



RISE UP

REVITALISING LANGUAGES AND SAFEGUARDING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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RISE UP Policy Recommendation for Revitalising Minoritised Language Varieties



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1 Introduction

Linguistic diversity is a cornerstone of Europe's commitment to safeguarding cultural heritage and fostering sustainable, inclusive societies. However, minoritised languages across Europe and beyond face sustained pressure from dominant languages. Even where formal recognition exists, many varieties continue to experience declining intergenerational transmission, limited domains of use, and fragmented provision across sectors. The [RISE UP project](#) has worked out recommendations for supporting the revitalisation of minoritised language varieties in collaboration with minoritised language users, researchers and policy makers.

These Policy Recommendations are based on the RISE UP Deliverable 3.2 Guidelines for language revitalisation as well as [RISE UP policy round table](#) "Bridging the Gap Between Language Policy Planning and Language Policy Making" on the 18th of June, 2025, organised by the project RISE UP & the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) in Vienna.

Based on the RISE UP Deliverable 3.2, Guidelines for Language Revitalisation, these policy recommendations emphasise the importance of inclusivity, humility, respect and reciprocity in revitalisation work. The RISE UP project understands revitalisation as a systemic and ongoing process that connects language, people and environment, rather than as a purely technical endeavour or an isolated educational intervention. Although the recommendations are addressed separately to language users, researchers and policymakers, their effectiveness depends on sustained collaboration between stakeholders. The recommendations are also categorised according to the following key spheres for revitalisation: education, cultural visibility, community socialisation, wellbeing and empowerment, governance and digital innovation.

2 Educational sphere and research

Education is a crucial element of the broader ecosystem that supports language revitalisation, offering opportunities for younger generations to acquire the language and enabling the training of skilled educators. Educational institutions also function as public spaces in which the language gains visibility and social legitimacy. The efficiency of these measures depends on collaboration between actors, but especially the following three recommendations are addressed to all stakeholders:

- Ensure equitable access to language learning through hybrid delivery, support for travel and childcare, and outreach to rural and diaspora communities.
- Review and reflect on educational plans regularly with communities to adjust aims and methods as contexts evolve.
- Monitor outcomes with indicators that track not only enrolments and test scores but also participation in community activities and language use in daily life, taking into account vitality levels.

2.1 Recommendations for language community members

- Establish an education plan covering early years, school, adult learning and digital provision, with clear progression and pathways into community use and employment.

- Prioritise approaches that involve or encourage real use, such as immersion programmes, conversation groups and project-based learning linked to local culture and economy.
- Align schooling with community and cultural activities so that learners have places and reasons to use the language outside the classroom
- Design inclusive activities for new speakers, heritage users and adult learners, with recognition of achievements through micro-credentials and community awards.

2.2 Recommendations for researchers

- Strengthen the link between research, policy-making, and implementation. Funding bodies as well as researchers should incentivise and strive for applied, impact-oriented research in language policy by:
 - valuing social impact alongside academic publication,
 - funding collaborative projects involving researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners,
 - supporting mechanisms that allow research findings to directly inform policy design and revision.
- Review and reflect on educational plans regularly with communities to adjust aims and methods as contexts evolve.
- Monitor outcomes with indicators that track not only enrolments and test scores but also participation in community activities and language use in daily life, taking into account vitality levels.

2.3 Recommendations for policymakers and funding bodies

- Provide stable multi-year funding and coordination across education, culture, media and governance to create momentum and visibility.
- Fund the development of adaptable, locally relevant materials across age groups and sectors, using open licences and community co-creation initiatives.
- Invest in teacher training through scholarships, co-teaching models and continuous professional development, including support for community educators and volunteers.
- Support monitoring frameworks that go beyond formal educational outcomes.
- Stakeholders participating at the RISE UP policy round table also stressed the need to demand and support systematic involvement of minoritised language communities in the design of language-related policies. Community members should be recognised as legitimate partners, not informal consultees, and their contributions should be financially compensated to ensure equitable participation.

3 Cultural visibility - raising awareness and prestige of minoritised language varieties

Increasing awareness and prestige helps create the social conditions in which people recognise the presence of minoritised language varieties in their communities and may be motivated to learn, use and identify with them. Achieving this requires synergy among stakeholders and across measures, including legislation, education, cultural and media engagement, and visibility in the linguistic

landscape, in order to convert awareness and recognition into genuine language vitality. However, the impact of awareness and prestige planning on language revitalisation ultimately depends on whether it leads to real opportunities for interaction. Visibility, cultural celebration and official recognition are effective only when they encourage people to speak and hear the language in everyday life.

The following recommendations are addressed to policymakers and community activists foremost.

- Prioritise early, proactive recognition at all stages of vitality, including for languages that already show signs of contraction or reduced transmission.
- Invest in creative industries, cultural festivals and youth-led media as vehicles of prestige.
- Support linguistic visibility through signage, branding and digital outreach.
- Support language development processes, including where appropriate polynomic approaches, in ways that respect linguistic diversity and cross-border variation.
- Ensure that awareness-raising connects back to use, learning and intergenerational continuity.
- Link official recognition to tangible policy actions and community participation.

