

Linguistic and cultural diversity – Minority and minoritised languages as part of European linguistic and cultural diversity



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Abstract

This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, at the request of the PETI Committee, inquires about the connection between the "Protection of European linguistic and cultural diversity" and the "Protection and promotion of European minority and minoritised languages" in Europe.

The situation of the European minority and minoritised languages can be seen as a barometer of the current state of European linguistic and cultural diversity. The available data show that more than two thirds of linguistic minorities within the European Union have significantly decreased in number in recent decades (1991-2011). At the pan-European level, too, two thirds of minorities have declined over the same period. The same must be assumed as to the use of the languages spoken by these minorities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The study starts from the assumption that linguistic and cultural diversity is a great wealth and strength of the European Union and of Europe as a whole. This diversity is expressed not only in the 36 official state languages in Europe, but also and, in particular, in at least 69 minority (stateless) languages. The corresponding data for the European Union are 25 official state languages (including Luxembourgish, official in Luxembourg but not at EU level) and at least 21 minority (stateless) languages. There are 50 titular nations and at least 362 minorities in Europe, and 29 titular nations and at least 158 minorities in the European Union. These 158 national minorities make up only 7% of the EU population (they are indeed in the minority), but they correspond to 89% of the cultural and linguistic diversity within the EU. If the promotion of European cultural and linguistic diversity wants to fulfil its purpose, it must *also* take place through the promotion of national, autochthonous minorities and their minority languages. This requires measures to support the use of those languages.

For a meaningful language policy, reliable data on the stock of the language (group) to be protected and promoted are necessary. In many cases, these data are not available. Where they are present, they often indicate the decline of the minority, which most probably also corresponds to a decline of the corresponding minority language.

On the other hand, there are minority languages that are growing, particularly within the EU. It is therefore important to point out the conditions that make this development possible and to look for ways to transfer these favourable conditions to other minority languages as well.

Main findings

Based on a review of the data available on minorities and their languages within the EU and Europe, which are seen as the heart of Europe's linguistic and cultural wealth, this study comes to the three main findings listed below:

- Although the concept of "number" is intrinsic in the definition of (linguistic) minority, many European states refrain from surveying such minorities, of using statistics as data. This means that a sound empirical basis for a sound linguistic minority policy is often lacking.
- Despite this problematic data situation, several indicators show that more than two thirds of the minorities within the EU (and also at pan-European level) have decreased noticeably in the last four decades. This decline must also be assumed for the languages spoken by these minorities.
- However, some minorities in the EU and in Europe are growing. From the conditions that enable this growth in number – the presence of a dedicated autonomy with the related political, economic, and linguistic framework (as the presence of a standard code) – can be derived strategies for an effective minority and minority language promotion.

It is precisely this last point – that the decline of minority languages is not a "law of nature", but can be halted and even reversed through appropriate measures and framework conditions – that is the starting point for the recommendations made in this study. It must be noted that in accordance with the current European Union legal framework, the main responsibility for implementing measures to improve the use of minority languages lies with the EU Member States. Despite this, the European Union has several indirect possibilities to support minorities and minority languages which should be used more intensively both on the part of the EU and on that of the minorities: programmes for the promotion of languages and cultures, employment and social integration, regionalisation and cross-border cooperation. However, this requires that representative organisations of linguistic minorities are given the legal possibility to access these programmes, if necessary, introducing new regulations.

They should also be given, where opportune, in-depth consulting for the submission of funds applications and managerial handling.

Main Recommendations

The main recommendations of this study can be summarised in the following appeal: the EU-motto “United in Diversity” should be brought to life. The starting point for are three postulates, which can be considered as generally valid:

- Minority languages need speakers otherwise they will perish.
- In order for minority languages to continue to have speakers, it is first and foremost necessary to be able to live and raise children (i.e., new speakers) in the respective minority areas. This requires a certain standard of living in minority areas to be ensured, also to prevent massive emigration from minority areas. Without speakers of minority languages, rights for these languages are also invalid. Immigrants in minority areas should (and should have the possibility to) be linguistically integrated as well.
- For the purpose of maintaining a minority community, the comparative analysis of the current situation of the minorities within the EU and Europe shows that granting adequate autonomy has proven to be particularly effective.

That said, the study offers the following recommendations for the European Union and its Member States:

- The *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages* and several reports and resolutions of the EU Parliament (*Report on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union* [2013], *Resolution on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union* [2013], *Resolution on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States* [2018]) contain a large set of provisions useful for the goal to preserve European linguistic and cultural diversity. The EU Member States should be encouraged to ratify (where provided) and fully implement them.
- Ways should be found out in order to get as accurate information as possible on the number of minority language speakers and their (minority) language competences. Actions aimed at preserving a language presuppose the knowledge about this fundamental criterion of its vitality. Surveys granting anonymity are conceivable and feasible, as it is proven by the concrete case of South Tyrol.
- Experience shows that the establishment of various forms of autonomy, cultural or territorial, with the aim of matching some basic needs of the minority group are particularly effective in preserving minority languages.
- Long-established and newly arrived adult inhabitants of a minority area must be given the possibility to learn the minority language. To this effect, special courses sponsored by public funds can prove useful. EU agencies should contribute to the said courses, planning their investment, also having regard to the degree of extinction that individual languages face.
- Families remain the most important way of passing on minority languages as mother tongues. Parents must be supported and incentivised by all possible means to achieve this task.
- The role of families must be supported, continued and even taken over (where the language is no longer passed on in the family) by the educational institutions. Minority languages should be taught (also in their formal, written form) in the schools respective minorities attend. The teaching of a minority language in a minority settlement area should be made compulsory for all pupils, whether they come from minority families or not.

- Optic bilingualism in toponymy indications and public signs of any kind should be encouraged, since they are likely to be for many a first contact with and a possible introduction to the minority language.
- The European Union should promote the presence of minority languages in digital systems. Given the importance and relevance of these systems, absence of minority languages must be equated with damage to the fundamental right to express oneself in one's mother tongue.
- Minority languages should be used in as many areas of daily life as possible, from administration to the media. This only becomes possible in the presence of a standard form for at least the written use, and requires a certain degree of language elaboration. The European Union should support the endeavours aimed at the achievement of these conditions of standardisation and elaboration. The EU should adopt and specifically promote the objectives of the UNESCO Indigenous Language Decade (2022-2032) in a similar initiative.
- Minority languages, not unlike State languages, need a basic infrastructure: comprehensive dictionaries, school grammars and a corpus of texts. For minority languages these tools are not easily available. EU programmes should support, in a more coordinated manner, the realisation of the said infrastructure that has to be considered as a strategic goal of the EU linguistic policy.
- A future-oriented language policy must not only aim at the (museum-like) preservation of what already exists, but also at maintaining the use value of a language. In most cases, language elaboration processes are necessary for this. These are particularly effective when they lead to the establishment of a replicable and teachable standard variety. The realisation of such standard varieties should find its way into European language policy.

Minority and minoritised languages – which represent the bulk of the language and cultural wealth of the EU and Europe – are currently more than ever at a crossroads. The radical change in their economic and social environment, increased mobility, and exuberant globalisation have profoundly changed the traditional environment in which a minority or minoritised language was passed on. In this changed world, minority and minoritised languages only have a future if the motivation for their use and transmission is conceived anew and differently. This new motivation lies in the added value that knowledge of a minority or minoritised language brings. On the one hand, this added value lies in the individual advantages of multilingualism (including the intrinsic value of language as a carrier of culture and identity, and a monetary value realised in interaction with other people, e.g., in the labour market), and, on the other hand, in its social advantages (multilingualism is the generator of entire sectors of the economy – e.g., in education, in the cultural and creative industries, in tourism, in cross-border cooperation – that cannot be easily outsourced to other regions or areas of the world because they are bound to a specific language combination).

Ultimately, multilingualism – to which minority languages contribute to a considerable extent – is a value in itself, i.e., it has intrinsic value. Multilingualism and linguistic diversity are, in fact, comparable to diversity in flora and fauna, or to diversification in agriculture, industry and the tertiary sector, where there is a unanimous opinion that a reduction of this diversification will lead to a shepherding monoculture. Linguistic and cultural monoculture is just as damaging as that in all other fields. Therefore, a parallelism imposes itself: just as Europe tries to avoid, with legal provisions or special measures, monocultures or monopolistic situations in all other sectors, it should avoid it in language and culture. Therefore, it should be a general European concern to preserve linguistic and cultural diversity as well.

As currently happens in the field of protecting the environment or the climate, the European Union and Europe also need a paradigm shift in the case of the protection of linguistic and cultural diversity.

And just like protecting the environment or the climate, protecting linguistic diversity, too, comes at a cost. But if the current development is met with indifference, it is easy to predict that Europe will experience a linguistic and cultural desertification even before the impending climate disasters.

1. INTRODUCTION

On the topic, “Linguistic and cultural diversity – Minority and minoritised languages as part of European linguistic and cultural diversity”, there are quite a number of studies.¹ If this paper nevertheless claims a certain originality, it is because it argues for relying on an empirical basis.² In particular, it highlights the issues at stake connected with the assessment of numerical size of the groups using a minority or a minoritised language. The significant difference in the quality of the available data accounts for the reason why the paper emphasises, among other things, the importance of accurately collecting data on minorities and minority languages in the European Union and in Europe. Just as accurate temperature measurements are a prerequisite for targeted measures against climate change, accurate data on the extent of their actual use is a prerequisite for targeted measures to protect and promote minority and minoritised languages. While the paper cannot provide all the relevant data either (this would be a research project on its own), it is to be hoped that calling attention to what is still needed in terms of reliable data will stimulate more detailed studies in the near future.

The paper consists of the following sections:

- Chapters 1-4 present the current linguistic and cultural variety of the European Union on the basis of available data. This section also addresses the definition issue (Chapter 4.1) and lists elements of added value deriving from language diversity and its preservation (Chapter 3).
- A second section (Chapters 5-6) discusses those framework conditions that can positively or negatively influence the development of a minority. These conditions are identified based on the quantitative development of the minorities within the EU over the last three decades (Chapter 5.2 and Annex III). The basic assumption is that positive framework conditions for a linguistic minority are also positive framework conditions for the preservation of the corresponding minority language and are thus a prerequisite or catalyst for the retention of linguistic and cultural diversity in the EU and in Europe. Such an analysis, however, must address the problem that more and more states have stopped collecting data on languages at fixed intervals (e.g., censuses) (Chapter 5.1 and Annex II). Based on the evidence of available data, it is possible to anticipate that two framework conditions have very positive effects: an autonomy setting for linguistic purposes and the adoption by the minority of a standardised language (Chapter 6.2). This will be exemplified by the case study of South Tyrol with its German and Ladin minorities (Chapter 7).
- In the third and final part of the paper (Chapter 8) and based on the positive cases identified, a catalogue of measures will be proposed to preserve and, if possible, strengthen the EU’s and Europe’s linguistic and cultural diversity.

¹ Cf. e.g., Green et al. 2002, Jaeger/van der Meer 2007, Mercator 2009, NPLD 2015, Ó Duibhir et al. 2015, van Dongera/van der Meer/Sterk 2017; OHCHR 2019; Council of Europe 2021.

² In this, we follow the approach of the “Südtiroler Volksgruppen-Institut” (South Tyrolean Institute for Ethnic Groups, SVI; <https://www.svi-bz.org/en/home/>). We would like to thank Silena Gasser BA and Prof. Dr. Christoph Pan (both SVI), who were of particular help in the drafting of this paper. All cited webpages were last accessed on 31/12/2022.

2. THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES AS PROTECTION OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

There is no question that one of Europe's greatest strengths and its wealth is its linguistic and cultural diversity.³ It is therefore in Europe's own interest to preserve this wealth and to nurture and strengthen it as far as possible. In this sense, the following premises serve as a starting point:

- Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity is an added value and not a burden.
- Europe's cultural diversity is based essentially on its linguistic diversity.⁴
- Europe's linguistic diversity is not only expressed in 36 official State languages of the continent, but even more so in the at least 69 stateless languages. The core of language diversity in Europe consists of the use of, at least, these 105 autochthonous languages by no less than 362 minorities.⁵
- Language is the most important cultural carrier.
- A culture that emerged from a language community but is no longer articulated in that same language comes to be restricted to mere externalities.
- This also means that the role of identification mark that this culture plays for a community decreases and may vanish altogether.
- Therefore, cultural diversity can best be preserved by promoting *active* language competences in the European (minority) languages.
- However, for a minority language to continue to be spoken, it is important that speakers may see added value in its use.
- The existence of a concrete or perceived added value of a minority language is a crucial factor for its use and its preservation.

These assumptions invite the fostering of conditions under which a minority language becomes an added value. The paper considers, therefore, those cases where these conditions are met or have been realised ("good practices", see e.g., the case study about South Tyrol in Chapter 7). Several suggestions will be put forward on how European states and the European Union can promote – in line with the respective legal framework – the establishment of such positive conditions.

³ Scholars (e.g., Kennedy 1987; Kimminich 1993) see in the great linguistic and cultural diversity in a geographically small area one of the key factors for the enormous rise that Europe experienced from the 16th century onwards in comparison with other parts of the world. See also the assumption and the conclusion of the reference study of Gogolin 2002: "linguistic diversity – [...] a rich source for human development, social welfare and economic growth in Europe" [7]; "Actual linguistic diversity in Europe is a rich resource" [21] or the relevant remarks in Pan 2018b, 252-253.

⁴ Minority groups based on religion (e.g., Jews) or a special way of life (e.g., Travellers) are not covered by the main arguments of this paper, which aim at linguistic preservation. In a sense, the Catholic Croats, the Orthodox Serbs and the Muslim Bosnians in Bosnia and Herzegovina were also originally religious "minorities". They became also linguistically differentiated groups through the differentiation of the originally common Serbo-Croatian language into Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian.

⁵ Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 31-65.

3. THE ADDED VALUE OF EUROPE'S LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND ITS PRESERVATION

The diversity of languages and cultures is a value in itself, comparable in some way to the diversity of flora and fauna (where there is a general consensus on the importance of their preservation in all their diversity). If the presence of minority groups is not seen by State authorities (as it was often the case in the past) as a factor of instability and potential conflict, but rather as a potential added value, a number of gains emerge both at the individual and societal level.

Personal multilingualism is always an asset, regardless of whether one or more of the languages involved are minority languages.⁶

The social benefits of multilingualism associated with the presence of autochthonous minorities have been extensively highlighted in recent years: In a counteraction to their regions, national minorities and their languages can offer regional advantages, economic incentives, and added value:

- *Regional advantages:* national and linguistic minorities make the areas in which they reside into multilingual areas. This offers additional attractions not only for tourism and, in particular, cultural tourism, but also for geographical and linguistic-cultural advantages locally as they serve to exploit the potential of cross-border cooperation.
- *Economic incentives:* the teaching of national minority languages requires schools. These are not just learning centres, but also economic enterprises. Added to this is the fact that minority languages also make additional activities possible in other cultural areas (literature, theatre, museums, music, etc.) which have an economic component.
- *Added value:* multilingualism at a regional level requires an increased investment in terms of schools, administration, and judicial system. What results from this is additional economic value and, at the same time, additional cultural value in terms of multilingualism, providing both individual and social enrichment.

The circumstance that minority protection causes economic expenditures whose costs turn out to be productive investments and promote the economic cycle indicates the astonishing aspect of minority protection as an economic factor which, up to now, has hardly been noted by research in the scholarly literature.⁷ The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted this thematic area in 2010 and recommended to the 48 Member States of the Council of Europe to make use of this possibility for regional policy.⁸

⁶ There is a solid scientific consensus on this topic. The advantages range from a faster reaction time of multilingual people also in non-linguistic decisions, to an easier learning of additional languages, to a delay of some neuronal diseases by an average of five years, greater competitiveness in the labour market. Cf. e.g., Cathomas/Carigiet 2008, Videsott et al. 2012, Franceschini et al. 2018; Wickström 2023. All the advantages and potentials that Gogolin 2002, 15-16 derives from the multilingualism of migrants apply to autochthonous minority languages too.

⁷ Pan 2018c, 344-345. This article provides an excellent overview of the subject. Already the headings of the intermediate chapters in the section "8.2 Regions and Minorities" [344-346] and "8.3 Minority Languages as a Valuable Asset for Regional Development" [346-350] speak for themselves: 8.2.1 *The Presence of Minorities Requires Increased Regional Services*; 8.2.2 *The Presence of Minorities Offers Added Regional Value*; 8.3.1 *Economic Support through Cultural Enrichment*; 8.3.2 *Economic Impetus*; 8.3.2.1 *Tourism and Cultural Tourism*; 8.3.2.2 *Cross-border Cooperation*; 8.3.3 *The Economic Significance of Cultural Activities*; 8.3.3.1 *Multilingualism as a Multiplier*; 8.3.3.2 *Cultural Economy*; 8.3.4 *Employment Effects through Creativity and Multilingualism*; 8.3.4.1 *Cultural Creativity*; 8.3.4.2 *Multilingualism*; 8.3.5 *Environmental Compatibility through the Decoupling of the Exploitation of Nature*.

⁸ The Council of Europe adopted this point of view in Council of Europe/ Congress of Local and Regional Authorities 2010a, 2010b, 2010c. See also Vogt et al. 2010 and, in particular, the numerous relevant works by Bengt-Arne Wickström on the subject (most recently Wickström 2023).

4. THE EU'S LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AT A GLANCE

As is known, the official motto of the European Union is *In varietate concordia – United in diversity*. This diversity is made up not only by the Member States and the official languages of the Union, but perhaps even more so by the numerous linguistic minorities living in the Union and their languages.⁹ There is no territorial state in the EU which does not have at least one traditional, autochthonous minority. The EU has:

- 27 Member States;
- (at least) 53 languages: 24 official languages, respectively, 25 official State languages (including Luxembourgish, which is an official State language in Luxembourg without being an official language of the Union), 10 State languages of non-EU countries (one of them with a core area outside of Europe) that are spoken also within the Union, and (at least) 18 stateless languages (some of them with their core area outside of the Union); and
- (at least) 158 minorities.

If we assume, in the rest of this study, that there are only (at least) 18 stateless languages and only (at least) 158 minorities within the EU, it is because two characteristic minority groups, the Jews and the Sinti/Roma, are not considered in this paper.¹⁰ This is due to the special situation of these minorities. They can also be carriers of a language of their own: Yiddish and Ladino (Judaeo-Spanish) in the first case, Romany in the second, but language is not their main distinctive trait, as it is for the other minorities dealt with here. This does not mean, however, that all the conclusions of this study regarding language maintenance and promotion should not apply to Yiddish, Ladino and Romany too.

The aforementioned figures show that the bulk of the EU's cultural diversity is related to language diversity, and most of the EU's linguistic diversity is related to the presence of minorities. Hence, protecting and promoting the EU's cultural and linguistic diversity is synonymous with protecting and promoting EU's numerous autochthonous minorities and their minority languages.¹¹

4.1. Minority and minoritised languages – a definition

In any domain of human activity, it is useful to clearly determine the object upon which one intends to operate; otherwise no measure taken can claim to be meaningful. As to the topic of this study, it is well known that there is no unanimous definition of either "minority" or "minority language". Therefore, no unanimous recognised exhaustive listing of minorities in Europe or of European minority languages exists.¹² The most authoritative documents at European level adopt two different strategies in this respect:

⁹ See Annex I for a concrete exemplification of this linguistic variety within the European Union.

¹⁰ Likewise, West and East Greenlandic are not included, as Greenland is an autonomous part of Denmark but not of the EU.

¹¹ This is even truer if the whole of Europe is taken into account instead of the European Union only. Europe (taking account also Turkey and [the European part of] Russia, but excluding the Caucasus region) has 47 states, 36 official state languages, (at least) 69 stateless languages and (at least) 362 minorities (cf. Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 31-65).

¹² Concerning "minoritised languages", the defining characteristic is the existence of a social power imbalance between these and the dominant languages. In the European context, all minoritised languages are also minority languages. The question as to whether in the meantime English is minoritising even some European State languages is beyond the scope of this study.

- a) the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*¹³ refrains from giving any definition¹⁴, leaving individual signatory States to determine which groups are to be considered as “national minorities” and therefore eligible for protection;
- b) the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*¹⁵ defines in Article 1 a “regional or minority language” as a language that:
 - is traditionally used within the borders of a State by nationals of that same State who form a group smaller in number than the group(s) speaking other languages and
 - differs from the official language(s) of that State; it does not include either dialects of the official language(s) of the State or the languages of migrants.

The *Framework Convention's* option is “based on the recognition that at this stage, it is impossible to arrive at a definition capable of mustering general support of all Council of Europe Member States”.¹⁶ In fact, there is still no definition of “minority” that is binding under international law after the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR) rejected any proposal made in order to establish which groups are entitled to the rights provided for in Article 27 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR). The Article rules: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language”.¹⁷

The first proposal to define ‘minority’ within the meaning of Article 27 ICCPR dates back to 1977. Its author was the then Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Francesco Capotorti. According to his proposal, under ‘minority’ a community is to be understood as the following:

- compactly or dispersedly settled on the territory of a State,
- which is smaller in number than the rest of the population of a State,
- whose members are citizens of that State,
- which have ethnic, linguistic, or cultural features different from those of the rest of the population,
- whose members are guided by the will to safeguard these features.¹⁸

Following the negative reactions stirred by this definition, the proposal was modified in 1985 by J. Dechênes on behalf of the same Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in the sense that a minority is:

- a group of citizens of a State, constituting a numerical minority and in a non-dominant position in that State,
- endowed with ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics which differ from those of the majority of the population,
- having a sense of solidarity with one another,
- motivated, if only implicitly, by a collective will to survive, and

¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities>

¹⁴ Cf. Framework Convention, Explanatory Report, § 12.

¹⁵ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages>

¹⁶ Cf. Framework Convention, Explanatory Report, § 12.

¹⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-minority-issues/international-standards>

¹⁸ Capotorti 1977, 96, § 568.

- whose aim is to achieve equality with the majority in fact and in law.¹⁹

Two points of these definitions, in particular, are still disputed, since they have been apodictically rejected by the UN Human Rights Committee: the question of *citizenship* and the question of *autochthony*. According to the UN Human Rights Committee, the formulation of Article 27 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* does not allow the restriction of the rights mentioned under this Article to State citizens alone, and likewise does not tie them to a certain period of residence. Thus, migrant workers or even visitors in a State constituting such minorities are entitled to exercise those rights.²⁰

Whereas the waiver of the citizenship criterion is understandable insofar as a number of States worldwide deny citizenship to members of autochthonous minorities, the waiver of the criterion of autochthony simply leads to the fact that genuine protection of minorities is made impossible in practice in an era in which migration is a global phenomenon. Within the European Union the principle of freedom of settlement has been established, and by now each EU State is home to more than 100 nationalities on average.²¹ The simple presence of groups having different ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics compared to the national majority cannot make them “minorities” in the sense of the Article 27 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. Otherwise, the very concept of “protection of minorities” would be lost. The concept implies the protection of something specific, which exists in the given form only under certain conditions that have been created over time. The surest indication for the existence of these conditions is the presence of a toponymy peculiar to minorities but in general they have all arisen following a framework that can be seen as a “lack of alternatives”. In fact, non-autochthonous groups (guest workers, asylum seekers, refugees, etc.) differ from autochthonous (or traditional or historical) minorities largely “by the causality of their minority status. While the existence of autochthonous minorities may be older than the state structure in which they live and they had as good as no influence upon the course of the state borders, which made them into minorities, there was at least one subjective element with the allochthonous groups. Although not all of them may have voluntarily left their homeland, since in most cases there were more or less convincing (and often even compelling) reasons, for most of them there existed a minimum of possibilities for choice with regard to the destination country, and in many cases a return to the homeland lay or lies (once again) within the realm of possibility or is even envisaged.”²²

If the fundamental difference between autochthonous minorities and allochthonous groups is overseen, the willingness of the States to subscribe protection obligations for minorities rapidly decreases for the understandable reason of practicability alone. A concrete example suffices to illustrate this. A legitimate aspiration of autochthonous minorities is to see their language anchored in the school curriculum (see Chapter 7 for the presence of German and Ladin in the schools of South Tyrol and the Ladin area). But with what logistical, financial and human resources should this endeavour be implemented in the case of migrant languages, which can be distributed across the entire State territory in hardly predictable quantity and quality?²³ The fact that blurring the differences between target groups when implementing certain rights creates more problems than it solves is made

¹⁹ Dechênes 1985, § 181.

²⁰ UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), *CCPR General Comment No. 23: Article 27 (Rights of Minorities)*, 8 April 1994, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.5, § 5.1 and 5.2.

²¹ In Italy, e.g., in 2016 people of 195 different nationalities were surveyed as residents (<http://www.comuni-italiani.it/statistiche/stranieri/>).

²² Pan 2028e, 226.

²³ There are many more examples that show how an undifferentiated application of protection instruments to both autochthonous minorities and migrants (“new minorities”) would ultimately not do justice to the authentic needs of both groups (cf. Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, XXXI-XXXII).

clear by the case of the right of asylum: when resorted to in order to circumvent immigration regulations, it leads to a questioning of the right itself in parts of the European population.

Still dwelling on the question of definition, it can be pointed out that Article 27 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which is the legal basis of the protection of minorities at the UN level, explicitly speaks of “ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities”. The undifferentiated extension that has been made, in the meantime, of the concept of “minority” to any group with biological (e.g., age), gender, or social or moral characteristics deemed “non-dominant” does not correspond to the intent of Article 27 ICCPR and should be avoided.

In light of the above and for the purposes of this study, “minority languages” are languages spoken by ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities having the characteristic of autochthonousness; this is also in accordance with Article 1 of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*.

4.2. Official language(s) of the State vs. dialects

Finally, the thorny question of the definition of *language* versus *dialect* must be addressed. Dialects are expressly excluded from protection by both Article 1 of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (cf. *supra* 4.1.) and several national legislations.²⁴ The problem affects several language families in Europe in various ways. In those linguistic regions (e.g., the Germanic one) where the label “dialect” does not have a negative connotation, there has long been a consensus as to which linguistic codes are to be regarded as languages and which as dialects. In other linguistic regions, where the term “dialect” (and its synonyms) has historically negative connotations (e.g., in the Romance language area), there is, on the other hand, an increased effort to upgrade language codes that were considered dialects in the past by claiming for them the status of “language”. It is a fact that so-called “primary dialects” (e.g., Lombard and Sicilian in Italy, Picard and Wallon in France or Astur-Leonesian and Navarro-Aragonese in Spain) are linguistically and historically not to be regarded as dialects of a standard language, but as independent language codes which (for various reasons) did not develop into standard languages. It is also a fact that these “primary dialects” have usually existed for several centuries under the umbrella of a standard language and their speakers have therefore developed an awareness of diglossia but not of bilingualism, as is the case of speakers of minority languages in relation to the language of the host State. As seen above, in the case of migrant languages, the willingness of States to enter into obligations for minority languages may rapidly decrease if it is to be feared that granting them rights fuels the unlimited emergence of “new” minority languages as a result.²⁵ If this is the case, it may be useful to refer to sociolinguistic and anthropological literature dating from before 1989 in order to distinguish which claims have arisen as a consequence of, and not as an impulse to, the enactment of European and national measures in favour of minorities and their languages. This distinction remains advisable, regardless of the fact that every linguistic manifestation has, of course, a unique intrinsic value.

4.3. The question of numbers

The basic element determining the definition of “minority” is the smaller number of speakers when compared with the titular nation(s) or, in our case, the State language(s). If, therefore, the *number* decides who is minority, it is indeed striking that, for many minorities in the EU and in Europe, the

²⁴ In Italy, for example, the Tabarcan variety spoken in the Archipelago of Sulcis (Sardinia) is officially not recognised as a minority language due to the fact that linguistically it is a Ligurian dialect.

²⁵ That this precaution is not entirely unfounded has been seen in the case of Italy. The high degree of discretion that Law 482/1999 leaves to provincial councils in defining a minority settlement area, after consulting the municipalities concerned, has led in more than one case to the “resurrection, for the purposes of access to the benefits of the law, of long-extinct alloglot varieties” (Toso 2008, 195).

number is available only in the guise of very rough estimates. This emerges, among other interesting information, from the catalogue below (tables 2-4), where the several minorities in the EU are listed with an indication of their numerical size (differentiating between surveys and estimates). From the listing, it is also possible to get an approximate picture of how many speakers each individual minority language within the EU may count on.

4.4. Minority and minoritised languages in the EU – a representative inventory

Since there is no official survey of European minorities (and hence of minority languages), the following list of minority and minoritised languages in the EU can only be an attempt to make an inventory as comprehensive as possible. According to the aforementioned definition of “minority languages” as “languages spoken by minority communities having the characteristic of autochthonousness”, the inventory of European national minorities proposed in Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018 will be used as a starting point. The list on which our research is based cannot be taken as exclusive or definitive, but it is sufficiently representative in as much as it allows us to capture and analyse the most important aspects of the issue at stake.

