

Minority Languages in Europe - France, Italy, Spain

June 24th, 2020

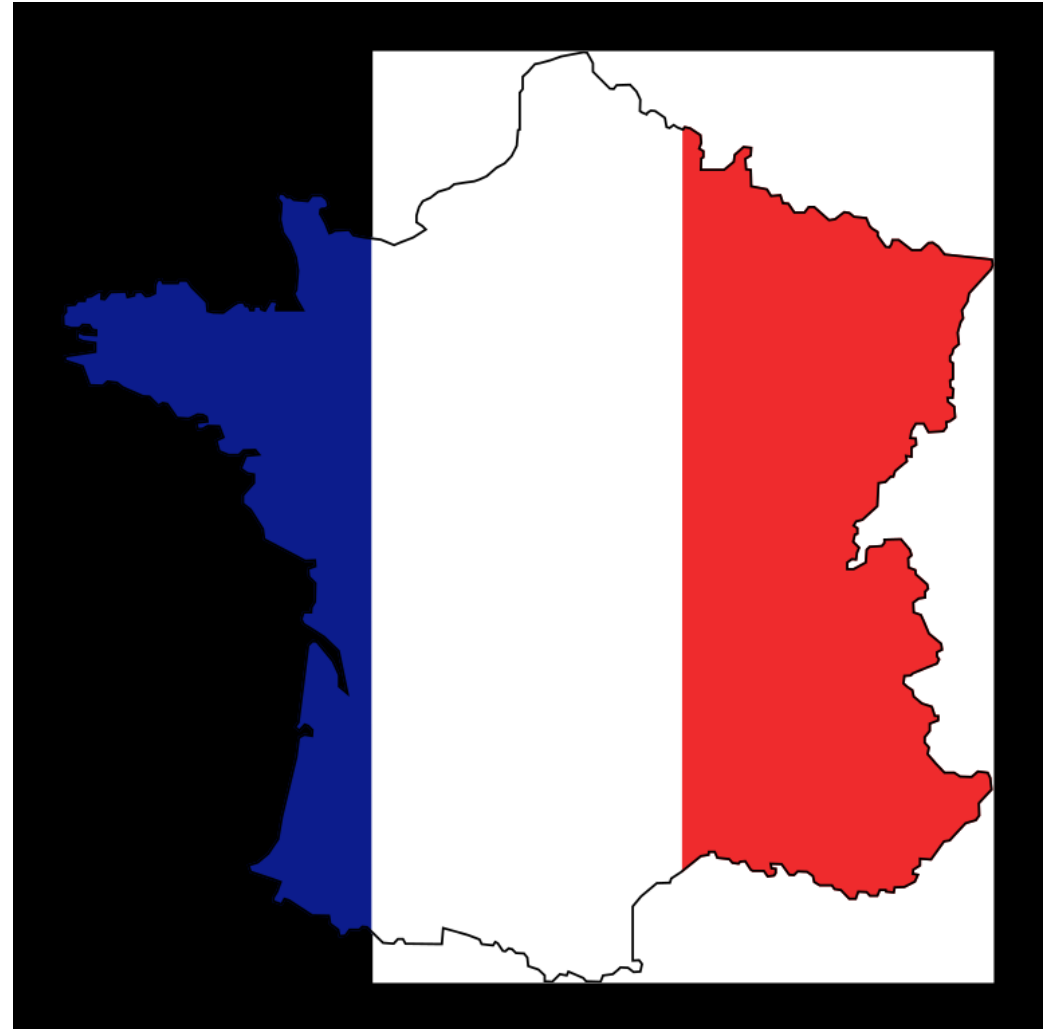
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France

- ▶ National language and national identity
- ▶ 1539: status planning - King François Ier signed the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts; French is the kingdom's administrative language replacing de facto Latin
- ▶ 17th century : French Academy funded by Cardinal Richelieu (corpus planning)



