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# BASQUE

## The Basque language in education in France

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

**mercator**

European Research Centre on  
Multilingualism and Language Learning



Regional Dossier series

The Basque language  
in education in France

3rd Edition

Beñat Lascano

**Edited by**

Anna Fardau Schukking

Katharina Thomas

Jan Ybema

Charlie Robinson-Jones

*Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning*

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## Foreword

### *background*

Regional and minority languages are languages that differ from the official state language. The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning uses the following definition for these languages, as stated in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML):

Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants.

The Mercator European Research Centre aims to acquire, apply, and circulate knowledge about these regional and minority languages in education. An important means to achieve this goal is the Regional Dossier series: documents that provide the most essential features of the education system of regions with a lesser-used regional or minority language.

### *aim*

The aim of the Regional Dossier series is to provide concise descriptions of minority languages in education, mainly in Europe but also in other parts of the world. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements, and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects such as the number of schools, teachers, and pupils, and financial investments. Because of this fixed structure, the dossiers in the series are easy to compare.

### *target group*

The dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, students, and journalists who wish to explore developments in minority language schooling in Europe. They can also serve as a first orientation towards further research, or function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions.

### *link with Eurydice*

The format of the Regional Dossiers follows the format of Eurydice – the information network on education in Europe – in order to link the regional descriptions with those of national

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education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

### ***contents***

Every Regional Dossier begins with an introduction about the region in question, followed by six chapters that each deal with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Chapters 8 and 9 cover the main lines of research into education of the minority language under discussion, and the prospects for the minority language in general and in education in particular, respectively. Chapter 10 provides a summary of statistics. Lists of (legal) references and useful addresses regarding the minority language are given at the end of the dossier.

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# The Basque language in education in France

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

**Beñat Lascano**

## Summary

### **Basque and its status in education in France**

Despite its centralist tendencies and focus on French as the only official language of the republic, France has, especially over the last 30 years, adopted laws, decrees, and regulations that allow for the inclusion and expansion of Basque language education. Thus, the choice of learning Basque or in Basque can be made in the Northern Basque Country or Iparralde (the French part of the Basque Country), even though it is not a mandatory part of the curriculum at any level. Basque is spoken by approximately 20% of the population of Iparralde, and, at the time of writing this dossier, around one third of all pupils were following Basque language classes (48% in pre-school, 40% in primary school, 23% in secondary school, and 5% in vocational training), most of whom through bilingual, fully or partially immersive education. The number of pupils following these types of education has steadily increased over the last few decades, even though, at the same time, the number of productive French-Basque bilinguals has decreased. The introduction of Basque into a school's curriculum mainly depends on the proportion of parents demanding such a step.

### **Basque in educational research**

The Interuniversity Department of Basque Studies in Bayonne is the only place in France that offers a full university programme in Basque Studies, with specialisations in language, literature, and civilisation. This department is attached to the University of Pau and the Pays de l'Adour and the University of Bordeaux Montaigne, where a doctorate in Basque Studies can be obtained. In the academic year 2019/20, there were 20 students following a trajectory to obtain such a doctorate. Recent research projects have focused on the challenges of French-Basque bilingual education and on adult learning of Basque.

### **Prospects for Basque in France**

A pro-active language policy is crucial to counter the slow but steady decline in the daily use of the Basque language in Iparralde. There is general public support for an expansion of Basque language education, which should be monitored and analysed through research, but the political will and financial means to do so are limited. Ideally, Basque education should become part of the general curriculum in all schools at all educational levels, at least as a language course or, better still, in the form of bilingual education. The availability of trained Basque-speaking teachers, already a matter of concern, would then deserve even higher priority.



# Herrialdeetako txostenen saila

## Euskara Frantziako irakaskuntzan

3. argitalpena

**Beñat Lascano**

### Laburpena

#### **Euskarak Frantziako irakaskuntzan duen estatutua**

Nahiz eta zentralizaziorako joera duen Frantziak, eta frantses errepublikaren hizkuntza ofizial bakarra frantsesa bada ere, euskararen irakaskuntza ahalbidetu eta garatu duten lege eta araudiak sortu dira, batez ere azken 30 urteetan. Euskararen edota euskarazko ikaskuntza ez da ikasmaila bakoitzeko programetan beharrezkoak diren edukien barne, baina honelako irakaskuntza segitzeko hautua egin daiteke Ipar Euskal Herrian. Iparraldeko biztanleen guti gora behera % 20k du euskara mintzatzen, eta txostena idatzi den mementoan, ikasleen heren batek segitzen zituen euskara edota euskarazko kursoak (% 48k ama eskolan, % 40k lehen hezkuntzan, % 23k bigarren hezkuntzan eta % 5ek formakuntza profesionalean), hauetan gehienek irakaskuntza elebidun osoki edo partez murgilketazko baten bidez. Honelako irakaskuntza segitzen duten ikasleen kopurua beti emendatuz joan da azken urteetan, denbora berean euskara-frantses elebidun aktiboen kopurua apaldu bada ere. Eskola batean euskararen irakaskuntza proposatua izatea, hala nahi duten guraso kopuruaren araberako erabakia da batez ere.