The step taking from *minorities* to *minority languages* was made in the light of the following assumptions – some of which have been mentioned also in the *Introduction* (Chapter 1):

- The most important and distinctive trait qualifying European minorities is the language and, therefore, establishing a correspondence between minority and minority language (for the particular case of Jews and Sinti/Roma, see above, Chapter 4) is allowed.
- In Europe, if at all, membership of a minority is recorded under “nationality” or “ethnicity” and not according to language competence in a minority language. In many cases, therefore, the data on the size of a linguistic minority is the only basis available to estimate the number of speakers of a minority language, although it must be stressed that there is not always congruence between “considering oneself a member of a minority” (the subjective side of the question) and “being able to use the respective minority language” (the objective side). The numbers presented in this paper refer in most cases to the size of the minority, not to the number of the actual speakers of the respective language.²⁶
- It is nevertheless evident that an appreciation of the size of a group speaking a minority or minoritised language is necessary in order to propose adequate instruments for the preservation and promotion of the language itself.²⁷
- The seminal work Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018 presupposes that individuals, despite the multiple social identities they may carry, have their strongest bond with the eponymous language in terms of their identity. For example, Ladin people (in total approx. 32,650 according to the last census) have their strongest bond with the Ladin language, even if they also have bonds with the other languages they speak, namely German and Italian. Along the same lines, members of the Albanian or Hungarian minorities declare their strongest bond with Albanian or Hungarian (or a variety thereof), even if they all also speak the national language(s) of the host State. For the purposes of this study, it was assumed that the members of a given minority speak (also) the eponymous language, and, therefore, that the recorded 32,650 Ladins also have

²⁶ For the number of speakers cited, see, in particular, Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 46-59.

²⁷ It is true that the size of a minority should *ideally* not influence the *quality* of their rights. But it is equally true that the size of a group plays a relevant role in the *practical* implementation of certain rights.

competence in Ladin, likewise the surveyed Albanian or Hungarian minorities members also have competence in Albanian and, respectively, in Hungarian.

- The assumptions mentioned in this paper may not correspond strictly to reality for each minority, but they are nevertheless maintained for practical aims. As has been already emphasised, there are seldom reliable and up-to-date data related to national minorities and/or minority and minoritised languages. However, the question of number is of decisive importance for their appropriate protection. In accordance with the Council of Europe's maxim "You cannot protect what you do not know"²⁸, it is in the interest of all parties concerned – both the States and the minorities – to find ways of enabling the collection of data both on the consistency of minorities and on the actual competence of their members in the respective minority languages. This paper makes an initial contribution to this endeavour also by showing which kind of data are necessary in view of the implementation of effective measures for minority protection and which are unfortunately still lacking.

Slightly more than fifty languages are at present spoken in the European Union. 53 of them form the empirical basis of this study. Of these, 25 are official State languages²⁹ in at least one Member State (47% of our sample), 10 are official State languages in a non-EU Member State but form minorities within the Union (19%), and 18 are stateless languages (34%).³⁰

Of the 27 EU Member States, two are so-called "Microstates" without national minorities in the strict sense of the word: Luxembourg and Malta. A special case is Cyprus, which is divided into Greek and Turkish de-facto states, also without significant minorities³¹. So the analysis will focus on the remaining 24 Member States hosting minority languages: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.

The (at least) 53 languages spoken within the EU can be classified as follows:

- Two official State languages within the EU, English and Maltese, are solely State languages and are not minority languages anywhere.
- The other (23) official languages within the EU (Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish Gaelic, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Luxembourgish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish) have both an intraterritorial component as State language (that is within the borders of the State where they are officially used) and an extraterritorial distribution as minority language. The extraterritorial distribution can be inside and/or outside the EU (we limit ourselves in the following to their presence inside the EU).

²⁸ This maxim is derived from the practice of the Council of Europe as is described in the relevant commentary on the Framework Convention: "The issue of *ethnic data collection* as well as its correct execution by the member states forms an important part of the implementation of Article 3 of the Framework Convention. Minority protection can only be implemented on the basis of concrete data on their size and composition." (Angst 2015, 173; Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, XLI n. 16).

²⁹ "State language" is normally understood also as the native language of the eponymous community representing the majority of the same State. In few cases, it is the language of the so-called constituent communities of multinational States enjoying the status of an official language for all public purposes (see Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 60 n. 1).

³⁰ The corresponding figures at European level are: (at least) 105 languages, of these, 36 are official languages in at least one State (34%), and 69 are stateless languages (66%).

³¹ The northeast portion of the island is *de facto* governed by the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a claim not recognised by the international community.

- A third group is formed by the ten languages (Albanian, Belarusian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Russian, Serbian, Turkish, Ukrainian and Armenian, the latter with a core area outside of Europe), which are State languages of a non-EU country but form minorities within the EU.
- Finally, the 18 stateless languages spoken in the EU considered here (Aromanian/Vlach, Basque, Breton, Catalan, Corsican, Faroese, Franco-Provencal, Frisian, Friulian, Karaim, Kashubian, Ladin, Livonian, Occitan, Sami, Sardinian, Sorbian, Tatar), identify speaker groups that live in minority situations everywhere in the Union. It is precisely these minority groups that form a large part of linguistic and cultural diversity within the EU, as the following tables show.³²
- The two exclusive State languages English and Maltese form two intraterritorial speaker communities within the EU.
- The 23 EU Member State languages with intra- and extraterritorial distribution form 28 intraterritorial speaker communities and 78 extraterritorial minorities within the Union.
- Ten languages that are national languages in non-EU countries form 46 extraterritorial minorities within EU Member States.
- The 18 stateless languages spoken in the EU form 34 minority speaker groups.

Table 1: The exclusive State languages in the EU and their speaker communities in the Union



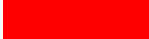
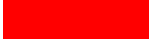

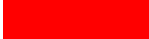

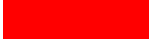

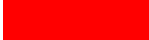
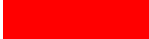



Language	intraterritorial diffusion/EU	speakers/EU
1. English		3,975,037
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Republic of Ireland	3,975,037
<i>Germanic branch</i>	[2. Malta	397,244]
<i>West Germanic group</i>		
2. Maltese		397,244
<i>Semitic language family</i>	1. Malta	397,244
<i>West Semitic branch</i>		

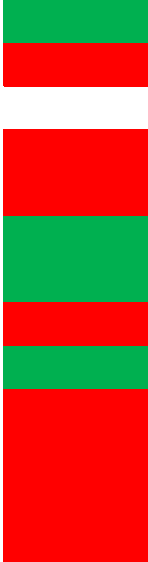


Table 2: The EU national languages with intra- and extraterritorial distribution and their speaker communities in the Union

Language	intraterritorial diffusion/EU	extraterritorial diffusion/EU	speakers/EU ³³
1. Bulgarian	6,331,196	49,658	6,380,854
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Bulgaria	1. Czech Rep.	4,999
<i>Slavic branch</i>	(including	2. Greece	30,000
<i>South Slavic group</i>	Pomaks)	3. Hungary	6,272
		4. Romania	7,336
		5. Slovakia	1,051

³² It is important to underline that the following figures are partly based on official counts (censuses), partly on estimates. The estimated values are in *italics* (cf. also Annex III). The quality of these data is discussed in Chapter 5.1.

³³ For the extraterritorial minority groups, the colours indicate the trend during the decades 1991-2011 according to the data presented in Appendix III. *Green*: positive trend, *red*: negative trend, *white*: no comparative data available. In Appendix III, numerous data are justified with references to the most recent literature.

2. Croatian		3,874,321			167,706	3,961,050
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Croatia	3,874,321	1.	Austria	50,000	
<i>Slavic branch</i>			2.	Czech Rep.	1,125	
<i>South Slavic group</i>			3.	Hungary	26,774	
			4.	Italy	2,400	
			5.	Romania	5,408	
			6.	Slovakia	1,022	
3. Czech		9,924,044			69,218	9,993,262
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Czech Rep.	9,924,044	1.	Austria	20,000	
<i>Slavic branch</i>			2.	Croatia	9,641	
<i>West Slavic group</i>			3.	Poland	3,447	
			4.	Romania	2,477	
			5.	Slovakia	33,653	
4. Danish		4,877,798			50,000	4,927,798
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Denmark	4,877,798	1.	Germany	50,000	
<i>Germanic branch</i>						
<i>North Germanic group</i>						
5. Dutch		21,181,235			40,000	21,221,235
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Netherlands	15,379,431	1.	France	40,000	
<i>Germanic branch</i>	2. Belgium	5,801,804				
<i>West Germanic group</i>						
6. Estonian		889,770			2,007	891,777
<i>Uralic</i>	1. Estonia	889,770	1.	Latvia	2,007	
<i>Finno-Ugric branch</i>						
<i>Baltic Finnic group</i>						
7. Finnish		4,863,351			238,423	5,101,774
<i>Uralic</i>	1. Finland	4,863,351	1.	Estonia	7,423	
<i>Finno-Ugric branch</i>			2.	Sweden	231,000	
<i>Baltic Finnic group</i>						
8. French		64,886,817			88,400	64,975,217
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. France	60,954,051	1.	Italy	88,400	
<i>Romance branch</i>	2. Belgium	3,932,766				
<i>Western Romance group</i>						
<i>Gallo-Romance subgroup</i>						

9. German		80,878,070			1,722,092	82,600,162
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Germany	73,799,682	1.	Croatia	3,262	
<i>Germanic branch</i>	2. Austria	6,991,388	2.	Czech Rep.	18,658	
<i>West Germanic group</i>	3. Belgium	87,000	3.	Denmark	20,000	
			4.	Estonia	1,490	
			5.	France	978,000	
			6.	Hungary	185,696	
			7.	Italy	320,300	
			8.	Latvia	3,042	
			9.	Lithuania	2,418	
			10.	Poland	147,814	
			11.	Romania	36,042	
			12.	Slovakia	4,690	
			13.	Slovenia	680	
10. Greek		10,682,446			26,288	10,708,734
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Greece	10,031,190	1.	Bulgaria	3,935	
<i>Greek branch</i>	2. Cyprus	651,156	2.	Czech Rep.	2,043	
			3.	Hungary	4,642	
			4.	Italy	12,000	
			5.	Romania	3,668	
11. Hungarian		8,504,492			1,768,922	10,273,414
<i>Uralic</i>	1. Hungary	8,504,492	1.	Austria	50,000	
<i>Finno-Ugric branch</i>			2.	Croatia	14,048	
<i>Ugric group</i>			3.	Czech Rep.	8,920	
			4.	Romania	1,229,159	
			5.	Slovakia	458,467	
			6.	Slovenia	8,328	
12. Irish Gaelic		613,215				613,215
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Ireland	613,215			³⁴	
<i>Celtic branch</i>						
<i>Gaelic group</i>						

³⁴ Irish Gaelic forms a minority community in Northern Ireland (United Kingdom).

13. Italian (including Tabarcans)	52,370,077				24,398	52,394,475
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Italy	52,370,077	1.	Croatia	17,807	
<i>Romance branch</i>			2.	Romania	3,203	
<i>Eastern Romance group</i>			3.	Slovenia	3,388	
14. Latvian	1,285,136				3,741	1,288,877
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Latvia	1,285,136	1.	Estonia	1,716	
<i>Baltic branch</i>			2.	Lithuania	2,025	
<i>Eastern Baltic group</i>						
15. Lithuanian	2,561,314				34,024	2,595,338
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Lithuania	2,561,314	1.	Estonia	1,682	
<i>Baltic branch</i>			2.	Latvia	24,479	
<i>Eastern Baltic group</i>			3.	Poland	7,863	
16. Luxembourgish	291,831				13,000	304,831
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Luxembourg	291,831	1.	Belgium	13,000	
<i>Germanic branch</i>						
<i>West Germanic group</i>						
17. Polish	36,527,053				298,435	36,825,488
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Poland	36,527,053	1.	Czech Rep.	39,096	
<i>Slavic branch</i>			2.	Estonia	1,622	
<i>West Slavic group</i>			3.	Hungary	7,001	
			4.	Latvia	44,772	
			5.	Lithuania	200,317	
			6.	Romania	2,543	
			7.	Slovakia	3,084	
18. Portuguese/Galician	10,104,182				2,050,000	12,154,182
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Portugal	10,104,182	1.	Spain	2,050,000	
<i>Romance branch</i>						
<i>Western Romance group</i>						
<i>Ibero-Romance subgroup</i>						
19. Romanian (including Megleno-Romanian)	16,764,868				39,532	16,804,400
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Romania	16,764,868	1.	Bulgaria	891	
<i>Romance branch</i>			2.	Greece	3,000	
<i>Eastern Romance group</i>			3.	Hungary	35,641	
<i>Daco-Romance subgroup</i>						









20. Slovak		4,352,775			214,007	4,566,728
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Slovakia	4,352,775	1.	Austria	10,000	
<i>Slavic branch</i>			2.	Croatia	4,753	
<i>West Slavic group</i>			3.	Czech Rep.	147,152	
			4.	Hungary	35,208	
			5.	Poland	3,240	
			6.	Romania	13,654	
21. Slovenian		1,949,038			113,337	2,062,375
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Slovenia	1,949,038	1.	Austria	50,000	
<i>Slavic branch</i>			2.	Croatia	10,517	
<i>South Slavic group</i>			3.	Hungary	2,820	
			4.	Italy	50,000	
22. Spanish (including Mirandese and Barranquenho)		28,247,247			13,500	28,260,747
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Spain	28,247,247	1.	Portugal	13,500	
<i>Romance branch</i>						
<i>Western Romance group</i>						
<i>Ibero-Romance subgroup</i>						
23. Swedish		8,166,755			291,219	8,457,974
<i>Indo-European</i>	1. Sweden	8,166,755	1.	Finland	291,219	
<i>Germanic branch</i>						
<i>North Germanic group</i>						

Table 3: Non-EU national languages forming autochthonous minority communities in the Union

Language			diffusion/EU		speakers/EU
1. Albanian					277,513
<i>Indo-European</i>		1.	Croatia	17,513	
<i>Albanian branch</i>		2.	Greece	160,000	
		3.	Italy	100,000	
2. Belarusian					165,738
<i>Indo-European</i>		1.	Czech Republic	2,103	
<i>Slavic branch</i>		2.	Estonia	12,419	
<i>East Slavic group</i>		3.	Latvia	68,202	
		4.	Lithuania	36,227	
		5.	Poland	46,787	
3. Bosnian					31,479
<i>Indo-European</i>		1.	Croatia	31,479	
<i>Slavic branch</i>					
<i>South Slavic group</i>					
4. Macedonian					165,056
<i>Indo-European</i>		1.	Bulgaria	1,654	
<i>Slavic branch</i>		2.	Croatia	4,138	
<i>South Slavic group</i>		3.	Greece	158,000	






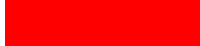













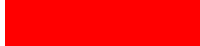




















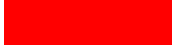














	4.	Romania	1,264	
5. Montenegrin				4,517
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Croatia	4,517	
<i>Slavic branch</i>				
<i>South Slavic group</i>				
6. Russian (including Lipovanian)				1,179,944
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Bulgaria	9,978	
<i>Slavic branch</i>	2.	Czech Republic	17,872	
<i>East Slavic group</i>	3.	Estonia	321,198	
	4.	Finland	58,334	
	5.	Latvia	557,119	
	6.	Lithuania	176,913	
	7.	Poland	13,046	
	8.	Romania	23,487	
	9.	Slovakia	1,997	
7. Serbian				216,464
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Croatia	186,633	
<i>Slavic branch</i>	2.	Czech Republic	1,717	
<i>South Slavic group</i>	3.	Hungary	10,038	
	4.	Romania	18,076	
8. Turkish				945,421
<i>Altaic language family</i>	1.	Bulgaria	588,318	
<i>Turkic branch</i>	2.	Cyprus	201,405	
<i>Oghuz group</i>	3.	Greece	128,000	
	4.	Romania	27,698	
9. Ukrainian/Ruthenian				308,760
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Bulgaria	1,789	
<i>Slavic branch</i>	2.	Croatia	3,814	
<i>East Slavic group</i>	3.	Czech Republic	53,992	
	4.	Estonia	22,302	
	5.	Hungary	11,278	
	6.	Latvia	45,798	
	7.	Lithuania	16,423	
	8.	Poland	61,532	
	9.	Romania	50,920	
	10.	Slovakia	40,912	
10. Armenian				35,107
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Bulgaria	6,552	
<i>Armenian branch</i>	2.	Greece	20,000	
	3.	Hungary	3,571	
	4.	Poland	3,623	
	5.	Romania	1,361	


Table 4: The stateless languages in the EU and their speaker communities in the Union

Language	diffusion/EU			speakers/EU
1. Aromanian/Vlach				242,684
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Bulgaria	3,684	
<i>Romance branch</i>	2.	Greece	211,000	
<i>Eastern Romance group</i>	3.	Romania	28,000	
<i>Daco-Romance subgroup</i>				
2. Basque				731,175
<i>separate language; no established relationship to other languages</i>	1.	France	55,000	
	2.	Spain	676,175	
3. Breton				370,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	France	370,000	
<i>Celtic branch</i>				
<i>Brittonic group</i>				
4. Catalan (including Valencian)³⁵				9,980,307
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Spain	9,834,307	
<i>Romance branch</i>	2.	France	126,000	
<i>Western Romance group</i>	3.	Italy	20,000	
<i>Ibero-Romance subgroup</i>				
5. Corsican				130,200
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	France	130,200	
<i>Romance branch</i>				
<i>Eastern Romance group</i>				
<i>Italo-Romance subgroup</i>				
6. Faroese				48,515
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Denmark	48,515	
<i>Germanic branch</i>				
<i>North Germanic group</i>				
7. Franco-Provençal				75,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	France	60,000	
<i>Romance branch</i>	2.	Italy	15,000 ³⁶	
<i>Western Romance group</i>				
<i>Gallo-Romance subgroup</i>				
8. Frisian (West, North and Saterfrisian)				534,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Germany	60,000	
<i>Germanic branch</i>	2.	Netherlands	474,000	
<i>West Germanic group</i>				

³⁵ Given that Catalan is the official language of Andorra, it could also be classified among the official state languages with intra- and extraterritorial distribution. But such a classification would not adequately reflect the actual status of Catalan.

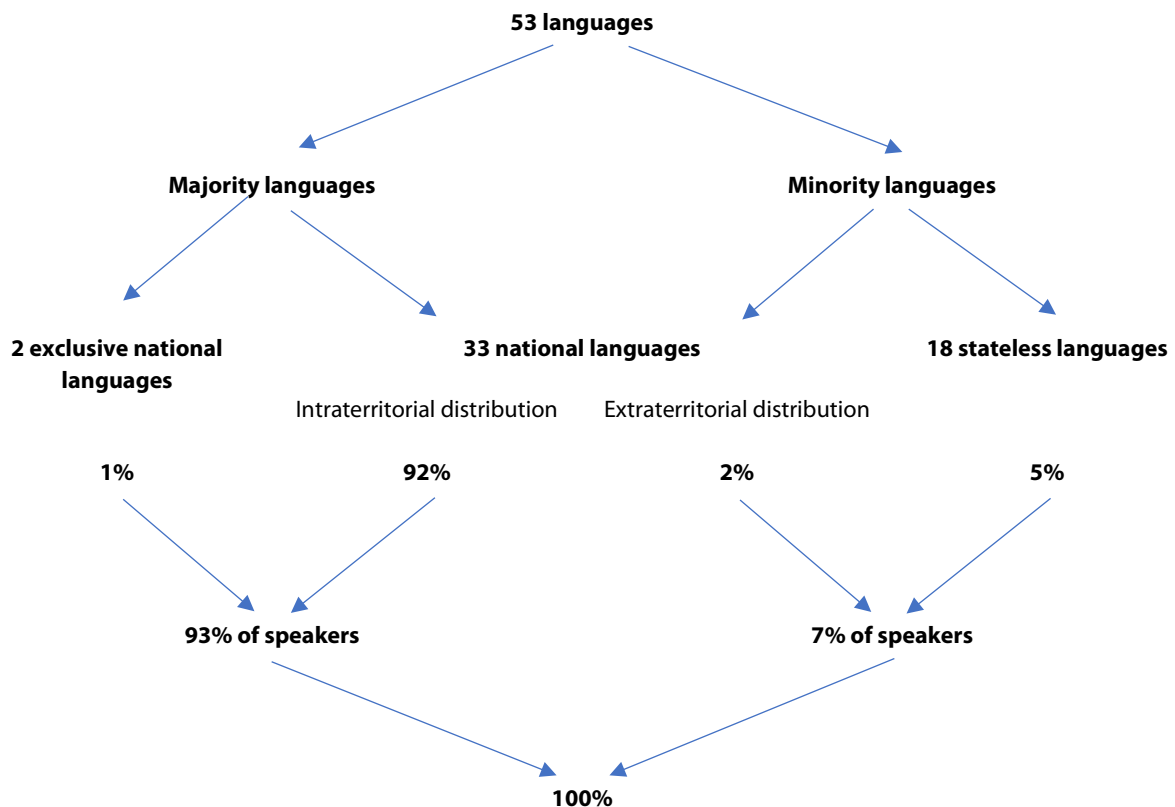
³⁶ The 88,400 speakers in the Italian Region Val d'Aosta using Franco-Provençal as a colloquial language were associated with the French for the purposes of this listing.

9. Friulian				614,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Italy	614,000	
<i>Romance branch</i>				
<i>Western Romance group</i>				
<i>Rhaeto-Romance subgroup</i>				
10. Karaim				587
<i>Altaic language family</i>	1.	Lithuania	241	
<i>Turkic branch</i>	2.	Poland	346	
<i>Kypchak group</i>				
11. Kashubian				232,547
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Poland	232,547	
<i>Slavic branch</i>				
<i>West Slavic group</i>				
12. Ladin				32,650
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Italy	32,650	
<i>Romance branch</i>				
<i>Western Romance group</i>				
<i>Rhaeto-Romance subgroup</i>				
13. Livonian				250
<i>Uralic linguistic family</i>	1.	Latvia	250	
<i>Finno-Ugric branch</i>				
<i>Baltic Finnic group</i>				
14. Occitan (including Aranese)				2,105,714
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	France	2,000,000	
<i>Romance branch</i>	2.	Italy	100,000	
<i>Western Romance group</i>	3.	Spain	5,714	
<i>Gallo-Romance subgroup</i>				
15. Sami (Lapp)				21,870
<i>Uralic language family</i>	1.	Finland	1,870	
<i>Finno-Ugric branch</i>	2.	Sweden	20,000	
<i>Samic group</i>				
16. Sardinian				1,000,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Italy	1,000,000	
<i>Romance branch</i>				
<i>Central Romance group</i>				
17. Sorbian (Upper and Lower Sorbian)				60,000
<i>Indo-European</i>	1.	Germany	60,000	
<i>Slavic branch</i>				
<i>West Slavic group</i>				
18. Tatar				30,000
<i>Altaic language family</i>	1.	Estonia	1,945	
<i>Turkic branch</i>	2.	Finland	900	

<i>Kypchak group</i>	3.	Latvia	2,164	
	4.	Lithuania	2,793	
	5.	Poland	1,916	
	6.	Romania	20,282	

Based on the tables above, the linguistic situation in the EU can be summarised as follows:

Figure 1: The distribution of the languages in the EU within majority and minority languages with percentage of speakers



Source: Adapted from Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 65

The tables and figures above confirm our assumption that a substantial part of the linguistic and cultural diversity in the EU is made up not only of the 53 languages currently in use³⁷, but also of the almost 190 groups of speakers (30 as State majority and 158 in a minority position) that together keep alive the said 53 languages. Since it can be assumed that the linguistic future of the 30 groups speaking a language that is in an exclusive way the State language or enjoys a predominant position at interterritorial level is not in danger,³⁸ it is clear that the defence and the support of the linguistic-cultural diversity in the EU must essentially take place through measures that lead to the preservation and, if possible, the strengthening of those approx. 160 language groups that are in a minority position throughout the Union. This is all the more true in light of the fact that almost four fifths of the minority language groups mentioned above (tables 2-4, see also Annex III) do not reach the threshold of 300,000

³⁷ It must be stressed again that this list is not intended to be exhaustive but representative.

³⁸ One should be aware that the status and situation of languages such as Irish-Gaelic or Maltese, although officially State languages, are not always comparable with those of other State languages, but have to cope with partially similar socio-linguistical conditions as the minority languages in a strict sense.

speakers, which in a seminal study by the European Commission³⁹ was indicated as the threshold below which a language is at risk of disappearing.

³⁹ European Commission 1996.

5. CONDITIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF EUROPE'S LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

5.1. "You cannot protect what you don't know". The problem of data availability

There is a simple and reliable method to detect where the conditions conducive to the preservation of the language diversity in Europe are to be found:

- Assuming that the State languages are not endangered in their intraterritorial diffusion, one determines which linguistic minorities have grown in number or, at least, remained approximately constant in recent decades.
- One examines the legal setting of which these fortunate minorities have taken advantage.

Unfortunately, this method, simple in itself, is complicated by the fact that, for many minorities, numbers concerning their size exist only in the form of very rough estimates. Annex II shows EU Member State by Member State the modalities, if any, that are used to survey the size of minorities and/or the number of minority language speakers, and, in particular:

- if data concerning minorities and/or minority languages are altogether collected in censuses;
- if yes, in what manner or with the help of what questions; and
- what changes in the procedure have taken place between the two last censuses (as a rule, by 2011 and by 2021/2022).

The outcome of this survey is:

- Eleven States (of the 24 analysed⁴⁰) do not collect any data whatsoever on ethnicity, (minority) language or religion on their territory.

Table 5: EU Member States not surveying the composition of their population at censuses

State	Type of census	Minorities concerned ⁴¹
Austria	registry-based	5 / 6
Belgium	registry-based	2 ⁴²
Denmark	registry-based	2 / 5
France	rolling census (register based integrated by questionnaires for a selected sample)	8 / 9
Germany	registry-based integrated by questionnaires for a selected sample	3 / 4
Greece	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	7 / 9

⁴⁰ Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta were excluded from this analysis (see Chapter 4.4).

⁴¹ See the detailed data in the tables 16-39 of Annex III. The first figure refers to the minorities considered in this study, the second to the totality of minorities located in the country (i.e., including e.g., Sinti and Roma). The figures differ slightly from those in Chapter 4.4 because of the different allocation of certain groups (in 4.4, for example, German in Belgium or Irish Gaelic were listed as state languages, which they are de jure, whereas here they are counted among the minority groups).

⁴² In this chapter, Luxembourgers and Germans are counted as minorities in Belgium.

Italy (except in the Region Trentino-South Tyrol)	registry-based	10 / 11
Netherlands	registry-based	1 / 3
Portugal	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	1 / 2 ⁴³
Slovenia	registry-based	3 / 4
Sweden	registry-based	2 / 4

- The next group of three Member States collects data about the ethnic and/or linguistic and/or religious composition of the population but on the basis of a registry-based census, integrated with questionnaires with specific questions limited to the interviewed sample.

Table 6: EU Member States surveying the composition of a sample of their population at censuses

State	Type of census (last) and questions included	Type of census (next)	Minorities concerned
Finland	registry-based language	registry-based language	4 / 6
Lithuania	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires ethnicity mother tongue(s) other languages religious affiliation	registry-based ethnicity native language religion	8 / 10
Spain	registry-based integrated by questionnaires	registry-based integrated by questionnaires initial language	3 / 6

⁴³ The Spanish-speakers in Portugal form two distinct linguistic minorities: the Mirandese and the Barranquenho.

- The last group of ten Member States continues to collect relevant data in the framework of censuses carried out as full surveys.

Table 7: EU Member States surveying the composition of their population at censuses

State	Type of census	Questions included			Minorities concerned
		ethnicity	languages	religion	
Bulgaria	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	ethnic group	mother tongue	religious denomination	8 / 11
Croatia	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	ethnicity	mother tongue	religion	12 / 14
Czech Republic	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	ethnicity	mother tongue	religious belief	11 / 12
Estonia	combined method (registry-based and direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires, depending on the questions and the information available)	ethnicity	mother tongue local dialect foreign languages	religious affiliation	10 / 12
Hungary	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	nationality additional nationality(s)	languages mother tongue habitually used languages(s) in family and with friends	religious community	11 / 12
Ireland	direct enumeration with compilation of questionnaires	ethnic group / ethnic background		religion	0 / 1 ⁴⁴
Italy (limited to the Trentino-South Tyrol region)	registry-based integrated by questionnaires	affiliation to a linguistic group			2 ⁴⁵

⁴⁴ In this chapter, Irish Gaelic speakers are considered as a minority in Ireland.

⁴⁵ In South Tyrol, Germans, Italians and Ladins are counted as minorities and in Trentino, Germans (distinguishing Cimbri and Mocheni) and Ladins are considered minorities.

