

Legal status of the Basque language

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Overall situation

In the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, Basque and Castilian are the two official languages. In the Autonomous Community of Navarre, the official languages of the Basque-speaking area are both Basque and Spanish, but Basque is not official in the mixed and non-Basque speaking areas. In the Northern Basque Country, in the French state, Basque is not recognised as an official language.

Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (ACBC)

SPANISH STATE

Article 3 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution:

- 1 – Castilian is the official language of the State. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it.
- 2 – The other Spanish languages will also be official in the respective Autonomous Communities in accordance with their Statutes.
- 3 – The wealth of the different linguistic modalities in Spain is a cultural heritage that will be carefully respected and protected.

AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY

Basque is an official language

Article 6 of the Charter of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country:

"Basque, the language of the Basque People, shall be, as with Castilian, an official language in the Basque Country, and all of its inhabitants have the right to know it and to use both languages"

1st effect:

The speaker has the right to use Basque with full legal validity and effectiveness, and no one shall require him/her to use a language other than the official language of his/her choice, as well as the right to receive a response in the language chosen when the interlocutor is a public body.

2nd effect:

All public authorities based in the Basque Country are subject to the official nature of Basque (Ruling 82/1986 of the Spanish Constitutional Court, legal basis 2):

- The administrative bodies that depend on the Basque Government (both those formed by the *lehendakari* (President of the Basque Government) and counsellors, as well as the General Administration of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country).
- Town/city councils and other local bodies.
- The administration of historical territories.
- The administration of the State based in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.
- Administrative bodies or delegations that the European Union establishes in any of these territories.
- The autonomous administrative bodies, such as the National Statistics Institute (INE), the National Employment Institute (INEM), the National Social Security Institute (INSS), the State Agency for Tax Administration, the Spanish National Railway Network (RENFE), the Spanish national postal service (Correos y Telégrafos), etc.
- Any other internal or international public authorities located in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.

3rd effect:

Citizens have the right to freely choose Basque in their public and private relations.

4th effect:

Citizens have the right to equality and not to be discriminated against for choosing the Basque language to express themselves.

Article 14 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: "Spaniards are equal before the law, and any discrimination for reasons of birth, race, sex, religion, opinion, or any other personal or social situation or circumstance must not be upheld."

5th effect:

Citizens and public authorities are subject to the Constitution and other judicial regulations.

Article 9 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: "1. Citizens and public authorities are subject to the Constitution and other judicial regulations. 2. The public authorities are responsible for fostering suitable conditions so that the freedom and equality of individuals and groups in which they are involved are real and effective; removing any obstacles that prevent or hinder the full and easy participation of all citizens in political, economic, cultural and social life (...)"

Article 103 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: "The Public Administration serves general interests objectively and acts in accordance with the principles of effectiveness, hierarchy, de-centralisation, de-concentration and coordination and complete compliance of the law and rights. (...)"

6th effect:

All citizens have the same right to express themselves in Basque in any part of the territory where it is the official language.

(Constitutional Court Ruling 82/1986, Legal Basis 2 and Constitutional Court Ruling 337/1994, Legal Basis 5)

7th effect:

The legal system envisages the possibility of using any of the official languages – just one – in the relationship between citizens and public authorities.

The Constitutional Court has declared that “the use of just one of the co-official languages by public authorities can be done interchangeably, through own initiative or even through the choice of the interested parties, when this is regulated, whenever it does not harm the rights of any of the parties that may validly allege the lack of knowledge of the language used, which can only be made with regards to a language other than Castilian. The fact that the entire procedure can be carried out in the Basque language is a natural consequence of the official nature of this language in the Basque Community, which entails the effectiveness, in its sphere, of the actions carried out in this language.” (Constitutional Court Ruling 82/1986, Legal Basis 9).

Ruling R2593 of 26th March 1996, and ruling R3956 of 15th April 1997 of the High Court of Justice of the Basque Country, also clearly demonstrate that the double official nature does not necessarily mean that: “...Public Administrations or Council are required to translate all documents that are published or subscribed to into the two official languages...”

Autonomous Community of Navarre: Basque-speaking area

SPANISH STATE

Article 3 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution:

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2 – The other Spanish languages will also be official in the respective Autonomous Communities in accordance with their Statutes.