- ▶ 1789: French Revolution; French is the language of the Republic; dialects are languages of the Ancient Régime
- ▶ 1794: Abbé Grégoire publishes pamphlet on necessity and means to eradicate patois



▶ Article 75-1 of the Constitution :
*Les langues régionales
appartiennent au patrimoine de la
France* (Reform of 2008)

▶ 10 officially recognized regional
languages of France:

- Basque
- Breton
- Catalan
- Corsican
- German dialects of Alsace and Moselle (alsacien et francique mosellan)
- flamand occidental
- Francoprovençal
- langues d'oïl
- occitan ou langue d'oc
- parlars liguriens



Délégation générale à
la langue française et
aux langues de France

<https://www.culture.gouv.fr/Sites-thematiques/Langue-francaise-et-langues-de-France/La-DGLFLF/Nos-priorites>

- ▶ July 2013: the DGLFLF presents report on vitality of France regional languages.
- ▶ Findings of 2007 national survey:

Regional languages	Number of speakers	Number of habitual speakers
Occitan	1 670 000	610 000
Langues d'oïl	1 420 000	570 000
Alsacien	900 000	660 000
Breton	680 000	280 000

- ▶ Findings of 1999 national survey:

Regional languages	Number of speakers	Number of habitual speakers
Catalan	170 000	80 000
Corse	170 000	70 000
Basque	80 000	50 000

Les langues régionales en France

Langues à «forte vitalité»

(enseignement bilingue comme option)

- Alsacien - Francique-Mosellan
- Basque
- Breton
- Occitan (langues d'Oc)
- Catalan
- Corse