#### **Euskara hezkuntzari buruzko ikerkuntzetan**

Frantzian, Baionako euskal ikasketen unibertsitateen arteko departamenduak du bakarrik euskal ikasketen arloko programa unibertsitario osoa eskaintzen, hizkuntzan, literaturan eta zibilizazioan berezitua izanez. Paue eta Aturri herrialdeetako unibertsitateari eta Bordeleko Montaigne unibertsitateari lotua zaie. Hauetan segi daiteke euskal ikasketen arloko doktoretza. 2019/2020 ikasturtean, 20 ikasle ziren doktoretza segitzen ari. Azken urteetako ikerketa proiektuek aztertu dituzte euskara-frantses irakaskuntza elebidunaren trabesak edo euskararen jabekuntza berantiarrarenak.

#### **Euskararen perspektibak Frantzian**

Hizkuntz politika proaktibo bat ezinbestekoa da Ipar Euskal Herriko euskararen eguneroko erabilpenaren gibelatze urri baina erregularrari kontra egiteko. Euskararen edo euskarazko irakaskuntza elebidunaren hedatze baten alde agertzen da jendea, ikerkuntzek segitu eta aztertu beharko luketena, baina horretara joateko borondate politikoa eta diru baliabideak mugatuak dira. Idealean, euskararen irakaskuntzak behar luke eskola guzietako programa orokorretan izan, ikasmaila bakoitz, ikasgai gisa, edo oraino hobeki, irakaskuntza elebidun baten barne. Honelako irakaskuntza eskaintzen ahal izateko, irakasle formatuen kopurua, jada arrangura gaietarik bat dena, lehentasunezkoa litzateke.

## Série des dossiers régionaux

# La langue basque dans l'enseignement en France

3ème édition

**Beñat Lascano**

### Résumé

#### **Statut de la langue basque dans l'enseignement en France**

En dépit de ses tendances centralisatrices et du fait que le français soit la seule langue officielle de la République, la France a, surtout au cours des 30 dernières années, adopté des lois, des décrets et des règlements qui permettent l'inclusion et l'expansion de l'enseignement de la langue basque. Ainsi, le choix d'un apprentissage du basque ou en basque peut être fait au Pays-Basque Nord ou Iparralde (la partie française du Pays-Basque), même si cet apprentissage n'est pas obligatoire dans les programmes d'enseignement à tous les niveaux. Le basque est parlé par environ 20 % de la population d'Iparralde et, au moment de la rédaction de ce dossier, environ un tiers des élèves suivaient des cours de langue basque (48 % en maternelle, 40 % en primaire, 23 % en secondaire et 5 % en formation professionnelle), la plupart par le biais d'un enseignement bilingue, totalement ou partiellement immersif. Le nombre d'élèves suivant ces types d'enseignement n'a cessé d'augmenter au cours des dernières décennies, même si en même temps, le nombre de bilingues français-basque a diminué. L'introduction d'un enseignement du basque ou en basque dans une école dépend principalement de la proportion de parents qui le souhaitent.

#### **Recherche à propos de l'enseignement de la langue basque**

Le Département inter-universitaire d'études basques de Bayonne est le seul endroit en France qui offre un programme universitaire complet en études basques, avec des spécialisations en langue, littérature et civilisation. Il est rattaché à l'université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour et à l'université Bordeaux Montaigne, dans lesquels il est possible d'obtenir un doctorat en études basques. Au cours de l'année universitaire 2019/2020, 20 étudiants étaient inscrits dans un tel doctorat. Les projets de recherche récents ont porté sur les défis de l'enseignement bilingue français-basque et sur l'apprentissage adulte du basque.

#### **Perspectives pour la langue basque en France**

Une politique linguistique proactive est cruciale pour contrer le déclin lent mais régulier de l'usage quotidien de la langue basque en Iparralde. L'opinion publique est favorable à une expansion de l'enseignement du basque ou en langue basque, qui devrait être suivi et analysé par des recherches, mais la volonté politique et les moyens financiers pour y parvenir sont limités. Dans l'idéal, l'enseignement du basque devrait faire partie du programme général dans toutes les écoles, à tous les niveaux d'enseignement, au moins comme cours de langue ou, mieux encore, sous la forme d'un enseignement bilingue. La disponibilité d'enseignants basco-phones formés, qui est déjà un sujet de préoccupation, serait alors un enjeu prioritaire.



## List of Abbreviations

<b>AEK</b>	Alfabetatze eta Euskalduntze Koordinakundea (Coordinator of Literacy and Basque Promotion)
<b>CAFEP</b>	Certificat d’Aptitude aux Fonctions d’Enseignement dans les Établissements Privés sous contrat du 2nd degré (Certificate of aptitude for teaching functions in private 2nd degree establishments under contract)
<b>CAPES</b>	Certificat d’Aptitude au Professorat de l’Enseignement du Second degré (Certificate of aptitude for secondary education teaching)
<b>CEFRL</b>	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
<b>DDEC</b>	Direction Diocésaine de l’Enseignement Catholique (Diocesan Directorate of Catholic Education)
<b>DIEB</b>	Département Interuniversitaire d’Etudes Basques (Interuniversity Department of Basque Studies)
<b>DNB</b>	Diplôme National du Brevet (National Patent Diploma)
<b>EEP</b>	Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa (Public office of the Basque language)
<b>FRLPE</b>	Federation for Regional Languages in Public Education
<b>MEEF</b>	Masters Métiers de l’Enseignement de l’Éducation et de la Formation (Master’s in Teaching, Education and Training)
<b>NBC</b>	Northern Basque Country
<b>NLS</b>	Non-linguistic subjects
<b>SBC</b>	Southern Basque Country
<b>UBM</b>	University of Bordeaux Montaigne
<b>UD</b>	University Diploma
<b>UPPA</b>	University of Pau and Pays de l’Adour

# 1 Introduction

## *language*

Basque, or *Euskara*, is considered to be one of the oldest languages in Europe, which has long interested researchers, with many theories, sometimes quite original, having been developed around it. The theories according to which it does not belong to the Indo-European language family are being disputed today.