3 – The wealth of the different linguistic modalities in Spain is a cultural heritage that will be carefully respected and protected.

BASQUE-SPEAKING AREA OF NAVARRE

Basque is an official language

Organic Act 13/1982, 10th August governing the Reintegration and Improvement of the Chartered Regime of the Community of Navarre. Article 9:

"2. The Basque language will also be an official language in the Basque-speaking areas of Navarre. A community act will determine these areas, will regulate the official use of Basque, and within the framework of general State legislation, will arrange the teaching of this language."

Community Act 18/1968, of Basque. Article 2:

"1. Castilian and Basque are languages pertaining to Navarre, and thereby all citizens have the right to know them and to use them. 2. Castilian is the official language of Navarre. Basque is also an official language within the terms envisaged in Article 9 of the Organic Act of the Reintegration and Improvement of the Chartered Regime of the Community of Navarre and in those included within this Community Act."

Modification of the Community Act of Basque.

On 22nd June 2017, the Navarran Parliament Plenary approved the modification of Article 5.1b of the Community Act 18/1986 of Basque - the new denomination of the regulation - referring to the expansion of the mixed area to include a further 44 towns, reaching a total of 98, as well as the transfer of Atez into the Basque-speaking area.

It also envisaged the "automatic" inclusion of the town of Noáin-Valle de Elorz to the mixed area, "as long as it receives previous approval through absolute majority of the town council's Plenary".

Municipalities in the Basque-speaking area:

A Basque-speaking area, comprising the municipalities of: Abaurregaina / Abaurrea Alta, Abaurrepea / Abaurrea Baja, Altsasu / Alsasua, Anue, Araitz, Arakil, Arano, Arantza, Arbizu, Areso, Aria, Arike, Arruazu, Atetz / Atez, Auritz / Burguete, Bakaiku, Basaburua, Baztan, Beintza-Labaien, Bera, Bertizarana, Betelu, Donamaria, Doneztebe / Santesteban, Elgorriaga, Eratsun, Ergoiena, Erro, Esteribar, Etxalar, Etxarri Aranatz, Ezkurra, Garaioa, Garralda, Goizueta, Hiriberri / Villanueva de Aezkoa, Igantzi, Imotz, Irañeta, Irurtzun, Ituren, Iturmendi, Lakuntza, Lantz, Larraun, Leitza, Lekunberri, Lesaka, Luzaide / Valcarlos, Oiz, Olazti / Olazagutía, Orbaizeta, Orbara, Orreaga / Roncesvalles, Saldias, Sunbilla, Uharte Arakil, Ultzama, Urdazubi / Urdax, Urdiain, Urroz, Ziordia, Zubieta, Zugarramurdi.

1st effect:

The speak has the right to use Basque with complete legal validity and effectiveness, and no one may require the speaker to express him/herself in a language other than the official language of his/her choice, and can expect to be responded to in the chosen language whenever the interlocutor is a public body.

2nd effect:

All public authorities based in the Autonomous Community of Navarre are subject to the official nature of Basque (Ruling 82/1986 of the Spanish Constitutional Court. Legal Basis 2):

- Administrative bodies located in the Basque-speaking area that are dependent on the Government of Navarre (Government of Navarre and Administration of the Regional Community).
- Town councils and other local bodies.
- Administrative bodies or delegations that the European Union establishes within the territory of the Basque-speaking area.
- The autonomous administrative bodies, such as the National Statistics Institute (INE), the National Employment Institute (INEM), the National Social Security Institute (INSS), the State Agency for Tax Administration, the Spanish National Railway Network (RENFE), the Spanish national postal service (Correos y Telégrafos), etc.
- Any other internal or international public authorities located within the Autonomous Community of Navarre.

3rd effect:

Citizens have the right to freely choose Basque in their public and private relations.

4th effect:

Citizens have the **right to equality** and not to be discriminated against for choosing the Basque language to express themselves.

Article 14 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: "Spaniards are equal before the law, and any discrimination for reasons of birth, race, sex, religion, opinion, or any other personal or social situation or circumstance must not be upheld."

5th effect:

Citizens and public authorities are subject to the Constitution and other judicial regulations.

Article 9 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: “1. Citizens and public authorities are subject to the Constitution and other judicial regulations. 2. The public authorities are responsible for fostering suitable conditions so that the freedom and equality of individuals and groups in which they are involved are real and effective; removing any obstacles that prevent or hinder the full and easy participation of all citizens in political, economic, cultural and social life (...)”