Latvia	registry based	ethnicity	main language used at home use of Latgallian		9 / 11
Poland	registry-based integrated by questionnaires	nationality additional nationality	language usually used at home		11 / 13
Romania	registry-based integrated by questionnaires	ethnic group	native language	religion	17 / 19
Slovakia	registry-based integrated by questionnaires	ethnicity additional ethnicity	mother tongue	religious belief	8 / 10

Regarding the availability of data on minorities and their languages, the following conclusions can be drawn from the tables in this section:

- Less than half of the minority-relevant states within the EU (10 of 24) collect data on language within the framework of population censuses. These data usually include information on the triad “ethnicity” / “mother tongue” / “religion”. Thus, this fact alone shows that the decision of other states not to collect such data at all, because it would be (too) “sensitive” or would infringe “privacy” rules, does not seem to hold. Data are sensitive only if used *against* an individual member of a minority or against the minority as a whole in order to harm them. This should not be the case for an EU Member State in the 21st century. However, if such concerns were to exist, a collection of this information could nevertheless be done in the context of a census, but under the guarantee of anonymity. The example of South Tyrol with its anonymous survey of “language group affiliation” (see Chapter 7) shows that this is feasible.
- Some states (Slovenia, Sweden) consider the method of collecting data within a census to be inappropriate. It should be said, however, that a full survey of language use and religion offers more reliable data than any estimate or sample survey, and this is especially true the smaller the minority. From this perspective, the current trend towards register-based censuses is to be viewed with caution. With regard to “ethnicity”, “mother tongue” or “religion”, registers are as reliable as the formerly prevalent questionnaire survey only in two cases: if these data are already part of the evaluated registers (Estonia) or the sample is so large that it is still representative even for the smallest of the surveyed minorities. However, none of these conditions has been met, for instance, by the Swiss experience.⁴⁶
- Almost all countries that survey the population through questionnaires provide for the questions to be answered via the internet. This facilitates the procedure enormously, especially for evaluation purposes, but the insurance must be given that everyone can cope with the required technology. The importance of this was shown, for example, in the last census in Italian Trentino, when the percentage of Ladins in the Fassa Valley dramatically fell from 85% to 58%. During the COVID period, the census was conducted on the internet and a good part of the older population (which is usually essential for the persistence of minorities) did not make a statement, being technically unable to do so.

⁴⁶ Cf. Coray 2017 concerning the problems with the census of Rhaeto-Romans in Switzerland since the method was changed to a registry-based integrated with sample interviews.

- In summary, while official, i.e., census-based, data are available for 99 minorities in the EU of the 158 considered in this study, exact information is still lacking for the remaining 59 minorities, for which estimates must be relied upon. The unsatisfactory situation of the latter must urgently be improved for empirical knowledge is a prerequisite for the adoption of any well-founded measure in their favour.⁴⁷ It is taken for granted that data will be used in order to foment, not to harm, a minority language and its speakers.
- The ideal solution would be that “ethnicity” and “language” be surveyed separately, and language further differentiated between “mother tongue”, “usual language in everyday life” and “further (foreign) language skills” (with the possibility of roughly defining one’s own competences in minority and/or in foreign languages – as it is the case, for example, in Montenegro or in the United Kingdom). It is also useful to distinguish between competence in the standard language and the local variety.
- When collecting data, EU Member States employ different terminologies, and use for their survey different (types of) questions. While there is no inconvenience if each State uses its own terminology in relation to ethnicity, things change when dealing with languages. Different terminology results in incomparable data (“mother tongue” can, but must not be identical to “main language” and/or “language normally used”).

As a conclusion, we can state that a sample of surveys common for all EU Member States concerning the linguistic composition of the population in a standardised form would be highly desirable.

This can take place in an effective manner within the framework of censuses because this context guarantees the necessary coverage.⁴⁸ Questions related to language use should be allowed to differentiate between different contexts and self-assessed competences. It is evident that an overview of the language skills of its citizens is extremely useful information for all of the States’ activities related to education, including policies on minority languages.

A second conclusion is that a central European agency could be usefully established with the task of collecting information on minorities and making it available especially to political decision makers, representative minority associations and scholars of different disciplines.

A possible *European Language Agency* could be put under the responsibility of an EU Commissioner for Languages and Cultural Diversity. The Agency could include a Section (or Observatory) with special focus on minority and minoritised languages.⁴⁹ The collection of reliable and comparable data would draft a precise picture of the situation and provide the necessary starting point for the initiation, implementation and evaluation of any language-promoting and language-maintaining measures, both at European and national or local level.

⁴⁷ In case further justification is needed: all science is based on empirical data. And any intervention in a social structure should also be based on empirical data. Indeed, measures against school drop-out, poverty, demographic decline, climate change (just to name a few of the most debated issues in Europe today) are always taken on the basis of preliminary surveys of how many people are affected by a problem or a measure. It should be no different with measures to support minority languages.

⁴⁸ This statement is also made against the background that we assume that, in 21st century Europe, the mere determination of the size of a minority should not be associated with any disadvantages for this minority and its members.

⁴⁹ The topic of language education is already partially covered by the European Centre of Modern Languages of the Council of Europe. However, a look at the activities of this centre (<https://www.ecml.at/Home/tabid/59/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>) shows that its involvement with minority languages is marginal and that the existence of this centre therefore does not make the proposal for an European Language Agency made here superfluous.

5.2. Numerical evidence

In Annex III, there is an attempt to illustrate the trends that emerge from the available data regarding the evolution of minorities in the European Union over the three decades (approx. 1991 – approx. 2011) after the fall of the Berlin Wall 1989, an epoch-making event also from the point of view of the minorities issue in Europe.

The data presented in the Annex lead to the main and rather disturbing conclusion that numerous minorities in the EU have declined in number. The same must be assumed for the language skills in the respective minority languages. So it seems that not only glaciers, but also European minorities and their languages, are melting away.

Considering the figures in detail, it appears that – excluding the size of 18 minorities where there are not reliable data about their development over the last 30 years (essentially the minorities in Austria, Germany and Greece) – the size of 82 minorities decreased and of 37 increased. The result is appalling: if more than two thirds of the minority groups in the EU have shrunk, this sounds as an alarm bell for the maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity in the Union. This figure alone shows that language-preserving and language-promoting measures for minority languages are urgently needed.

The most incisive change is taking place in today's generation of children. Without appropriate measures, this change will inevitably lead to a complete language shift by many minorities. As an example for many, a recent study on *Arberesh* (Albanian in Southern Italy), after analysing the language competences of the three current generations (grandparents/parents/children) and noting that skills in *Arberesh* have dropped from 85% in the generation of the grandparents to 8% in the generation of their grandchildren, concludes that: "*It (= the language shift from Albanian to Italian) is happening fast, it is happening now*".⁵⁰ This conclusion is doubtless valid for many other European minority languages.

On the other hand, it can be stated that certain minorities in the EU have not changed substantially in number and, in some cases, have even grown. Below the most notable cases (linguistic minorities with more than 5,000 members are taken into consideration) are listed:

Albanians in Croatia

Basques in Spain

Bulgarians in Hungary

Catalans in Italy, Spain (incl. Valencians)

Croats in Hungary

Faroese in Denmark

Finns in Sweden⁵¹

Frisians in the Netherlands

Galicians in Spain

Germans in Belgium, Hungary, Italy (limited to South Tyrol)

Ladins in Italy (limited to the Trentino-South Tyrol region)

Kashubians in Poland

⁵⁰ Cane 2022, 225; 235 (italics in the original).

⁵¹ Only the Finns using standard Finnish show a slight increase. The Tornedalians however, using the local form of Finnish (Meänkieli), are decreasing.

Lithuanians in Poland

Occitans (Aranese) in Spain

Poles in Hungary

Romanians in Hungary

Russians in Czech Republic; Finland, Poland

Serbs in Hungary

Slovaks in Hungary

Swedes in Finland (limited to the Åland Islands)

Ukrainians/Ruthenians in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

At least for some of the cases mentioned (in particular, Albanians in Croatia; Russians in Czech Republic, Finland and Poland; Ukrainians/Ruthenians in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), the general opinion is that the increase is not due to a growth of the autochthonous minority but to immigrants of the same language. There is hardly any empirical evidence on the extent to which immigration from a co-national state has a positive impact on a local autochthonous minority. However, a condition for a positive effect is the use by all the people concerned of a standard language. If co-national immigrants and autochthonous minorities do not use a common standard language, communication between them takes place as a rule in the host State language – which of course does not contribute to the strengthening of the minority language. Specifically in the case of small minorities, co-national immigrants must show the willingness to adapt to local cultural and social conditions in order to become beneficial to the minority in question. However, given the general scale that migration has currently taken in the current EU Member States, it is essential that migrants in minority areas are given the opportunity to integrate linguistically and culturally.

There is, in sum, evidence that proves that the size-shrinking of minorities is not a “law of nature”. There is therefore a special interest in determining the conditions that have made a positive evolution possible for some minorities.

5.3. Extralinguistic conditions for minority language use

It is quite obvious that the situation of a minority language depends (also) on extralinguistic factors, among which the legal framework has a paramount importance. To get a rough overview of this legal situation, the classification proposed in 2006 by Pan/Pfeil⁵² will be applied to the minority-relevant EU Member States in terms of minority rights that they have granted.

The table is organized around thirteen specific rights and the degree of their implementation. The thirteen rights are: 1 = identity, 2 = non-discrimination, 3 = formal equality under the law, 4 = equality of opportunity, 5 = use of mother tongue, 6 = mother tongue education, 7 = right of association, 8 = unhindered contacts, 9 = information/media, 10 = political representation, 11 = autonomy, 12 = co-determination, 13 = minority-specific legal protection.

The (simplified) three levels of granting are: right guaranteed and implemented = 2 points; right partially guaranteed/implemented = 1 point; law not guaranteed/implemented = 0 points (emphasis must be put on the situation described here, as it refers to 2006). Rights 5 and 6 are highlighted because they are directly related to language use.

⁵² Cf. Pan/Pfeil 2006, 19. This overview is the most recent available.

Table 8: Ranking of the minority relevant EU Member States in relation to granted minority rights (2006)

States		Assessment (max. = 26)		Rights												
		Pts.	%	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Belgium	22	85	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	Finland	22	85	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2
2.	Denmark	20	77	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
	Hungary	20	77	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
3.	Croatia	19	73	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	0
	Spain	19	73	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	1
4.	Italy	18	69	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	0
	Ireland	18	69	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	1
5.	Lithuania	17	65	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	0
	Sweden	17	65	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	1
6.	Germany	16	61	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	0
	Austria	16	61	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	1
	Slovenia	16	61	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	0
7.	Estonia	15	58	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1
	Netherlands	15	58	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
	Poland	15	58	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
	Slovakia	15	58	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0
8.	Czech Republic	14	54	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0
9.	Romania	13	50	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	1	0
10.	Bulgaria	11	42	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1
	Latvia	11	42	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0
11.	Portugal	10	38	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
12.	France	8	31	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
13.	Greece	4	15	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
∅	24 states	15.46	59.38													

The connection between the figures in Table 8 and the quantitative data in Annex III show a strong and direct relationship between the extralinguistic conditions for a minority and its language as well as the development of the minority and its language. This will be exemplified below by the five “best” and five “worst” ranked States.

The five States ranked at the top of the table are Belgium, Finland, Denmark, Hungary and Croatia.

Belgium

Of the two minorities of Belgium considered, the German speakers and the Luxembourgers, the first increased while the second decreased. One reason has certainly to do with the different status of the two communities: the Luxembourgish minority lives in Old Belgium (part of the Kingdom of Belgium since its foundation) and speaks Luxembourgish (Letzeburgish), which had dialectal status until its

elevation to national language of Luxembourg (in 1984). It is officially part of the French language domain.⁵³ The German minority, on the other hand, lives in New Belgium, which became part of Belgium only in 1919, uses the standard German language and has a linguistic area of its own at its disposal. The situation of the German-speaking minority in Belgium can be regarded as favourable for the preservation of the minority and its language.

Finland

Of the four minorities of Finland considered, three increased and one decreased. The increase in one of them, the Tatars, is based on estimates and is so minimal that it cannot be considered meaningful. The Sami increased minimally, too, according to the available data. The only minority that has demonstrably and consistently grown in number is the Russian one. In this case, however, the growth is largely due to the naturalisation of Russian emigrants⁵⁴ and is therefore not representative in our context. Finally, the number of Swedes has decreased slowly but steadily since the 1940s (although evidence exists of a certain shift in recent years). In the last decades, this was particularly due to emigration.⁵⁵ The exception continues to be the Åland Islands, whose Swedish-speaking population is steadily growing. The situation of the Swedish-speaking minority in the autonomous Åland Islands can be considered favourable for the maintenance of the minority and its language.

Denmark

Of the four minorities in Denmark considered in Annex III, three of them increased, if it can be assumed that the slight growth of the Greenland and the Faroe Islands population is due to the indigenous community and not entirely to immigration. In the light of their geographical location, however, they are – not unlike the Åland Islands – very special cases. There is no longer exact data on the German minority. The number of pupils in the German schools of the area is steadily increasing, but this seems to be due more to the influx of Germans from the Federal Republic of Germany than to a growth of the local minority as such.⁵⁶ The German minority also seems no longer inclined to define itself predominantly through the German language and culture, but through a regional, i.e., primarily geographical identity.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the general conditions for the German minority in Denmark can be retained as favourable for the minority and its language.⁵⁸

Hungary

The situation in Hungary looks very promising. If the figures between 1990 and 2010 are compared, ten out of eleven minorities have increased (sometimes significantly).⁵⁹ It can be argued that this is also the consequence of the rights granted to minorities in Hungary over the last two decades.⁶⁰ The Hungarian system of “nationality self-governments” can thus be seen as favourable for the minorities and their languages.

⁵³ Luxembourgish has official recognition by the French language community (<https://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d5452.html>). Since Luxembourgish is dialectally a Mosel-Franconian dialect, Belgium considers this minority to be part of the German-language community.

⁵⁴ Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 111 n. 4.

⁵⁵ Potinkara 2022.

⁵⁶ Kühl 2023.

⁵⁷ Kühl 2023.

⁵⁸ [the-situation-of-german-minority-in-denmark-rather-satisfactory-but-media-presence-and-general-awareness-need-to-be-improved?inheritRedirect=false&desktop=false](https://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d5452.html).

⁵⁹ Cf. also Tóth/Vékás 2014.

⁶⁰ <https://www.ajbh.hu/web/njbh-en/minorities-in-hungary>.

Croatia

Of the twelve minorities of Croatia considered in the study, ten have decreased. Croatia is thus an example of how even relatively well-developed minority rights alone are not enough to compensate for structural problems such as the general population decline. It is clear that, in the case of Croatia and the other countries of the former Yugoslavia, the decrease in minorities is also a consequence of the Yugoslav wars of 1991-2001. In many cases, minorities are more affected by such structural conditions than the majority population (Croatia: general population decline 1991-2011: 10,4%; decline of minority population: 56,8%).

At the opposite end of the list, Bulgaria, Latvia, Portugal, France and Greece can be found.

Bulgaria

Of the seven surveyed minorities in Bulgaria, for which data are available on their development during the last decades, all seven have declined.

Latvia

For Latvia, the development of nine minorities can be traced. Eight of them have decreased. The only exception concerns the smallest minority, that of the Livs, but it is on such a small scale (from 135 members in 1989 to 250 in 2011) that is not quite as meaningful.

Portugal

Both language minorities in Portugal, the Mirandese and the Barranquenho speakers, show a (clearly) decreasing trend.⁶¹

France

Of the nine surveyed minorities in France, all nine have declined. The only glimmer of hope is that the last comprehensive sociolinguistic survey carried out in Corsica shows that stabilisation may have begun. Commenting on the survey, the study's director, Sébastien Quenot, states: "Competences and use are decreasing according to age, with the exception of 18-24 year-olds, for whom a slight upswing can be observed. In addition, there is a strong desire for the use of the Corsican language, shared by 90% of the population, who would like to see a bilingual society."⁶²

Greece

From the nine minorities in Greece, the data are so disparate and unreliable that no conclusion can be drawn. This is a symptom of a general situation that can certainly not be classified as positive for the minority groups.

To conclude, it can be stated that a special legal framework is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a positive trend of minorities and their languages. Where no special legal framework is in place, the trend – as far as reliable information is available at all – is always negative. Where, on the other hand, a special legal framework is in place, an essential element for positive developments is given, although it is per se not sufficient and must be flanked by other elements (cf. below Chapter 5.4). This conclusion, which may sound trivial, is certainly not new but it is underpinned here for the first time with empirical data.

⁶¹ A recent overview of both minorities is given by Banza 2020 and Bárboło Alves 2020.

⁶² Di Meglio 2021, 99-100 (translation by the author of this study).

5.4. Intralinguistic conditions for minority language use: linguistic infrastructure

An important intralinguistic condition conducive to the use of a minority language is the availability of an adequate linguistic infrastructure: dictionaries, grammar books, specialised terminology etc. One way to determine the adequacy of the linguistic infrastructure is to determine the “degree of elaboration” of a language according to a linear correlation: the greater the degree of elaboration, the more extensive the linguistic infrastructure. For the determination of the “degree of elaboration” of a language, the well-known scheme by Heinz Kloss⁶³ has been applied, according to which the degree of elaboration of a linguistic variety can be roughly determined on the basis of its use in a determinate choice of areas. The process of the gradual expansion of the use of a variety, normally from square ① towards adjacent squares is called elaboration (*Ausbau*). Consequently, the varieties, whose communities implement targeted activities to fill – in a succession that is not always identical for each variety – the fields ②-⑨ of the scheme (but usually stopping in the intermediate fields⁶⁴), are called *Ausbausprachen*.

Figure 2: The various levels of linguistic elaboration according to Kloss 1976

F = university level (specialised prose: specialised texts from all fields of research) (<i>Forscherprosa</i>)	⑦	⑧	⑨
G = high school level (prose specific) (<i>gehobene Schulstufe</i>)	④	⑤	⑥
V = primary school level (general prose) (<i>Volksschulstufe</i>)	①	②	③
	E = specific issues related to the community itself (<i>Eigenbezogene Themen</i>)	K = all other humanities subjects (<i>kulturkundliche Fächer</i>)	N = natural sciences and technology (<i>naturwissenschaftliche Fächer</i>)

For a European official State language, a degree of elaboration of “nine” (i.e., covering all nine areas of employment) can be stated, even though field ⑨ in particular is by now dominated by English worldwide. For minority languages that are not fully standardised, a classification has been attempted. It is clear that these rough indications serve just in order to get a glimpse of whether or not it is possible to establish a trend valid for all the minorities with a positive evolution listed above in Chapter 5.2.

Minorities with a positive evolution (see Chapter 5.2) using a fully standardised language (degree of elaboration: ⑨): Albanians in Croatia; Bulgarians, Croats, Poles, Romanians and Slovaks in Hungary;

⁶³ Kloss 1967; 1976. Cf. in this respect also Goebel 1989.

⁶⁴ In particular, one seldom aspires to reach even square ⑨, given the absolute predominance that English has in this domain even compared to the other *Hochsprachen*.

Catalans (incl. Valencians) in Spain and Italy⁶⁵, Finns in Sweden; Germans in Belgium, Hungary, Italy (limited to South Tyrol); Lithuanians in Poland; Russians in Czech Republic; Finland, Poland; Serbs in Hungary; Swedes in Finland; Ukrainians/Ruthenians in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

Minorities with a positive evolution (see Chapter 5.2) using an almost fully standardised language (degree of elaboration: ⑦-⑧): Basques in Spain; Faroese in Denmark; Frisians in the Netherlands; Galicians in Spain.

Minorities with a positive evolution (see Chapter 5.2) using a language on the way to higher elaboration (degree of elaboration: ④-⑥): Kashubians in Poland; Ladins in Italy (limited to the Trentino-South Tyrol region); Occitans (Aranese) in Spain.

The evidence of this Chapter could not be clearer: the presence of a fully elaborated standard language proves to be a very effective condition for the maintenance and growth of the minority language. Of the 29 examples of growing minorities cited in Chapter 5.2, as many as 22 (76%) have a standard language. The growth of a minority using a non-standardised variant is, on a large scale, more unique than rare. According to the available data, no minority within the EU is growing whose language does not have an elaboration level of at least ④.

5.5. Acquisition of the minority languages

As to this point, the analysis will be limited to the minorities whose growth is endemic and not primarily due to the immigration of co-nationals. They are classified in a very rough manner according to the presence of the minority language in compulsory education: “yes” means that the subject is mandatory in the schools of the minority area, “present, but not mandatory” means that pupils have to specifically enrol in order to attend lessons.⁶⁶

Yes: Basque in Spain; Catalan in Spain; German in Belgium; Faroese in Denmark; Frisian in the Netherlands; Galician in Spain; Ladin in Italy (limited to the Trentino-South Tyrol region); Lithuanian in Poland; Occitan (Aranese) in Spain; Swedish in Finland.

Present, but not mandatory: Bulgarian in Hungary; Catalan in Italy; Croat in Hungary; German in Hungary; Kashubian in Poland; Polish in Hungary; Romanian in Hungary; Serbian in Hungary; Slovak in Hungary.

Is possible, but is offered only if required: Finnish in Sweden.

The figures show that minorities which have compulsory schooling of and in the minority language are better off. It should therefore be, for EU Member States, a goal of education policy to make the learning of the minority language in a minority area compulsory in school lessons. Compulsory education should concern all pupils living in the minority area – regardless of whether they are members of the minority or not – and should foresee a minimum number of lessons.⁶⁷ The compulsory presence of the minority language at school is of paramount importance, since the transmission of the language through the family alone is no longer sufficient.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ The writing system of the Catalan in Alghero is essentially based on standard Catalan with some concessions to local forms. Retaining the bond with the standard Catalan makes it available for more formal domains also for Algherese.

⁶⁶ For an in-depth-analysis, see the “Regional dossiers” available for most minority languages at <https://www.mercator-research.eu/en/knowledge-base/regional-dossiers/>.

⁶⁷ Where this system is already established, the number of lessons in minority language is at least two, but usually five.

⁶⁸ In fact, a good part of the social conditions that allowed the transmission of the language within the family have in the meantime irretrievably disappeared (cf. Cane 2022, 229-230 for the example of the ‘gjitoni’ in the Arberesh communities of southern Italy).

6. CORNERSTONES OF THE POLICY IN FAVOUR OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN EUROPE

6.1. Europe's linguistic diversity – the EU framework

In view of the progress made in the field of European integration in the last two decades, it seems anachronistic that the EU does not have any legal basis for direct actions targeted at linguistic minorities. The EU Commission stated this very clearly of late in rejecting twice the "Minority SafePack Initiative" sponsored by FUEN.⁶⁹ It perpetuates the ambivalent situation according to which "the Union demands minority protection from third countries which it is not itself willing to grant. In the end, this led to a double standard of minority protection within the Union which catches the eye in particular after the EU's Eastern Enlargement of May 2004 because the new member countries had to show a degree of minority protection before the beginning of accession negotiations, which some of the old member countries such as France and Greece do not wish to either recognize or grant".⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the EU cannot completely deny any responsibility in this topic. The fundamental EU treaties mention "the respect of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity". Respect implies action because indifference to the grave dangers affecting somebody is not a way to express respect. Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) states that the Union "shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced".⁷¹ Article 165(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) emphasises that "Union action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States", while fully respecting cultural and linguistic diversity (Article 165(1) TFEU).

Moreover, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, made legally binding by the Treaty of Lisbon, prohibits discrimination on grounds of language (Article 21) and places an obligation on the Union to respect linguistic diversity (Article 22).⁷²

In 2013, the European Parliament adopted a *Resolution on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union*, urging Member States to be more attentive to endangered European languages and to commit to the protection and promotion of the diversity of the Union's linguistic and cultural heritage.⁷³

On 7 February 2018, the European Parliament also approved a *Resolution on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States*.⁷⁴ This resolution encourages the Member States to ensure that the right to use a minority language be upheld and to protect linguistic diversity within the Union. It advocates respect of linguistic rights in communities where there is more than one official language and calls on the Commission to strengthen the teaching and use of regional and minority languages. Furthermore, in its resolution of 17 December 2020, the European Parliament expressed its support for the Minority SafePack, the already mentioned European Citizens' Initiative by FUEN with the aim of improving the protection of linguistic minorities.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/initiatives/details/2017/000004_en.

⁷⁰ Pan 2018a, 323.

⁷¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A12008M003>.

⁷² <https://fra.europa.eu/en/eu-charter/article/22-cultural-religious-and-linguistic-diversity>.

⁷³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-7-2013-0350_EN.html.

⁷⁴ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0032_EN.html.

⁷⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020IP0370>.

While awaiting an organic EU regulation, the EU can, in any case, exert influence on its Member States to take measures for the promotion of minority languages.⁷⁶ Suggestions of this kind have already been forwarded, e.g., in the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*. The EU could encourage Member States to ratify and implement them. Finally, the EU Parliament itself adopted the *Report on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union* presented by Francois Alfonsi⁷⁷, but without any concrete measures having followed.

In the absence of a specific EU regulation, minorities organisations should be empowered to gain easier access to the existing funds, significant for minority-related issues invoking, for instance, the *promotion of languages and cultures, the promotion of employment and social integration, regionalization and cross-border cooperation*.⁷⁸ In particular, the objective of the EU's language strategy that every EU citizen masters two other languages in addition to the mother tongue⁷⁹ should be given appropriate financial support, benefitting incidentally also the learning of minority languages. In parallel, the EU should encourage the work on the standardisation of each minority language – where still lacking – and the creation of the associated linguistic infrastructure (textbooks, grammars, dictionaries, corpora, etc.). This can be done through funding programmes tailored to the possibilities of minorities.⁸⁰

In many cases, minorities need professional help to apply to EU programmes that are not primarily intended for the protection of minorities but can nevertheless have a positive effect on them, like those just quoted above. Their impact is primarily in the economic sphere – an aspect that plays just as important a role in the protection and promotion of minorities and their languages as legal provisions. Making use of these programmes requires a professional level of knowledge and practice that only experts in the EU administration can offer, but that individual interested parties cannot have, particularly in the case of small minorities.⁸¹ “Helping minorities to help themselves” could be a task that the EU assumes either within the sphere of action of an ad hoc EU agency (for instance a *European Language Agency*, see above Chapter 4) or enlarging the range of competence of another, already existing, EU agency or, finally, signing a special convention with an umbrella organisation of European minorities.

6.2. Europe's linguistic diversity – the national legal framework

State legislation on the protection of linguistic minorities is essentially influenced by three typologies of measures:

- the implementation of the obligations assumed with the ratification of *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and/or the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*;
- the respect of minority related provisions of bilateral treaties or agreements entered into (as a rule bilateral documents concern the minority host State and the co-national State); and

⁷⁶ The EU is currently doing something similar for measures in favour of migrants [fundamental-rights-refugees-asylum-applicants-and-migrants-european-borders](#) and sexual minorities [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729426/EPRS_BRI\(2022\)729426_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729426/EPRS_BRI(2022)729426_EN.pdf).

⁷⁷ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-7-2013-0239_EN.html#_section2.

⁷⁸ Pan 2018a, 327-331.

⁷⁹ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/142/language-policy>.

⁸⁰ This requirement corresponds to requirement 2.2 in the “Minority SafePack”: adjust funding programmes so that they become accessible for small regional and minority language communities.

⁸¹ Larger minorities or regions have recognised this and run their own offices in Brussels to represent their interests.

- the granting of comprehensive legal frameworks that can be referred to by the collective term “Statute of Autonomy”.

There are substantial differences between the three references both in scope and in terms of the success that the corresponding implementation measures have shown. This success can be determined once again according to the changes in the total number of minority members and in the number of the minority language speakers.

6.2.1. Implementation of the measures foreseen by the *Framework Convention*

Measures related to the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages* date after 1992, when the document was opened to signature in Strasbourg. The *Charter* entered into force on 1 March 1998 after its ratification by five states. Up to today, 33 Member States of the Council of Europe have signed the *Charter* and 25 have also ratified it. 16 of these are EU Member States.

Table 9: Signatures and ratifications of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages
EU Member States

State	Signature	Ratification	Entry into Force ⁸²
Austria	05/11/1992	28/06/2001	01/10/2001
Belgium			
Bulgaria			
Croatia	05/11/1997	05/11/1997	01/03/1998
Cyprus	12/11/1992	26/08/2002	01/12/2002
Czech Republic	09/11/2000	15/11/2006	01/03/2007
Denmark	05/11/1992	08/09/2000	01/01/2001
Estonia			
Finland	05/11/1992	09/11/1994	01/03/1998
France	07/05/1999		
Germany	05/11/1992	16/09/1998	01/01/1999
Greece			
Hungary	05/11/1992	26/04/1995	01/03/1998
Ireland			
Italy	27/06/2000		
Latvia			
Lithuania			
Luxembourg	05/11/1992	22/06/2005	01/10/2005
Malta	05/11/1992		
Netherlands	05/11/1992	02/05/1996	01/03/1998
Poland	12/05/2003	12/02/2009	01/06/2009
Portugal	07/09/2021		
Romania	17/07/1995	29/01/2008	01/05/2008
Slovakia	20/02/2001	05/09/2001	01/01/2002

⁸² For the complete list of measures applied to each minority language protected by the means of the *Charter*, see the individual state declarations in <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=signatures-by-treaty&treaty=148>.