Considerable similarities have been highlighted by comparing Basque and the ancient Indo-European languages. Basque, or its protolanguage, is thus now considered by most specialists as a pre-Indo-European language. It is, however, beyond the scope of this dossier to enumerate such theories (for more information, see, e.g., Etxamendy et al., 2017; Igartua & Zabaltza, 2012). The language has several dialects (see Zuazo, 2008). The Basque Language Academy (Euskaltzaindia) developed a standard form of writing in the 1960s, called *Euskara batua* (unified Basque). In 1968, it became the norm, which greatly facilitated the organisation of teaching Basque. Depending on the region, the local dialect is also transmitted in schools (Sarraitet, 2009).

Nowadays, the area where Basque is spoken is called Euskal Herria, or the Basque Country (see Figure 1). This area comprises seven historical provinces, of which four are in Spain (Araba/Álava, Bizkaia/Vizcaya, Gipuzkoa/Guipúzcoa, and Nafarroa/Navarra), called the Southern Basque Country (SBC) or Hegoalde, and three in France (Lapurdi/Labourde, Nafarroa Behera/Basse Navarre, and Zuberoa/Soule), called the Northern Basque Country (NBC) or Iparralde. Figure 2 provides an idea of the areas of the Basque Country in which Basque is spoken to a greater or lesser extent.

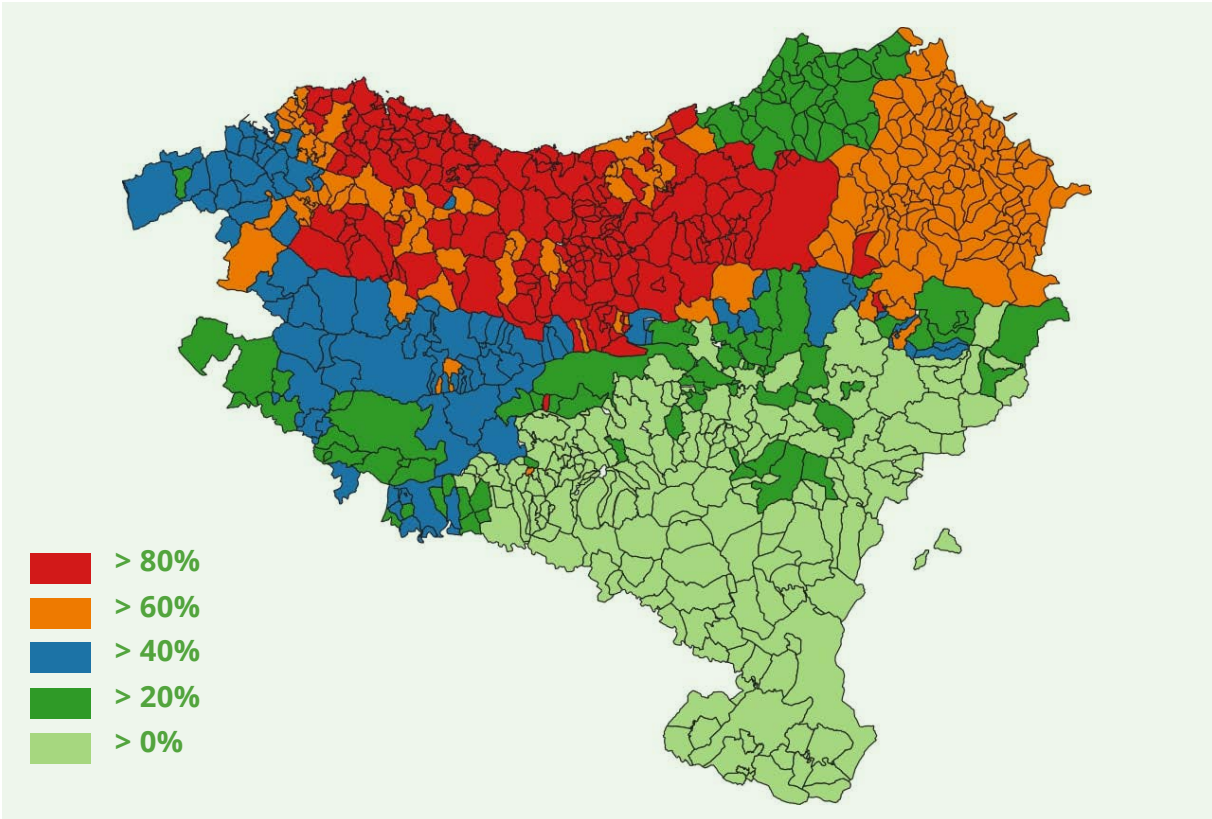
In this dossier, the situation of Iparralde is discussed, which occupies approximately two fifths (3,060 km<sup>2</sup>) of the French *département* (county) Pyrénées-Atlantiques. According to quantitative and socio-political criteria, the Basque language in France is a minority language. The language is considered “seriously endangered” by the *UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger* (Moseley, 2010).

Figure 1 Map of the Basque Country with Iparralde in yellow.



