

PLATA  
FORMA  
PER LA  
LLENGUA

L'ONG del català

# THE CATA LAN LAN GUA GE

KEY FACTS 2017







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# INTRODUCTION

Catalan is spoken in four European states (Spain, France, Andorra and Italy). In Spain, it is spoken in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, most of the region of Valencia and the Eastern Strip of Aragon. The linguistic domain of the Catalan language spreads out over a territory comprising 14 million inhabitants, 10 million of whom speak Catalan.

Catalan is the mother tongue of important people whose work has had a major international impact: architects such as Antoni Gaudí; painters such as Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró and Antoni Tàpies; musicians of the ilk of Pau Casals and Josep Carreras; chefs such as Ferran Adrià or the Roca brothers; scientists such as Valentí Fuster or Joan Massagué; and prominent sports celebrities such as Pep Guardiola, Gerard Piqué, Rafael Nadal or the Gasol brothers.

The Plataforma per la Llengua is an civil society organisation with more than 13,000 members that works to promote the social use of Catalan, to improve its legal status and to increase linguistic awareness in society, in the conviction that the role of the Catalan language is to become the backbone of social and cultural diversity in our country and that it should therefore be nurtured. Now, in 2017, we are presenting the second English-language version of the InformeCAT.

The report presents 25 significant data, obtained from official sources and press articles, as well as data culled from the studies and campaigns conducted by the Plataforma per la Llengua. The detail of each reference and their sources are provided in a final section that contains descriptions and links to each source. Once again this year, the data evince the vitality of Catalan in places where it is not undermined by the legal shackles of the Spanish State.

With this compilation, the Plataforma per la Llengua seeks to present a panorama which we wish to transform with the aid of a highly active society, in order to guarantee Catalan speakers the right to live fully in their language, just like other linguistic communities of a similar size as Catalan in advanced democracies do.





# SOCIOLINGUISTIC DATA

## 01 Catalan is spoken by some 10,047,102 people

The number of people who speak Catalan is above ten million, and it is estimated that 13,406,271 people understand it. This information was obtained by comparing the latest sociolinguistic surveys throughout the Catalan-speaking territories and the latest censuses of inhabitants. On a by-territory basis, 6 million of these speakers live in the Principality of Catalonia, 2.56 million in the Community of Valencia and a further 880,271 speakers in the Balearic Islands. The remaining half-million speakers are distributed across the other Catalan-speaking territories and beyond, registered on the census as residents abroad (this figure does not include residents in Northern Catalonia and Andorra).

Number and percentage of people that understand and/or speak Catalan

Territory	Total population	Population that understand Catalan	Estimation of speakers
Catalonia	7.518.903	7.112.882 (94,60%)	6.045.198 (80,40%)
Valencia	5.004.844	4.444.301 (88,80%)	2.561.479 (51,18%)
Balearic Islands	1.103.442	1.068.132 (96,80%)	888.271 (80,50%)
Eastern strip of Aragon	47.525	44.721 (94,10%)	38.115 (80,20%)
Northern Catalonia	465.467	283.935 (61,00%)	164.775 (35,40%)
L'Alguer (Sardinia)	44.082	39.718 (90,10%)	27.022 (61,30%)
Andorra	70.570	67.747 (96,00%)	55.680 (78,90%)
Catalan-speaking areas	14.254.833	13.061.437 (91,63%)	9.780.540 (68,61%)
Abroad	371.356	344.834 (92,86%)	266.562 (71,78%)
TOTAL		13.406.271	10.047.102

Source: data elaborated by Plataforma per la Llengua using the municipal register of 1 January 2014 (1 January 2015 in L'Alguer) and the latest sociolinguistic polls.

