitted a petition to the Minority Ombudsman** concerning a person of Ruthenian nationality currently working in the cultural field. According to the petition, the complainant had applied for a full-time state-funded course on the felvi.hu website in February 2021.

The applicant's foreign school-leaving certificate had already been naturalised in 2003 and, according to the preliminary oral information received from the Education Office, there was no obstacle to the applicant's higher education admission. However, according to the information subsequently received by telephone from the university, **the only qualification for admission to the faculty in question was a higher level school leaving certificate, whereas a naturalised foreign school leaving certificate was equivalent to an intermediate level school leaving certificate.** The university informed the complainant that if they had not registered for the school leaving examination by 15 February, they could only apply for it the following year. The applicant was also informed that if there was a make-up examination that year, they could apply for it and, after passing the professional entrance examination, be admitted to the full-time, self-financed course. However, the applicant was informed by the Education Office that they could not take part in the professional entrance examination because they could only apply for university admission after passing the higher level school leaving examination. In the complainant's view, the incomplete information previously received from the Education Office meant that the applicant could only start studies one year later.

The applicant took a Ruthenian language exam at the state-recognised ELTE Origo Language Centre in 2020, for which they would have liked to receive extra points in the higher education admission procedure, but noticed that in the upload system of the language exam certificate **on the felvi.hu website, there was no possibility to select Ruthenian in the menu, as it was not listed.** The applicant was therefore forced to upload their certificate in Ruthenian language by ticking the Ukrainian language box.

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The Minority Ombudsman contacted the State Secretary for Higher Education, Innovation and Vocational Training. According to the State Secretary's professional opinion detailed in the reply, he stated that the Education Office had acted in full compliance with the legal provisions applicable to the complainant. He stressed that the continuous improvement of the operation of the admission system is a top priority for the Education Office, which has therefore remedied the circumstances complained of by the complainant – the lack of the possibility to upload the Ruthenian language examination – and has **extended the range of languages that may be chosen accordingly.**