Article 103 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution: “The Public Administration serves general interests objectively and acts in accordance with the principles of effectiveness, hierarchy, de-centralisation, de-concentration and coordination, and complete compliance of the law and rights. (...)”

6th effect:

All citizens have the same right to express themselves in Basque in any part of the territory where it is the official language.

(Constitutional Court Ruling 82/1986, Legal Basis 2 and Constitutional Court Ruling 337/1994, Legal Basis 5)

7th effect:

The legal system envisages the possibility of using any of the official languages – just one – in the relationship between citizens and public authorities.

8th effect:

The right of Navarran citizens to use and know Basque is recognised, as well as the right to receive education in Basque and in Castilian across the diverse levels of education, within the terms stipulated in the Act and based on the principles of voluntariness, gradualness and respect, in accordance with the socio-linguistic reality of Navarre.

Article 1 of the Basque Act: “2. These are essential objectives of this Act: (...) c) Guarantee the use and teaching of Basque based on the principles of voluntariness, gradualness and respect, in accordance with the socio-linguistic reality of Navarre”.

Article 19 of the Basque Act: “All citizens have the right to receive an education in Basque and in Castilian across the diverse levels of education, within the terms stipulated in the following chapters”.

9th effect:

The right to receive administrative notifications and communications exclusively in Basque when expressly requested for individual use, and to receive them drafted in both official languages in the event that the individual has not expressly exercised the right to choose the language.

The right to request and obtain copies or deeds in Basque from public notaries and to request said notaries to translate matrices and documents under their responsibility.

The right to request and obtain copies and certifications in Basque issued from Public Records.

Autonomous Community of Navarre: mixed area

SPANISH STATE

Article 3 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution:

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- 2 – The other Spanish languages will also be official in the respective Autonomous Communities in accordance with their Statutes.
- 3 – The wealth of the different linguistic modalities in Spain is a cultural heritage that will be carefully respected and protected.

BASQUE-SPEAKING AREA OF NAVARRE

Basque is not an official language

Municipalities within the mixed area:

Abáigar, Abárzuza / Abartzuza, Adiós, Aibar / Oibar, Allín / Allin, Améscoa Baja, Ancín / Antzin, Ansoáin / Antsoain, Añorbe, Aoiz / Agoitz, Aranarache / Aranaratxe, Aranguren, Arce / Artzi, Arellano, Artazu, Barañáin / Barañain, Bargota, Belascoáin, Beriáin, Berrioplano / Berriobeiti, Berriozar, Bidaurreta, Biurrun-Olcoz, Burgui / Burgi, Burlada / Burlata, Cabredo, Cendea de Olza / Oltza Zendea, Cirauqui / Zirauki, Ciriza / Ziritza, Cizur, Dicastillo, Echarri / Etxarri, Enériz / Eneritz, Esparza de Salazar / Espartza Zaraitzu, Estella-Lizarra, Etxauri, Eulate, Ezcabarte, Ezcároz / Ezkaroze, Galar, Gallués / Galoze, Garde, Garínoain, Goñi, Güesa / Gorza, Guesálaz / Gesalatz, Huarte / Uharte, Isaba / Izaba, Iza / Itza, Izagaondoa, Izalzu / Itzaltzu, Jaurrieta, Juslapeña, Larraona, Leoz / Leotz, Lerga, Lezaun, Lizoain-Arriasgoiti / Lizoainibar-Arriasgoiti, Lónguida / Longida, Mendigorria, Metauten, Mirafuentes, Murieta, Nazar, Obanos, Ochagavía / Otsagabia, Odieta, Oláibar, Olite / Erriberri, Orkoien, Oronz / Orontze, Oroz-Betelu / Orotz-Betelu, Oteiza, Pamplona / Iruña, Puente la Reina / Gares, Pueyo / Puiu, Roncal / Erronkari, Salinas de Oro / Jaitz, Sangüesa / Zangoza, Sarriés / Sartze, Tafalla, Tiebas-Muruarte de Reta, Tirapu, Ujué / Uxue, Unzué / Untzue, Urraúl Bajo, Urroz-Villa, Urzainqui / Urzainki, Uztárróz / Uztarroze, Valle de Egüés / Eguesibar, Valle de Ollo / Ollaran, Valle de Yerri / Deierrri, Vidángoz / Bidankoze, Villatuerta, Villava / Atarrabia, Zabalza / Zabaltza, Zizur Mayor / Zizur Nagusia, Zúñiga.