## 02 72% of French people are in favour of Catalan being official in Northern Catalonia

Almost 3 out of every 4 French citizens are in favour of Catalan attaining official status in the territory of Northern Catalonia, according to a survey carried out by the French Institute of Public Opinion. It should be mentioned that 85% of the inhabitants of the Pyrénées-Orientales department fully support and are calling for Catalan to have its own space in the public institutions and in public education. Despite the willingness evinced by its inhabitants, in October 2015 the French Senate vetoed France from ratifying the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), a step that would have won certain rights for Catalan speakers.

Source: [http://www.ifop.com/media/poll/3058-1-study\\_file.pdf](http://www.ifop.com/media/poll/3058-1-study_file.pdf)

## 03 Catalan is spoken by virtually all young people in Catalonia

Under-20s have a very high level of spoken Catalan. 96% of the population aged between 10 and 14 years and 93.6% of those aged between 15 and 19 years speak fluent Catalan. On the other hand, over-65s are the population sector with the lowest knowledge of Catalan, and only 59.7% speak the language fluently. These data point to the importance of linguistic immersion in Catalan in the educational system to guarantee that it is spoken and understood by everyone.

Source: Language Use Survey 2013







# CULTURE

## 4 The Catalan Public Television channel, TV3, produces series that enjoy international recognition

International recognition of the series produced by TV3 increased in the course of 2016. Netflix purchased the worldwide broadcasting rights to “Merlí”, a series that deals with the strange relationship between a philosophy teacher and his pupils and which has enjoyed great success in Catalonia. And it is not the first time that this has happened. In 2011, Steven Spielberg bought the broadcasting rights to the “Polseres Vermelles” series, which was adapted for the United States and screened there as Red Band Society in 2014.

Source: <http://www.naciodigital.cat/noticia/122744/tv3/es/mant/lider/audiencia/sete/any/consecutiu/amb/11/quota/pantalla>

[http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2015/12/16/television/1450294024\\_918981.html](http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2015/12/16/television/1450294024_918981.html)

<http://www.lavanguardia.com/television/20111028/54237284871/spielberg-producir-polsers-vermelles.html>



## 5 Most Catalans consume culture in the Catalan language, and the figures are increasing with every passing year

A recent study by the Opinion Studies Centre of the Government of Catalonia showed that 57% of the population would rather enjoy culture in Catalan, 17.8% were indifferent and 1.5% did not reply. The preference for Catalan is particularly high in the age bracket between 18 and 34 years.

Catalan has traditionally commanded a strong presence in the world of the theatre and dancing since the Spanish Transition, a trend that has been consolidated over the years. Between 2011 and 2017, it was the most used language in these areas, as 54.6% of shows were in Catalan.

Source: 2015 Linguistic Policy Report (page 25)

## 6 A film in Catalan, short-listed for the Oscars

The Catalan film *Estiu 1993* [Summer 1993] has been short-listed for the Oscar award to the best Foreign Language film.

*Estiu 1993*, directed by Carla Simón, tells the story of a 6-year-old girl who is spending her first summer without her parents (both of whom had died of AIDS), with her aunt and uncle in a farmhouse in Olot. The film won the award to the best début at the latest Berlinale, one of Europe's reference film festivals.

Source: [http://www.elnacional.cat/lallanca/ca/actualitat/estiu-1993-oscar\\_183228\\_102.html](http://www.elnacional.cat/lallanca/ca/actualitat/estiu-1993-oscar_183228_102.html)

# CULTURE

## 7 Catalan language, star of the 53rd Children's Book Fair of Bologna

For the first time ever, this professional book trade fair dedicated to children's books, and a worldwide reference, held in Bologna, hosted a guest of honour with a stateless culture. In the course of the Fair, staged between April 3 and 6, 2017, in a venue with a surface area of 176 square metres, Catalan Publishing houses and Agencies and the participating institutions organised numerous meetings with publishers and agencies from all over the world to showcase the sector's literary novelties. Thus, Catalan language took the centre stage before almost 26,000 professionals from more than 100 countries in attendance, thus making the most of its opportunity to showcase the strength of its literary output.