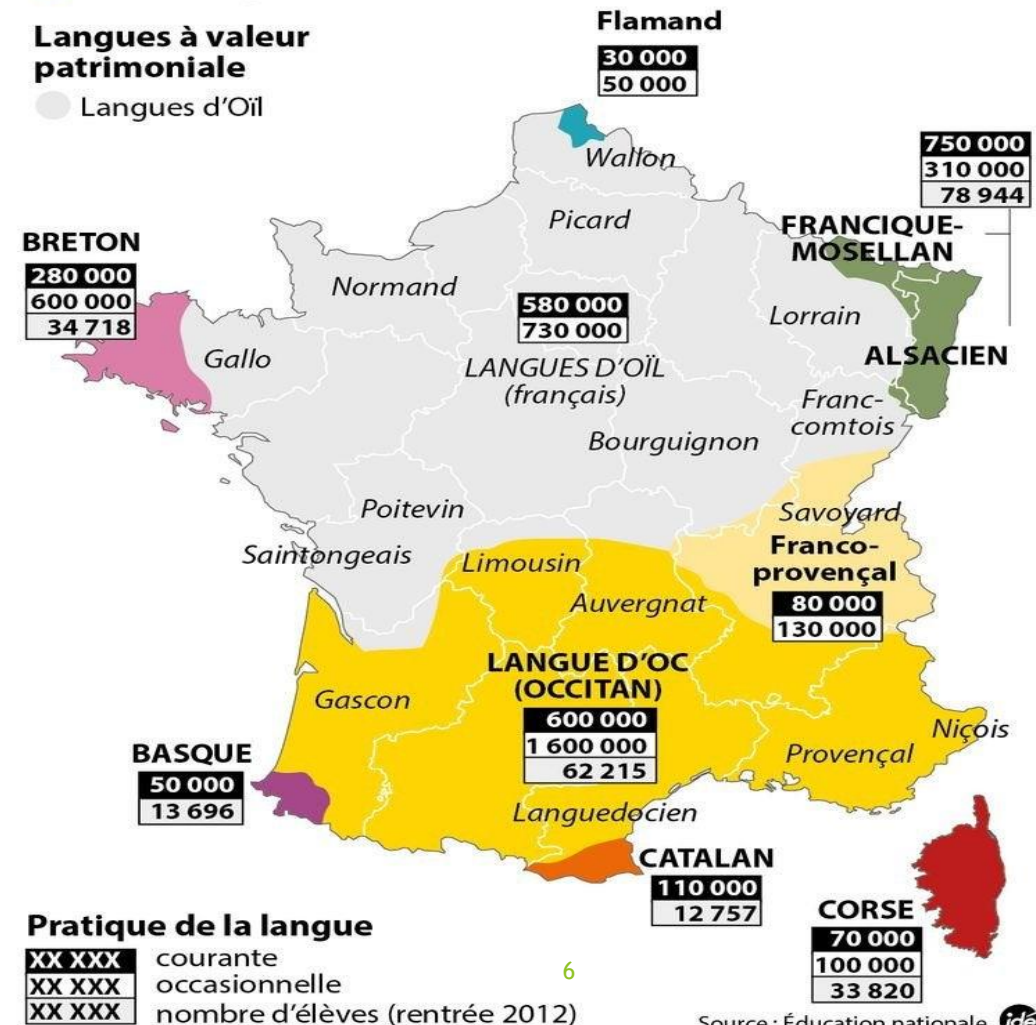
Langues à valeur patrimoniale

- Langues d'Oïl

Langues à «faible diffusion et grande dispersion»

(enseignement dans un nombre limité d'établissements)

- Flamand
- Franco-provençal





Breton



Corsican



Basque

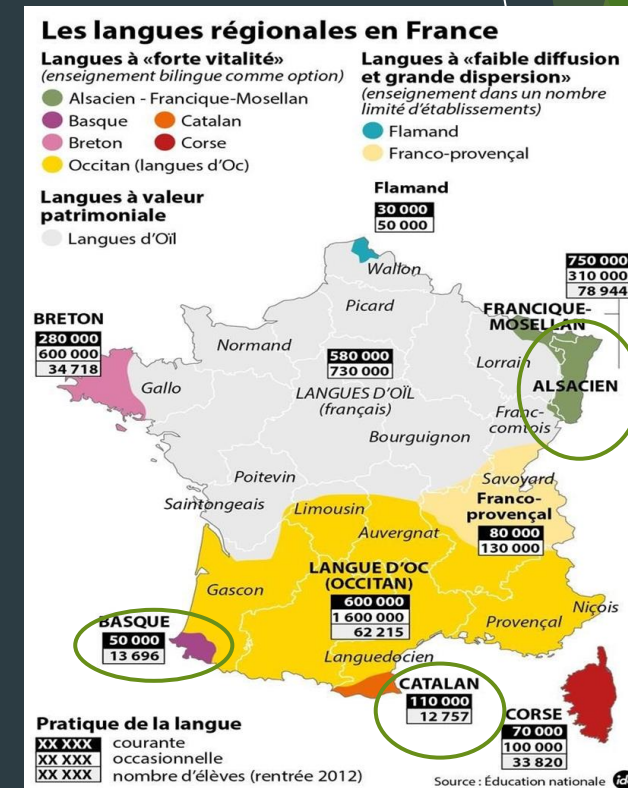
Bilingual road signage in France

2011 small scale survey → ongoing reduced usage of RMLs

- ▶ 93% exclusively speak French
- ▶ 82% of these grew up speaking French
- ▶ 0.6% only speak their Regional Minority Language/foreign language
- ▶ 75% grew up speaking a RML at home → 42% now only speak French
33% now occasionally use RML
- Geographical mobility
- Urbanization
- Intermarriage

Case studies of RMLs → endangered language transmission in the family

- ▶ Alsace: only 42% speak Alsatian (they were 62% in 2002)
- ▶ Basque: only 21.4% are bilingual French-Basque; the younger people are, the less they grow up speaking Basque at home
- ▶ Similar results for Catalan



Regional languages	Number of learners in school
Alsatian	73 000
Occitan	62 000
Breton	35 000
Corsican	34 000
Basque	14 000
Catalan	13 000
Gallo	500