Effect:

The Basque Act recognises the right of citizens residing in the mixed area to use both Basque and Castilian when addressing the Public Administrations of Navarre, which are expected to

specify the civil servant positions for which it is necessary to have a knowledge of the Basque language.

Autonomous Community of Navarre: Non-Basque speaking area

SPANISH STATE

Article 3 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution:

1 – Castilian is the official language of the State. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it.

2 – The other Spanish languages will also be official in the respective Autonomous Communities in accordance with their Statutes.

3 – The wealth of the different linguistic modalities in Spain is a cultural heritage that will be carefully respected and protected.

NON BASQUE-SPEAKING AREA OF NAVARRE

Basque is not an official language

Municipalities in the non Basque-speaking area:

Aberin, Ablitas, Aguilar de Codés, Allo, Andosilla, Aras, Arguedas, Armañanzas, Arróniz, Artajona, Ayegui / Aiegi, Azagra, Azuelo, Barásoain, Barbarin, Barillas, Beire, Berbinzana, Buñuel, Cabanillas, Cadreita, Caparroso, Cárcar, Carcastillo, Cascante, Cáseda, Castejón, Castillonuevo, Cintruénigo, Corella, Cortes, Desojo, El Busto, Eslava, Espronceda, Etayo, Ezprogui, Falces, Fitero, Fontellas, Funes, Fustiñana, Gallipienzo / Galipentzu, Genevilla, Guirguillano, Ibargoiti, Igúzquiza, Javier, Lana, Lapoblación, Larraga, Lazagurría, Leache / Leatxe, Legarda, Legaria, Lerín, Liédena, Lodosa, Los Arcos, Lumbier, Luquin, Mañeru, Marañón, Marcilla, Mélida, Mendavia, Mendaza, Milagro, Miranda de Arga, Monreal / Elo, Monteagudo, Morentin, Mues, Murchante, Murillo el Cuende, Murillo el Fruto, Muruzábal, Navascués / Nabaskoze, Noáin (Valle de Elorz) / Noain (Elortzibar), Oco, Olejua, Olóriz / Oloritz, Orísoain, Peralta / Azkoien, Petilla de Aragón, Piedramillera, Pitillas, Ribaforada, Romanzado, Sada, San Adrián, San Martín de Unx, Sansol, Santacara, Sartaguda, Sesma, Sorlada, Torralba del Río, Torres del Río, Tudela, Tulebras, Úcar, Unciti, Urraúl Alto, Uterga, Valtierra, Viana, Villafranca, Villamayor de Monjardín, Yesa.

Effect:

The Law recognises the right of citizens to address the Public Administrations of Navarre in Basque, though they may be required to translate into Spanish.

Northern Basque Country

IN FRANCE

1. French constitution:

Article 2 of the Constitution of 4th October 1958 (modified by Constitutional Law 95-880 of 4th August 1995 - art. 8): **"The language of the Republic is French"**

Article 75-1, inserted into the Constitution by Constitutional Law 2008-724 of 23rd July 2008 modernising the institutions of the 5th Republic with regard to the regional languages of France): **"Regional languages are part of the heritage of France."**

2. Toubon Law:

Article 1 of the **Toubon Law of 4th April 1994** on the use of the French language: "The Language of the Republic by virtue of the Constitution, the French language is a fundamental part of the personality and heritage of France. It is the language of education, work, commerce and public services (...)."

Article 21: **"The provisions of this law apply notwithstanding the legislation and regulations concerning the regional languages of France, and do not oppose their use."**

3. NOTRé Law:

Law 2015-991 of 7th August 2015 on the new territorial organisation of the Republic (NOTRé) formally institutes a competence to "promote regional languages" and affirms the shared nature of this power.

4. Legislative and regulatory framework governing education

Education Code:

- **Art. L. 121-1** : [...] This training may include teaching, at all levels, of regional languages and cultures. [...].
- **Art. L. 121-3, II:** The language of education, examinations and competitive examinations, as well as theses and reports in public and private educational establishments, is French. Exceptions may be justified:
 - 1 By the need to teach regional or foreign languages and cultures; [...]
- **Art. L. 123-6, para. 3:** The public education service "assures the promotion and enrichment of the French language and regional languages and cultures. It takes part in the study and development of elements of national and regional heritage. [...]"