Note. Adapted from Willtron (2006).

Figure 2 Percentage of people who understand or are able to speak Basque in the Basque Country, by municipality, in 2011.



Note. From Assar (2018).

## population

According to the latest sociolinguistic survey (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2016a, 2016b), there are 51,200 Basque speakers in Iparralde, which equals 20.5% of the population of Iparralde (the survey takes into account the population aged over 16 years old). The study further revealed that the number of Basque speakers in Iparralde has diminished over the years, while the total population has increased, mainly due to the arrival of many non-Basque speakers (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2016b). However, a closer look at the evolution of the number of Basque speakers (see Table 1) shows that the rate of decline has decreased, while the absolute number of bilinguals seems to be stabilising.

**Table 1** Number of bilingual and monolingual speakers in Iparralde (1991–2016).

Speaker type	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Productive bilinguals	59,900 28.7%	56,100 26.5%	54,600 24.7%	51,800 22.0%	51,100 21.4%	51,200 20.5%
Passive bilinguals	17,900 8.5%	19,800 9.3%	26,400 11.9%	19,800 8.6%	21,700 9.1%	23,300 9.3%
(French) monolinguals	151,100 62.8%	136,500 64.2%	140,600 63.4%	158,600 68.9%	165,560 69.5%	174,900 70.1%
Total	228,900	212,400	221,600	230,200	238,360	249,000

*Note.* Data adapted from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa (2016b).

Looking at age group, it appears that the percentages of bilingual speakers continue to decrease among the older generations, while the opposite occurs among those aged under 34 years (despite the fact that the majority of people in this group are more comfortable using French than Basque), thus compensating for this loss for the first time.

However, the figures for the use of the Basque language have been decreasing and they continue to do so. The survey results revealed that the language is still rarely used outside of the family and among friends. The same is true for family transmission of the language. In the oldest group, aged 65 and over, 26% reported having Basque as their first language and 6% Basque and French, while only 5% of the 16- to 24-year-olds reported having Basque as their first language and 6% Basque and French (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2016b).

Schools have helped to counter the constant decrease in Basque speakers among new generations, and now ensure most of the language transmission to them. For example, 33% of the youngest population surveyed (16–24 years old) were bilingual (active or receptive), while only 11% of the same population had Basque as their first language or among their first languages,

which shows the role of the school in the transmission of Basque. It is therefore essential to continue to develop and reinforce quality teaching of the Basque language, to allow the re-appropriation of the Basque language by the younger generations. At the moment, the figures are not sufficient to ensure its survival (only 19% of 16- to 24-year-olds are productive bilinguals). This work is in line with the social demand since the vast majority of people believe that in Iparralde both Basque and French are the languages for the future. Research showed that 76.7% of families in Iparralde want their children to learn Basque or be taught in Basque (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2016b), which means that these parents want their children to have Basque language skills, ranging from basic knowledge to an advanced command of the language (i.e. bilingual competence).

### *language status*

For historical reasons that date back to the French Revolution (1789), the obligation to use French and the intention to spread the French language have been central to the building of France. The development of the French language took place to the detriment of other languages between the end of the 19th century and the middle of the 20th century. The French State applied methods contrary to the linguistic, traditional, and cultural realities of the population (for more details, see Escudé, 2013).

The French political system is now still based on the idea of a single unified state; it is a centralist structure. There is a will for cultural and linguistic uniformity within the state. France refuses to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, 1992) as it is not in line with the French constitution. French, the language of the Republic, is the only official language in France; the other languages in France are designated “regional languages” and have no official recognition and no specific status, except that they have been considered as belonging to the patrimony of France since the revision of the constitution in 2008 (in the added Article 75-1). The added article does not, however, give legal value or legal recognition or protection to these languages. For example, minority languages have never been used by the authorities. In most cases, the teaching of these regional languages is based on the goodwill and dedication of parents and teachers.

In Iparralde, the Basque language and culture were taken into account and officially placed at the centre of territorial projects in the framework of the development of the Basque Country in 1993, in the territorial forecast *Basque Country 2010*, and then in 1997 within the project *Basque Country 2020*. These projects have allowed the first development of a linguistic policy in the NBC and the creation of the public office of the Basque language (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, or EEP) in 2004, which adopted a language policy project (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2006) in which the teaching of Basque is a central axis. Since then, the Basque Country Community of Agglomeration, created in 2017, has voted to take responsibility for linguistic policy in favour of the Basque language and Basque culture, and it officially recognises Basque and Gascon Occitan as languages of its territory alongside French.

## *status of language education*

Teaching the regional language and culture can have the following two forms in France: (1) specific classes on the regional language and culture (1 to 3 hours per week depending on the school) or (2) bilingual education (which does not exist for all regional languages), which aims to make pupils bilingual in the regional language and French. Bilingual education means that some subjects are taught in the regional language, in addition to the specific classes on the regional language and culture.

Both forms are always an optional choice, and not all schools offer these possibilities. The teaching of regional languages is outside the common curriculum, which is called the common base of knowledge, skills and culture (Décret n° 2015-372 du 31 mars 2015 relatif au socle commun de connaissances, de compétences et de culture [Decree on the common base of knowledge, skills and culture], 2015).

In France, the teaching of or in the regional languages has been implemented step by step. Progress has been made, as until the 1950s, French was the single language of schooling. In Iparralde, the Basque language was repressed at school; it was forbidden to speak in Basque under penalty of punishment, which very strongly marked the stance against Basque at that time (Sarraillet, 2009).