Slovenia	03/07/1997	04/10/2000	01/01/2001
Spain	05/11/1992	09/04/2001	01/08/2001
Sweden	09/02/2000	09/02/2000	01/06/2000

Non-EU countries

State	Signature	Ratification	Entry into Force
Armenia	11/05/2001	25/01/2002	01/05/2002
Azerbaijan	21/12/2001		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	07/09/2005	21/09/2010	01/01/2011
Georgia			
Iceland	07/05/1999		
Liechtenstein	05/11/1992	18/11/1997	01/03/1998
Monaco			
Montenegro	22/03/2005	15/02/2006	06/06/2006
North Macedonia	25/07/1996		
Norway	05/11/1992	10/11/1993	01/03/1998
Republic of Moldova	11/07/2002		
Russia ⁸³			
San Marino			
Serbia	22/03/2005	15/02/2006	01/06/2006
Switzerland	08/10/1993	23/12/1997	01/04/1998
Turkey			
Ukraine	02/05/1996	19/09/2005	01/01/2006
United Kingdom	02/03/2000	27/03/2001	01/07/2001

Table 9 shows that the Charter as an instrument for minority language protection seems to have exhausted its appeal, as no ratification has taken place for over a decade (the last one was that of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010). Because the most recent quantitative data cited in this study (see Annex III) refers to 2011, the next round of censuses must be awaited in order to be able to draw conclusions – at least for those states where a census has taken place – as to whether or not the Charter Articles have had a quantifiable impact.

6.2.2. Minority-related provisions of State treaties

The protection of a second group of minorities is legally based on the provisions of state treaties/agreements.

Table 10: State treaties/agreements concerning EU Member States with reference to the protection of minorities

State	Minorities concerned	State treaty/agreement
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⁸³ The Russian Federation signed the Charter without ratifying it on 10/05/2001. It is not a member of the Council of Europe anymore.

Austria	Slovenian and Croatian minority in Carinthia, Burgenland, and Styria	Article 7 in the State Treaty concerning the Restoration of an Independent and Democratic Austria, of 15 May 1955
Denmark	German minority in Denmark	Bonn-Copenhagen declarations of 29 March 1955
Finland	Swedish minority on the Åland Islands	Treaties under the Aegis of the League of Nations of 24 June 1921 and 20 October 1921
Greece	Muslim minority in Greece	Article 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne of 24 July 1923
Germany	Danish minority in Germany	Bonn-Copenhagen declarations of 29 March 1955
	Sorbian minority in Germany	Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic on the unification of Germany of 31 August 1990
Italy	German minority in South Tyrol ⁸⁴	Treaty of Paris (Gruber-Degasperi agreement) of 5 September 1946

The implementation of these international provisions⁸⁵ resulted, in particular, in the establishment of an autonomy ordering for the Swedish minority in the Åland Islands and the German and Ladin minorities in South Tyrol, as well as in the granting of a number of linguistic and cultural rights in the other cases. Their practical effect appears in the data in Annex III.

6.2.3. Granting of measures within “autonomy statutes”

Finally, as far as the instrument of autonomy is concerned, the following Table 11 lists the territorial authorities within the EU that have an autonomous status.⁸⁶

Table 11: Territorial autonomies in the EU and some key-data concerning resident minorities

States / Regional Autonomies	Autonomy (within the current state) granted in	Primary purpose of autonomy	Minorities settled in the territory ⁸⁷	Key data concerning minorities living in the territory ⁸⁸	GDP/capita of the territory (referred to 2017)	+	-
						(in %)	(in %)
EU-28					30,000	100	
Austria					38,100	127	

⁸⁴ The Gruber-Degasperi agreement only mentions the German minority. The development based on this, which led to the granting of the Second Autonomy Statute for South Tyrol in 1972 (see Chapter 7), also included the so-called Settlement Declaration between Austria and Italy before the UN in 1992, in which the Ladins were included (cf. Videsott 2017).

⁸⁵ In addition, with regard to the non-EU country Turkey, the Treaty of Lausanne of 24 July 1923 can be cited, which regulates the rights of non-Muslim minorities in Articles 37-44.

⁸⁶ Pan 2019, 30-32, with updating.

⁸⁷ Non-territorial minorities and large state constituent peoples are not included in the table.

⁸⁸ a = Tendency (according to the data in Annex III); b = Type of written language used; c = Minority language taught at school; d = Minority language used in administration; e = Degree of elaboration of the minority language.

<i>Burgenland</i>	1921	Territorial, primarily not intended for minority protection	<i>Burgenland Croats</i>	a	No reliable data available, probably decreasing	27,100		90
				b	Local standard			
				c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Is possible			
				e	4			
			<i>Burgenland Hungarians</i>	a	No reliable data available, in any case decreasing			
				b	Standard Hungarian			
				c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Is possible			
				e	9			
<i>Upper Austria</i>	1920	Territorial				31,100	104	
<i>Vienna</i>	1922	Territorial, primarily not intended for minority protection	<i>Czechs</i>	a	No reliable data available, most probably decreasing	45,200		151
				b	Standard Czech			
				c	Minimal			
				d	No			
				e	9			
			<i>Slovaks</i>	a	No reliable data available, most probably decreasing			
				b	Standard Slovak			
				c	Minimal			
				d	No			
				e	9			
<i>Carinthia</i>	1920	Territorial, primarily not intended for minority protection	<i>Slovenes</i>	a	No reliable data available, but most probably decreasing	32,600		109
				b	Standard Slovenian			
				c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Is possible			
				e	9			
<i>Styria</i>	1920	Territorial, primarily not intended for minority protection	<i>Slovenes</i>	a	No reliable data available, in any case decreasing	34,500		115
				b	Standard Slovenian			
				c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Is possible			
				e	9			
<i>Lower Austria</i>	1920	Territorial				39,000	130	
<i>Salzburg</i>	1920	Territorial				45,400	151	
<i>Tyrol</i>	1920	Territorial				40,900	136	
<i>Vorarlberg</i>	1920	Territorial				40,600	135	

Belgium						35,000	116	
<i>Brussels</i>	1963 / 1970	Territorial / cultural				58,700	196	

<i>Flanders</i>	1963 / 1970	Territorial / cultural				35,900	120	
<i>Wallonia</i>	1963 / 1970	Territorial / cultural, but not intended for the protection of Luxembourgers	<i>Luxembourgers</i>	a	Decreasing	25,300		84
				b	Luxembourgish is not used			
				c	No			
				d	No			
				e	3			
<i>East Belgium (DG)</i>	1963 / 1970	Territorial / cultural, primarily intended for minority protection	<i>Germans</i>	a	Increasing	28,480		95
				b	Standard German			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	9			

Denmark						38,400	128	
<i>Faroe-Islands</i>	1948	Territorial, primarily intended for minority protection	<i>Faroese</i>	a	Increasing	29,488		98
				b	Standard Faroese			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	7			
<i>Greenland (not part of the EU)</i>	1979 / 2009	Territorial, primarily intended for minority protection	<i>Inuit (Western Greenlanders)</i>	a	Stable	32,657	109	
				b	Standard West Greenlandic (<i>Kalaallisut</i>)			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	5			
			<i>Ivi (Eastern Greenlanders)</i>	a	Stable			
				b	<i>East Greenlandic (Tunumiit oraasiat) is almost not written</i>			
				c	No			
				d	No			
				e	1			

Finland						32,700	109	
<i>Åland Islands</i>	1921	Territorial, primarily intended for minority protection	<i>Swedes</i>	a	Increasing	37,900	126	
				b	Standard Swedish			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	9			

France						31,200	104	
<i>Corsica</i>	2018	Territorial, not intended for	<i>Corsicans</i>	a	Decreasing / stable	25,100		84
				b	Corsican (polynimic standard)			
				c	Minimal			
				d	NO			

		minority protection		e	5			
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Germany						37,100	124	
<i>Baden-Württemberg</i>	1952	Territorial				42,300	141	
<i>Bavaria</i>	1949	Territorial				43,200	144	
<i>Berlin</i>	1949 / 1990	Territorial				35,500	118	
<i>Brandenburg</i>	1990	Territorial, not intended for minority protection	<i>Lower Sorbs</i>	a	Decreasing	26,000		87
				b	Standard Lower Sorbian			
				c	Yes, in bilingual schools			
				d	Is possible			
				e	4			
<i>Bremen</i>	1949	Territorial				46,500	155	
<i>Hamburg</i>	1949	Territorial				60,600	202	
<i>Hesse</i>	1949	Territorial				42,100	140	
<i>Mecklenburg-Vorpommern</i>	1990	Territorial				25,000		83
<i>Lower Saxony</i>	1949	Territorial, not intended for minority protection	<i>Sater Frisians</i>	a	Decreasing	34,100	114	
				b	A Standard Sater Frisian exists, but its use is very limited			
				c	Minimal			
				d	No			
				e	2			
<i>North Rhine-Westphalia</i>	1949	Territorial				36,300	121	
<i>Rhineland-Palatinate</i>	1949	Territorial				33,400	111	
<i>Saarland</i>	1957	Territorial				33,300	111	
<i>Saxony</i>	1990	Territorial, not intended for minority protection	<i>Upper Sorbs</i>	a	Tendentially decreasing	28,000		93
				b	Standard Upper Sorbian			
				c	Yes, in bilingual schools			
				d	Is possible			
				e	5			
<i>Saxony-Anhalt</i>	1990	Territorial				25,600		85
<i>Schleswig-Holstein</i>	1949	Territorial, not intended for minority protection	<i>Danish</i>	a	Stable	30,400	101	
				b	Standard Danish			
				c	Mandatory in Danish schools			
				d	Is possible			
				e	9			
			<i>North Frisians</i>	a	Decreasing			
				b	Local varieties			
				c	Minimal			
				d	Is possible			
				e	3			
<i>Thuringia</i>	1990	Territorial				27,000		90

Italy						28,900		96
Aosta Valley	1948	Territorial, originally not intended for minority protection	Francophones	a	Decreasing	35,700	119	
				b	Standard French			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	9 ⁸⁹			
			German Walser	a	Decreasing			
				b	Walser is almost not written			
				c	Except for individual projects, Walser is not used at school			
				d	Practically not used			
				e	1			
Autonomous Province of Bolzano	1948 / 1972	Territorial / cultural, intended for minority protection	Germans (South Tyroleans)	a	Increasing	42,900	143	
				b	Standard German			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	9			
			Ladins	a	Increasing			
				b	Local valley standard			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	5			
Autonomous Province of Trento	1948 / 1972	Territorial, also intended for minority protection	Ladins in Fassa Valley	a	Stable	36,600	122	
				b	Local valley standard			
				c	Mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	4			
			German Mocheni	a	Decreasing			
				b	Mocheno is almost not written			
				c	Minimal			
				d	Is possible, but practically not used			
				e	2			
			German Cimbrians	a	Decreasing			
				b	Cimbrian is almost not written			
				c	Minimal			
				d	Is possible, but practically not used			
				e	2			
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1963	Territorial, also	Friulians	a	Decreasing	31,400	104	
				b	Standard Friulian			

⁸⁹ The indications refer to French. This language has the status of a “high” variety (H variety), while the spoken language is Francoprovençal. This diglossic situation is changing due to the disappearance of French, but Francoprovençal is not able to take the previous H-position of French. This constellation proves problematic for language maintenance in Aosta Valley (see Louvin/Alessi 2020).

		intended for minority protection		c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	6			
			<i>Slovenes</i>	a	Stable			
				b	Standard Slovenian (except for Val Resia)			
				c	Yes, but not mandatory			
				d	Yes			
				e	9			
			<i>Germans</i>	a	Decreasing			
				b	Local varieties			
				c	Minimal			
				d	Is possible, but practically not used			
				e	2			
<i>Sicily</i>	1946	Territorial, not intended for minority protection	<i>Albanians (the language is still alive in three municipalities)</i>	a	Decreasing	17,700		59
				b	Local varieties			
				c	Except for individual projects, Albanian is not used at school			
				d	No			
				e	4			
<i>Sardinia</i>	1948	Territorial, originally not intended for minority protection	<i>Sardinians</i>	a	Decreasing	20,900		69
				b	Standard Sardinian and local varieties			
				c	Minimal			
				d	Is possible			
				e	5			
			<i>Catalans in Alghero</i>	a	Stable			
				b	A local form quite close to standard Catalan			
				c	Is possible in bilingual classes			
				d	Is possible			
				e	9 ⁹⁰			
Portugal						23,000		77
<i>Azores</i>	1976	Territorial				20,500		68
<i>Madeira</i>	1976	Territorial				22,000		73

Spain						27,600		92
<i>Galicia</i>	1978	Territorial, also intended for minority protection	<i>Galicians</i>	a	Stable	24,700		82
				b	Standard Galician			
				c	Yes			
				d	Yes			
				e	7			
<i>Asturias</i>	1978	Territorial				24,500		82

⁹⁰ Even though a local standard was adopted for the Catalan of Alghero in 2003, standard Catalan remains the reference language for language elaboration.

<i>Cantabria</i>	1978	Territorial				25,000		83						
<i>Basque County</i>	1978	Territorial, also intended for minority protection	<i>Basques</i>	a	Stable / increasing	36,300	121							
<i>Navarre</i>	1978	Territorial, also intended for minority protection		b	Standard Basque									
				c	Yes									
				d	Yes									
				e	7									
<i>La Rioja</i>	1978	Territorial				28,800		96						
<i>Aragon</i>	1978	Territorial				30,400	101							
<i>Castile and León</i>	1978	Territorial				25,800		86						
<i>Castilla-La Mancha</i>	1978	Territorial				21,800		73						
<i>Extremadura</i>	1978	Territorial				19,300		64						
<i>Catalonia</i>	1978	Territorial, also intended for minority protection	<i>Occitans (Aranese)</i>	a	Stable / decreasing	33,100	110							
				b	Local form of Occitan									
				c	Yes									
				d	Yes									
				e	5									
			<i>Catalans</i>	a	Increasing									
				<i>Valencian Community</i>	1978				Territorial, also intended for minority protection	b	Standard Catalan	24,300		81
				<i>Balearic Islands</i>	1978				Territorial, also intended for minority protection	c	Yes	28,900		96
										d	Yes			
										e	9			
<i>Andalusia</i>	1978	Territorial				20,400		68						
<i>Murcia</i>	1978	Territorial				22,700		76						
<i>Canary Islands</i>	1978	Territorial				24,400		81						

Not every square of Table 11 is as precise as one would wish. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact an autonomy setting may have on the minorities living in the territories concerned. Taking into account those cases where autonomy was granted from the outset with the declared intention, possibly among others, of protecting the linguistic minorities settled in the territory and where the autonomy is sufficiently dated as to allow a diachronic analysis of the evolution of the same minorities (as for instance East Belgium, the Faroe Islands and Greenland in Denmark, the Åland Islands in Finland, the Autonomous Provinces of Bolzano and Trento and Friuli Venezia Giulia in Italy, the Spanish regions of Galicia, Basque County, Navarre, the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands), it is possible to make the following assessment: out of 17 minorities living in these territories, 12 (Germans in East Belgium, Faroese, West and East Greenlanders, Swedish in Åland Islands, Germans in South Tyrol, Ladins in South Tyrol and Trentino, Slovenes in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Galician in Galicia, Basques in Basque County and Navarre, Catalan in the Valencian Community and Balearic Islands) show a stable or even increasing development over the last three decades. The data on the Aranese minority is ambiguous in that they show higher language competence but lower language use in the population as a whole.⁹¹ Counterexamples, at least in purely numerical terms, seem to be the German Mocheni

⁹¹ Carrera 2021, 62-66.

and Cimbrian minorities in Trentino and the Friulian and German minority in Friuli-Venezia Giulia. It should be noted, however, that the decline rate among the Friulian speakers weakened from 1.8% per decade to currently 0.6%, and that the three German communities in Trentino and Friuli-Venezia Giulia mentioned are very small, as they only count some hundred speakers each, so that their sheer survival can already be seen as positive.

The information suggests that there is a highly positive correlation between a territorial autonomy intended for minority protection and a stable or even positive evolution in terms of the size of the minorities concerned. Autonomies wholly or partially enacted with the aim of protecting minorities proved, as a rule, to be effective. Thus, if one of the goals EU Member States pursue is the preservation of their linguistic and cultural diversity, the granting of certain autonomy rights to linguistic minorities is to be strongly recommended, since it is a legal device that more often than not has proven to be quite successful. For the groups mentioned above, an increase in numerical consistency is achieved especially where, in addition to legal provisions, the standardisation of the local language has been implemented and agreed upon, making the use of the minority language in school lessons compulsory and for citizens facultative in all branches of the administration.

The effectiveness of autonomy totally or in part conceived to respond to the needs of a linguistic minority emerges also from the cases where the autonomy is not territorial, but a so-called cultural one. This has been observed in Hungary, for instance, where minorities have been given an extensive cultural autonomy. Such an option has indisputably proved to be efficient, as 11 of the 12 Hungarian minorities monitored over the past three decades have grown (see Annex III). The Germans in Denmark and the Frisians in the Netherlands likewise have cultural autonomy. In their case, too, the available figures speak for a stable or even positive evolution.

In conclusion, it can be said that, to the extent that the figures quoted correspond to reality, autonomy provisions taking into account (also) the needs of linguistic minorities are an excellent instrument of minority policy. An increase in the use of the minority language cannot automatically be derived from this, given that, in many cases, a declaration of belonging to a minority says nothing as to language competence. However, it seems plausible that an environment that promotes the willingness to manifest a sense of belonging to a minority also has an effect on the linguistic behaviour of the individuals.

It is also clear from the examples cited that minorities are far better off if they can resort to a fully standardised and highly elaborated language.⁹² In the case where a standardised language is for any reason not available, the creation of a local standard is the second-best choice, far better than continuing using the local language in a non-standardised form. In addition, as is well known, standardisation is the first step to necessary language elaboration. It should be the goal of a European language policy in the next ten years for every minority language that does not have one yet to receive an officially recognised language norm and to elaborate the minority language systematically in at least two fields of the Klossian elaboration scheme already quoted.

What is also clear from the examples cited is that autonomy orderings, not specifically conceived for minority protection, have a lesser impact on minorities. It remains the fact that the implementation of an autonomy setting frequently correlates with above-average prosperity, as the figures in Table 11 related to the GDP per capita show. There are 208 administrative regions within the EU, corresponding,

⁹² This becomes very clear, for example, in the case of the German minorities in Italy. The South Tyrolean minority, which uses the standard German language for formal situations, is in a much better position with regard to the preservation of its dialects than the northern Italian language islands, where it is necessary to switch to Italian for formal situations. For the relevance of language standardisation, see also Videsott 2018, 288-290.

with some exceptions, to the NUTS-2 regions. Of these, 56, that is, just over a quarter, enjoy some form of regional autonomy and 31 have a GDP higher than the EU average.⁹³ These 31 regions differ much in terms of history, geography, climate and culture (they are to be found in Austria, Germany, Italy, Finland etc.) and in a sense correspond to the diversity of Europe itself, but one thing they all have in common is namely a self-government historically grown, with a specific cultural tradition and a relatively small territorial dimension. This common trait among them has not emerged by accident and speaks in favour of a regional self-administration that makes it possible to adapt to regional peculiarities increasing productivity and prosperity by the means of a division of labour between regional and State level.

In sum: according to EU indicators, autonomous regions are often more prosperous than average. Prosperity, it must be emphasised, means an advantage for everyone, not just for minorities living in a territory.⁹⁴

A certain economic wellbeing is all the more important for minorities, as this encourages them to continue living in their ancestral settlement areas.⁹⁵ This is the prerequisite for the preservation of a minority and its language because outside the traditional settlement area there are usually neither the linguistic and cultural nor the social conditions that make the said preservation possible.

⁹³ At European level, the proportion of prosperous autonomous regions is even higher: 60 of 96 enjoying some form of regional autonomy (compared with 323 regions in total, cf. Pan 2019, 211). Examples such as South Tyrol or the Basque Country show that economic prosperity is a consequence of autonomy, and that the reverse is not true, that economically strong regions can more easily achieve autonomy.

⁹⁴ For this argument, see Pan 2019.

⁹⁵ From the figures in Chapter 2, it is noticeable that, as a rule, in States with declining population, the decline of the minority population(s) is significantly greater than that of the total population of a State.

7. A CASE STUDY: SOUTH TYROL AND THE LADIN MINORITY

7.1. The autonomy ordering of South Tyrol – general characteristics

If – as in this study – the demographic strengthening of the (minority) group carrying a specific (minority) language and culture is to be seen as a yardstick for the success of measures in favour of a given (minority) language and culture, then the case of South Tyrol is undoubtedly a model of success. In fact, since the entering into force of the Second Statute of Autonomy in 1972, the number of German- and Ladin-speaking South Tyroleans has not only stabilised, but has even grown, both in absolute and relative terms, as shown in Tables 12 and 13 below.⁹⁶

Table 12: Population development (absolute figures) in South Tyrol between 1971 and 2011

Year	Italians	Germans	Ladins	Others ⁹⁷	Total
1971	137,759	260,351	15,456	475	414,041
1981	123,695	279,544	17,736	9,593	430,568
1991	116,914	287,503	18,434	17,657	440,508
2001	113,494	296,461	18,736	34,308	462,999
2011 ⁹⁸	118,120	314,604	20,548	51,371	504,643

Table 13: Population development (relative figures in %) in South Tyrol between 1971 and 2011

Year	Italians	Germans	Ladins
1971	33.38	62.88	3.73
1981	29.38	66.40	4.21
1991	27.65	67.99	4.36
2001	26.47	69.15	4.37
2011	26.06	69.41	4.53

The presence of a second autochthonous minority, the Ladins, which is much smaller than the German minority, gives the case study of South Tyrol additional relevance. The development of the Ladins shows the extent to which the thesis put forward in this study, according to which autonomy specifically granted for the protection of minorities has measurable positive effects in terms of language and cultural preservation irrespective of the size of the group to be protected, can claim general validity.

The South Tyrolean minority protection system has often been the subject of research work.⁹⁹ Here, we can therefore limit ourselves to highlighting its most important characteristics.¹⁰⁰

- A first point is that the South Tyrolean system is based on *group rights*, and not just on individual rights. A part of the autonomous rights granted to South Tyrol is linked to the whole territory (“territorial autonomy”).¹⁰¹ Other rights are bound to each language group (e.g., the school

⁹⁶ ASTAT 2019, 58.

⁹⁷ “Others” includes resident nationals without linguistic declaration and resident foreigners.

⁹⁸ Most recent data available, the next survey is scheduled for autumn 2023.

⁹⁹ The most recent relevant studies are EJM 2021 and Haller 2021.

¹⁰⁰ On the following see in particular Pan 2018c, 354-360 and Benedikter 2021, 320-327.

¹⁰¹ This is the case, e.g., for the 29 fields in which South Tyrol has primary competences, i.e., can act independently legislatively, respecting the national Italian constitution (e.g. regional planning, landscape protection, subsidised housing,

system or the promotion of cultural activities: this is carried out separately according to language groups). Symbolic of this “cultural autonomy” are the three councillors for school and culture who sit in the provincial government of South Tyrol: one for German, one for Italian and one for Ladin school and culture.¹⁰²

- A second point is the concept of *dynamic autonomy*. The Autonomy Statute is a work in progress, in the effort to constantly adapt to new realities. The work takes place in the “Commission of the Six”, in which the State and the Province send an equal number of representatives. These commissioners meet behind closed doors: that way, they can negotiate compromises without being in the constant crossfire of day-to-day-politics, public opinion and the media. They only make consensual decisions instead of majority decisions. Therefore, they depend on finding compromises that all represented parties or contracting parties (State and Province, Italians as well as Germans and Ladins) can live with. Consensus decisions need more time to be arrived at, but they are much more stable than majority decisions, which could also be called into question by any change of majority.
- A third characteristic of the South Tyrolean minority protection system is its *international guarantee*. The Autonomy Statute is not only on a level with the Italian constitution, but is also based on the 1946 Treaty of Paris between Austria and Italy which, for its part, was included as an annex to the Allies’ Peace Treaty with Italy after World War II (see Chapter 6.2.2). This type of international anchoring offers a safeguard against unilateral change by Italy, because this would automatically provoke an international conflict. In the case of serious violations of autonomy rights, Austria could also appeal to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.¹⁰³
- Fourthly, the three historical linguistic groups of the Province were recognised by the 1972 statute as *equal bearers of autonomy and collective legal subjects*. All three are granted an autonomy not only in the sense of the aforementioned cultural autonomy for the group, but also in terms of political representation in the provincial Council, in the provincial government and in the district and municipal assemblies (i.e., in the executive at all levels). The composition of the South Tyrolean provincial government must correspond to the demographic size of each linguistic group (with some additional dispositions in favour of the Ladins).

In order to prevent one linguistic group from being penalised by the others, a minimum number of deputies can demand a vote by linguistic group. This clause particularly applies to the adoption of the provincial budget. Thus, if a majority of a linguistic group opposes a budget chapter because, in its opinion, it does not sufficiently correspond with, or may even be detrimental to, its interests, it is referred to a conciliation commission, which must work out a compromise that is binding for the provincial parliament within 15 days. In South Tyrolean institutional life, therefore, the political majorities of the respective language groups must permanently find concordance.¹⁰⁴

- Another fundamental pillar of South Tyrol’s protection of minorities is the *equal rights of the three local languages in an institutionalised multilingualism*, with Ladin having equal rights to a lesser extent and limited territorially. German has equal status with Italian as an official

roads, agriculture, tourism etc.). For the text of the South Tyrolean Autonomy Statute in its current version (last amendment 2019) see <https://www.landtag-bz.org/de/datenbanken-sammlungen/autonomiestatut.asp> (German) or <https://www.consiglio-bz.org/it/banche-dati-raccolte/accordo-parigi.asp> (Italian).

¹⁰² <https://landesregierung.provinz.bz.it/de/mitglieder-der-landesregierung>

(German); <https://giunta-provinciale.provincia.bz.it/it/membri-della-giunta-provinciale> (Italian).

¹⁰³ Cf. Benedikter 2021, 327.

¹⁰⁴ Benedikter 2021, 321-322.

language. “In South Tyrol – in contrast to Switzerland – autonomy combined the territorial principle with the personal principle. The use of the mother tongue in the entire public sphere is a fundamental right of all citizens. Every citizen has the right to deal with the public authorities in the local language of his or her choice. The public sphere is thereby defined more broadly than just the public administration, and includes all public services. This means that all public service employees dealing with the public are obliged to have sufficient command of and use both local languages. This is a prerequisite for entry into the public service at all levels, including state administrations. Proof of proficiency in the second language must be provided by means of a certificate (so-called “*Patentino* for bilingualism” or “trilingualism”).”¹⁰⁵ Knowledge of the second (and third¹⁰⁶) language is not only a prerequisite for admission to the civil service, but is also rewarded financially through the so-called “bilingualism” or “trilingualism” allowance, which as a rule amounts to 11% of the salary.

It is a special achievement of the South Tyrolean autonomy to have extensively enforced bilingualism with all the associated rights and obligations. If an act of the administration does not respect bilingualism, this act is invalid. With this regulation, South Tyrol is still an exception among the autonomous multilingual regions of Europe, where, at most, the minority language is permitted, but universal bilingualism is not prescribed.¹⁰⁷

- A point that used to be very controversially discussed is the *quota system* for the distribution of public resources, whereby these public resources also include jobs in the civil service. This quota system is called “proportional sharing” (*Proporz / proporzionale*), and states that certain resources (e.g., subsidies, social housing – but especially posts in the civil service) must be allocated to the members of the linguistic group in fixed proportions according to the numerical strength of the language group they belong to (see Table 13). Proportional group sharing was introduced in South Tyrol in 1976 in order to compensate for the until then practised massive discrimination against members of the German and Ladin language groups.¹⁰⁸

Few other regulations were as controversial in South Tyrol in the first few years of their application as this has been for *Proporz*. The Italian language group had to take a back seat in terms of posts for a while, because until then it had held almost 90% of public posts, although it only accounted then for about 30% of the population.

Above all, however, in order to implement of proportional system, the registration of citizens eligible as members of the language group of their choice was necessary. Since 1981, this has been done by means of a binding “language group affiliation declaration”. Every South Tyrolean who wants to make use of the rights for which *Proporz* plays a role – including the right to stand for election, because the political bodies must be formed according to the respective strength of the language groups represented¹⁰⁹ – must submit a “language group affiliation declaration”. The exact modalities of this registration gradually changed between 1981 and 2005. Today, on reaching the age of 18, one submits a personal declaration of “affiliation” or “assignment” to a linguistic group to the court. This entitles the holder to participate in the proportional system. The declaration can be changed at any time, but the

¹⁰⁵ Pan 2018c, 356; Benedikter 2021, 323.

¹⁰⁶ This applies to Ladins.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Benedikter 2021, 323.

¹⁰⁸ Pan 2018c, 357-358; Benedikter 2021, 324.

¹⁰⁹ See above point d). This regulation includes the fact that one cannot be elected without this declaration.

change does not take effect until 18 months later. This prevents opportunistic declarations.¹¹⁰ Every 10th year, the population of the groups is surveyed. This survey is anonymous. The personal declaration for the purpose of individual participation in proportional system and the anonymous declaration for statistical purposes may differ. In practice, the cases of different declaration seem to be quite limited.

The last survey for the aims of the proportional system took place in 2011 and, taking into account all declarations of affiliation and assignment, revealed 69.41 % Germans, 26.06 % Italians and 4.53 % Ladins (see Table 13). The next survey will take place in autumn 2023. Despite some problematic aspects, particularly for the smallest group, the Ladins, with their proportion of only 4.53 % Province-wide, on the whole, the proportional system has proven to be extremely useful. This can also be seen in the fact that, 30 years after its introduction – that is, in 2006 –, it has not been abolished as originally intended, but confirmed. The proportional representation prevents distribution quarrels between the language groups, which would otherwise very quickly break out again.