RMLs in school

- ▶ Formal education from pre-school all the way to college
- ▶ Training for RMLs teachers
- ▶ 272 000 students in 2011-2012

- ▶ 1997-2017: anniversary of bilingual French-Breton program in Redon, Brittany
- ▶ Div Yezh organization
- ▶ 48 children enrolled in 2017



<https://www.ouest-france.fr/bretagne/redon-35600/div-yezh-20-ans-d-enfants-qui-parlent-le-breton-5421405>



Cultural festivities

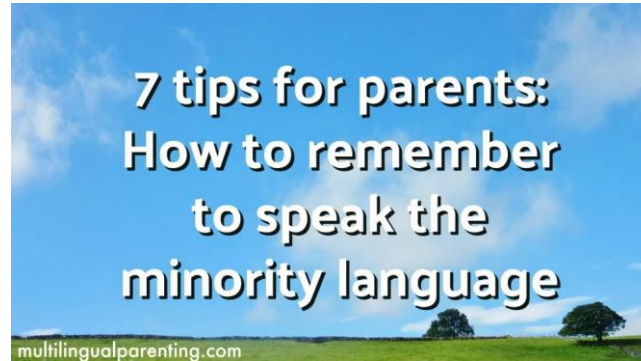


education

No family transmission of the language → language extinction



songs



Conclusion



EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

20th Anniversary 1998-2018

Italy

- ▶ 1861: Kingdom of Italy
- ▶ One nation = one language
- ▶ Italianization of the peninsula: only 2.5% spoke Standard Italian in 1861!
- ▶ From dialect monolingualism to diglossia/triglossia

In the Renaissance

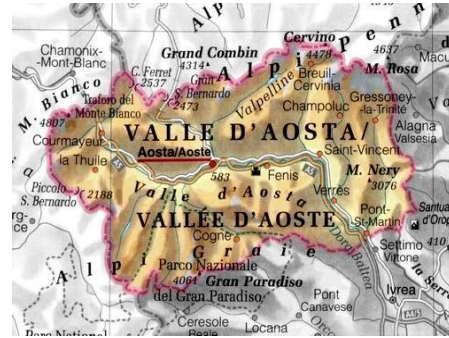


In 1861



Today

Valle d'Aosta (VDA)



ITALIAN – official state language (since 1861)

FRENCH – language of the elite since 6th century and official since 1559; co-official regional language since 1948 and symbol of VDA ‘resistance’

FRANCOPROVENÇAL – local spoken Gallo-Romance varieties spoken since 6th century

Population: 127,844 inhabitants

50,000 Francoprovençal speakers

3,000 estimated French speakers

Trentino Alto-Adige



ITALIAN – official state language (since 1861)

GERMAN – language of the elite; co-official regional language since 1948

SUD-TIROL GERMAN – local German variety spoken since 9th century

Population: 1,072,276 inhabitants
335,000 speakers of local German variety

15
(ISTAT, January 2019)

Oppression of Italy's regional languages



QUI SI PARLA
SOLTANTO
ITALIANO

P.N.F. - Comando Squadristi - Dignano

Attenzione!

Si proibisce nel modo più assoluto che nei ritrovi pubblici e per le strade di Dignano si canti o si parli in lingua slava.

Anche nei negozi di qualsiasi genere deve essere una buona volta adoperata

SOLO LA LINGUA ITALIANA

Noi Squadristi, con metodi persuasivi, faremo rispettare il presente ordine.

GLI SQUADRISTI

Abolite il "lei,,

Abolite nei vostri rapporti personali il « lei » femminile, sgrammaticato, straniero, nato due secoli or sono in tempi di servitù.

Per sedici secoli gli Italiani lo hanno ignorato.