Some of the more significant laws or official documents that have enabled schools to teach regional languages in France are the Law on the teaching of local languages and dialects of 1951 (Loi n° 51-46 du 11 janvier 1951 relative à l'enseignement des langues et dialectes locaux [Loi Dexonne], 1951), which authorises teachers to use local languages when considered necessary, and the Circular on the teaching of regional cultures and languages in the public service of National Education (Circulaire n° 82-261 du 21 juin 1982 sur l'enseignement des cultures et langues régionales dans le service public de l'Éducation nationale [Circulaire Savary], 1982), which authorises bilingual class experiments.

The regulatory framework for bilingual education was defined in 1995 (Circulaire n° 95-086 du 7 avril 1995 enseignement des langues et cultures régionales [Circular on teaching regional languages and cultures], 1995). In 2001, the principles and methods of organising bilingual education in hourly parity of regional languages, meaning that pupils receive an equal number of teaching hours in French and the regional language, were determined for the first degree of education (i.e. pre-school and primary school; Circulaire n° 2001-166 du 5 août 2001 Développement de l'enseignement des langues et cultures régionales à l'école, au collège et au lycée [Circulaire Lang] [Circular Development of the teaching of regional languages and cultures in schools, collèges (lower secondary school) and lycées (upper secondary school)], 2001), as well as for secondary education in 2003 (Arrêté du 12 mai 2003 relatif à l'enseignement bilingue en langues régionales à parité horaire dans les écoles et les sections langues régionales des collèges et des lycées [Order of May 12, 2003 relating to hourly parity bilingual teaching in regional languages in schools and "regional language" sections in collèges and lycées], 2003). The Law of orientation and programme for the future of the school of 2005 (Loi n° 2005-380 du 23 avril 2005 d'orientation et de programme pour



l'avenir de l'école, 2005) grants a place for the teaching of regional languages and cultures throughout schooling, according to modalities defined by way of convention between the state and the territorial authorities where these languages are in use.

In 2007, the level objectives and curricula for the teaching of regional languages for primary and secondary schools were defined, based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL; see Programmes de l'enseignement de langues régionales pour l'école primaire [Regional language teaching programmes for primary school], 2007; Arrêté du 20 mars 2007 fixant les programmes de l'enseignement de langues régionales au palier 1 du collège [Order of 20 March 2007 setting the regional language teaching programmes at level 1 of collège], 2007; Horaires et programmes d'enseignement de l'école primaire [Primary school timetable and curriculum], 2008; Programmes d'enseignement de langues régionales au palier 2 du collège [Regional language teaching programmes at level 2 of collège], 2010). The Law of orientation and programming for the refoundation of the school of the republic of 2013 (Loi n° 2013-595 du 8 juillet 2013 d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'école de la République, 2013) then reaffirmed that the teaching of regional languages and cultures, belonging to the heritage of France, is favoured as a priority in the regions where they are used.

The latest documents governing bilingual (semi-immersive) Basque-French education are the framework documents for the organisation of teaching in bilingual pre-schools and primary schools, produced by the Academic Inspection of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques. The first framework document came into force in 2012 and the second in 2019 (Cohéré et al., 2018). There is also the Circular relating to the teaching of regional languages and cultures of 2017 (Circulaire n° 2017-072 du 12 avril 2017 relative à l'enseignement des langues et cultures régionales, 2017). These documents specify (or recall) the latest modalities in force for organising the teaching of regional languages and cultures and bilingual education at the primary or secondary level (objectives, time schedules, diploma procedures, etc.).

### ***education system***

The French education system is largely state-controlled, although some decentralisation measures were taken in the 1980s. The Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry of National Education) has almost total control over educational matters, such as defining educational guidelines and curricula, the approval of diplomas, and the recruitment, training, and administration of staff. The state also issues regulations on questions of management and supervision with which the majority of private schools are required to comply as well.

Education is compulsory between the ages of 3 and 16 years, but children can be accepted in schools from the age of 2. Curricula have been established for all compulsory school levels. The basic principle is free public education.

Since 2014, the first three levels of education, namely pre-school (nursery school), primary, and lower secondary level, are subdivided into four learning cycles. The first learning cycle is for children from the ages of 2–3 to 5–6 years. The second cycle, called the fundamental learning cycle, is for children aged 6–7 to 8–9 years. The third consolidation cycle is for those aged 9–10 to 11–12 years, and the fourth deepening cycle for those aged 12–13 to 14–15 years.

Evaluations are carried out throughout schooling; assessments in French and mathematics and on social and civic skills are conducted at the age of 8. Evaluations of skills in the common curriculum are carried out at age 11, and again at the end of compulsory schooling, at aged 15. Pupils can then continue their studies, if they wish, in upper secondary education, at a high school (general, technological, or vocational). Finally, they may choose to follow higher (or higher technical) education, at a university, a *grande école* (large school), or a specialised school.

### ***private and public***

In its constitution, France advocates the idea of state education to promote the values of the Republic itself. In public education, all teachers are paid by the Ministry of National Education.

Besides the public system, there are various categories of private schools, which offer, alongside the common curriculum that they must deliver, different syllabi that distinguish them pedagogically. There are denominational schools or schools that offer specific pedagogies, including those using another language of instruction – foreign or regional – than French. Almost all private schools have signed a contract with the state. This contract ensures that the institution provides lessons in accordance with the rules and programmes of National Education, and in return, the state pays the teachers. In the private sector, families must pay school fees that vary from school to school.