- Another highly important point is the fact that South Tyrolean autonomy has, from the very beginning, linked *cultural* aspects with the *economic well-being* of the inhabitants. In this respect, the Treaty of Paris of 1946 (“Degasperi-Gruber Agreement”) – the basis of South Tyrolean autonomy – was very far-sighted when it provided for “special provisions to safeguard the ethnic character and the cultural and economic development of the German-speaking element”. The basic idea behind this is as simple as it is obvious: all minority and language rights are of no use if the minority or language to be protected cannot (sur)vive in its own traditional settlement area because it is forced to emigrate due to poor economic conditions. This insight from the experience of South Tyrolean minority protection is one of the most important lessons with regard to successful minority protection in general. Key economic elements pertaining to the South Tyrol autonomous government have been spatial planning, landscape protection, public housing, and vocational training. With these key instruments, regional development could be steered in the direction of minority protection, combined with economic prosperity and social security.¹¹¹

In conclusion, with regard to the protection of languages, the South Tyrolean autonomy system can be described as a system in which the local minority languages are placed on an equal footing with the State language, Italian. Equality to Italian is total for German (except within the Army) and reaches a certain level, without being total, for Ladin.¹¹² The system grants broad cultural autonomy to individual language groups, which includes not only the field of cultural associations, but also the school system. On a general level, the South Tyrolean Autonomy ordering has proven to be a very effective system of labour division, in the specific case: a division of labour in the field of public administration between the Italian national and downstream South Tyrolean regional level. It is accepted that progress in civilization can be measured by the degree of division of labour, and it is well known that meaningful division of labour usually increases productivity and efficiency. This effect of increased productivity and efficiency is clearly visible and measurable in South Tyrol, according to demographic (Table 12) and economic (Table 11) indicators, and manifests itself precisely in the positive development of the German and Ladin minorities (Table 13).

¹¹⁰ “Opportunistic” in the sense that one could change his language group depending of the position called.

¹¹¹ Cf. Pan 2018c, 378-379.

¹¹² Articles 99-100 of the Autonomy Statute. The corresponding implementing regulations are summarised in the Italian Presidential Decree n° 574 of 15 July 1988 (http://lexbrowser.provincia.bz.it/doc/it/dpr-1988-574/decreto_del_presidente_della_repubblica_15_luglio_1988_n_574.aspx).

7.2. The school systems in South Tyrol and in the Ladin area

Because of its importance for the protection of minorities, the *school system* in South Tyrol and in the Ladin area must be mentioned specifically. In the South Tyrolean Autonomy Statute of 1972, the right to schools in the respective mother tongue was more clearly outlined in comparison with the first Autonomy Statute of 1948. Thus, peculiar school system has been implemented that preserves the independence of the three language groups. Each language group has the right to a school system in its own language, which in any case must also guarantee the acquisition of the second (local or national) language. However, all parents have the right to enrol their children in schools of their choice, provided that they can demonstrate a minimum knowledge of the respective language of instruction.¹¹³

As a result, there is a German and an Italian school model in South Tyrol with instruction in the mother tongue and managed by people of the same linguistic group. To be stressed is the growing importance year after year of the respective second language and English as the common third language.

The German and Italian school model in South Tyrol provide instruction in the mother tongue with a compulsory presence of the respective second and English as the common third language. The timetable of a 4th-year primary school class (standard age of pupils: 10 years) can be used as example to visualise the similarities and differences between the two systems.

Figure 3: Timetable of a 4th-year class at German-speaking primary school in South Tyrol

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.	History, Geography, Biology	Italian	History, Geography, Biology	Music	Mathematics
2.	German	Italian	German	Mathematics	German
3.	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	German	Italian
4.	English	German	Religion	English	Religion
5.	Arts, Technology	History, Geography, Biology	Italian	Italian	Movement and Sport
6.		Arts, Technology			
7.		Movement and Sport			

Teaching Languages:

German	Italian	English
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¹¹³ Cf. Pan 2018c, 357; Benedikter 2021, 326.

Figure 4: Timetable of a 4th-year class at Italian-speaking primary school in South Tyrol

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.	German	German	Mathematics	Italian	Music
2.	Mathematics	Religion	Natural Sciences	Arts and	Mathematics
3.	Italian	German	Italian	Italian	Mathematics
4.	English	Italian	Natural Sciences	Religion	Geography
5.	Italian	Mathematics	English	Mathematics	German
6.	History		German		
7.	Movement and Sport		Italian		

Teaching Languages:

German	Italian	English
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In addition to the two larger models, there is a third school model in South Tyrol: the so-called “paritetic” (parity) school for the two Ladin valleys of the Province of Bolzano - Val Badia and Val Gardena. Its characteristic is the compulsory balanced presence of the two languages Italian and German, both as a subject and as a language of instruction, with the additional obligatory presence of the local minority language Ladin and of the international foreign language English. It is therefore one of the few school systems in Europe with a continuous presence of four compulsory school languages.

Figure 5: Timetable of a 4th-year class at Ladin “paritetic” primary school in South Tyrol

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.	German	German	English	Compulsory optional subject	Italian
2.	German	German	Mathematics	Italian	Italian
3.	History, Geography, Biology	Ladin	Mathematics	Italian	History, Geography, Biology
4.	Music	Mathematics	Religion	History, Geography, Biology	Mathematics
5.	Religion	Movement and Sport	Mathematics	Ladin	English
6.		Arts, Technology			

Teaching Languages:

German	Italian	Ladin	English	German, Italian, Ladin
White: weekly alternation between Italian and German				

Notwithstanding the obligation and the right to learn the State language, the German and Ladin language groups have thus enshrined the right to organise an education system in their language or to have one that takes their language into account.

The Ladin education system is one of the key instruments for the preservation of the Ladin language and culture. The right to their own school system with compulsory presence of Ladin was granted to the Ladins of the Province of Bolzano in 1948 as the first minority right ever in their history. In 1972, it was expanded by Article 19, paragraph 2 of the Second Statute of Autonomy: “The Ladin language shall be used in kindergartens and shall be taught in primary schools in Ladin areas. Ladin shall also be used as a teaching language in schools of every type and level in those areas. In such schools, teaching shall be given on the basis of the same number of hours and final results as Italian and German”.¹¹⁴

This provision was implemented in the different school levels as follows:

Kindergarten

Figure 6: Timetable of a Ladin kindergarten in South Tyrol

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
All guided activities are in LADIN	All guided activities are in ITALIAN	All guided activities are in LADIN	All guided activities are in GERMAN

In the kindergartens of the Ladin valleys of South Tyrol - Val Badia and Val Gardena - the languages for the guided activities were divided up into weeks. A month has 4 weeks: in the first week only Ladin is used, in the second only Italian, in the third again Ladin and in the fourth German. It is important to know that this regulated language use only concerns the guided activities – when children are playing or enjoying their free time, they use the language they want. A second important point is that this regulation concerns *all* children. In the Ladin localities of Val Badia and Val Gardena this is the only kind of kindergarten, so every child attending kindergarten¹¹⁵ is exposed to this system no matter what their mother tongue is.

For the teaching of the different languages, the kindergartens of Val Badia and Val Gardena have adopted a didactic strategy called “language order”. All languages are used by the same educator, but they are always connected to a colour: Ladin to green, Italian to yellow, German to red and English to blue (see in this respect the colours used in Figures 3-10). When a guided activity is being undertaken, the colours are always used as support.¹¹⁶ The colours help the children to orientate themselves and to mentally organise the languages. This prevents language mixing.¹¹⁷

Primary school

In the primary schools of Val Badia and Val Gardena (see above), there are four teaching languages: Ladin, Italian, German and (starting with the 4th year) English. Religion is taught alternately in all three local languages. The non-linguistic subjects, such as mathematics, history, geography etc. are taught

¹¹⁴ https://www.mercator-research.eu/fileadmin/mercator/documents/regional_dossiers/ladin_in_italy_2nd.pdf.

¹¹⁵ Although attendance at kindergarten is voluntary in Italy, the attendance rate in South Tyrol is almost 100%.

¹¹⁶ The colours are used in different ways. Usually in kindergarten the educator puts on a very striking piece of clothing in that colour, or uses hand puppets dressed accordingly. All the examples of writing in the different languages are always set in the corresponding colours.

¹¹⁷ To this very innovative and successful didactic system cf. Cathomas et al. 2013 and Cathomas 2015.

alternately, with a weekly change, in Italian and in German as well. This system can thus be described as a “double CLIL” (*Content and Language Integrated Learning* not only in one language which is not the mother tongue of the Ladin pupils but two).

For language teaching, the “integrated language teaching” method is increasingly used: a topic (mainly grammatical or lexical) is dealt with in one language and taken on again in another language in order to illustrate the differences from the base language (which may vary depending on whether the main language of instruction in a given week is German or Italian). With this method, it is possible to make the best use of the available teaching time and the language skills that the pupils already have. Once, for example, the function of the article has been explained for Italian, it seems superfluous to repeat the same topic for German, Ladin and English. On the basis of what the pupils already know about the Italian article, the teacher can deal in depth with the morphosyntactic peculiarities where the other languages differ from Italian in the use of the article. This principle is also applied to the other grammatical contents. To this end, a series of quadrilingual teaching materials were developed.¹¹⁸

Figure 7: Quadrilingual teaching material for teaching spelling in Ladin “paritetic” primary schools in South Tyrol¹¹⁹

Sëgn capësci. Da ti ciaré ala tabela di sonns vëighi che i medems vocal y consonanc vëgn ince dant tl talian, tl todësch y tl inglesc, diji pa dërt?

Sambëgn:

	Ladin	Italian	German	English
VOCAL	ambulanza	ambulanza	Ambulanz	ambulance
	elefant	elefante	Elefant	elephant
	indian	indiano	Indianer	Indian
	orghe	organo	Orgel	organ
	ufo	ufo	Ufo	UFO
CONSONANC	banana	banana	Banane	banana
	computer	computer	Computer	computer
	domino	domino	Domino	domino
	flama	fiamma	Flamme	flame
	gorila	gorilla	Gorilla	gorilla
	hotel	hotel	Hotel	hotel
	Jasmin	Jasmin	Jasmin	Jasmin
	liun	leone	Löwe	lion
	mama	mamma	Mutter	mum
	nes	naso	Nase	nose
	pinguin	pinguino	Pinguin	penguin
	radio	radio	Radio	radio
	sorëdl	sole	Sonne	sun
	turta	torta	Torte	tart
	vidora	violino	Violine	violin
	xilofon	xilofono	Xylofon	xylophone
	yeti	yeti	Yeti	yeti
zebra	zebra	Zebra	zebra	

RECORDETE che n valgügn sonns unse tl ladin ma canche i adorun parores forestes:

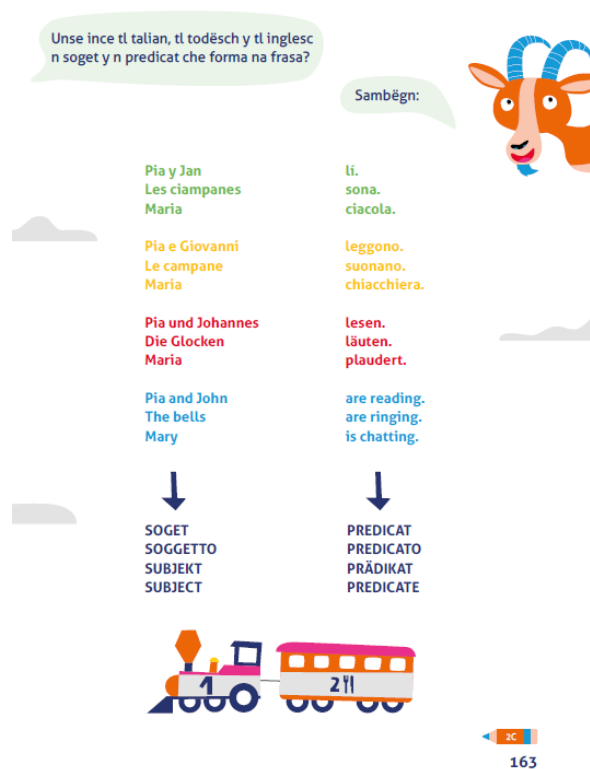
Q	quiz
K	koala
W	Walter

31

¹¹⁸ Videsott et al. 2018.

¹¹⁹ Videsott et al. 2018, 31.

Figure 8: Quadrilingual teaching material for teaching syntax in Ladin “paritetic” primary schools in South Tyrol¹²⁰



A striking development of the “paritetic” system took place in 2015, when the Ladin school moved from monolingual literacy (in Italian or German, depending on the school’s choice) to trilingual literacy with the inclusion of Ladin. From this year on, all children attending primary school in the Ladin valleys of the Province of Bolzano have learnt to read and write simultaneously in the three languages, Ladin, Italian and German, whatever their mother tongue or family language is. To this end, a series of innovative teaching materials has been developed, mainly based on the analogies between the three languages, for example, an alphabet book characterised by the fact that all the words start with the same letter in all four languages, Ladin, Italian, German and English.¹²¹

Secondary school

The secondary schools in Val Badia and Val Gardena also operate according to the “paritetic” principle. In this case, however, the two main teaching languages, German and Italian, no longer alternate weekly, but are combined with a specific subject.

¹²⁰ Videsott et al. 2018, 163.

¹²¹ Videsott 2023, 228; <https://docplayer.org/70870381-Abc-alfabetier-plurilingual-sfoei-d-acompagnament-quaderno-di-accompagnamento-begleitheft-accompanying-booklet.html>

Figure 9: Timetable of a Ladin “paritetic” high school in South Tyrol

Subjects (school with specialisation in Administration, Finance and Marketing)	Teaching language	Year					Sum of hours per week
		1	2	3	4	5	
Religion	German, Italian, Ladin	1	1	1	1	1	5
Ladin – Language and culture	Ladin	2	2	2	2	2	10
German – Language and literature	German	4	4	3	4	4	19
Italian – Language and literature	Italian	4	4	4	3	4	19
English	English	3	3	3	3	3	15
History	German	2	2	2	2	2	10
Mathematics	German	4	4	3	3	3	17
Law and economics	Italian	2	2				4
Biology and earth sciences	German	2	2				4
Physics and Chemistry	German	2	2				4
Geography	German	2	2				4
Economic geography	German			2			2
Information and Communication Technologies	German, Italian, Ladin	2	2	2	2		8
Business economics	Italian	2	2	6	9	8	27
Law	Italian			3	3	3	9
Macroeconomics	German			3	2	3	8
Sport and sport science	Italian	2	2	2	2	2	10
Additional teaching		2	2			1	5
Language parity	German = 68 Italian = 69	36	36	36	36	36	180

Teaching Languages:

German	Italian	Ladin	English	German, Italian, Ladin
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University

In order to train schoolteachers, a course of study in “Primary Education” was established in 1998 at the Faculty of Education of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, based in Brixen.¹²² The programme comprises three departments corresponding to the three school systems of the country just described (German, Italian and the “paritetic” Ladin). The Ladin department¹²³ is “transversal”, in the sense that Ladin students share 30% of their timetable with German students in the German department and 30% with Italian students in the Italian department, while 10% of the timetable includes courses in English,

¹²² <https://www.unibz.it/de/faculties/education/master-primary-education/>.

¹²³ <https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/ladin-section/>;
<https://www.unibz.it/it/faculties/education/master-in-primary-education-ladin-section/>.

common to all three departments. The remaining 30% of the timetable are courses reserved only for the Ladin department, and which are mostly taught in Ladin.

The latest curriculum reform, which came into force in the 2017/2018 academic year, provides for the following subjects to be taught in Ladin for students trained for Ladin school: linguistics and didactics of the L1, comparative literature and children’s literature, reading and writing propaedeutics, ethics and school law, a part of the history, music and art courses, as well as internships. At the end of their studies, students must master the Ladin, Italian and German languages at level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), and English at level B2.

Figure 10: Timetable and language distribution in the 4th year of the study course in “Primary Education” at the Ladin department of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano



4. Anno / 4. Jahr = Skills des Berufseintritts

WS	SS					
<p>21. Pedagogia del media; sistema formativo: valutazione e sviluppo / Medienpädagogik; Bildungssystem: Bewertung und Entwicklung</p> <p>21.1. M-PED/03 VI Pedagogia e didattica del media / Medienpädagogik und Didaktik = 3 CFU = 30 h <i>In englischer Sprache</i></p> <p>21.2. M-PED/03 LAB Pedagogia del media / Medienpädagogik und Didaktik = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>21.3. M-PED/04 VL Valutazione e sviluppo del sistema della scuola dell'infanzia e primaria / Evaluation and Weiterentwicklung von Kindergarten = 3 CFU = 30 h <i>In englischer Sprache</i></p> <p>21.4. M-PED/04 LAB Preparazione alla tesi / Vorbereitung auf die Abschlussarbeit = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 21 = 100 h Esame Modulo 21 = 10 CFU</p>	<p>22. Didattica dell'avviamento alla lettura e alla scrittura / Erlese- und Erstschriftunterricht</p> <p>22.1. Sez. Ital. L-FIL-LEI/12; Di. Abt. L-LIN/14, Sez. Lae. L-FIL-LEI/09 o M-PED/03 LV Didattica dell'avviamento alla lettura e alla scrittura / Didaktik des Erlesens und Erstschriftens = 2 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>22.2. Sez. Ital. L-FIL-LEI/12; Di. Abt. L-LIN/14, Sez. Lae. L-FIL-LEI/09 o M-PED/03 LAB Fonetica, fonologia e consapevolezza fonologica / Fonetik und Phonologische Bewusstheit = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>22.3. Sez. Ital. L-FIL-LEI/12; Di. Abt. L-LIN/14, Sez. Lae. L-FIL-LEI/09 o M-PED/03 LV Riflessione sulla lingua e conoscenza ortografica / Einsicht in die Sprache und Rechtschreibung = 2 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>22.4. Sez. Ital. L-FIL-LEI/12; Di. Abt. L-LIN/14, Sez. Lae. L-FIL-LEI/09 o M-PED/03 LAB Alfabetizzazione multilingua / (Mehrsprachige) Schreibabstimmung = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 22 = 100 h Esame Modulo 22 = 8 CFU</p>	<p>23. Didattica della matematica e delle scienze naturali 2 – Approfondimenti tematici / Didaktik der Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften 2 – Inhaltliche Vertiefung</p> <p>23.1. MAT/04 VI Didattica della matematica: approfondimenti tematici / Didaktik der Mathematik: inhaltliche Vertiefungen = 4 CFU = 40 h</p> <p>23.2. MAT/04 LAB Didattica della matematica con particolare attenzione alla fascia di età 5-12 / Didaktik der Mathematik mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Altersstufe 5-12 Jahre = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>23.3. FIS/06 VI Didattica della fisica: approfondimenti tematici / Didaktik der Physik: inhaltliche Vertiefungen = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>23.4. FIS/06 LAB Didattica della fisica con particolare attenzione alla fascia di età 5-12 / Didaktik der Physik mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Altersstufe 5-12 Jahre = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 23 = 120 h Esame Modulo 23 = 10 CFU</p>	<p>24. Inglese 1 – Fondamenti didattici / Englisch 1 – Didaktische Grundlagen</p> <p>24.1. L-LIN/12 VL English Language Teaching L3 Introduction to English language analysis and teaching activities = 3 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>24.2. L-LIN/12 LAB English Language Teaching L3 Activities for young and very young learners of English with a focus on oral skills = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 24 = 50 h Esame Modulo 24 = 5 CFU</p>	<p>25. Pedagogia e Didattica dell'inclusione / Pädagogik und Didaktik der Inklusion</p> <p>25.1. M-PED/03 VI Pedagogia e didattica dell'inclusione per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza / Pädagogik und Didaktik der Inklusion für Kindheit und Jugend = 3 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>25.2. M-PED/03 LAB Pedagogia e didattica dell'inclusione per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza / Pädagogik und Didaktik der Inklusion für Kindheit und Jugend = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>25.3. M-PED/03 VI Differenze, difficoltà e disturbi dell'apprendimento / Diversität, Lernschwierigkeiten und Lernbeeinträchtigungen = 3 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>25.4. M-PED/03 LAB Differenze, difficoltà e disturbi dell'apprendimento / Diversität, Lernschwierigkeiten und Lernbeeinträchtigungen = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 25 = 100 h Esame Modulo 25 = 10 CFU</p>	<p>26. Letteratura e letteratura per l'infanzia / Literatur und Kinderliteratur</p> <p>26.1. Ital. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/10; Di. Abt.: L-LIN/13; Lae. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/09 o M-PED/02-VI Letteratura per l'infanzia / Vergleichende Literatur der germanischen Schulsprachen = 3 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>26.2. Ital. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/10; Di. Abteilung: L-LIN/13; Lae. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/09, L-FIL-LEI/10, L-LIN/13; LAB Lettura ed approccio ai testi / Comprehension textuale, narrazione e comunicazione / Lesen und Umgang mit Texten; Textverständnis, Erzählen und Miteinander Reden = 2 CFU = 20 h</p> <p>26.3. Ital. Abt.: M-PED/02, Di. Abteilung: L-LIN/13, Lae. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/09 oder M-PED/02-VI Letteratura per l'infanzia / Kinderliteratur = 4 CFU = 40 h</p> <p>26.4. Ital. Abt.: M-PED/02, Di. Abteilung: L-LIN/13, Lae. Abt.: L-FIL-LEI/09 oder M-PED/02-VI Letteratura per l'infanzia / Kinderliteratur = 3 CFU = 30 h</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 26 = 120 h Esame Modulo 26 = 12 CFU</p>	<p>Modulo 27. Tirocinio 4 / Praktikum 4:</p> <p>27.1. Tirocinio 4 / Projektatione e simulazione con focus sui campi di esperienza e sulle aree disciplinari / Praktikum 4: Projektplanung und Simulation im Blick auf Lern- und Erfahrungsfelder sowie Sachbereiche = 20 h indiretto</p> <p>Carico di lavoro diretto modulo 27 = 70 h (tir. indiretto) Esame Modulo 27 = 5 CFU</p>

Teaching Languages:



The outstanding characteristic of the university training for future teachers at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano is that attendance at the Ladin courses is compulsory for the students of the Ladin department. In addition, all students in the German and Italian departments of the study course in “Primary Education” must also attend 20 hours (= 2 ECTS) in Ladin language and culture. This should also create an awareness of the smallest language group in South Tyrol among the teaching staff of the majority German and Italian schools, which will then be reflected in the respective pupils.

In summary, the following minority-relevant characteristics of the Ladin school system in South Tyrol can be identified as good practice:

- All inhabitants in the Ladin area of Val Badia and Val Gardena have the same school type and have to learn the minority language as well. Therefore, the whole population has the same fundamental linguistic skills, no matter what their home language is.
- The minority language is compulsory for all those attending this education system, from kindergarten to university.
- The constellation of three local languages (two of them being equally valid as teaching and official languages) proves to be very helpful for the preservation of Ladin: the two majority

languages Italian and German keep each other in check and this prevents the minority language, Ladin, being put under pressure unilaterally.

- The Ladin system guarantees the presence of the minority language as a central pivot of the language teaching. Presence of Ladin prevents one of the two majority languages taking over the other and decreasing the willingness to learn the second major language. Notoriously, for a majority language speaker, there is no absolute necessity to be bi- or multilingual, but as a speaker of a minority language, this absolute necessity is given – and this represents a very impactful learning advantage.
- The Ladin system led to the establishment of “multilingual pride” among the Ladins, and this pride also includes the minority language. The Ladins are aware that they generally speak, thanks to their competence in Ladin and their multilingual school, better German than their fellow Italian-speaking citizens and better Italian than their fellow German-speaking citizens. This is confirmed by the results of the “bi- and trilingual exam”, a standardised language examination according to the CEFR system, which is a prerequisite for access to the civil service in South Tyrol and in which Ladins have a significantly higher pass rate than members of the German and Italian language groups.¹²⁴
- The Ladin school system is also characterised by the fact that it (only) has teachers speaking the minority language as well. This is a very relevant point because this allows the use of Ladin at any given moment, both in school and extracurricular activities, and it does not create the imbalance of teachers of the minority language knowing the majority language(s) but not vice versa. Because of their language skills (see above), Ladin teachers can teach all subjects, regardless of whether the language of instruction is Ladin, German, Italian or English.

The Ladin language, a Romance language, is currently spoken by about 32,500 speakers. In a list according to the absolute size of the 53 languages used within the EU recorded in Chapter 4.4, Ladin would be ranked as 51st. Ladins are settled in a contiguous area of five valleys in the Dolomites: Val Badia, *Gherdëina/Val Gardena*, *Fascia/Val di Fassa*, *Fodom/Livinallongo* and *Anpezzo/Cortina d’Ampezzo*.¹²⁵ Although historically, geographically, culturally and ethnically they form a unified group, their territory has been divided since the fascist era into three provinces: Val Badia and Val Gardena belong to the autonomous Province of Bolzano (South Tyrol), Val di Fassa to the autonomous Province of Trento (Trentino) – both forming the autonomous region of Trentino Alto-Adige/South Tyrol – and, since 1923 Livinallongo and Cortina d’Ampezzo have been part of the Province of Belluno, which is part of the Veneto region – an Italian region with a normal statute. This state of belonging to different administration systems in spite of simultaneous initial situation (the Dolomites landscape, the altitude range of the villages, tourism as main economic activity etc. are identical in all five valleys) makes it possible, in an exemplary manner, to examine the extent to which different legal framework conditions have an effect on the preservation of a minority language.

According to their different provincial affiliation, Val di Fassa, Livinallongo and Cortina d’Ampezzo have school systems which differ from each other and from that of the Ladin valleys of South Tyrol.¹²⁶

The valley of Fassa also has a multilingual system, conceived independently from the South Tyrolean one at the end of the 1980s. It does not provide for alternation between the teaching languages within the same subject (no “white” cells in this timetable). English is also foreseen as a teaching language for a non-linguistic subject (Geography, Arts and Technology can be taught in English, according to the

¹²⁴ Videsott 2023, 86-90.

¹²⁵ The Ladin names of the valleys are in italics if they differ from the Italian name.

¹²⁶ Videsott 2023, 229-232.

school's choice). Finally, Ladin is not only a teaching subject, but also a teaching language for the subjects of History, Geography and Biology.

Figure 11: Timetable of a 4th-year class at Ladin "Lingaz curriculèr" primary school in Val di Fassa (Trentino)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Mathematics	Mathematics	English	Mathematics	Ladin
2	Italian	Mathematics	Italian	Sport	Mathematics
3	Italian	German	Italian	Sport	Geography
4	English	Religion	Mathematics	German	Religion
5	Music	History	History	Italian	Technology
6		Biology		Italian	
7		Biology		Arts	

Teaching languages:

German	Italian	Ladin	English
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The third school system of the Ladin minority concerns the valleys of Livinallongo and Cortina d'Ampezzo, which are part of the Province of Belluno in the non-autonomous region of Veneto. It is based on the national Italian minority law 482/1999. This system also foresees the teaching of English, as required by Italian national legislation, but it only has a single hour dedicated to the local minority language of Ladin and only two hours per week for the teaching of German. This system is much less multilingual than the South Tyrolean and Fassan systems. But its most relevant point of weakness is that the teaching of the minority language has to be applied for by the parents of the pupils and that the school has to approve it. These conditions are almost unattainable in Cortina d'Ampezzo, where the Ladin minority has become a minority in their own municipality after the Olympic Winter Games in 1956.

Figure 12: Timetable of a 4th-year class at Ladin "Law 492/99" primary school in Livinallongo (Belluno)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1.	Mathematics	English	Italian	Mathematics	Italian	Geography
2.	Mathematics	English	Italian	Geography	Italian	Natural Sciences
3.	Mathematics	Mathematics	Italian	History	Italian	Arts
4.	Italian	Movement and Sport	Mathematics	German	Religion	History
5.	Italian	Movement and Sport	Mathematics	German	Religion	Ladin

Teaching languages:

German	Italian	Ladin	English
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The following minority-relevant conclusions can be drawn from the comparison of the school systems in the Ladin valleys:

- A homogeneous linguistic minority should not have different school systems. It is discriminatory not to give all members of the same minority community the same possibility to learn their own minority language and the most important neighbouring and international languages at school.
- Schools in minority areas should also be able to teach the minority language to pupils who do not speak it at home. This is particularly relevant with regard to increasing migration within EU countries and increasing immigration to EU countries.
- The Ladin minority (as many others in Europe) does not have any major cities in its settlement area. This means that there are hardly any job opportunities for minority members with an academic training in the traditional settlement area and therefore, they are forced to settle outside. But outside of the territory of traditional settlement, minority rights (especially the teaching of minority language at school) usually no longer apply. As a consequence, inclination of a minority member to assimilate with the surrounding population is very strong. It would be important to provide the possibility to learn a minority language on a voluntary basis at least in those cities that are the most relevant for a minority. This kind of offer is sometimes foreseen for the languages of immigrants, but only very rarely in the case of local minority languages.