- **Art L. 312-10:** Regional languages and cultures are part of the heritage of France, their teaching is encouraged as a priority in the regions where they are in use.

This education may be provided throughout schooling in the forms defined by agreement between the State and the territories where these languages are in use.

The National Education Council is consulted, in accordance with the powers vested in it by article L. 231-1, on the means of encouraging the study of regional languages and cultures in the regions where these languages are in use.

Optional teaching of regional languages and cultures is proposed in one of the following two ways:

- 1 Teaching of regional language and culture;
- 2 Bilingual education in French and the regional language.

Families are informed of the different options for learning regional languages and cultures.

Order of 12th May 2003 concerning bilingual education in regional languages with timetable parity in schools and regional language sections in secondary and upper-secondary schools:

Art 1: In educational regions where a council for regional languages has been set up pursuant to articles D. 312-33 to D. 312-39 of the education code, bilingual education in a regional language with timetable parity may be implemented by the head of the regional education authority in schools and regional language sections in secondary and upper-secondary schools, following consultation of the council for regional languages, notification of the educational region technical committees, departmental technical committees, regional national education councils, departmental national education councils and notification of the local authorities concerned.

Art 2: Bilingual education with timetable parity is provided half in the regional language and half in French. However, no subject or subject area other than the regional language may be taught exclusively in the regional language.

The parts of education or the curriculum taught in French or in regional languages will be determined within the framework of the school programme or the establishment programme according to the principle of timetable parity.

Annexe to law no. 2013-595 of 8th July 2013: [...] Early exposure to and learning of living languages, either foreign or regional, is a proven factor in progress in the subject.

[...] In the educational regions concerned, complementary learning of a regional language is to be encouraged, and bilingualism in French and the regional language will be encouraged from nursery school onwards.

The use of materials and teaching resources in foreign or regional languages in educational activities during, around and outside school time is to be encouraged.

In the territories where regional languages are used, their learning will be encouraged for families who so desire. Thus, apart from the education that may be provided throughout schooling in the forms defined by agreement between the State and the territories where these languages are in use, complementary educational and cultural activities may be organised by local authorities to enhance knowledge of regional languages and cultures.

To favour access to schools providing education in a regional language, pupils residing in a municipality where the schools do not offer such education will have the option to be enrolled in a school in another municipality that does provide this education, subject to there being places available.

5. The media

Law no. 2000-719 of 1st August 2000 modifying law 86-1067 of 30th September 1986 on freedom of communication:

- Article 3 inserts a new article 43-11 in the 1986 law, of which paragraph 2 stipulates that broadcasters "assure the promotion of the French language and develop cultural and linguistic heritage in its regional and local diversity."
- Article 4 inserts a new article 44, III: Radio France "is to encourage regional expression on its decentralised channels around the country."

Decree no. 2009-796 of 23rd June 2009 establishing the terms of reference for the national broadcasting company France Télévisions, modified by decree no. 2013-233 of 16th April 2013:

- Article 40: France Télévisions ensures that, among the services it provides, those that offer regional and local programmes contribute to the expression of the regional languages spoken in mainland and overseas territories.

6. European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages:

France signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 7th May 1999 but has not ratified it. In January 2014 the National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment allowing ratification of the treaty, but this was finally rejected by the Senate on 27th October 2015.

FRENCH BASQUE COUNTRY

The above provisions apply to the French Basque Country, and likewise to all the territory of the French Republic.

In the French Basque Country, all tiers of government (State, Region, Department and municipality) have chosen to group themselves together to define and implement a public policy in favour of the Basque language. Thus, in 2004 the local authorities of the French Basque Country grouped together in a syndicate, elected representatives of the Basque Country represented by the council of elected representatives, the General Council of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques department, the Regional Council of Aquitaine and the State acting through an inter-ministerial framework including the Ministries of the Interior, Culture and National Education, set up, in the form of a grouping of public interest, a body governed by public law called the Public Office of the Basque Language, with the explicit task of drawing up, defining and implementing a language policy in favour of the Basque language. In 2017, the "Agglomeration Community" of the Basque Country, grouping together the 158 municipalities of the French Basque Country, replaced the municipalities and the council of elected representatives in the Public Office of the Basque Language as a representative of the group of municipalities.