In Iparralde, two types of private schools offer education in the Basque language, namely associative private schools (private education with an association contract under the Seaska federation) and private Catholic schools (private education with an association contract reporting to the Direction Diocésaine de l'Enseignement Catholique [Diocesan Directorate of Catholic Education] or DDEC).

### ***bilingual education forms***

In Iparralde, bilingual classes have continually developed since their creation in the late 1960s as there is a social demand for them. In these classes, the regional language is taught and it is the language of instruction in several fields of activity and learning. Bilingual education including Basque, the second language of most of the pupils in Iparralde, is available at both public and private schools. It can take different forms at different schools. The two

main models are the semi-immersive model, called the hourly parity bilingual model, and the full immersive model (or teaching in Basque). The objective of these models is to train French-Basque bilingual individuals to develop Basque as a second language in an additive manner, without replacing the acquisition of French, the pupils' first language.

The first model is provided by some public and private Catholic schools. The start of bilingual classes in schools must be based on a proven parental request and be the subject of a broad consultation involving all actors concerned. Not all schools therefore offer bilingual classes, and in those that do, not all pupils follow this type of education since it is optional. The first class of this type was officially registered in 1983 (Coyos, 2012), although experiments of this type had started as early as the 1960s.

In principle, half of the teaching hours are in Basque and the other half in French. This distribution is effective in primary schools, largely following the “one teacher, one language” modality. In this approach, two teachers share the teaching time. One takes charge of teaching in French, while the other teaches in the regional language. The disciplinary fields other than the regional language cannot be taught exclusively in the regional language.

In secondary school, the non-linguistic subjects (NLS) taught in Basque depend on the availability of Basque-speaking teachers and their level of proficiency in the Basque language. In reality, most of the so-called bilingual schools offer courses in Basque language and civilisation, and history-geography-moral and civic education in Basque. Other NLS subjects, such as mathematics, physical and sports education, music education, physics-chemistry, plastic arts, technology, and life and earth sciences, are sometimes offered in Basque.

There is, however, a limited number of Basque-speaking NLS teachers, thus parity of hours is rarely ensured in secondary education. It should be noted that this is an hourly parity for teaching time, but the services offered outside of the classes, for example during break-times and in the canteen in particular, are very rarely open to the Basque language. Thus, in this hourly parity model, the actual exposure time to the Basque language is around a third of the total number of hours the pupils spend in school, as Alicbar (2019) notes.

Some nursery schools have implemented an increased number of hours of teaching in Basque for several years. The type of immersion consists of 80% or 100% of class hours in Basque. This immersion is based on the voluntary work and unanimous support of the teaching teams and families concerned with the project.

The full immersive model, which is immersive for pupils whose first language is French, and a linguistic maintenance model for those whose first language is Basque, is only provided at associative private schools. These schools, the first of which was created in 1969, are called *ikastola* and are now grouped within the Seaska federation. The first agreements with the state were signed in 1982 (for more details, see Garat & Aire, 2009). The Seaska federation is a member of the cooperative association Euskal Herriko Ikastolak (also called *ikastolen elkarte*), assembling all the *ikastola* schools of the NBC and SBC. It is also a member of the association Eskolim, which brings together the five networks of immersive associative schools in the regional languages of France.

The ikastola are the only schools in France that use the Basque language as the main or even exclusive language of instruction for NLS, from nursery school until the end of secondary school. Extracurricular activities are also carried out in Basque. The linguistic aim is to learn to communicate in Basque as well as in French and to ensure that the pupils have the same level of mastery in both languages at the end of primary education (Coyos, 2016). At the time of writing this dossier, the objectives of linguistic levels in Basque following the CEFRL were being established for each cycle by the Seaska federation.

The bilingual teaching models including Basque are thus similar throughout the Basque Country. The same models of teaching Basque also exist in Hegoalde, with the difference that in Iparralde, the immersive model is not offered by public schools.

### ***administration***

There are four administrative levels in France, namely state, region, département, and local community level.

As previously mentioned, at the state level, the Ministry of National Education has almost total control over educational matters. The regions are responsible for building and maintaining the premises of upper secondary schools (lycées) and institutes for vocational training. Départements have the same responsibility for schools of lower secondary education (collèges), and local communities or town councils for nursery and primary schools.

A particular characteristic of the French education system is formed by the administrative units of education (*académies*). There are 30 académies, grouped within 18 (multi-)academic regions. Each academic region and academy is headed by a director (*Recteur*), who sits in the rectorate. Directors represent the Ministry of National Education and are responsible, with their assistants, for the entire public service of education in the academy, from nursery school to university. They also exercise administrative and educational controls in the field of private education.

Each département then has a local administration for the national education authorities, the Departmental Direction of Services of National Education, also called the Academy Inspectorate. Its mission at the departmental level is to adapt and apply the national objectives of education policy. The Pyrénées-Atlantiques Departmental Direction of Services of National Education is based in Pau.

Iparralde is part of the département of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, which is part of the académie of Bordeaux, located in the Nouvelle Aquitaine multi-academic region. The academic inspector represents the minister and the Recteur in their département. This inspector is the primary authority of public and private schools, and their staff. The academic inspector is assisted by national education inspectors, of which there were four for Basque education in 2019, three for pre-school and primary education, and one for secondary education.