The Fascist Regime (1922-1945)

- ▶ Repression of Italo-Romance dialects
- ▶ Opposition to linguistic minorities
- ▶ Purification of Italian language from foreign words and “usages”
- ▶ Unsuccessful → regional dialects still widely spoken; prescribed vocabulary lost

Oppression of Italy's regional languages (1922-1945)



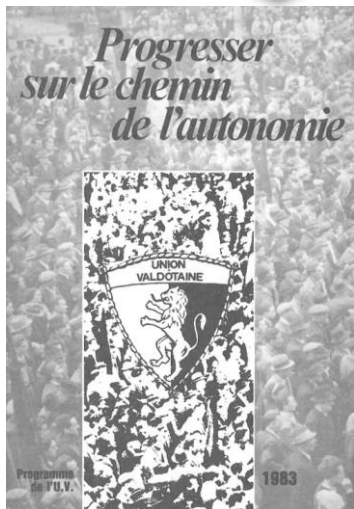
- ▶ Fascist oppression successful in Valle d'Aosta
- ▶ in 1928, schools forbidden to teach French;
- ▶ Catholic Church was forced to close all its French-medium schools;
- ▶ all the region's toponymy was Italianized as well as people's last names;
- ▶ no French newspaper could be published
- ▶ Italian replaced French as the administrative language
- ▶ Consequence: a generation of people in VDA grew up without French - no more a native language
- ▶ Francoprovençal patois maintained - as a dialect, harder for the Regime to target

The Special Statute of Autonomy (1946-1963)



- ▶ a constitutional law that provides the regions with judicial, administrative, and financial autonomy
- ▶ VDA, Trentino and Friuli have special protection for their minority languages (French, German, Slovenian):
 - co-official regional languages
 - mandatory teaching in school
 - bilingual education

The Dialect Renaissance and autonomist political parties (1960s-1970s)