1st consequence:

In its Decision no. 99-412 DC of 15th June 1999, the Constitutional Council considered the following: "that the freedom proclaimed by article 11 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen of 1789, according to which: "The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of man's most precious rights: all citizens may therefore speak, write and print freely, except in abuse of this freedom in the cases determined by the law," must be reconciled with the first paragraph of article 2 of the Constitution, according to which, "The language of the Republic is French;"

"that by virtue of these provisions, the use of French is imposed on legal entities and persons governed by public and private law in the exercise of a task of public service; that individuals cannot presume, in their relations with the authorities and public services, a right to use a language other than French, or be obliged to use such a language; that article 2 of the Constitution does not prohibit the use of translations; that its application must not lead to neglect of the importance in the field of education of audiovisual communication and research, freedom of expression and communication."

Thus, the French language is the language of education, work, commerce and public services, but there is nothing in administrative practice to stop regional languages being used, with the agreement of the people concerned.

It is also possible to use regional languages for written communication, providing this is accompanied by a version in French, which is the only one with legal value.

On public transport, information messages may be given in languages other than French, providing they are also given in French.

Bilingual or multilingual road signs may be installed, as the message has no prescriptive value.

In general terms, there is no prohibition on the use of regional languages, but neither does anything in law guarantee their use, and "Individuals cannot presume, in their relations with the authorities and public services, a right to use a language other than French, or be obliged to use such a language."

2nd consequence:

The public policy implemented in the French Basque Country by the authorities is at the same time voluntarist and incentivising, and respectful of freedom of acceptance and of the wishes of actors and speakers. The use of the Basque language, its learning and its adoption are on a voluntary basis. The public authorities may (or not), at their choice and discretion, provide services in the Basque language aimed at the population, the members of which are free to use them or not.

3rd consequence:

The teaching of the Basque language in schools at different levels is permitted but cannot be made obligatory.

This education is provided in three forms:

- Optional teaching of the Basque language for 1 to 3 hours a week at primary school and for 2 to 3 hours a week at secondary and upper-secondary school
- An education referred to as bilingual with timetable parity (in state schools and denominational private ones). This education consists of the following:
 - o At primary school, an education half the time in Basque and half the time in French
 - o At secondary and upper-secondary school, this involves teaching the Basque language for 3 hours a week and teaching one or more non-language subjects in Basque, without going beyond timetable parity.

- Immersive education in Basque, offered by associative private schools under a contract of association with the State.

It is also possible, within a framework of pedagogical experiments conducted over a limited period of 3 to 5 years which must be the subject of an assessment, to propose education entirely in Basque within public education and private denominational education.

4th consequence:

Decentralised services of the State may, in the performance of their tasks, make use of one or more regional languages alongside French. In practice, the Basque language is not used in the State services located in the French Basque Country.

Public health establishments (hospitals), State public establishments, are committed by an agreement with the Public Office of the Basque Language to use Basque in public institutions.

5th consequence:

In including article 75-1 in title XII of the Constitution devoted to local authorities, the legislator established a principle of shared responsibility with the State, confirmed by the NOTRé law.

Authorities may, if they wish, institute a policy of making use of the Basque language.

Thus, civil status certificates, public documents issued by town halls, must be drawn up in French, but there is nothing to stop town halls issuing a translation into another language on request by the interested parties and at no cost to the State. Municipalities can use bilingual communication and bilingual municipal services.

Likewise, the Department and the Region may pursue a language policy in their areas of competence (for example, road signs or certification of kindergarten teachers by the Department, training for job seekers or media by the Region, etc.).

6th consequence:

Public service media have obligations included in their terms of reference and:

- Terms of service and reference of the company France 3:
 - Chapter II. – Particular obligations
 - V. – Broadcasting in the main regional languages:
 - Art. 16: the company contributes to expression in the main regional languages in mainland France.
- Terms of service and reference of France 3: the general obligations explicitly include promotion of the French language and regional languages. Regional languages and dialects have a presence on several local channels in the France Bleu network.

In practice, the presence of Basque in programmes on public media remains marginal.