4 Community language use and socialisation

Community-based use is central to language vitality. Without active and informal use within families, peer groups and social networks, neither schooling, policy measures nor awareness-raising efforts can ensure long-term sustainability. Policies and projects should therefore support community-driven use by fostering the spaces, relationships and networks through which the language becomes part of everyday life.

4.1 Recommendations addressed to community activists and language users

- Prioritise family and community transmission by supporting parent-focused learning, flexible working hours, and mentorship schemes
- Invest in “new speaker” networks through social groups, immersion retreats, cultural events and digital communities.
- Create safe, inclusive spaces for language use that encourage risk-taking and welcome participants of all backgrounds.

4.2 Recommendations addressed to policymakers

- Integrate community initiatives into regional policy so that informal activities are recognised as legitimate and measurable components of language planning.
- Strengthen links between education, awareness and community practice to ensure that classroom learning, cultural engagement and daily use reinforce one another.

5 Community wellbeing and empowerment

Language vitality is closely linked to the wellbeing of communities, their environment, and local economies. Revitalisation depends on factors such as social justice, cultural confidence, and community resilience, making it not only a cultural endeavour but also part of broader agendas for

sustainable development, inclusion, decolonisation, and regional development. Language revitalisation efforts depend on non-linguistic policies, such as housing, labour, and digital policy. Integrated, cross-sectoral strategies should be promoted to ensure that language use is supported not only in education, but also in other life situations and digital environments.

5.1 Recommendations for policymakers

- Integrate language revitalisation into regional and rural development policies, ensuring that economic initiatives promote and use local languages
- Develop sustainable funding models that tie revitalisation outcomes to social and economic wellbeing, not only linguistic indicators
- Promote intersectoral cooperation between cultural institutions, environmental agencies and creative industries
- Recognise language revitalisation as a determinant of wellbeing, and integrate it into health, education, and social policy initiatives.

5.2 Recommendations for community activists

- Avoid over-commodification of language and culture, maintaining authenticity and living practice alongside economic valorisation.
- Support cross-sectoral partnerships between linguistic, cultural, educational and health organisations to deliver integrated community programmes relevant to language revitalisation.

6 Governance

Governance and policy help align community initiatives with institutional support and ensure that local efforts create sustained impact. These recommendations are addressed to policymakers.

- Embed language revitalisation into cross-sectoral policy frameworks at local, national and European levels.
- Institutionalise participatory governance models that include community representatives in planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Ensure sustainable, long-term funding through integrated budget lines and multi-year programming. Facilitate follow-up funding and scaling mechanisms for successful initiatives, ensuring that insights and structures developed in short-term projects can be embedded sustainably in communities and institutions.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships linking education, culture, health, environment and creative industries.
- Establish evaluation frameworks that measure social and cultural outcomes alongside linguistic indicators.
- Encourage inter-regional and European cooperation for exchange of good practices and co financing of revitalisation initiatives.

- On the other hand, encourage institutional capacity-building at local and municipal level. Capacity-building measures should address common constraints such as limited budgets, administrative overload, and lack of implementation expertise.

7 Digital innovation

Technological tools can reinforce linguistic vitality, fostering community activism, structural support, emotional attachment, motivation and momentum by connecting people, resources and content in new ways. The RISE UP project is also publishing a policy brief specifically with guidelines for discussing Generative AI for minoritised languages. These policy recommendations are addressed to policymakers to help sustain an environment that supports revitalisation of minoritised linguistic varieties.

- Mainstream linguistic diversity in European digital-culture and innovation programmes.
- Support community-driven digital projects through long-term funding, training and infrastructure.
- Promote open-access, multilingual and interoperable resources while protecting data sovereignty and cultural rights.
- Invest in digital education and creative industries to link revitalisation with employment and youth engagement
- Develop ethical guidelines for AI and emerging technologies to ensure equitable representation of minoritised languages, and equitable access to digital tools.
- Encourage cross-border collaboration to share digital tools, standards and best practices among European language communities.

8 Evaluation

Evaluation is a crucial part of the language revitalisation process. Evaluation enables communities and institutions to reflect on what works and why, demonstrates responsible use of resources and transparent outcomes and effectively helps adapt goals to changing social, demographic and technological contexts. It is crucial that all stakeholders, especially language users themselves participate in the evaluation process. Stakeholders participating at the RISE UP Policy Round Table also emphasized the critical importance of evaluation processes and the need to frame evaluation as a learning tool, not a punitive mechanism, encouraging adaptation and revision where policies prove ineffective. The evaluation process should be an empowering measure for the communities and not intended to penalise.

- Adopt an evaluation framework integrating all components of the linguistic ecosystem ([D3.1](#))
- Ensure multilevel monitoring so that governmental, institutional and community data inform each other.
- Combine quantitative and qualitative methods for a balanced view of outcomes.
- Institutionalise participatory evaluation to build capacity and trust.
- Establish regular review cycles and open data sharing to sustain learning and accountability.

Links

RISE UP Website: www.riseupproject.eu

RISE UP & NPLD Policy Roundtable: <https://www.riseupproject.eu/events/policy-roundtable/>