Where they exist, the public offices for regional languages (such as the EEP for the Basque language) are closely associated with the development and implementation of the academic policy for regional languages.

### ***inspection***

The supervision and inspection of the French education system is carried out by the General Inspectorate of Education, Sport and Research, under the direct authority of the Minister of National Education, with various inspectors. The Inspectorate monitors teaching methods and educational policies in classrooms and educational establishments. It inspects, evaluates, and advises on the work of teachers in schools, and inspectors participate in their pedagogical training courses. In 1996, the Ministry of National Education appointed a general inspector for regional languages and cultures to each académie.

### ***support structure***

The Academy Inspectorate and several institutions and associations in the field of education form the support structure for Basque education.

Each organisation has its mission managers, pedagogical advisers, animators, and structures in charge of initial and in-service teacher training, and is represented by associations and federations. The Seaska federation represents private bilingual immersive schools in the Basque Country, throughout all levels of schooling. *Ikas-bi* and *Biga bai* bring together parents of children in public education who are enrolled in bilingual semi-immersive education. *Ikas-bi* is part of the Federation for Regional Languages in Public Education (FRLPE) in France. *Euskal Haziak* is the association for pupils' parents, teachers, and heads of bilingual Catholic schools. Teachers who provide Basque education have their own associations as well, namely *Erakasleak* (Teachers) in the first degree and *Euskara geroan* (Basque in the future) in the second degree. These associations inform, represent, and defend Basque education within and outside schools. Moreover, they maintain the link between teachers and parents and create teaching materials while being in contact with other associations in several language communities throughout France and abroad. Since 2004, if there is a common need, the Seaska federation, *Biga bai*, and *Euskal Haziak* come together under the platform *Hiru sareta* (three networks).

The schools and their teachers, and the bilingual education organisations set up projects and events throughout the year, such as school outings, language exchanges, shows and cultural workshops of Basque expression, hikes, concerts, and parties. This enables them to communicate and promote their work, to raise funds, and to motivate and make pupils (and parents) practise the Basque language and culture outside of the schools.

For adult education, the main actor is the federation *Alfabetatze eta Euskalduntze Koordinakundea* (AEK; Coordinator of Literacy and Basque Promotion; AEK), which coordinates the evening schools (*gau eskola*) that offer different training programmes and intensive traineeships.

At the local institutional level, the EEP was established in 2004. It is a public interest group (with 14 employees), created in a mutual agreement between the state, the Aquitaine Region, the département of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, the Intercommunal Syndicate of support for Basque Culture, and the elected representative of the Basque Country. The EEP is the first public office in France responsible for promoting a regional language and culture.

The principal mission of the EEP is the conception, definition, and implementation of a public linguistic policy in support of the Basque language and its focus is on bilingual education. Its main objective is to train “full speakers”, targeting the younger generations. The concept of “full speaker” is not defined in terms of the level of language proficiency according to the CEFRL, but it means that people acquire the skills necessary to communicate in Basque in all circumstances and that they are motivated to do so (Inspection Générale de l’Éducation Nationale [IGEN], 2016, pp. 73–74). In this area of language transmission through school education, the EEP collaborates with the Ministry of National Education, the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, the département of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, and the Basque Country Community of Agglomeration.

Many documents are available on the website of the EEP to further explore the subject, such as the language policy project, the main framework documents (e.g. parts one and two of the multiannual programming of Basque education), as well as numerous resources regarding the Basque language and its challenges in Iparralde.

The Regional Center of Pedagogic Documentation and the Canopé Network support the development of teaching materials. The Canopé Network is under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education, which publishes transmedia pedagogical resources, meeting the needs of the educational community.

Another major organisation helping and creating good conditions for Basque education and for sharing and transmitting Basque culture is the pedagogical centre IKAS (Learn), which was created in 1959. The centre has seven full-time employees and two teachers working 1 day a week. It is based in Ustaritz/Uztaritze and is open to everyone. It is funded by the EEP and has an agreement with the Regional Center of Pedagogic Documentation. IKAS creates, translates, and provides documentation and teaching materials. It is recognised as having a public service mission in this area by convention. The centre makes various materials available, such as schooling manuals, activity books, posters, children’s literature, briefcases, CDs, and files. All teachers teaching Basque can use these materials for first degree, second degree, or adult education. Finally, the centre organises, or co-organises with other organisations, traineeships, courses, conferences, and exhibitions relating to the Basque language or teaching in Basque.

There is also the joint research unit IKER, centred on the study of the Basque language, Basque texts, and language didactics, which is located at the University of Bayonne/Baiona. The centre is composed of 13 researchers and teacher-researchers, four engineers, technicians, and administrative staff. Their main focus is not the teaching of/in Basque, but

the centre provides access to rich scientific resources on the language itself, its literature, didactics, and many other subjects related to the Basque language. It is the unifying contact point for researchers interested in the Basque language and in Basque studies, and the host laboratory for master's and doctoral students in Basque studies (IKER, 2021a).

Moreover, there is the scientific-cultural institution Eusko Ikaskuntza (Society for Basque Studies), which has its offices in Bayonne, Iparralde. The institution functions as a private university, offering training programmes, conferences, documentary resources, and projects regarding Basque society. The Euskal Konfederazioa (Basque Confederation) also brings together several associations for the defence and promotion of the Basque language and campaigns for its development.