Source: <http://www.escriptors.cat/node/14095>







## 8 Catalan is a useful language for business

Catalan language has more than 4 million active consumers in Catalonia alone. These data vary according to the sector in which it is consumed. The best data stem from the retail trade, where 4,056,500 Catalan consumers use the language in retail shopping (65% of all consumers). Almost all of them (3,833,100) also use it in supermarkets and hypermarkets, either exclusively or in combination with other languages. Besides trade and commerce, Catalan is also used extensively in dealings with financial institutions, where 3,843,900 speakers (more than 60% of all consumers) use it, and almost two million of whom (1,918,800) conduct their formalities with savings banks and banking institutions exclusively in Catalan.

Source: Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya, 2015. *Enquesta d'usos lingüístics de la població 2013*.

# BUSINESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

## 9 Six (6) of the 10 major distribution groups include Catalan in their house brand products

Compliance with the Consumer Code Law in Catalonia is much higher among distribution sector companies than in other areas: whereas only 6% of manufacturer products available in the retail trade include Catalan (estimates made by the Plataforma per la Llengua), 6 out of the 10 distribution companies with the largest market share label all or some of their house brand products at least in Catalan.



Source: [www.plataforma-llengua.cat/media/assets/3256/Informe\\_marques\\_blanques\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.plataforma-llengua.cat/media/assets/3256/Informe_marques_blanques_DEF.pdf)



## 10 Four (4) of the 5 leading radio stations in Catalonia broadcast entirely in Catalan, although the largest part of the offer is in Spanish

Listeners prefer the radio in Catalan. Data from the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia show once again that Catalan language enjoys great health in the radio in Catalonia.

Thus, Four (4) of the 5 leading radio stations in Catalonia, broadcast entirely in Catalan (*Rac1*, *Catalunya Ràdio*, *Flaixbac* and *Flaix FM*). *Rac1* continues to lead the rankings, with more than 707,000 listeners a day, followed by *Catalunya Ràdio*, with more than 593,000. The third major general-content radio station is *Cadena Ser*, which broadcasts partially in Catalan. The 4th and 5th leading radios in Catalonia are music stations, *Flaixbac* and *Flaix FM*.

Mention should also be made of the audience figures for public and private radio stations in Catalan overall, often local ones.

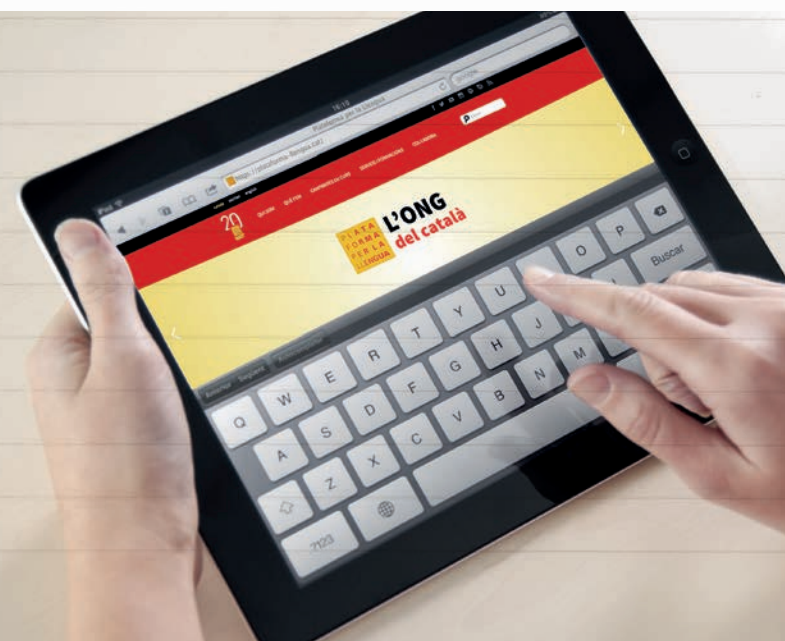
Source: [https://www.cac.cat/pfw\\_files/cma/recerca/altres/BIAC\\_num\\_3\\_cat.pdf](https://www.cac.cat/pfw_files/cma/recerca/altres/BIAC_num_3_cat.pdf)

# BUSINESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

## 11 83% of mobile telephones can operate in Catalan

Softcatalà, a non-profit association engaged in promoting the use of Catalan in the new technologies, publishes a report in which consumers of technology devices –mobile telephones, tablets, e-books and PCs – report what devices are available for use in Catalan and what ones are not. It transpires that 151 of the 182 (83%) devices registered on the Catalan market have the option of configuring the mobile telephone in Catalan, and 98 (53.8%) can run on software in this language.

Source: Softcatalà 2016, devices







# LINGUISTIC ROOTS

## 12 Teaching the Catalan language is one of the outstanding policies involved in the refugee hosting policy

The Catalan Refugee Programme is a comprehensive project designed by the Catalan Government with the help of civil society and local government. The programme's objective is to facilitate the full integration and autonomy of refugees. The programme features three types of mentors: linguistic (language accompaniment), occupational (guidance and job placement) and environmental (social bonds and participation). The Plataforma per la Llengua subscribes to the programme and has called upon its 13,000 members to act as language mentors for the refugees that reach our country to help them learn our language and linguistic reality.

Source: [http://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/web/.content/03ambits\\_tematicos/05immigracio\\_refugi/Persones\\_refugiades/Programa\\_catala\\_refugi/170124-RESUM-PCR-PER-A-LA-PREMSA.pdf](http://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/web/.content/03ambits_tematicos/05immigracio_refugi/Persones_refugiades/Programa_catala_refugi/170124-RESUM-PCR-PER-A-LA-PREMSA.pdf)





## 13 52.8% of newcomers speak Catalan

More than half of the foreign population have a fluent command of oral Catalan, and 31.7% write it properly. Most of these people learn Catalan in the Consorci per a la Normalització lingüística [Linguistic Harmonisation Consortium], which has more than 1.7 million people registered on its courses. The Minister for Culture declared, in this regard, that “this all proves that Catalan language is greatly appreciated from the standpoint of social promotion and growth and that is perceived by citizens as being useful, and not just as something nice”.

Source: Language Use Survey 2013

## 14 100,000 language volunteers and learners meet up to teach and learn Catalan, respectively

Fifteen years after it was started up, the “Language Volunteers” project, which features the participation of the Plataforma per la Llengua, has reached the figure of 100,000 language partners. The partners, comprised of a volunteer that speaks Catalan and a learner with basic notions but who wants to improve, meet for one hour every week to practice Catalan. Taking part in the programme, besides the evident benefits of improving the learner’s fluency in the language, helps to create emotional bonds with Catalan language and opens us up to learning about new cultures and other realities.

Source: 2012 Linguistic Policy Report Government of Catalonia (page 25)





## 15 Catalan is used in 76.5% of university degree classes

Catalan is the language used most in classes in Catalan universities, as confirmed by data published by the Commission for Universities and Research of the Government of Catalonia.

76.5% of university degree course classes are given in Catalan, 14.4% in Spanish and 9.1% in other languages. By universities, the University of Lleida (88.6%), the University of Girona (88.1%) and the Polytechnic University of Catalonia (82.7%) feature the highest presence of Catalan, whereas the Pompeu Fabra University turns in the lowest figure, with only 52.5% of classes in Catalan, 20% below any other Catalan university. On the other hand, the use of Catalan in Masters is lower, accounting for a global figure of 56.8%.

Source: Universitats i Recerca. Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015. *Dades i estadístiques sociolingüístiques*.

# EDUCATION

## 16 150 universities all over the world teach Catalan. Germany, France and the United Kingdom are the leaders

More than 6,000 students do courses in Catalan language and culture in 28 countries in Europe, America, Asia and Oceania. More than 150 universities in 28 countries all over the world teach Catalan. Moreover, 19 universities provide specialisation courses in Catalan studies.