Its (compulsory) presence in school is certainly one of the most important factors supporting the use of a minority language. But there are a whole range of other framework conditions that can have a positive impact as well. Chapter 6.2.3 identified, in particular, the presence of a dedicated autonomy with the related political, economic, and linguistic framework and the presence of a standard code for a minority language. This statement can be verified very well with the example of the Ladin minority and its affiliation to different administrative units, some of which have autonomous powers (South Tyrol, Trentino, region Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol) and others do not (Province of Belluno, region Veneto). The demographic development of the areas concerned is again used as a yardstick.¹²⁷

Table 14: Population development (absolute figures) in the Ladin valleys between 1971 and 2011
Valleys of Badia and Gardena – Autonomous Province of Bolzano

Municipality ¹²⁸	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	Diff. 1971-2011 (%)
<i>Mareo / Marebbe</i>	2,377	2,413	2,574	2,682	2,907	22.3
<i>San Martin de Tor / San Martino in Badia</i>	1,374	1,427	1,495	1,690	1,729	25.8
<i>La Val / La Valle</i>	1,069	1,143	1,199	1,232	1,299	21.5
Badia	2,271	2,575	2,722	3,015	3,360	48.0
Corvara	951	1,183	1,236	1,266	1,320	38.8
<i>Urtijëi / Ortisei</i>	3,949	4,080	4,226	4,480	4,653	17.8
S. Cristina	1,494	1,567	1,598	1,738	1,871	25.2
<i>Sëlva / Selva Valgardena</i>	2,137	2,294	2,394	2,513	2,660	24.5

Fassa valley – Autonomous Province of Trento

Municipality	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	Diff. 1971-2011 (%)
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¹²⁷ Videsott 2023, 42-43.

¹²⁸ The Ladin names of the municipalities are in italics if they differ from the Italian name.

<i>Cianacei / Canazei</i>	1,447	1,608	1,730	1,818	1,907	31.8
<i>Ciampedel / Campitello di Fassa</i>	588	653	708	732	737	25.3
<i>Mazin / Mazzin</i>	355	379	422	440	494	39.2
<i>Poza / Pozza</i>	1,426	1,621	1,668	1,787	2,138	49.9
<i>Vich / Vigo di Fassa</i> ¹²⁹	815	883	936	1,073	1,207	48.1
<i>Soraga</i>	440	519	590	673	736	67.3
<i>Moena</i>	2,688	2,583	2,567	2,602	2,690	0.1

Valleys of Livinallongo and Ampezzo – Province of Belluno

Municipality	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	Diff. 1971-2011 (%)
<i>Fodom / Livinallongo del Col di Lana</i>	1,718	1,576	1,440	1,417	1,384	-19.4
<i>Col / Colle Santa Lucia</i>	603	556	480	418	391	-35.2
<i>Anpezo / Cortina d'Ampezzo</i>	8,499	8,109	7,109	6,085	5,890	-30.7

Table 14 illustrates the demographic development that the Ladin valleys experienced after 1971, i.e., after the adoption of the Second Statute of Autonomy for the Provinces of Bolzano and Trento. The Ladin valleys, as a whole, have seen a 9.3 % increase in population from 34,201 to 37,373: for a mountainous territory, as the Ladin valleys are, this is quite remarkable. A detailed reading reveals that this increase is limited to the municipalities located in the autonomous provinces, while the three municipalities in the Province of Belluno (with ordinary Statute) have suffered considerable demographic losses. It may be suggested that the demographic evolution of the Ladin municipalities is directly related to the degree of autonomy they enjoy. Where the total population has shrunk, the number of Ladin speakers has evidently also decreased (Livinallongo and Ampezzo). Where the total population has increased, the number of Ladins has either remained stable (Fassa) or even increased (South Tyrol, see above Tables 12 and 13). As a result, the proportion of Ladin speakers within the local population varies today between almost 95% in Val Badia and less than 40% in Cortina d'Ampezzo.

7.3. The relevance of language elaboration and the presence of German and Ladin in the public administration

The example of South Tyrol also illustrates the importance of language development. The German minority in South Tyrol uses Standard German as its written language, and thus a language with expansion level ⑨ (see Chapter 5.4 and Figure 2). This was the overall prerequisite for German in South Tyrol to be fully equalised with Italian. The status as an official language "forces" German in South Tyrol to take continuous measures towards language cultivation and linguistic development, so that its differentiated designation ability is maintained within the constantly changing administrative necessities. The colloquial language also benefits from this constant language maintenance, so that the German minority can fall back on German for both formal and informal situations and does not need any other language for the linguistic coverage of all relevant areas. These framework conditions are naturally very favourable for the minority language. In contrast, the German language islands in northern Italy do not use the standard German language. For formal situations, they therefore usually

¹²⁹ The two municipalities were merged in 2018 into the new municipality Sèn Jan de Fascia.

have to switch to Italian. This “dependence” on Italian naturally also affects the colloquial language and it is pushing the use of the local minority language to ever smaller areas.

Ladin, on the other hand, does not yet have a generally recognised standard language. Language cultivation and linguistic development continues to take place at a dialectal level, and is thus dependent on the legal framework of the respective administrative unit to which the valleys belong. This leads to the fact that the degree of protection enjoyed by Ladin in the different valleys and the quantity of written Ladin (as an indicator for linguistic elaboration) are strongly intercorrelated. The current situation of the Ladin varieties results in the following ranking of the use of Ladin: Ladin in Val Badia (maximum use) > Val Gardena > Fassa > Livinallongo > Cortina d’Ampezzo (minimum use). This gradation can be seen in many areas, for example in the traditional and new media, in the church, at public events, or as a cultural feature in the field of tourism. Transposed to H. Kloss’s scheme for language elaboration, the situation concerning the different Ladin varieties is that only those of Val Badia, Val Gardena, and Val di Fassa significantly exceed the ① quadrant signalling the most basic written usage of the different dialects. However, even for the Ladin dialects spoken (and written) in these advantaged valleys, the other quadrants up to ⑦ are difficult to access, while ⑧ and ⑨ quadrants are outright inaccessible. At the moment, the Ladin varieties of Val Badia, Gardena and Fassa are gradually consolidating their position in quadrant ④. The fact that Ladin is elaborated in parallel for five varieties (one per valley) at the same time and not uniformly for one standard variety complicates the process considerably.

How the different legal framework conditions and degree of elaboration affect the use of Ladin is finally illustrated by its presence in the public administration.¹³⁰

In the Province of Bolzano, the status of administrative language was granted to Ladin in 1989, thanks to the Italian Presidential Decree n° 574 of 15 July 1988.

The decisive passage (Article 32, paragraphs 1 to 5) states the following:

1. The Ladin-speaking citizens of the Province of Bolzano have the right to use their own language in their oral and written relations with the services of the public administration, excluding the armed forces and the police, located in the Ladin localities of the same province with the local authorities and educational establishments of the said localities, and with the services of the province which carry out functions exclusively or mainly in the interest of the Ladin population, even if they are located outside the said localities, as well as with the concessionaires who operate exclusively in the Ladin localities.
2. The administrations and concessionaires referred to in paragraph 1 are obliged to reply orally in Ladin or in writing in Italian and German, followed by the text in Ladin.
3. Authentic instruments issued by the administrations referred to in paragraph 1 shall be drawn up in Italian and German, followed by the text in Ladin. The right of the citizen belonging to the Ladin linguistic group residing in the Province of Bolzano to be examined and questioned in his or her mother tongue with the help of an interpreter, both in Italian and German language proceedings, remains unaffected.
4. At meetings of the elective bodies of the local authorities of the Ladin localities of the Province of Bolzano, the members of these bodies may use the Ladin language in oral speeches, with immediate translation into Italian or German on request if some members

¹³⁰ Videsott 2023, 132-136.

of these bodies declare that they do not know the Ladin language. The relevant minutes are drawn up jointly in Italian, German and Ladin.

- In their relations with the services of the public administration located in the Province of Bolzano, Ladin-speaking citizens may use Italian or German.

The municipalities of the Badia and Gardena valleys are therefore among the few European localities whose administration is strictly trilingual.

Figure 13: Trilingual administrative text from a Ladin municipality in South Tyrol

<u>ORIGINALE / ORIGINAL</u>		Nro. 83/2020																		
COMUNE DI MAREBBE Provincia di Bolzano	GEMEINDE ENNEBERG Provinz Bozen	COMUN DE MAREO Provinzia da Balsan																		
DELIBERA DELLA GIUNTA COMUNALE	BESCHLUSS DES GEMEINDEAUSSCHUSSES	DELIBERAZIUN DLA JUNTA DE COMUN																		
	Seduta del/Sitzung vom/Sontada dai	ore/Uhr/ora																		
	26.02.2020	17:00 h																		
-----	-----	-----																		
<i>OGGETTO:</i>	<i>BETRIEFT:</i>	<i>ARGOMONT:</i>																		
Sistemazione del piazzale presso il centro scolastico di S. Vigilio di Marebbe - Approvazione del terzo stato di avanzamento	Oberflächengestaltung Schulkomplex St. Vigil in Enneberg - Genehmigung des 3. Baufortschrittes	Sistemaziun dla plaza pro le zënter scolastich a Al Plan de Mareo - Aproaziun dla terza pert dai laurs																		
Previo esaurimento delle formalità prescritte dalla vigente legge regionale sull'Ordinamento dei Comuni, vennero per oggi convocati, nella solita sala delle adunanze, i componenti di questa Giunta comunale.	Nach Erfüllung der im geltenden Regionalgesetz über die Gemeindeordnung enthaltenen Formvorschriften wurden für heute, im üblichen Sitzungssaal, die Mitglieder dieses Gemeindeausschusses einberufen.	Dô l'ademplimont dles formalitês scrites dant dla lege regionala en valüta söl'Ordinamont dai Comuns, èl gnü cherdé éte, tal salf dles sontades, i componënc' de cösta Junta de Comun.																		
Sono presenti:	Anwesend sind:	Presënc' è:																		
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>(1)</th> <th>(2)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>dott. Albert Palfrader</td> <td>Sindaco/Bürgermeister/Ombolt</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>dott. Marco Pizzinini</td> <td>Vicesindaco/Vizebürgermeister/Vizeombolt</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>dott. ssa Elisabeth Frenner Suani</td> <td>Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Patrick Complojer</td> <td>Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alessandro Huber</td> <td>Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		(1)	(2)	dott. Albert Palfrader	Sindaco/Bürgermeister/Ombolt		dott. Marco Pizzinini	Vicesindaco/Vizebürgermeister/Vizeombolt		dott. ssa Elisabeth Frenner Suani	Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur		Patrick Complojer	Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur		Alessandro Huber	Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur	
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Patrick Complojer	Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur																			
Alessandro Huber	Assessore/Gemeindereferent/Assessur																			
Assiste la Segretaria comunale, Sign.ra	Seinen Beistand leistet Die Gemein- desekretärin, Frau	Secretêr dla sontada è la Secretêria de Comun, Sign.ra																		
	dott. Verena Ellecosta																			
Constatato che il numero degli intervenuti è sufficiente per la legalità dell'adunanza, il Sig.	Nach Feststellung der Beschlussfähigkeit, übernimmt Herr	Dô avëi constaté che la numerä dai antergnüs basta por la legalitê dl'endünada, sorantöl le Sign.																		
	dott. Albert Palfrader																			
nella sua qualità di Sindaco ne assume la presidenza e sottopone alla Giunta comunale la trattazione dell'oggetto suddetto.	in seiner Eigenschaft als Bürgermeister den Vorsitz und unterbreitet dem Gemeindeausschuss die Behandlung des obgenannten Gegenstandes.	te söa cualitê da Ombolt la presidënza y i sotmët ala Junta de Comun la trataziun dal argomont soradit.																		
(1) assente/abwesend/assënt (2) assente nella trattazione e votazione del presente oggetto/abwesend bei Behandlung und Abstimmung dieses Gegenstandes/assënt pla trataziun y votaziun de cösc argomont																				

In Val di Fassa, in the Province of Trento, Ladin became an administrative language in 1994, thanks to the provisions of Legislative Decree n° 592 of 16 December 1993:

1. Citizens belonging to the Ladin population of the Province of Trento have the right to use their own language in verbal and written communications with the educational institutions and offices, with their seat in Ladin localities, of the State, the Region, the Province and the local authorities, as well as with their dependent entities, and with the offices of the Region and the Province which carry out functions exclusively in the interest of the Ladin population, even if they are located outside the above-mentioned area. The armed forces and the police are excluded from these state offices.
2. When the request, application or declaration is made in Ladin, the offices and administrations referred to in paragraph 1 shall reply orally in Ladin, or in writing in Italian, which is the official text, followed by the text in Ladin.
3. In Ladin localities, public acts intended for the public in general, public acts intended for more than one of the offices referred to in paragraph 1 and individual public acts intended for public use, including those requiring public display or posting and identity cards, shall be written in Italian followed by the Ladin text.
4. In meetings of the elective bodies of the local authorities of the Ladin area of the Province of Trento, the members of these bodies may use the Ladin language in oral speeches, with an immediate translation into Italian if any of the members of these bodies declare that they do not know the Ladin language. The minutes are written in Italian and Ladin.

Therefore, in Val di Fassa, the local administration is bilingual Italian-Ladin:

Figure 14: Bilingual administrative text from a Ladin municipality in Val di Fassa

<p>OGGETTO: Esame ed della nota di aggiornamento allo schema del Documento unico di Programmazione 2020-2022.</p> <p>Delibera n. 51 d.d. 25.11.2019</p> <p>Premesso che dal 1° gennaio 2015 è entrata in vigore la nuova contabilità armonizzata di cui al D.Lgs. 23 giugno 2011 n. 118, integrato e modificato dal D.Lgs. 10 agosto 2014 n. 126;</p> <p>Richiamata la Legge Provinciale 9 dicembre 2015 n. 18 "Modificazioni della legge provinciale di contabilità 1979 e altre disposizioni di adeguamento dell'ordinamento provinciale e degli enti locali al decreto legislativo 23 giugno 2011, n. 118 (Disposizioni in materia di armonizzazione dei sistemi contabili e degli schemi di bilancio delle regioni, degli enti locali e dei loro organismi, a norma degli articoli 1 e 2 della legge 5 maggio 2009, n. 42)" che, in attuazione dell'articolo 79 dello Statuto Speciale e per coordinare l'ordinamento contabile dei comuni con l'ordinamento finanziario provinciale, anche in relazione a quanto disposto dall'articolo 10 (Armonizzazione dei sistemi contabili e degli schemi di bilancio degli Enti locali e dei loro enti ed organismi strutturali) della Legge Regionale 3 agosto 2015 n. 22, dispone che gli enti locali trentini e i loro enti e organismi strumentali applicano le disposizioni in materia di armonizzazione dei sistemi contabili e degli schemi di bilancio contenute nel titolo I del Decreto legislativo n. 118 del 2011, nonché i relativi allegati, con il posticipo di un anno dei termini previsti dal medesimo decreto;</p> <p>Considerato che la stessa L.P. n. 18/2015, all'art. 49, comma 2, individua gli articoli del Decreto legislativo n. 267 del 2000 che si applicano agli enti locali trentini;</p> <p>Rilevato che il comma 1 dell'art. 54 della Legge Provinciale di cui al paragrafo precedente prevede che "in relazione alla disciplina contenuta nel decreto legislativo n. 267 del 2000 non richiamata da questa legge continuano ad applicarsi le corrispondenti norme dell'ordinamento regionale o provinciale";</p> <p>Atteso che, in esecuzione della Legge Provinciale 09.12.2015 n. 18, dal 1 gennaio 2016 gli enti devono provvedere alla tenuta della contabilità finanziaria sulla base dei principi generali previsti dal D.Lgs. 23 giugno 2011 n. 118 e s.m.;</p> <p>Richiamato l'art. 11 del D.Lgs. n. 118/2011, così come modificato ed integrato dal D.Lgs. n. 126/2014, il quale prescrive che a decorrere dal 2017 gli enti adottano gli schemi di bilancio</p>	<p>SE TRATA: Vardèr fora e aproèr l document de aggiornament al schem del Document Unich de Programazion 2020-2022.</p> <p>Deliberazion n. 51 dai 25.11.2019</p> <p><i>Dit dantfora che da l' 01.01.2015 l'é jit en doura la neva contabilità armonisèda perveduda dal D.Lgs dai 23 de jugn del 2011 n. 118, integrà e mudà dal D.Lgs. dai 10 de aost del 2014 n. 126.</i></p> <p><i>Recordà la Lege Provinzièla dai 9 de dezember del 2015, n. 18 "Mudazions de la lege provinzièla de contabilità 1979 e autra despojizions per adatèr l'ordenament provinzièl e di enc locai al decret legislatif dai 23 de jugn del 2011, n. 118 (Desposizions en cont de armonisazion di sistemes contaboi e di schemes de bilanz de la regions, di enc locai e de sie organismes, aldò di articoi 1 e 2 de la lege dai 5 de mé del 2009, n. 42)" che, tel meter en doura l'articol 79 del Statut Spezièl e per coordenèr l' ordenament contaboi di Comuns co l' ordenament finanzièl provinzièl, ence aldò de chel che despon l'articol 10 (Armonisazion di sistemes contaboi e di schemes de bilanz di Enc locai e de si enc e organismes strutturèi) de la Lege Regionèla dai 3 de aost del 2015 n. 22, la despon che i enc locai trentins e si enc e organismes strumentèi i mete en doura la desposizions en cont de armonisazion di sistemes contaboi e di schemes de bilanz che l'é ite tel titol I del Decret legislatif n. 118 del 2011, e ence sia enjontes, col sperlongiament de un an di termegn pervedui dal medemo decret;</i></p> <p><i>Conscidrà che la medema L.P. n. 18/ 2015, te l'art. 49 coma 2, la troa fora i articoi del Decret legislatif n. 267 del 2000 che vèrda i enc locai trentins;</i></p> <p><i>Metù al luster che l coma 1 de l'art. 54 de la Lege Provinzièla desche dit tel paragraf de sora l perveit che "per chel che vèrda la desposizions del decret legislatif n. 267 del 2000 no recordèdes te chesta lege, se seghita a meter en doura la normes de l'ordenament regionèl o provinzièl che corespon";</i></p> <p><i>Tout dant che, descheche perveit la Lege Provinzièla 09.12.2015 n. 18, dal prum de jené del 2016 i enc i cogn endrezèr la contabilità finanzièla aldò di prinzipies generèi pervedui dal D.Lgs. dai 23 de jugn del 2011 n. 118 e s.m.;</i></p> <p><i>Recordà l'art. 11 del D.Lgs. n. 118/2011, descheche l'é stat mudà e integrà dal D.Lgs. n. 126/2014, che l prescrif che a tachèr dal 2017 i enc i met en doura i schemes de bilanz pervedui</i></p>
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In the Livinallongo and Ampezzo valleys, the provisions of Articles 7-9 of the National Minorities Act n° 482 of 15 December 1999 shall apply.

Art. 7.

1. In the municipalities referred to in Article 3, the members of the municipal councils and other bodies with a collegiate structure of the administration may use, within the framework of the work of the bodies themselves, the language admitted to protection.

2. The provision referred to in paragraph 1 shall also apply to councillors of mountain communities, provinces and regions whose territory includes municipalities in which the language of protection is recognised and which together constitute at least 15% of the population concerned.
3. If one or more members of the collegiate bodies referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 declare that they do not know the language admitted for protection, an immediate translation into Italian must be guaranteed.
4. Where acts intended for public use are drawn up in both languages, only acts and deliberations drawn up in Italian shall have legal effect.

Art. 8.

1. In the municipalities referred to in Article 3, the municipal council may, with charges to the budget of the municipality itself, in the absence of other resources available for this purpose, provide for the publication in the language accepted for the protection of official acts of the State, of the regions and local authorities and of non-territorial public bodies, without prejudice to the exclusive legal value of acts in Italian.

Art. 9.

1. Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 7, in the municipalities referred to in Article 3, the oral and written use of the language admitted to protection in the offices of public administrations is authorised. The armed forces and police forces of the State are excluded from the application of this paragraph.
2. In order to make the exercise of the powers referred to in paragraph 1 effective, public administrations shall ensure, also by means of agreements with other entities, the presence of staff capable of responding to requests from the public using the language authorised for protection.

The use of written Ladin in the three municipalities of Livinallongo, Col and Cortina d'Ampezzo is still the exception, but is developing.

In order to fulfil its new role as an administrative language, the Ladin varieties of Val Badia, Val Gardena and Val di Fassa were given a specific nomenclature in the two decades between 1990 and 2010, based on the official Italian and German terminologies. The elevation of Ladin to the status of a local official language was of utmost importance. It drove the lexical modernisation boost in Ladin essential for the use of a minority language in today's world. It would never have happened without Ladin's status as an administrative language. With regard to the identification of good practices in European minority policy, the elevation of Ladin to a local administrative language can be counted as one of them.

8. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF EUROPE'S LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

From the aforementioned conclusions, suggestions can be drawn as to how effectively promote linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe. The EU motto "United in Diversity" should be brought to life. The starting point for this are the following postulates, which we consider to be generally valid:

- Minority languages need speakers otherwise they will perish.¹³¹
- In order for minority languages to continue to have speakers, it is first and foremost necessary to be able to live and raise children (= new speakers) in the respective minority areas. This requires that a certain standard of living in minority areas is ensured, also to prevent massive emigration from minority areas. Without speakers of minority languages, rights for these languages are also invalid. Immigrants in minority areas should (and should have the possibility to) be integrated also linguistically.
- For the purpose of maintaining a minority community, granting adequate autonomy has proven to be particularly effective. It has to be stressed that autonomy does not mean secession.

8.1. General measures for the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity

- The *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages* and several reports and resolutions of the EU Parliament (*Report on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union* [2013], *Resolution on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union* [2013], *Resolution on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States* [2018]) contain a large set of provisions useful for the goal to preserve European linguistic and cultural diversity. The EU Member States should be encouraged to ratify (where provided) and fully implement them.
- Ways should be identified for obtaining as accurate information as possible on the number of minority language speakers and their (minority) language competences. Actions aimed at preserving a language presuppose knowledge about this fundamental criterion of its vitality. Surveys granting anonymity are conceivable and feasible, as it is proven by the concrete case of South Tyrol.
- Experience shows that the establishment of various forms of autonomy, cultural or territorial, with the aim of matching some basic needs of the minority group are particularly effective in preserving minority languages.
- The EU has several indirect possibilities to support minorities and minority languages: programmes for the promotion of languages and cultures, employment and social integration, regionalisation and cross-border cooperation.¹³² Representative organizations of linguistic minorities should be given the legal possibility to access these programmes, and, if necessary, introduce new regulations. They should also be given, where opportune, support for consulting for the submission of funds applications and managerial handling.

¹³¹ This is, of course, also true for large languages, but in their case, the risk of massive speaker reduction is not present under normal circumstances.

¹³² Such programmes are, for example, in the field of Education, the Erasmus+ Programme (<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>), in the field of social integration, the European Social Fund (<https://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp>), or in the field of cross-border cooperation, the Interreg-Programme (<https://interreg.eu/>).

8.2. Measures in favour of minority language acquisition

- Long-established and newly-arrived adult inhabitants of a minority area must be given the possibility to learn the minority language. To this end, special courses sponsored by public funds can prove useful. EU agencies should contribute to the said courses by planning their investment, along with having regard for the degree of extinction that individual languages face.
- Families are and remain the most important place to pass on minority languages as mother tongues. Parents must be supported and incentivised by all possible means to this task.
- The role of families must be supported, continued and even taken over by the educational institutions where the language is no longer passed on in the family. Minority languages should be taught (also in their formal, written form) in the schools of the respective minority. The teaching of a minority language in a minority settlement area should be made compulsory for all pupils, whether they come from minority families or not.
- The elaboration of teaching materials for minority languages as L1 and L2 should be stimulated with a dedicated European programme, accessible also for very small minorities.
- Optic bilingualism in toponymy indications and public signs of any kind should be encouraged, since they are likely to be a first contact with and a possible introduction to the minority language for many.
- The European Union should promote the presence of minority languages in digital systems. Given the importance and relevance of these systems, absence of minority languages must be equated with damage to the fundamental right to express oneself in one's mother tongue.

8.3. Measures in favour of status and corpus planning of minority languages

- Minority languages should be used in as many areas of daily life as possible, from administration to the media. This only becomes possible in the presence of a standard form for at least the language's written use, and requires a certain degree of language elaboration. The European Union should support the endeavours aimed at the achievement of these conditions of standardisation and elaboration.
- Minority languages, not unlike state languages, need a basic infrastructure: comprehensive dictionaries, school grammars and a corpus of texts. For minority languages these tools are not easily available. EU programmes should support, in a more coordinated manner, the realisation of the said infrastructure, which has to be considered as a strategic goal of the EU linguistic policy. The EU should adopt and specifically promote the objectives of the UNESCO Indigenous Language Decade (2022-2032)¹³³ in a similar initiative.
- A future-oriented language policy can not only aim at the (museum-like) preservation of the existing, but also at maintaining of the use value of a language. In most cases, language elaboration processes are necessary for this. These are particularly effective when they lead to the establishment of a replicable and teachable standard variety. The realisation of such standard varieties should find its way into European language policy.

The European public and decision-makers alike must take note of the fact that two thirds of the European minority languages are decreasing and several are rapidly approaching the threshold of extinction. In order to stop and, if possible, reverse this trend, targeted measures are urgently needed.

¹³³ <https://www.unesco.org/en/decades/indigenous-languages>

They must be built on the basis of comprehensive and reliable data, which in most cases are unfortunately still lacking.

If the current development is met with indifference, it is easy to predict that Europe will experience a linguistic and cultural desertification even before the impending climate disasters.

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ANNEX I: THE MOTTO OF THE EU IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES SPOKEN WITHIN THE EU

Linguistic diversity within the European Union at a glance: the motto of the EU *In varietate concordia* in the different official languages of the Union and in different minority and minoritised languages spoken within the EU.¹³⁴

Table 15: The motto of the EU in the different official and minority languages of the EU

<i>Language</i>	<i>State where the language is official or forms an autochthonous minority group</i>	<i>Translation (where it was possible to obtain one from the minorities concerned)</i>
Albanian	Croatia (arbënisht)	<i>Bashkim në tjetërsi</i>
	Greece (arvanite)	
	Italy (arbëresh)	<i>Bashkuar në diversitet</i>
Armenian	Bulgaria	Уједињени су (<i>Miavorvats bazmazanut'yan meј</i>)
	Greece	
	Hungary	
	Poland	
	Romania	
Arumanian	Bulgaria	<i>Deadun cu alanți</i>
	Greece	
	Romania	
Barranquenho	Portugal	<i>Unida na dibersidade</i>
Basque	Spain	<i>Bat eginik aniztasunean</i>
	France	
Belarusian	Czech Republic	<i>З'яднанья ў размаітасці (Zjadnanyja ũ razmaitaści)</i>
	Estonia	
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Poland	
Bosnian	Croatia	<i>Ujedinjeni u različitosti</i>
Breton	France	<i>Unanet el liested</i>
Bulgarian	Bulgaria	<i>Единство в многообразието (Edinstvo v mnogoobraziето)</i>
	Czech Republic	
	Greece (Pomak)	
	Hungary	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
	Spain	

¹³⁴ Versions in the official languages quoted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motto_of_the_European_Union. Versions in minority languages: study's data collection. The version in the Romany (language not considered in the study) is *Ando mindenfelitiko khetan*.