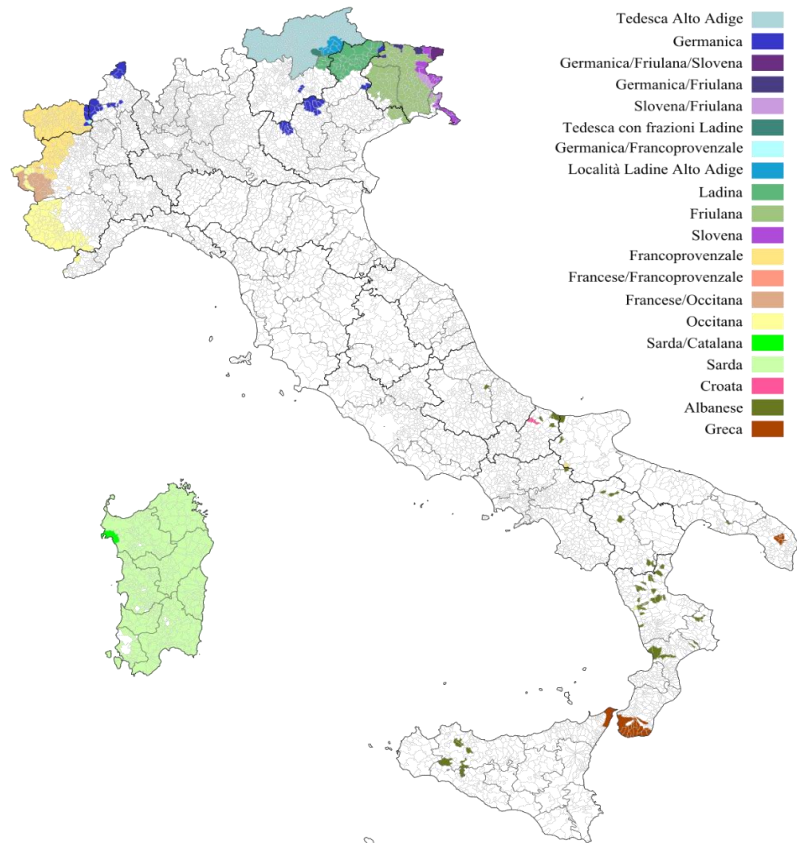


Protect minority languages to protect cultural distinctiveness



Minority language = distinctive regional identity

National law 482/1999 on Italy's historical linguistic minorities



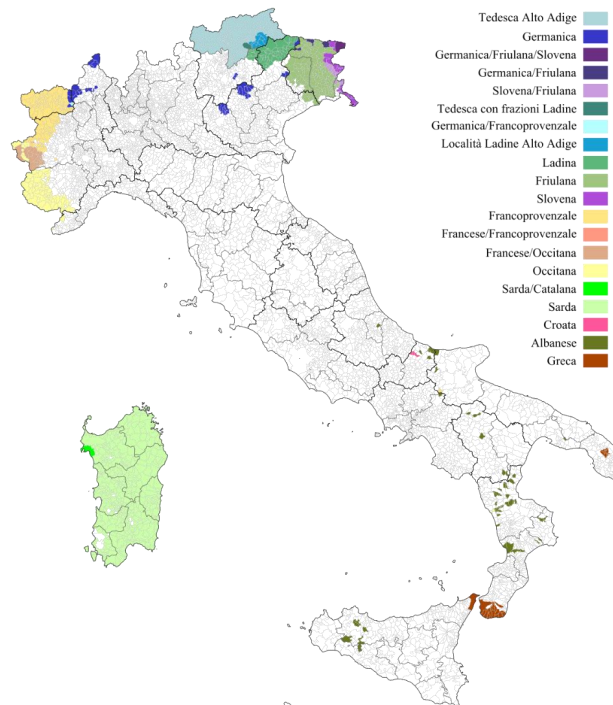
► Article 2 recognizes 12 minorities:

«[...] la Repubblica tutela la lingua e la cultura delle popolazioni albanesi, catalane, germaniche, greche, slovene e croate e di quelle parlanti il francese, il franco-provenzale, il friulano, il ladino, l'occitano e il sardo.

[...] the Republic protects the language and culture of the Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovenian and Croatian populations, and of those speaking French, Francoprovençal, Friulan, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian”.

Comunità di minoranza
L. 482/99 e S.A. Prov. BZ/Sudtirolo

National law 482/1999 on Italy's historical linguistic minorities



Comunità di minoranza
L. 482/99 e S.A. Prov. BZ/Sudtirolo

- ▶ multilingual educational policy at the pre-school, elementary and secondary levels of instruction in the recognized municipalities
- ▶ Guarantees the use of the language in public offices, in the local government, in the judicial system, and in the media
- ▶ 1076 municipalities in Italy now enjoy recognition of their bilingual / plurilingual reality, over a total of 8101, i.e. 13% of the national territory.
- ▶ About 4,000,000 people reside in these municipalities (i.e. 7% of Italy's population)
- ▶ approximately 2,150,000 people are RMLs speakers

Vitality of Italy's minority languages today

- ▶ ISTAT 2000, 2006 survey
- ▶ 52% in Italy speak a regional language / dialect (30,000,000 people)
- ▶ 5% speak a **recognized minority language** (2,000,000 people)
- ▶ Very much alive but ongoing shift toward Italian monolingualism
- ▶ Some areas have more dialect speakers (Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily)

Italy's recognized linguistic minorities	Approximate Number of speakers (all levels of mastering)
Albanian (Arbëresh)	78,000
Catalan	18,000
German	500,000
Greek (Griko)	10,500
Slovenian	60,000-80,000
Croatian	2,600-3,500
French	20,000 (or 120,000 entire VDA population)
Francoprovençal	90,000
Friulan	526,000-700,000
Ladin	55,000
Occitan	178,000
Sardinian	1,000,000-1,350,000

Conclusion

“Speaking in dialect is not a sign of being rude, but an art”

PARLARE IL DIALETTO
NON È MALEDUCAZIONE...
MA “ARTE”

“I am also Italy”



“Every people is an asset for humankind”



“Dialect or language”?

