

Languages Lanean

Kongresua

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**LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION.
HOW THE EU CAN
PROMOTE BASQUE**

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WHAT CAN THE EU DO FOR REGIONAL AND MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Minority rights in
third countries:**

Yes

**Minority rights
within the union:**

Competence of the
Member States.

**No legal base,
no tools!**

24 OFFICIAL EU LANGUAGES

To become an official language, it has to:

1

**BE AN OFFICIAL
LANGUAGE IN A
MEMBER STATES
AND RECOGNISED
IN ITS
CONSTITUTION.**

2

**BE PROPOSED BY
THIS MEMBER
STATE IN THE
COUNCIL**

3

**BE ADOPTED BY
UNANIMITY BY THE
OTHER 26
MEMBER STATES.**

TREATY CHANGE?

**Very unlikely.
Any improvement?**



THE LISBON TREATY (1.12.2009)

Article 1a:

The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

**With the Lisbon Treaty
the Charter of
Fundamental rights
enters into force.**

THE CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Article 21:

Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.”

Article 22:

The Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

THE SCOPE OF THE CHARTER IS LIMITED TO EU LAW

Article 51:

...with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity , [the Charter is applicable to] the Member States **only when they are implementing Union law!** They shall therefore respect the rights in accordance with their **respective powers.**

Furthermore, the Charter **does not establish any new power or task** for the Community or the Union, or modify powers and tasks defined by the Treaties.

COMPETENCE OF THE MEMBER STATES

The Charter is the biggest blow to regional and minority languages!

The Charter underlines that language policy is a competence of the Member States.

**In other words:
There's nothing even close to a legal base!**

The Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority languages provides a comprehensive framework.

WHAT CAN AND SHOULD THE EU DO?

EU's efforts defend and promote regional or minority languages (RML) is limited to:

1

**Statements,
awareness raising**

European Citizens'
Initiative: Minority
SafePack.

2

Financial support

Through funding
programmes

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

**EU's most important means of pressure,
also politically!**

Support for Minority Languages in Europe

(2002 by Grin, Moring, Gorter, Häggman, O'Riagain, Strubell)

A survey of EU-projects that have improved the "capacity, opportunity and desire to speak minority languages". The share of projects fulfilling these requirements is small, around 1 % of all projects funded. But it is still a considerable sum, for instance 6 million in 1999-2000.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A FOLLOW UP STUDY IN 2005

Ten Years of EU Support for Regional or Minority Languages: a Financial Assessment

(François Grin, Michele Gazzola, Johan Häggman and Tom Moring)

A FOLLOW UP STUDY IN 2016

A Historical Financial Assessment of the EU Support for Regional or Minority Languages

(Gazzola, Grin, Häggman, Moring)

showed that the financial support available has increased until 2010.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The mainstream support makes it difficult for regional or minority languages.

Minority organisations tend to be smaller, with less financial resources, than majority organisations, which makes it difficult to compete for EU funding on equal terms.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

In previous programmes priority was given to “smaller” or “less-widely spoken languages” spoken by minorities.

This positive discrimination disappeared in the following generation of programmes.

Now, there is a new tendency. The EU Commission seems to have realised that small entities find it difficult to apply for funding.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The European Commission has generally failed to react to the proposals in the Minority SafePack, but the ECI has at least resulted in a budget line for **“safeguarding endangered languages in Europe”**

Also many programmes with call for proposals promoting young people and digitalization.

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE FINAL REPORT MAY 2022

A commitment towards the protection of national and linguistic minorities was taken up in the conclusions.

The establishment of a Language Diversity Centre was also reflected in the conclusions.

**OF COURSE
a lot on young people and digitalisation.**

BASQUE AS THE 25TH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE?

**Very unlikely, but
not impossible.**

**Para que sea
probable. Como
si fuéramos a
marcar.**

**Finland and
Sweden are
sceptical.**

**Still possible,
WORTH FIGHTING
FOR.**

Lobbying

AN ENDORSEMENT

- Why is financial support so important?
- Financial support is an endorsement.
- It's the European Union's only tool to influence the language policy of it's Member States.
- It gives recognition to unrecognised languages, nations and people.
- For instance in Greece.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!