Catalan (incl. Valencian)	France	<i>Unida en la diversitat</i>
	Italy (Alghero)	
Corsican	France	<i>Unita in a diversità</i>
Croatian	Croatia	<i>Ujedinjeni u različitosti</i>
	Czech Republic	
	Hungary	
	Italy	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
	Austria (Burgenland-Croats)	<i>Jedinstvo u različnosti</i>
Czech	Czech Republic	<i>Jednotná v rozmanitosti</i>
	Austria (Vienna)	
	Croatia	
	Poland	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
Danish	Denmark	<i>Forenet i mangfoldighed</i>
	Germany	
Dutch	Belgium	<i>In verscheidenheid verenigd</i>
	The Netherlands	
	France	
English	Ireland	<i>United in diversity</i>
	Malta	
Estonian	Estonia	<i>Ühinenud mitmekesisuses</i>
	Latvia	
Faroese	Denmark	<i>Sameint í fjølbroytni</i>
Finnish	Finland	<i>Moninaisuudessaan yhtenäinen</i>
	Estonia	
	Sweden	
Franco-Provencal	France	<i>Unia deun la diversità</i>
	Italy (Val d'Aosta)	
	Italy (Faeto)	
Frisian	Netherlands	<i>Ferbûn yn ferskaat</i>
	Germany (North Frisian)	<i>Bröket tuhuupe</i>
	Germany (Sater Frisian)	<i>Truch Ferskiele ferbuunden</i>
Friulian	Italy	<i>Adun te diversitàt</i>
French	Belgium	<i>Unie dans la diversité</i>
	France	
	Luxembourg	
	Italy (Aosta Valley)	
Galician	Spain	<i>Unida na diversidade</i>

German	Austria	<i>In Vielfalt geeint</i>
	Belgium	
	Germany	
	Luxembourg	
	Italy (Standard)	
	Croatia	
	Czech Republic	
	Denmark	
	Estonia	
	France (Standard)	
	Hungary	
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Poland	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
	Slovenia (Standard)	
	France (Alsatian)	<i>Einheit én d'Vielfaltikeit</i>
	Slovenia (Gottschee)	<i>Aus tsom ischt bi ðroins</i>
	Italy (Walser of Eische/Issime – Aosta Valley)	<i>Ellji zseeme wa nöit ellji glljéich</i>
Italy (Walser of Greschòney/Gressoney – Aosta Valley)	<i>Zéeme én der Verschidenheit</i>	
Italy (Walser of Pomatt/Formazza - Piedmont)	<i>Im unnerscheit einig</i>	
Italy (Walser of Im Land/Alagna - Piedmont)	<i>Im underschaid verainiguti</i>	
Italy (Walser of Remmalju/Rimella - Piedmont)	<i>Tschemund wanj wol umglihe</i>	
Italy (Cimbrians of Siben Komoin/7 Comuni - Veneto)	<i>Andarst Mittanàndar</i>	
Italy (Cimbrians of Lusern - Trentino)	<i>Pittnàndar in di àndarhait</i>	
Italy (Cimbrians of Dreizehn Komoin/13 Comuni - Veneto)	<i>Gaveisat in uangalaicha</i>	
Italy (Cimbrians of the Cansiglio - Veneto)	<i>Galéganet sùà in nèt galàiche</i>	

	Italy (Germans of Bersntol/Valle del Fersina - Trentino)	<i>En de varietet oa'ne</i>
	Italy (Germans of Zahre/Sauris - Friuli)	<i>Ola zome in der unterschtlikhat</i>
	Italy (Germans of Tischlbong/Timau - Friuli)	<i>Zoma in da unglackickait</i>
	Italy (Germans of Plodn/Sappada - Friuli)	<i>Ûnderscht unt pintnònt</i>
Greek	Cyprus	<i>Ενωμένοι στην πολυμορφία (Enoméni stin polymorfía)</i>
	Greece	
	Bulgaria	
	Czech Republic	
	Hungary	
	Italy (griko)	
	Italy (gricano)	
	Romania	<i>Διαφορετικοί και ενωμένοι (Diaforetikoí kai enwménoi)</i>
Hungarian	Hungary	<i>Egység a sokféleségben</i>
	Austria (Burgenland)	
	Croatia	
	Czech Republic	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
	Slovenia	
Irish	Ireland	<i>Aontaithe san éagsúlacht</i>
Italian	Italy	<i>Unita nella diversità</i>
	Croatia	
	Romania	
	Slovenia	
Karaim	Lithuania	<i>Birliškiañ kioptiušliuliukkia</i>
	Poland	<i>Kosulhan keptirililike</i>
Kashubian	Poland	<i>Jedniò we wszelejaskòscë</i>
Ladin	Italy	<i>Adum tla desferenzia</i>
Latvian	Latvia	<i>Vienota dažādībā</i>
	Estonia	
	Lithuania	
Lithuanian	Lithuania	<i>Suvienijusi įvairovę</i>
	Estonia	
	Latvia	
	Poland	
Livonian	Latvia	
Luxembourgish	Luxembourg	

	Belgium	<i>An der Diversitéit gëeent</i>
Macedonian	Bulgaria	<i>Обединети во различноста (Obedineti vo razlicnosta)</i>
	Croatia	
	Greece	
	Romania	
Maltese	Malta	<i>Magħquda fid-diversità</i>
Megleno-Romanian	Greece	<i>Priună di toati turlili</i>
Mirandese	<i>Portugal</i>	<i>Armanada na dibersidade</i>
Montenegrin	<i>Croatia</i>	
Occitan	<i>France</i>	<i>Unida dins la diversitat</i>
	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Unia en la diversitat</i>
	<i>Spain (Aranese)</i>	<i>Unida ena diversitat</i>
Polish	Poland	<i>Zjednoczona w różnorodności</i>
	Czech Republic	
	Estonia	
	Hungary	
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	
Portuguese	Portugal	<i>Unida na diversidade</i>
Romanian	Romania	<i>Uniți în diversitate</i>
	Bulgaria	
	Hungary	
Russian	Bulgaria	<i>Объединены в разнообразии (Ob"yedineny v raznoobrazii)</i>
	Czech Republic	
	Estonia	
	Finland	
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Poland	
	Romania (Lipovans)	
	Slovakia	
Sami	Finland	<i>Máנגgahámatvuodástis oktiláš [North Saami] Maangáhámásášvuodástis ohtâlås [Inari Saami] Määnghämmsažvuodstes öhttnaž [Skolt Saami]</i>
	Sweden	
Sardinian	Italy	<i>Unidos in sa diversidade</i>
Serbian	Croatia	<i>Уједињени у различитости (Ujedinjeni u različitostii)</i>
	Czech Republic	
	Hungary	

	Romania	
Slovak	Slovakia	<i>Zjednotení v rozmanitosti</i>
	Austria (Vienna)	
	Croatia	
	Czech Republic	
	Hungary	
	Poland	
	Romania	
Slovene	Slovenia	<i>Združena v raznolikosti</i>
	Austria	
	Croatia	
	Hungary	
	Italy (standard)	
	Italy (Val Resia)	<i>Wkop pa či difarent</i>
Sorbian	Germany (Upper S.)	<i>Jednota we wšelakorosći</i>
	Germany (Lower S.)	<i>Jadnotka we wšakorakosći</i>
Spanish	Spain	<i>Unida en la diversidad</i>
Swedish	Sweden	<i>Förenade i mångfalden</i>
	Finland	
Tabarchino	Italy (Sardinia)	<i>Ōnii inta diversità</i>
Tatar	Estonia	
	Finland	<i>Törlektä berdämlek</i>
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Poland	
	Romania	
Turkish	Bulgaria	<i>Çesitlilikte birlik</i>
	Greece	
	Romania	
Ukrainian	Bulgaria	<i>Об'єднані в різноманітності (Ob'yednani v riznomanitnosti) [standard Ukrainian]</i> <i>з'єднані у розманітності (Z'yednocheni u romanitnosti) [Rusyn]</i> <i>Єднотна у розманітності (Jednotna u rozmanytosti) [Ruthenian]</i>
	Croatia	
	Czech Republic	
	Estonia	
	Hungary	
	Latvia	
	Lithuania	
	Poland	
	Romania	
	Slovakia	

ANNEX II: MODALITIES IN THE EU MEMBER STATES TO SURVEY THE SIZE OF MINORITIES AND/OR THE NUMBER OF SPEAKERS OF (MINORITY) LANGUAGES

Austria

The census in 2011 did not record any data whatsoever concerning the languages of minorities. It was the first registry-based census. The 1991 and 2001 censuses were instead carried out using the method of universal direct enumeration based on field operations with compilation of questionnaires by enumerators (still including an explicit question) which, however, referred to the *native language* in 1991 and to the *colloquial language* in 2001. The results of the latter therefore were seen as too low by the ethnic group organisations as, “In the end, though, there are no really reliable current data on the numbers of members of ethnic groups in Austria”.¹³⁵ The next census was conducted during the period of November 2021 to the end of 2022 and, again, did not collect data on ethnic groups or minority languages.

Belgium

Belgium does not collect data on ethnicity or race. The figures given with respect to this normally reflect the proportion of the inhabitants of the respective communities. The censuses, for their part, are registry-based¹³⁶ and this system was also maintained in 2021.¹³⁷ The last census including language-related questions was carried out in 1947 (and published in 1954). On 24 July 1961, language censuses were abolished in Belgium by law. In 1962, the language border was established as part of a larger community compromise. No official information about language knowledge or language activity has been issued since then.¹³⁸

Bulgaria

The last census in Bulgaria was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹³⁹ The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. The questionnaire included specific questions (answering them was voluntary):

- 10: Ethnic group [Answers: Bulgarian / Turkish / Roma / Other [with the possibility to specify] / Not stated];
- 11: Mother tongue [Answers: Bulgarian / Turkish / Roma / Other [with the possibility to specify] / Not stated];
- 13: Religious denomination [Answers: East Orthodox / Catholic / Protestant / Muslim Sunity / Muslim Shiity / Other [with the possibility to specify] / No religion / Not stated].

The subsequent census of 2021 was also carried out with the same modalities.¹⁴⁰

Croatia

¹³⁵ Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 78.

¹³⁶ <http://ghdx.healthdata.org/record/belgium-census-2011>.

¹³⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/system/files/improving-education-data_belgium_0.pdf.

¹³⁸ <https://www.docu.vlaamserand.be/node/12921?language=fr>.

¹³⁹ <https://www.kas.de/de/statische-inhalte-detail/-/content/bulgarien-stellt-sich-vor>.

¹⁴⁰ <https://sofiaglobe.com/2021/09/16/bulgaria-extends-online-phase-of-2021-census-to-september-30/>.

The Croatian census of 2013 was carried out as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁴¹ The questionnaire included specific questions:¹⁴²

- 19. Ethnicity [Answers: Croat / Other [with the request to state which] / Not declared],
- 20. Mother tongue [Answers: Croatian / Other [with the request to state which], and
- 21. Religious denomination [Answers: Catholic / Other [with the request to state which] / Atheist / Not declared].

As far as information is available, the 2021 census was carried out with the same modalities as well. The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. The first available results, however, do not mention ethnic or linguistic topics.¹⁴³

Czech Republic

The census in 2011 was carried out as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires. The 2021 census also maintained this modality¹⁴⁴ with the possibility to compile the questionnaires in the field (paper) or online. Both censuses 2011 and 2021 have provided for relevant questions:¹⁴⁵

- B8: "What is your language / mother language?" [Answers (up to two answers possible): Czech / Polish / Ukrainian / Slovak / German / Vietnamese / Roma / Russian / Sign language / Other [with the possibility to specify]];
- B9: "Please state your ethnicity (your belonging to the nation, national or ethnic minority you identify yourself with)" [Voluntary item. Up to two ethnicities can be stated. No predefined answers];
- B10: "Please state your religious belief (religious persuasion, movement, church or community you identify yourself with)" [Voluntary item. Believers identifying with a church or community may state its name. Two other answer options: Believers not identified with a church or religious society / Without religious belief].

Denmark

For reasons of privacy, Denmark does not survey ethnic or linguistic affiliation, as it is "personal information" (Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 105). The numerical size of the minority populations is therefore only based on estimates. Census in Denmark is registry-based.¹⁴⁶

Estonia

The last census in Estonia was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires. The questionnaire was included in a sector entitled "Questions about origin, language skills and religion" specific questions related to language and ethnicity:¹⁴⁷

- What is your ethnicity?
- What is your mother tongue?
- Do you speak some local language form, dialect or sub-dialect? [Please name the local language form, dialect or sub-dialect you speak best]

¹⁴¹ https://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm.

¹⁴² <https://web.dzs.hr/Eng/censuses/census2011/forms/P1-WEB.pdf>.

¹⁴³ <https://popis2021.hr/>.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.czso.cz/csu/scitani2021/first-interesting-facts-from-the-2021-census-a-brief-summary>.

¹⁴⁵ https://www.czso.cz/documents/142154812/156229594/LSF_2021_vysvetlivky_EN_VZOR.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.dst.dk/Site/Dst/SingleFiles/GetArchiveFile.aspx?fi=4693288513&fo=0&ext=kvaldel>.

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.stat.ee/en/statistics-estonia/population-census-2021/2011-population-and-housing-census/personal-questionnaire>.

- Do you speak other languages besides your mother tongue? [Please name the other languages besides the mother tongue that you speak, according to the level of language proficiency]
- Do you have any religious affiliation? (response is voluntary) [Please indicate your religious affiliation (answering is voluntary)]”.

Estonia’s 2021 population census was carried out during 2022 using the combined method. This means using data from state databases, i.e., registers, and requesting data directly from people in order to obtain information that is not available in registers. “The dataset or census characteristics for which data are collected in the census have been fixed in the Official Statistic Act and in the Regulation 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council”¹⁴⁸ and also foresees information about this group of topics:

- ethnic nationality, mother tongue, foreign language skills, religion, number of children given birth to, and age of a woman at the time of birth of her first child – demographic data.¹⁴⁹

Finland

The census in Finland is registry based.¹⁵⁰ No official statistics are kept on ethnicity. However, statistics of the Finnish population according to language, citizenship and country of birth are available.¹⁵¹ These data are published annually. Finland distinguishes between “national languages” (Finnish, Swedish, Sami) and “foreign languages” (all others).¹⁵²

France

Since 2004, the census in France has been based on an annual collection of information successively concerning all municipalities with less than 10,000 inhabitants and 40% of dwellings in municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants over a five-year period. The first five Annual Census Surveys (ACS) were conducted from 2004 to 2008. They produced the results of the 2006 census, the mid-point of the period. Since then, each year, census results are produced from the five most recent annual surveys, dropping the information from the oldest survey and taking into account the new survey (“rolling census”).¹⁵³ The 2020 census was announced as a rolling census integrated by requesting data directly from statistically selected people in order to obtain information that is not available in registers.¹⁵⁴ France’s censuses do not ask about religion or ethnicity.¹⁵⁵

Germany

For its censuses (the last was carried out in 2022¹⁵⁶), Germany applies the registry-based method. The data are integrated by questioning a selected sample (combined method). The questionnaire does not include questions related to religion or ethnicity.¹⁵⁷

Greece

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.stat.ee/en/statistics-estonia/population-census-2021>.

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/517122019002/consolide>.

¹⁵⁰ https://www.stat.fi/tup/vl2010/index_en.html.

¹⁵¹ https://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html#Population%20by%20origin%20and%20language,%202019.

¹⁵² https://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html#Population%20by%20language%20on%2031%20December.

¹⁵³ <https://www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/source/serie/s1321>.

¹⁵⁴ [The new French census ; The new French rolling census](#).

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.thelocal.fr/20200115/frances-2020-census-who-will-be-counted-and-when/>.

¹⁵⁶ [Zensus 2022](#); https://www.zensus2022.de/DE/Wer-wird-befragt/_inhalt.html.

¹⁵⁷ https://www.zensus2022.de/DE/Wer-wird-befragt/Musterfragebogen_Uebersicht/_inhalt.html.

The last census in Greece was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁵⁸ No data about language, ethnicity or religion were collected.¹⁵⁹ The census of 2021 was also carried out as a complete survey but with the possibility to fill out the questionnaires digitally.¹⁶⁰ In this case also, no linguistic, ethnic or religious data was collected (“no sensitive personal data will be requested”¹⁶¹). The last census in Greece that surveyed a minority-relevant aspect – namely religion – was conducted in 1951.

As for the data given here, we quote Pan/Pfeil/Videsott (2018, 122 n. 3): “If at the point in time of the 2001 census, it was already difficult to even get a somewhat realistic size of the minority populations through the use of estimates, for the period around 2011 it was simply impossible. The estimates that are available are not sufficiently delimited in terms of time and their range is too great [...] to be able to empirically provide proof or refutation of the continuing process of Hellenization during the decade from 2001 to 2011. For that reason, the calculation of the percentage change with the individual minorities between 2001 and 2011 has been left out”.

Hungary

The last census in Hungary was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁶² The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. The questionnaire included specific questions at two different places: III. Command of languages (question 21), and V. Nationality, used languages, religion (questions 34-38):¹⁶³

- Question 21. “What languages do you speak? In what languages can you understand others and make yourself be understood?” Predefined answer: Hungarian, possibility to add up to three others;
- Question 34. “Which nationality do you feel you belong to?” Predefined answers: Hungarian / Armenian / Arabian / Bulgarian / Romanian / Chinese / Gipsy (Roma) / Ruthenian / Russian / Greek / Serbian / Vietnamese / Croatian / Slovakian / Polish / Slovenian / German / Ukrainian / Other [with the possibility to fill in] / do not wish to answer;
- Question 35. “Do you think you belong to another nationality in addition to what you marked above?” The same answers as for question 34 were possible, in addition the field: do not belong to another nationality;
- Question 36. “What is your mother tongue?” (max. two answers possible). Predefined answers: Hungarian / Armenian / Arabian / Bulgarian / Romanian / Chinese / Gipsy (Roma) / Ruthenian / Russian / Greek / Serbian / Vietnamese / Croatian / Slovakian / Polish / Slovenian / German / Ukrainian / Other [with the possibility to fill in] / do not wish to answer;
- Question 37. “In what languages do you usually speak with family members or friends?” (max. two answers possible). The same answers as in question 36 possible;
- Question 38: “Which religious community or denomination do you feel you belong to?” No predefined answers, but the possibility to state a community or to choose between “do not belong to any religious community or denomination / atheist / do not wish to answer”.

¹⁵⁸ https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1215267/A1602_SAM01_DT_DC_00_2011_03_F_EN.pdf/cb10bb9f-6413-4129-b847-f1def334e05e.

¹⁵⁹ https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1204270/2011_CENSUS_Questionnaire.pdf/26dde485-9eae-4f08-bd1f-cbfd659147b7.

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.statistics.gr/en/2021-census-pop-hous>.

¹⁶¹ <https://www.statistics.gr/en/census-2021-process>.

¹⁶² <https://www.ksh.hu/docs/eng/xftp/idoszaki/nepsz2011/enepszelo2011.pdf>.

¹⁶³ https://www.ksh.hu/nepszamlalas/docs/kerdoivek/szemely_angol.pdf.

The next census of 2021 was announced with the same modalities and was carried out at the end of 2022.¹⁶⁴

Ireland

The last census in Ireland was carried out in 2016 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁶⁵ The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. “Irish Travellers, Ethnicity and Religion” was the eighth thematic report from the 2016 Census. The report is divided into the title themes, giving insights into the Irish Traveller population, ethnicity in the overall population and religion in Ireland in 2016.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the census carried out in 2022 contained specific questions about these topics:¹⁶⁷

- 11. What is your ethnic group/background? Predefined answers include Irish / Irish Traveller / Roma [one answer possible];
- 12. What is your religion, if any? Predefined answers: No religion / Roman Catholic / Church of Ireland / Islam / Orthodox Christian / Presbyterian / Other [with the possibility to fill in].

Italy

The census carried out in Italy in 2011 was the last one to be a full survey based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁶⁸ The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. Since 2018, Italy has changed to a registry-based census, analysing yearly a sample of 1.4 million households in 2,800 municipalities.¹⁶⁹ The collection of linguistic data (“membership or affiliation to a language group”) is only foreseen in the Trentino-Alto Adige region. In the Province of Trento, the declaration is voluntary while it is obligatory in the Province of Bolzano.

The last time Italy made a full survey with a question related to the use of languages was in 1921; the results of this census are still mentioned in relation to the size of most minorities in Italy.

Latvia

The census carried out in Latvia in 2011 was a registry-based integrated by questionnaires for a selected sample (combined method).¹⁷⁰ The questionnaire in 2011 included specific questions:¹⁷¹

- G01: “What is your ethnicity?” [no predefined answers];
- G02: “What is the main language you use at home?” [predefined languages: Latvian / Russian / Byelorussian / Ukrainian / Polish / Lithuanian / Other language [with the possibility to specify];
- G03: “Do you use Latgallian, subtype of Latvian Language, on a daily basis?” [predefined answers: yes / no].

As future censuses will be carried out on a registry-based method, the ethnicity will be part of the personal information: “Information on a person’s ethnicity is available in the Population Register, where the entry is made in accordance with the information in a personal identification document, a document certifying the registration of civil status acts or a court judgment. If information on the person’s ethnicity is not available in any of the above documents, the person’s ethnicity shall be

¹⁶⁴ <https://dailynewshungary.com/2021-census-questionnaire-to-be-available-online-for-everyone/>.

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2016reports/census2016vacanthousingstatisticsfaqs/>.

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016profile8-irishtravellersethnicityandreligion/>.

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.census.ie/help-with-your-form/census-form-explained/>.

¹⁶⁸ https://www.istat.it/it/files//2012/12/nota-metodologica_censimento_popolazione.pdf.

¹⁶⁹ <https://astat.provinz.bz.it/de/2104.asp>.

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.csb.gov.lv/en/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/census/census-2011>.

¹⁷¹ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/quest/LVA2011enIn.pdf>.

entered according to the person's choice according to the ethnicity of the direct relatives in the ascending line. When recording the birth of a child, the ethnicity of the child can be entered according to the ethnicity of the child's relatives in a direct ascending line within two generations, i.e., the ethnicity of the father, mother or grandparents may be entered as a child's ethnicity. The ethnicity of the child may be omitted if the parents are of different ethnicities and cannot agree on the ethnicity of the child. In this case, the child's ethnicity will be recorded as 'unselected'¹⁷².

Lithuania

The last census in Lithuania was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires. Specific questions were foreseen for ethnicity, languages and religious beliefs:¹⁷³

- 13. What is your ethnicity? [predefined answers: Lithuanian / Polish / Russian / Another (with the possibility to fill in) / not indicated];
- 14. What is (are) your mother tongue(s)? [Predefined answers: Lithuanian / Polish / Russian / Another (with the possibility to fill in) / not indicated – two answers possible];
- 15. What other languages do you know, i.e., are able to speak and (or) write? [Predefined answers: Russian / Polish / Spanish / English / German / Lithuanian / French / other (with the possibility to fill in) / no command of other languages];
- 16. Which religious community would you attach yourself to? [predefined answers: Roman Catholic / Old Believer / Greek Catholic (Uniate) / Judaist / Evangelical Lutheran / Sunni Muslim / Evangelical Reformed / Karaite / Orthodox Believer / Other (with the possibility to fill in) / not any / not indicated].

The 2021 census was carried out as a registry-based survey. As ethnic, linguistic and religious data were not included, a separate survey on these topics was carried out: "From 15 January [2021], Statistics Lithuania started the statistical survey on population by ethnicity, native language and religion. During the survey, the respondents were asked about their ethnicity, mother tongue, knowledge of other languages and religion professed. These indicators were previously collected through the population and housing censuses. Based on the data of the last population and housing census carried out in 2011, the population of Lithuania comprised people of 154 ethnicities. One in three residents indicated that they spoke two foreign languages. The residents belonged to 59 different religious communities. Since this year's census was carried out on the basis of administrative data, in response to the user need, in order to maintain continuity and compatibility of indicators, such information is collected through statistical survey this year. From 15 January to 28 February [2021], an online survey was carried out. In order to ensure the quality and representativeness of the results of the statistical survey, after the end of the online survey, around 40,000 people who had not participated in the online survey were sampled from the Population Register, and 171 thousand people were interviewed. The survey data were combined with the census results."¹⁷⁴

Netherlands

The census in the Netherlands is registry-based and was carried out with this modality in both 2011¹⁷⁵ and 2021¹⁷⁶. No data on ethnic or religious affiliation were collected.

¹⁷² <https://stat.gov.lv/en/statistics-themes/population/population/tables/ire060-population-citizenship-and-ethnicity>.

¹⁷³ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/quest/LTU2011en.pdf>.

¹⁷⁴ <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/en/gyventoju-ir-bustu-surasyimai>.

¹⁷⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/ess/-/statistics-netherlands-dutch-census-saves-time-and-money>.

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/corporate/2021/20/cbs-in-the-starting-blocks-for-the-2021-census>.

Poland

The last census in Poland was carried out in 2011 with a mixed model consisting of merging the data from administrative registers with the data obtained from direct statistical surveys.¹⁷⁷ Four channels for obtaining census data were created: administrative sources/the internet/self-enumeration (CAI)/telephone interviews (CATI)/a census with the participation of enumerators with the use of hand-held terminals (CAPI). The last three channels were supported by online electronic forms. The questionnaire provided questions referring to ethnic affiliation and language use:¹⁷⁸

- Question 14a. "What is your nationality understood as the national or ethnic affiliation? (Do not confuse with citizenship)" [Predefined answers: Polish / Belarusian / Czech / Karaitic / Lithuanian / Lemko / German / Armenian / Romany / Russian / Slovakian / Tatar / Ukrainian / Jewish / other (with the possibility to specify)];
- Question 14b. "Do you also feel affiliated to any other nation or ethnic group?" [Predefined answers: yes (please specify) / no];
- Question 15. "What language do you usually speak at home? (the language you use in everyday contact with your family – do not confuse with foreign language knowledge)" [Predefined answers: only Polish / Polish and other (please specify) / only other (please specify)].

Additionally, the 2021 census was conducted using a mixed method, i.e., using data coming from administrative sources and data collected from respondents and included questions referring to nationality or ethnic identity (defined as "a declarative, based on subjective impression, individual feature of each person, expressing his or her emotional or cultural relationship or the one following from his/her parents' origin to a specific nation or ethnic community. Nationality (a sense of national-ethnic affiliation) should not be confused with a legal bond to a state – i.e., citizenship)", to language used at home ("concerns the language used on a daily basis at home and refers to spoken or sign language that is used in family interactions") and religious affiliation ("a person's formal participation in or emotional connection with a particular religious denomination (church or religious association); religion is determined by voluntary declaration, including the declaration of the lack of relation with any religion (no religious affiliation). The question about denomination does not refer to religious belief (or disbelief) per se or to its intensity, but to perceived or formal belonging (or non-belonging) to a religion.¹⁷⁹

Portugal

The last census in Portugal was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁸⁰ The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. In addition, the 2021 census was conducted with this method.¹⁸¹ In Portugal, no ethnically relevant data are surveyed by census. In 2021, however, the questionnaire included an optional question concerning religion [predefined answers: Catholic / Buddhism / Orthodox / Hinduism / Protestant/Evangelical / Judaism / Jehovah's' Witnesses / Muslim / Other Christian / Other non-Christian / No religion).¹⁸²

Romania

¹⁷⁷ <https://stat.gov.pl/en/national-census/national-census-of-population-and-housing-2011/>- Modern census in Poland.

¹⁷⁸ <https://stat.gov.pl/en/national-census/national-census-of-population-and-housing-2011/> – Questionnaires.

¹⁷⁹ [https://stat.gov.pl/en/national-census/national-population-and-housing-census-2021/national-population-and-housing-census-2021-research-methodology-and-organization.3.1.html](https://stat.gov.pl/en/national-census/national-population-and-housing-census-2021/national-population-and-housing-census-2021/national-population-and-housing-census-2021-research-methodology-and-organization.3.1.html).

¹⁸⁰ [Census - Final results. Portugal - 2011.](#)

¹⁸¹ <https://www.theportugalnews.com/news/2021-04-16/census-2021/59327>.

¹⁸² https://censos.ine.pt/scripts/censos_css_js/quest/EN_Q_IND_Censos2021_EN_v03.pdf.

The last census in Romania was carried out in 2011 as a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires.¹⁸³ The compilation of questionnaires was possible in the field (paper) or online. The 2022 census was carried out with a combined method (registry-based and questionnaires) but remained a full survey. In particular, data relating to ethno-cultural characteristics were further collected via questionnaires:¹⁸⁴

- P3a. Which ethnic group do you consider you belong to?
- P3b. What is your native language?
- P3c. Which religion do you consider you belong to?

Slovakia

The 2011 Slovakia census was a classic enumeration based on compilation of questionnaires; the compilation of them was possible in the field (paper) or online.¹⁸⁵

The census of 2021 was carried out using a combined method.¹⁸⁶ The questionnaire contained dedicated questions related to ethnicity, mother tongue and religion:¹⁸⁷

- What is your ethnicity? [Predefined answers with the additional option to select “Other” and to write the ethnicity in words];
- Are you affiliated with another ethnicity? [Predefined answers: yes [with the possibility to choose the same answers as for the main ethnicity] / no];
- What is your mother tongue? [Predefined answers as in the previous questions];
- What is your religious belief? [Predefined answers: “With religious belief” – and the option to select a concrete denomination / “With no religious belief”].

All questionnaire-related data were collected digitally.

Slovenia

The last full survey carried out in Slovenia was the census in 2002, including questions related to ethnicity.¹⁸⁸ The census in 2011 was registry-based and no longer contained the questions on “national affiliation”, “native language” and “colloquial language”.¹⁸⁹ In addition, the census in 2021 was registry-based and without any question referring to the ethnicity, languages used or religion. An announced dedicated survey on these topics has, until now, never been carried out (Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 190).

Spain

The 2011 census in Spain was a registry-based census, supplemented with a large sample survey to find out the characteristics of people and dwellings.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20110511075533/https://www.recensamantromania.ro/>.

¹⁸⁴ https://www.recensamantromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/chestionar-martor_RPL2021_engleza.pdf.

¹⁸⁵ [Population and Housing Census 2021 in Slovakia.](#)

¹⁸⁶ [The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.](#)

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.scitanie.sk/storage/app/media/dokumenty/vzor-formularaen.pdf>.

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.stat.si/popis2002/en/>.

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.stat.si/popis2011/eng/Default.aspx?lang=eng>.

¹⁹⁰ [The new French census.](#)

The 2021 census was on the other hand, fully registry-based.¹⁹¹ However, as not all useful information is available from registers, an additional sample survey was planned. It also included one question concerning language that can partially be related to ethnicity:¹⁹²

- 4.22. “Initial language: Do you remember which language you first spoke at home when you were a child? Please tick all that apply” [Predefined answers: Castilian / Galician / Basque / Catalan/Valencian / English / French / Italian / German / Romanian / Arabic / Other [with the possibility to specify].

Sweden

Sweden carries out its census using a registry-based method. No data is officially collected about the ethnic composition of the population. This is justified by the fact that it is supposedly impossible to collect data on this topic that would be both ethically justifiable and scientifically reliable.¹⁹³ Therefore, the 2021 census did not have specific questions either.

¹⁹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/system/files/mr-antonio-argueso_census-will-be-fully-register-based_es.pdf.

¹⁹² https://www.ine.es/censos2021/proyecto_caracter%C3%ADsticas_esenciales.pdf.

¹⁹³ Council of Europe/Sweden 2006, 10.