Nazionalità

Italia

Le prime 10 collettività raccolgono il 64,2% degli stranieri residenti

Romania	1.168.552
Albania	448.407
Marocco	420.651
Cina	281.972
Ucraina	234.354
Filippine	166.459
India	151.430
Moldavia	135.661
Bangladesh	122.428
Egitto	112.765

Sono presenti immigrati da quasi 200 paesi del mondo



If you recognize me, you respect me - sign the petition to recognize the historic-linguistic Rom and Sinti minority

Spain

- ▶ RMLs are protected by 1978 Constitution
- ▶ Ratified European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2001



The Kingdom of Spain and Castilian Spanish

- ▶ 1492 Reconquista, merging of Kingdoms of Castile (Castilian) and Aragon (Catalan)
- ▶ 1512 Conquest of Navarre
- ▶ Early 18th century: Castilian language of government, courts, education, culture, Catholic Church
- ▶ Castilian remains a second/foreign language for majority of minorities until beginning of 20th century [Castilian native speakers less than 5% of Spain's population]



The Francoist dictatorship [1936/1939-1975]

- ▶ Spanish official language
- ▶ Outlawed regional languages in public
- ▶ Violent RMLs oppression until 1950s
- ▶ 1960s and 1970s relative tolerance for RMLs in public →



Catalan:
Still spoken in in-group interactions; formal events; private teaching; culture; Church

The 1978 Constitution and Languages of Spain

- ▶ Democratic monarchy
- ▶ Plurilingualism endorsed
- ▶ 1978 Constitution declares Spain legally multilingual and its languages to be protected
- ▶ Castilian is the State official languages
- ▶ Regional languages obtain co-official status
- ▶ Language policy is domain of Autonomous Communities



Catalan in Catalonia

- 1983 The Linguistic Normalisation Act:
 - Language of education with Castilian
 - Used in mass media
- 1998 Language Policy Act:
 - Official working language of public institutions
 - Normal language of education
 - Normal language of public mass media
- 2006 reform Statute of Autonomy:

Every Catalonia's citizen must know Catalan, the majority language of Catalonia.



Vitality of Catalan in Catalonia

- ▶ 9,000,000 speakers in Spain, Andorra, France, Italy
- ▶ 2011 report
- ▶ 1 million immigrant - Castilian speakers
- ▶ 94.6% understand Catalan
- ▶ 81% can read in Catalan
- ▶ Spanish #1 language learnt at home, Catalan #2
- ▶ Similar numbers for both languages as usual languages
- ▶ 41% people speak Catalan to their children even if Spanish spoken with their own parents



Galician

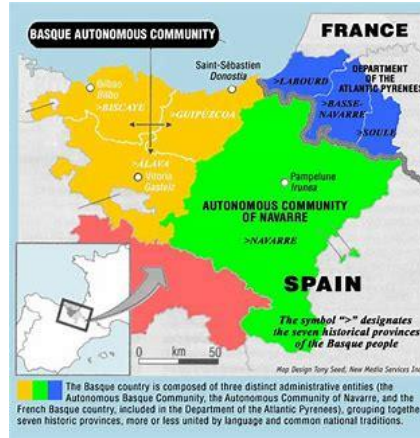


- ▶ Spoken by 2.500,000 million in Spain
- ▶ High command for speaking/understanding
- ▶ Low command in reading/writing
- ▶ Mother tongue of 57.6% of Galicia
- ▶ Younger people use it less as everyday language





Basque

- ▶ In 2006, 37.5% in the Basque Country is bilingual Basque-Spanish
- ▶ 17% are passive bilinguals
- ▶ 45% are Spanish monolinguals
- ▶ Number of bilinguals is growing → from 324,504 people in 1981 to 755,640 in 2006!



Spain's regional languages - Conclusion


- ▶ Stable vitality
- ▶ Regional Minority Languages have (re)gained prestige as co-official languages
- ▶ Education in RML is successful (Catalan and Basque)
- ▶ RMLs and immigrants
- ▶ Regional languages, politics and identity




CURS DE CATALÀ PER A ADULTS

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