The countries with the highest number of centres that offer Catalan studies are France, with 21 universities, and Germany and the United Kingdom, both of them with 20. Similarly, in the 2014-2015 academic year, almost 650 courses in Catalan language and culture were given.

Source: [http://www.llull.cat/catala/aprendre\\_catala/mapa\\_llengua.cfm](http://www.llull.cat/catala/aprendre_catala/mapa_llengua.cfm)

## 17 More than 130,000 people from all over the world have signed up for virtual courses to learn Catalan on the parla.cat website

The Catalan language virtual learning space promoted by the Government of Catalonia, the Institut Ramon Llull and the Consorci per a la Normalització Lingüística [Linguistic Harmonisation Consortium] reached the figure of 130,413 pupils from all over the world who are interested in learning Catalan. This service has been providing everyone with teaching material to learn Catalan language since 2008, offering courses with different levels, either in the "free" mode or with the aid of a tutor who guides and motivates the pupil or student.

Source: 2012 Linguistic Policy Report Government of Catalonia (page 25)





## 18 Only 8.4% of rulings in Catalonia are in Catalan, despite the language's official status

In June 2016, the Department of Justice published the data about the use of Catalan in the judiciary and the courts. The use of Catalan has dwindled over the last 10 years: in 2015, only 8.4% of all rulings or sentences issued were in Catalan. The percentage of use of Catalan was 4% down on the previous year. And compared to 2009, these figures have plunged to half.

This dynamic is largely due to the non-fulfilment of the recommendations issued repeatedly by the experts of the Council of Europe to Spain in its evaluation reports of fulfilment of the ECRML. According to the experts, the Organic Law of the Judicial Power, which at this moment in time does not guarantee the right to be hold legal proceedings in Catalan, needs to be reformed.

Source: <http://www.elpuntavui.cat/societat/article/5-societat/1182842-injeccio-de-catala-als-jutjats.html>

# JUSTICE

## 19 The Spanish Parliament continues to violate the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) in matters of justice

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate, in the course of their respective Justice Commissions on February 6, 2017, rejected a motion calling for the implementation of measures to protect and guarantee language rights in justice and that knowledge of Catalan should be a requirement for judges working in Catalan-speaking territories.

Had this motion been upheld, oral and written knowledge of Catalan would have been a requirement for judges (at the moment only Spanish is a required language) and parties to proceedings would have been able to demand that proceedings be held in Catalan, which would have led the State to progress with regard to the recommendations issued by the Council of Ministers of Europe to palliate some of the Spanish State's infringements of the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages.

The fact that Catalan is not a requirement for judges has spawned all types of problems for Catalan speakers in legal proceedings throughout history, as pressure (or even force) has been brought to bear on people to switch languages.

Source: [http://www.senado.es/web/actividadparlamentaria/actualidad/video/index.html?s=12\\_S011008\\_007\\_01&ig=624847](http://www.senado.es/web/actividadparlamentaria/actualidad/video/index.html?s=12_S011008_007_01&ig=624847)



## 20 Fined 601 Euros for addressing the Spanish police in Catalan

Linguistic aggressions perpetrated by State officials against Catalan speakers did not disappear in the course of 2016. One of the numerous outstanding cases was that of a lecturer from the UPC who was repeatedly harassed by two Spanish police officers at El Prat airport for having addressed them in Catalan. The officers rebuked him for purportedly disrespecting them and for his “lack of affection for the country,” withheld his passport and threatened him with preventing him from boarding his flight unless he agreed to speak Spanish. However, this was not the end of the lecturer’s ordeal. A few months later he received notice that he had been fined 601 Euros for “disobedience” and for “obstructing the police.”

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated event: between 2007 and the present, more than 100 serious cases of discrimination by state officials against citizens for speaking Catalan have been detected, and many more have simply gone unreported. The fact that most of these cases are eventually filed is indicative of the scant willingness of the Spanish State to do away with such malpractice.