ANNEX III: THE LINGUISTIC MINORITIES WITHIN THE EU: TRENDS IN THE 30-YEAR PERIOD 1991-2011

In this Annex, the trends that emerge from the available data regarding the development of minorities in Europe over the last 30 years will be illustrated.

The following tables distinguish:

- whether the size of minorities is officially ascertained in periodic censuses (numbers in regular characters) or not (numbers in italics) – in this case, the data come from estimates;
- if the available figures show a positive (in green) or negative (in red) trend over the last decades;

Except where otherwise indicated, the data come from:

- Decade around 1990: Pan/Pfeil 2000 resp. Pan/Pfeil 2003.
- Decades around 2000 and 2010: Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018.

It must be emphasised that the two sources draw data from sometimes quite different sources, and that those for around 1990 in particular are not always directly comparable with the later data. In any case, these are the data considered most reliable at the time of publication of both publications.

Consistent with the approach of this study, data on the Jewish and Sinti/Roma minorities are added in the footnotes for completeness, but have not been considered in the analyses.

Table 16: Composition of the population of Austria between 1991 and 2011

Austria	1991	%	2001 ¹⁹⁴	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ¹⁹⁵	7,795,786	100.0	8,032,857	100.0	8,401,940	100.0	
Titular nation (German-speaking Austrians)	7,107,411	91.2	6,991,388	87.0	6,991,388	83.2	
Slovenes	19,289	0.3	<i>50,000</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>50,000</i>	<i>0.6</i>	
Croats	29,596	0.4	<i>42,000</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>40,000– 50,000</i>	<i>0.6</i>	
Hungarians	19,638	0.3	<i>20,000– 30,000</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>30,000– 50,000</i>	<i>0.6</i>	
Czechs	9,822	0.1	<i>15,000– 20,000</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>10,000– 20,000</i>	<i>0.2</i>	
Slovaks	1,015		<i>5,000– 10,000</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>5,000– 10,000</i>	<i>0.1</i>	
Others	86,325	1.1	153,543	1.9	270,565	3.2	
Foreign nationals	517,690	6.6	710,926	8.9	939,987	11.2	

¹⁹⁴ In 2001, the census question aimed at *colloquial language*. The results were seen as too low by the ethnic group organisations. The table here includes their own estimates.

¹⁹⁵ Data regarding Roma/Sinti: 5,000 in 1991, 25,000 (0.3%) in 2001 and 10,000–20,000 (0.2%) in 2011.

Table 17: Composition of the population of Belgium between 1991 and 2011

Belgium	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population	9,978,681	100,0	10,263,414	100,0	11,000,638	100,0	
Flemings	5,765,856	57,8	5,765,856	56,1	5,801,804	52,7	
Walloons	3,258,795	32,6	3,258,795	31,8	3,932,766	35,8	
German speakers	66,445	0,7	¹⁹⁶	1,1	87,000	0,8	
Luxembourgers	22,000	0,2	22,000	0,2	13,000	0,1	
Foreign nationals	865,585	8,7	1,104,305	10,8	1,166,068	10,6	

Table 18: Composition of the population of Bulgaria between 1992 and 2011

Bulgaria	1992	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1992- 2011
Population ¹⁹⁷	8,487,317	100,0	7,928,901	100,0	7,364,570	100,0	
Titular nation (Bulgarians)	6,803,185	80,2	6,435,210	81,1	6,263,846	85,1	
Turks	800,052	9,4	746,664	9,4	588,318	8,0	
Pomaks (Bulgarian- speaking Muslims)	200,000– 280,000	3,3	220,000	2,6	67,350	0,9	
Russians					9,978	0,1	
Armenians	13,677	0,2	10,832	0,1	6,552	0,1	
Greeks	4,930	0,1	3,408		3,935		
Vlachs/Aromanians	5,159	0,1	10,566	0,1	3,684		
Ukrainians					1,789		
Macedonians	188,000 (1956)		5,071	0,1	1,654		
Tatars	4,515	0,1					
Albanians	3,197						
Gagauz	1,478						
Romanians	2,491				891		
Others	63,776	0,7	124,879	1,6	90,068	1,2	

¹⁹⁶ Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 85 cites for 2001 the figure 112,458 from Berié/Kobert (2006, 76). This figure is certainly considered to be too high in view of the data for 1991 and 2011 and especially for the population of the German-speaking area.

¹⁹⁷ Data regarding Roma: 313,396 (3.7%) in 1992, 370,908 (4.6%) in 2001 and 325,343 (4.4%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 3,461 (0.1) in 1992, 1,363 in 2001 and 1,162 in 2011.

Table 19: Composition of the population of Croatia between 1991 and 2011

Croatia	1991 ¹⁹⁸	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ¹⁹⁹	4,784,265	100.0	4,437,460	100.0	4,284,889	100.0	
Titular nation (Croats)	3,736,356	78.1	3,977,171	89.6	3,874,321	90.4	
Serbs	581,663	12.2	201,631	4.5	186,633	4.4	
Bosniaks	43,469	0.9	20,755	0.5	31,479	0.7	
Italians	21,303	0.5	19,636	0.4	17,807	0.4	
Albanians	12,032	0.3	15,082	0.3	17,513	0.4	²⁰⁰
Hungarians	22,355	0.5	16,595	0.4	14,048	0.3	
Slovenes	22,376	0.5	13,173	0.3	10,517	0.3	
Czechs	13,086	0.3	10,510	0.2	9,641	0.2	
Slovaks	5,606	0.1	4,712	0.1	4,753	0.1	
Montenegrins	9,724	0.2	4,926	0.1	4,517	0.1	
Macedonians	6,280	0.1	4,270	0.1	4,138	0.1	
Ruthenians/Ukrainians	5,747	0.1	4,314	0.1	3,814	0.1	
Germans	2,849		3,149	0.1	3,262	0.1	
Others	294,124	6.1	24,392	0.5	11,184	0.3	
No indication			107,105	2.4	73,778	1.7	

Table 20: Composition of the population of the Czech Republic between 1991 and 2011

Czech Republic	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ²⁰¹	10,302,215	100.0	10,230,060	100.0	10,436,560	100.0	
Titular nation (Czechs)	9,773,000	94.9	9,249,777	90.4	9,924,044	95.1	
Slovaks	314,877	3.1	193,190	1.9	147,152	1.4	
Ukrainians/Ruthenians	10,146	0.1	23,218	0.2	53,992	0.5	
Poles	59,383	0.6	51,968	0.5	39,096	0.4	
German(speaker)s	48,969	0.5	39,106	0.4	18,658	0.2	
Russians	5,062		12,369	0.1	17,872	0.2	
Hungarians	19,932	0.2	14,672	0.1	8,920	0.1	
Bulgarians			4,363		4,999		
Belarusians					2,103		
Greeks	3,379		3,219		2,043		
Serbs			1,801		1,717		

¹⁹⁸ This census was conducted during the Yugoslavian period.

¹⁹⁹ Data regarding Roma: 6,695 (0.1%) in 1991, 9,463 (0.2%) in 2001 and 16,975 (0.4%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 600 in 1991, 576 in 2001 and 509 in 2011.

²⁰⁰ The increase primarily relates to immigration from Kosovo and Northern Macedonia. The local Albanian minority, the Arbënisht, do not ethnically identify as Albanian.

²⁰¹ Data regarding Roma: 32,903 (0.3%) in 1991, 11,746 (0.1%) in 2001 and 5,135 in 2011.

Croats			1,585		1,125		
Others	34,564	0.3	623,046	6.1	209,704	2.0	

Table 21: Composition of the population of Denmark between 1997 and 2011

Denmark	1997	%	2000	%	2011	%	Δ 1997- 2011
Population ²⁰²	5,290,000	100,0	5,330,020	100,0	5,560,628	100,0	
Titular nation (Danes)	5,041,370	95,3	5,068,849	95,1	4,877,798	87,7	
Faroese	47,840	0,9	45,400	0,9	48,515	0,9	
Inuit (Western Greenlanders)			47,000	0,9	47,115	0,9	
Germans	15,000– 20,000	0,4	15,000– 20,000	0,4	15,000– 20,000	0,4	
Ivi (Eastern Greenlanders)			3,475	0,1	3,500	0,1	
Others	124,927	2,4	143,796	2,7	561,700	10,1	

Table 22: Composition of the population of Estonia between 1989 and 2011

Estonia	1989 ²⁰³	%	2000	%	2011	%	Δ 1989- 2011
Population ²⁰⁴	1,565,662	100.0	1,370,052	100.0	1,294,236	100.0	
Titular nation (Estonians)	963,281	61.5	930,219	67.9	889,770	68.7	
Russians	474,834	30.3	351,178	25.6	321,198	24.8	
Ukrainians	48,271	3.1	29,012	2.1	22,302	1.7	
Belarusians	27,711	1.8	17,241	2.1	12,419	1.0	
Finns	16,622	1.1	11,837	0.9	7,423	0.6	
Tatars	4,000	0.2	2,582	0.2	1,945	0.1	
Latvians	3,135	0.2	2,330	0.2	1,716	0.1	
Lithuanians	2,600	0.2	2,116	0.2	1,682	0.1	
Poles	3,000	0.2	2,193	0.2	1,622	0.1	
Germans	3,466	0.2	1,870	0.1	1,490	0.1	
Swedes	400						
Others or no indication	13,729	0.9	16,787	1.2	30,286	2.3	

²⁰² Data regarding Roma: 1,500 in 2000 and 2,000 in 2011.

²⁰³ This census was conducted during the Soviet Union era.

²⁰⁴ Data regarding Roma: 542 in 2000 and 456 in 2011; regarding Jews: 4,613 (0.3%) in 1989, 2,145 (0.2%) in 2000 and 1,927 (0.1%) in 2011.

Table 23: Composition of the population of Finland between 1997 and 2011

Finland	1997	%	2000	%	2011	%	Δ 1997- 2011
Population ²⁰⁵	5,147,349	100,0	5,194,901	100,0	5,401,267	100,0	
Titular nation (Finns)	4,773,576	92,7	4,793,199	92,3	4,863,651	90,0	
(Finland) Swedes	293,691	5,7	290,771	5,6	291,219	5,4	
Russians			33,400	0,6	58,334	1,1	
Sami (Lapps)	1.716		1,734		1,870		
Tatars			800		900		
Others	66,682	1,3	63,557	1,2	174,093	3,2	

Table 24: Composition of the population of France between 1990 and 2011

France	1990	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1990- 2011
Population ²⁰⁶	56,577,000	100.0	60,941,748	100.0	64,933,051	100.0	
Titular nation (French)	48,444,000	85.6	56,451,748	92.6	60,954,051	93.9	
Occitans	3,360,000– 5,760,000	10.2	2,500,000	4.1	2,000,000	3.1	
German-speakers	1,350,000– 1,400,000	2.5	978,000	1.6	978,000	1.5	
a) Alsatians	1,200,000	2.1	900,000	1.5	900,000	1.4	
b) Lorrainers	150,000– 200,000	0.4	78,000	0.1	78,000	0.1	
Bretons	350,000– 450,000	0.8	370,000	0.6	370,000	0.6	
Corsicans	143,000	0.3	150,000	0.2	130,200 ²⁰⁷	0.2	
Catalonians	100,000– 200,000	0.4	125,000	0.2	126,000	0.2	
Franco-Provincals	70,000 (1971)	0.1			60,000	0.1	
Basques	80,000	0.1	67,000	0.1	55,000	0.1	
Flemings	80,000– 100,000	0.2	40,000	0.1	40,000		

²⁰⁵ Data regarding Roma: 7,000 (0.1%) in 1997, 10,000 (0.2%) in 2000 and 10,000 (0.2%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 1,440 in 2000 and 1,500 in 2011.

²⁰⁶ Data regarding Roma: 200,000 (0.3%) in 2001 and 200,000 (0.3%) in 2011.

²⁰⁷ Di Meglio 2021, 99.

Table 25: Composition of the population of Germany between 1997 and 2011

Germany	1997	%	2004	%	2011	%	Δ 1997- 2011
Population ²⁰⁸	82,057,379	100.0	82,500,800	100.0	80,219,695	100.0	
Titular nation (Germans)	74,539,546	90.8	75,020,800	90.9	73,847,682	92.0	
Sorbs (Wends)	60,000	0.1	60,000	0.1	60,000 ²⁰⁹	0.1	
Frisians	12,000		12,000		12,000 ²¹⁰		
Danes	50,000	0.1	50,000		50,000		
Foreign nationals	7,365,833	9.0	7,288,000	8.8	6,180,013	7.7	

Table 26: Composition of the population of Greece between 1991 and 2011

Greece	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ²¹¹	10,259,900	100,0	10,939,771	100,0	10,787,690	100,0	
Titular nation (Greeks [ethnic Hellenes])	10,006,900	97,5	10,660,771	97,4	10,031,190	93,0	
Aromanians/Vlachs	40,000	0,4	40,000	0,4	211,000	1,9	
Albanians/Arvanites	23,000	0,2	23,000	0,2	160,000	1,5	
(Slavic) Macedonians	40,000	0,4	40,000	0,4	158,000	1,5	
Turks	59,000	0,6	59,000	0,5	128,000	1,2	
Pomaks	39,000	0,4	39,000	0,4	30,000	0,3	
Armenians	30,000	0,3	30,000	0,3	20,000	0,2	
Megleno-Romanians			10,000	0,1	3,000		
Others			10,000	0,1			

Table 27: Composition of the population of Hungary between 1990 and 2011

Hungary	1990	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1990- 2011
Population ²¹²	10,374,823	100.0	10,198,315	100.0	9,937,628	100.0	
Titular nation (Hungarians [Magyars])	10,142,072	97,8	9,627,057	94.4	8,504,492	85.6	

²⁰⁸ Data regarding Sinti/Roma: 30,000 in 1997, 70,000 (0.1%) in 2001 and 70,000 (0.1%) in 2011.

²⁰⁹ The figure of 60,000 usually quoted refers to the persons who feel they are Sorbs by origin and identity (Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 119 n. 5). The actual number of speakers is certainly significantly smaller, even though there are not even any estimates for this.

²¹⁰ The figure of 12,000 refers to speakers of Frisian (approx. 10,000 North Frisian and approx. 2,000 Sater Frisian). The figure of 60,000 usually quoted refers to the persons who feel they are Frisian by origin and identity as such (Pan/Pfeil/Videsott 2018, 119 n. 6).

²¹¹ Data regarding Roma: 22,000 (0.2%) in 1991, 22,000 (0.2%) in 2001 and 42,000 (0.4%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 6,000 in 2001 and 4,500 in 2011.

²¹² Data regarding Roma: 142,683 (1.4%) in 1990, 205,720 (2.0%) in 2001 and 315,583 (3.2%) in 2011.

Germans	30,824	0.3%	120,344	1.2	185,696	1.9	
Romanians	10,740	0.1%	14,781	0.1	35,641	0.4	
Slovaks	10,459	0.1%	39,266	0.4	35,208	0.4	
Croats	13,570	0.1%	25,730	0.2	26,774	0.3	
Ukrainians/Ruthenians			9,472	0.1	11,278	0.1	
Serbs	2,905		7,350	0.1	10,038	0.1	
Poles			5,144		7,001		
Bulgarians			2,316		6,272		
Greeks			6,619	0.1	4,642		
Armenians			1,165		3,571		
Slovenes	1,930		3,025		2,820		
Other minorities	19,640	0.1					
Foreign nationals			89,700	0.9	124,211	1.2	
No indication			38,819	0.4	664,401	6.7	

Table 28: Composition of the population of Ireland between 1996 and 2011

Ireland	1996	%	2002	%	2011	%	Δ 1996- 2011
Population	3,626,087	100.0	3,917,203	100.0	4,588,252	100.0	
Titular nation (Irish)			3,669,261	93.7	4,014,322	87.5	
"Indigenous" minority: Travellers			23,681	0.6	29,573	0.6	
Foreign nationals			224,261	5.7	544,357	11.9	
Distribution by language usage:							
Majority: predominantly English-speaking	3,226,087	89.0	3,577,662	91.3	3,975,037	86.6	
Minority: Irish Gaelic speakers	400,000	11.0	339,541	8.7	613,215	13.4	

Table 29: Composition of the population of Italy between 1991 and 2011

Italy	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ²¹³	57,003,000	100.0	56,995,744	100.0	59,433,744	100.0	
Titular nation (Italians)	53,583,000	93.8	53,229,694	93.3	52,363,577	88.1	
Sardinians	1,269,000	2.2	1,269,000	2.2	1,000,000	1.7	
Friulians	750,000	1.1	650,000	1.0	614,000 ²¹⁴	0.8	
German speakers	296,000	0.5	304,100	0.5	320,300	0.5	

²¹³ Data regarding Roma: 130,000 (0.2%) in 1991, 130,000 (0.2%) in 2001 and 160,000 (0.3%) in 2011.

²¹⁴ Figure from a 2014 sociolinguistic study (<https://arlef.it/it/lingua-e-cultura/condizione-sociolinguistica/>).

Francophones	111,600	0.2	111,600	0.2	88,400	0.2	
Occitans	178,000	0.3	178,000	0.3	100,000	0.2	
Albanians (Arberesh)	98,000	0.2	98,000	0.2	100,000 ²¹⁵	0.2	
Slovenes	60,000–80,000	0.1	60,000–80,000	0.1	50,000	0.1	
Ladins		0.1	30,500	0.1	32,650	0.1	
Catalans	18,000		18,000		18,000–20,000		
Greeks	20,000		20,000		12,000		
Tabarcans			10,000		6,500		
Croats	2,600		2,600		2,400		
Others	633,600	1.1	987,400	1.7	4,570,317	7.7	

Table 30: Composition of the population of Latvia between 1989 and 2011

Latvia	1989 ²¹⁶	%	2000	%	2011	%	Δ 1989-2011
Population ²¹⁷	2,666,567	100.0	2,377,383	100.0	2,070,371	100.0	
Titular nation (Latvians)	1,387,757	52.0	1,370,703	57.7	1,285,136	62.1	
Russians	905,515	33.9	703,243	29.6	557,119	26.9	
Belarusians	119,702	4.5	97,150	4.1	68,202	3.3	
Ukrainians	92,101	3.5	63,644	2.7	45,798	2.2	
Poles	60,416	2.3	59,505	2.5	44,772	2.1	
Lithuanians	34,360	1.3	33,430	1.4	24,479	1.2	
Germans	3,783	0.1	3,465	0.1	3,042	0.1	
Tatars	4,828	0.2	3,168	0.1	2,164	0.1	
Estonians	3,312	0.1	2,652	0.1	2,007	0.1	
Livs	135		180		250		
Others	24,717	0.9	21,653	0.9	16,278	0.7	
No indication or unknown					8,198	0.4	

²¹⁵ The figure of 98,000–100,000 Albanians in Italy derives from the 1921 census. Cane (2022, 236) estimates the number of Arberesh-speakers to be “below 40,000”.

²¹⁶ This census was conducted during the Soviet Union era.

²¹⁷ Data regarding Roma: 7,044 (0.3%) in 1989, 8,205 (0.3%) in 2000 and 6,489 (0.3%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 22,897 (0.9%) in 1989, 10,385 (0.4%) in 2000 and 6,437 (0.3%) in 2011.

Table 31: Composition of the population of Lithuania between 1989 and 2011

Lithuania ²¹⁸	1989 ²¹⁹	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1989- 2011
Population	3,674,802	100.0	3,483,972	100.0	3,043,429	100.0	
Titular nation (Lithuanians)	2,925,142	79.6	2,907,293	83.5	2,561,314	84.1	
Poles	257,994	7.0	234,989	6.7	200,317	6.6	
Russians	344,455	9.4	219,789	6.3	176,913	5.8	
Belarusians	63,169	1.7	42,866	1.2	36,227	1.2	
Ukrainians	44,789	1.2	22,488	0.7	16,423	0.5	
Tatars	5,135	0.1	3,235	0.1	2,793	0.1	
Germans	2,060		3,243	0.1	2,418	0.1	
Latvians			2,955	0.1	2,025	0.1	
Karaims	289		273		241		
Others	16,737	0.5	7,342	0.2	6,615	0.2	
No indication			32,921	0.9	32,978	1.1	

Table 32: Composition of the population of the Netherlands between 1990 and 2011

Netherlands	1990	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1990- 2011
Population ²²⁰	14,952,000	100.0	15,987,075	100.0	16,655,799	100.0	
Titular nation (Dutch)	13,832,000	92.5	14,827,275	92.7	15,379,431	92.3	
Frisians	450,000	3.0	450,000	2.8	474,000	2.8	
Foreign nationals	600,000	4.0	667,800	4.2	760,368	4.6	

Table 33: Composition of the population of Poland between 2002 and 2011

Poland	2002 ²²¹	%	2011	%	Δ 2002- 2011
Population ²²²	38,230,080	100.0	38,511,824	100.0	
Titular nation (Poles)	37,610,384	98.4	36,527,053	94.8	
Kashubians	57,720	0.2	232,547	0.6	
Germans	152,897	0.4	147,814	0.4	

²¹⁸ Data regarding Roma: 2,718 in 1989, 2,571 (0.1%) in 2001 and 2,115 (0.1%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 12,314 (0.3%) in 1989, 4,007 (0.1%) in 2001 and 3,050 (0.3%) in 2011.

²¹⁹ This census was conducted during the Soviet Union era.

²²⁰ Data regarding Roma: 40,000 (0.2%) in 1986, 12,000 (0.1) in 2001 and 12,000 (0.1%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 30,000 (0.2%) in 1983, 30,000 (0.2%) in 2001 and 30,000 (0.2%) in 2011.

²²¹ In the 2002 census, the ethnic-linguistic affiliation of the population was surveyed once again for the first time since 1946. But because of the fears of negative consequences by those affected that in many cases still existed at the time of the survey, the results were criticized as having too low a yield.

²²² Data regarding Roma: 12,855 in 2002 and 17,049 in 2011; regarding Jews: 1,133 in 2002 and 7,508 in 2011.

Ukrainians	36,800	0.1	61,532	0.2	
Belarusians	48,737	0.1	46,787	0.1	
Russians	6,103		13,046		
Lithuanians	5,846		7,863		
Armenians	1,082		3,623		
Czechs	831		3,447		
Slovaks	2,001		3,240		
Tatars	495		1,916		
Karaims	43		346		
Silesians	173,153	0.5	846,719	2.2	
Others/ no indication	120,200	0.3	591,334	1.5	

Table 34: Composition of the population of Portugal between 1991 and 2011

Portugal	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ²²³	9,866,000	100.0	10,356,117	100.0	10,562,178	100.0	
Titular nation (Portuguese)	9,605,000	97.3	10,120,117	97.7	10,104,182	95.7	
Spanish-speakers	42,000		17,000	0.1	13,500	0.1	
a) Mirandese- speakers	40,000	0.4	15,000		12,000		
b) Barranquenho- speakers	2,000		2,000		1,500		
Foreign nationals	114,000	1.2	114,000	1.1	394,496	3.7	

Table 35: Composition of the population of Romania between 1992 and 2011

Romania	1992	%	2002	%	2011	%	Δ 1992- 2011
Population ²²⁴	22,760,449	100.0	21,680,974	100.0	20,121,641	100.0	
Titular nation (Romanians)	20,095,449	88.3	19,352,618	89.3	16,764,868	83.3	
Hungarians	1,622,364	7.1	1,433,073	6.6	1,229,159	6.1	
Ukrainians/Ruthenians	66,833	0.3	61,098	0.3	50,920	0.3	
Germans	119,436	0.5	59,764	0.3	36,042	0.2	
Vlachs (Aromanians)	200,000– 250,000 (1980)	1.1	50,000	0.2	28,000	0.1	
Turks	29,533	0.1	32,098	0.2	27,698	0.1	

²²³ Data regarding Roma: 105,000 (1.1%) in 1991, 105,000 (1.0%) in 2001 and 40,000–50,000 (0.5%) in 2011.

²²⁴ Data regarding Roma: 409,723 (1.8%) in 1992, 535,140 (2.5%) in 2002 and 621,573 (3.1%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 9,107 in 1992, 5,785 in 2002 and 3,271 in 2011.

Lipovans/Russians	38,688	0.1	35,791	0.2	23,487	0.1	
Tatars	24,649	0.1	23,935	0.1	20,282	0.1	
Serbs	29,080	0.1	22,561	0.1	18,076	0.1	
Slovaks	20,672	0.1	17,226	0.1	13,654	0.1	
Bulgarians	9,935		8,025		7,336		
Croats/Karashovene	4,180 + 2,775		6,807		5,408		
Greeks	3,897		6,472		3,668		
Italians (Friulians)			3,288		3,203		
Poles	4,247		3,559		2,543		
Czechs	5,800		3,941		2,477		
Armenians	2,023		1,780		1,361		
Macedonians	6,999		731		1,264		
Others	4,527		15,341		20,541	0.1	
No indication			1,941		1,236,810	6.1	

Table 36: Composition of the population of Slovakia between 1997 and 2011

Slovakia	1997	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1997- 2011
Population ²²⁵	5,356,207	100.0	5,379,455	100.0	5,397,036	100.0	
Titular nation (Slovaks)	4,590,100	85.7	4,614,854	85.8	4,352,775	80.7	
Hungarians	568,714	10.6	520,528	9.7	458,467	8.5	
Ruthenians/Ukrainians	17,277	0.3	35,015	0.6	40,912	0.7	
	14,341	0.3					
Czechs (including Moravians)	57,654	1.1	46,968	0.9	33,653	0.7	
Germans	5,380	0.1	5,405	0.1	4,690	0.1	
Poles	3,039		2,602		3,084	0.1	
Russians			1,590		1,997		
Bulgarians	1,400		1,179		1,051		
Croats	4,000		890		1,022		
Others	6,814	0.1	5,784	0.1	10,523	0.2	
No indication			54,502	1.0	382,493	7.0	

Table 37: Composition of the population of Slovenia between 1991 and 2011

Slovenia	1991 ²²⁶	%	2002	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011

²²⁵ Data regarding Roma: 83,988 (1.6%) in 1997, 89,920 (1.7%) in 2001 and 105,738 (2.0%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 3,500 in 1997, 218 in 2001 and 631 in 2011.

²²⁶ This census was conducted during the Yugoslavian period.

Population ²²⁷	1,965,986	100.0	1,964,036	100.0	2,050,189	100.0	
Titular nation (Slovenes)	1,727,018	87.8	1,631,363	83.1	1,949,038	95.1	
Hungarians	8,503	0.4	6,243	0.3	8,328	0.4	
Italians	3,064	0.1	2,258	0.1	3,388	0.2	
Germans (incl. "Old Austrian" heritage)	745	0.1	680		680		
Others (1991, 2002) or foreign nationals (2011)	224,363	11.4	145,333	7.4	82,746	4.0	
No indication or unknown			174,913	8.9			

Table 38: Composition of the population of Spain between 1991 and 2011

Spain	1991	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1991- 2011
Population ²²⁸	38,872,268	100.0	40,847,371	100.0	46,815,916	100.0	
Titular nation (Castilian-speaking Spaniards)	29,658,632	76.3	27,446,170	67.2	28,247,247	60.3	
Catalans	4,194,202	10.8	5,661,816	13.9	5,991,690	12.8	
Valencians	2,005,720	5.1	2,336,650	5.7	3,842,617	8.2	
Galicians	1,514,609	3.9	2,437,770	6.0	2,050,000	4.4	
Basques	533,741	1.3	687,800	1.7	676,175	1.4	
Occitans (Aranese)	4,000		5,152		5,714		
Foreign nationals	461,364	1.2	1,572,013	3.8	5,252,473	11.2	

Table 39: Composition of the population of Sweden between 1990 and 2011

Sweden	1990	%	2001	%	2011	%	Δ 1990- 2011
Population ²²⁹	8,585,907	100.0	8,909,128	100.0	9,482,855	100.0	
Titular nation (Swedes)	7,760,000	90.4	7,827,142	91.2	8,166,755	88.9	
Finns (incl. Tornedalians)	225,000	2.6	231,000	2,6	231,000	2,6	
Sami	20,000– 25,000	0.3	20,000– 25,000	0.3	15,000– 20,000	0.2	
Foreign nationals	576,000	6.7	475,986	5.3	655,100	6.9	

²²⁷ Data regarding Roma: 2,293 (0.2%) in 1991, 3,246 (0.2%) in 2002 and 6,009 (0.3%) in 2011.

²²⁸ Data regarding Gitanos (Roma): 500,000 (1.3%) in 1991, 650,000–700,000 (1.7%) in 2001 and 725,000–750,000 (1.6%) in 2011.

²²⁹ Data regarding Roma: 35,000–40,000 (0.4%) in 2001 and 50,000–100,000 (1.1%) in 2011; regarding Jews: 25,000 (0.3%) in 2001 and 20,000–25,000 (0.3%) in 2011.

This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, at the request of the PETI Committee, inquires about the connection between the "Protection of European linguistic and cultural diversity" and the "Protection and promotion of European minority and minoritised languages" in Europe.

The situation of the European minority and minoritised languages can be seen as a barometer of the current state of European linguistic and cultural diversity. The available data show that more than two thirds of linguistic minorities within the European Union have significantly decreased in number in recent decades (1991-2011). At the pan-European level, too, two thirds of minorities have declined over the same period. The same must be assumed as to the use of the languages spoken by these minorities.

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