Source: <https://www.plataforma-llengua.cat/que-fem/noticies/3480/la-policia-espanyola-sanciona-un-ciutadana-per-parlar-en-catala-a-laeroport-del-prat>

# OFFICIAL STATUS AND RECOGNITION

## 20 The European Language Equality Network (ELEN) meets in Barcelona to promote a framework of protection for minority languages in the EU

In the course of its general assembly, held in Barcelona in October 2016, the ELEN resolved to petition the European Commission to undertake disciplinary proceedings against States that fail to punish linguistic discriminations against speakers of minority languages, in accordance with article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Similarly, the ELEN also called upon the Commission to promote the procedure to enact a Directive on linguistic rights.

Source: <http://www.plataforma-llengua.cat/que-fem/noticies/3341/rosa-de-la-neus-marco-escollida-nova-vicepresidenta-de-la-xarxa-europea-elen>

## 22 Catalan has been the official language of Futbol Club Barcelona for 100 years

2016 was the 100th anniversary of the first official document of Futbol Club Barcelona written in Catalan. The document in question were the minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Directors chaired by Gaspar Rosés on July 1, 1916, which constituted the beginning of the use of Catalan as the club’s official language. After that, Catalan became the official language of Barça’s internal documents (board meeting minutes, lists of members, statutes, etc.) and it was subsequently acknowledged as the club’s language by the statutes, and must therefore be used routinely and preferentially in all activities.

Source: <https://www.fcbarcelona.cat/club/noticies/2016-2017/el-catala-cent-anys-present-al-fc-barcelona>





# INTERNET AND THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

## 23 Six (6) of the world's 10 main websites now have a Catalan version

The Alexa website counts the world's most-visited websites. According to its classification, 6 of the 10 most visited websites have a Catalan version. These sites are Google, Facebook, YouTube, Wikipedia, Twitter and Live. It should also be mentioned that two of the remaining four websites are intended exclusively for the Chinese (Baidu and QQ). Amazon is one of the few leading portals that still do not use Catalan. When the company announced that it was setting up in Barcelona, the Plataforma per la Llengua called upon it to connect with its host society by using Catalan from the word go.

Source: InformeCat 2016

## 24 The Catalan version of Wikipedia already has 500,000 articles, and leads the classification of the 1,000 most relevant articles of all Wikipedias

The Catalan version of the Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia promoted by the Wikimedia Foundation, topped the figure of 500,000 articles in 2016. This places it in the fourth tier (between half a million and 1 million), along with Portuguese, Chinese and Ukrainian. Moreover, the Catalan Wikipedia led the Wikipedia classification in terms of the 1,000 articles regarded as most important by the community. This was the second time that it had led this classification, since in 2010 it became the first non-English language edition to top the ranking.

Source: [ca.wikipedia.org](http://ca.wikipedia.org)

## 25 **TripAdvisor removes comments in Catalan but permits posts in languages with half its number of speakers**

TripAdvisor, the web platform that rates establishments and services, continues to ostracise Catalan, despite having versions for linguistic communities with far fewer speakers. More specifically, Trip Advisor has 56 portals, which include its Canadian French-speaking one (7.3 million speakers according to Ethnologue.com), the Belgian Dutch-speaking one (5.6 million), Finnish (5.4 million speakers), Hebrew (5,239,200), Norwegian (5), the Swiss German-speaking portal (4.5), the Belgian French-speaking platform (3,900,000), the Slovakian one (4.5) and the Swiss French-speaking (1.8) and Swiss Italian-speaking (666,000) ones. On the other hand, Catalan, with more than 10 million speakers, is still banned by the consumer establishment rating website. Despite leading the ranking of complaints on account of its discrimination against Catalan for three consecutive years (comments in Catalan are automatically deleted), it would appear that at least for the moment TripAdvisor has no intention of treating Catalan speakers in the same way that it treats similar-sized or even patently smaller language communities.

Source: [www.tripadvisor.es](http://www.tripadvisor.es)



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