Other institutions worth mentioning are the Basque Cultural Institute, which is responsible for supporting the culture of Basque expression, and the Udaleku association, which offers holiday stays and activities in leisure centres in Basque. Moreover, the Basque language technicians, translators, the various media in Basque (television, press, and radio), the many cultural associations using or promoting the Basque language, and all online resources (discussion platforms, dictionaries, databases, catalogues, applications, and computer tools) should also be mentioned; however, they have no primary responsibility for educational matters.

## 2 Pre-school education

### *target group*

Since the school year 2019/20, education has been compulsory from the age of 3 years (Loi n° 2019-791 du 26 juillet 2019 pour une école de la confiance [Law for a school of trust], 2019). Usually, pre-schools, for children aged 2 to 6 years, are combined with primary schools.

### *structure*

At pre-schools, the classes are divided into the following three (or four) sections based on the pupils' age and level of development: *très petite section* (very small section) for age 2–3 years; *petite section* (small section) for age 3–4 years; *moyenne section* (medium section) for age 4–5 years; and *grande section* (large section) for age 5–6 years. These sections form the first learning cycle.

The latest nursery school programmes in force, set up by the Ministry of National Education, are from 2015 (Programme d'enseignement de l'école maternelle [Curricula for pre-school], 2015). These programmes organise the teaching in five areas of learning and reaffirm the primary importance of language in nursery school (oral language and progressive entry into the culture of writing).

### *legislation*

The Law of orientation and programme for the future of the school (2005) states that every child at the age of 3 should be enrolled in a nursery school near their home. The latest regulations in force are those put in place by the Decree on the organisation of school time in pre-schools and primary schools (Décret n° 2013-77 du 24 janvier 2013 relatif à l'organisation du temps scolaire dans les écoles maternelles et élémentaires, 2013) and the Law of orientation and programming for the refoundation of the school of the republic (2013). The service of teachers is 27 hours weekly, including 24 hours of lessons spread over 4 or 5 days, depending on the school. About 3 more hours weekly are spent on consultation, training, complementary activities, and extra support.

### *language use*

In Iparralde, some public pre-schools offer an optional introductory course on regional



languages and cultures. These classes are taught by itinerant teachers, who go from class to class, offering children activities for an hour or two. Classes depend on the number of children in the schools, with teaching lasting from 1 hour for one group to 1 day for five groups. Nursery school children are taught in the same groups as primary school pupils.

Moreover, public and private schools can offer bilingual education in several forms. Schools can choose to work with the semi-immersion bilingual education form, where half of the lessons are taught in Basque and half in French. They can also opt for an increase in class hours in Basque (80% or 100% of class hours in Basque), or, in private associative ikastola, for full immersion in Basque, where all class hours and extracurricular activities are in Basque.

It can also be mentioned that the Arnéguy-Valcarlos Cross-border Intercommunal Pedagogical Group has an experimental trilingual project (Basque-French-Spanish) that aims to develop skills in all three languages throughout pre-school and primary school.

### ***teaching materials***

Instruction materials in Basque are prepared mainly by teachers. They can build on, among others, educational materials made available by organisations and associations, such as the IKAS educational centre (for examples, see IKAS, 2021a). Teachers can also adapt and use the Basque materials developed in Hegoalde and materials created in the French language.

### ***statistics***

Comparing recent years, there has been an increase in the supply of and demand for the teaching of Basque, even though the majority of pupils follow a teaching model only in French. In the school year 2004/05, 35.5% of children in pre-school in Iparralde were taught Basque (Sanchez, 2007). In 2019, this had increased to 47.7% (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* [Overall education data 2019-20], personal communication, 2020). The evolution of the number of bilingual pupils attending pre-schools in Iparralde since 2004/05 can be seen in detail in Table 2 in Chapter 10.

In the school year 2019/20, out of the 233 pre-schools in Iparralde, 76 public schools and 13 Catholic private schools offered the semi-immersion model (38% of schools in Iparralde). In this model, 2,257 pupils were enrolled (24.4% of pupils in Iparralde).

Nineteen public schools and 19 Catholic private schools offer the immersion model with all class hours in Basque (16% of the total number of schools in Iparralde). The first started in 2001 in the Catholic private sector, and in 2008, the first school in the public sector started using this model. The full immersion model is currently used at 32 ikastola, which is 14% of the total number of schools in Iparralde.

In the school year 2019/20, there were 2,074 children enrolled in one of these two immersion models, which represents 22.4% of children in pre-school education in Iparralde (see details in [Table 2](#) in Chapter 10).

The introductory course in nursery schools is taught to children at eight public pre-schools (seven French monolingual schools and one bilingual school), which is 3% of the total number of pre-schools in Iparralde. There were 84 children enrolled in this model (0.9% of children in pre-schools) in the school year 2019/20.

## 3 Primary education

### *target group*

Primary school starts for children aged 6 to 7 years and lasts 5 years until they are 10–11 years old.

### *structure*

In the French education system, the years of primary school are named as follows: *cours préparatoire* (preparatory course; CP; age 6/7 years), *cours élémentaire 1* (elementary course 1; CE1; 7/8 years), and *cours élémentaire 2* (elementary course 2; CE2; 8/9 years), which form cycle 2 (basic learning). Cycle 3 (consolidation) then begins with the *cours moyen 1* (middle class 1; CM1; 9/10 years) and *cours moyen 2* (middle class 2; CM2; 10/11 years) classes. This cycle ends in the first year of the second degree, in collège (lower secondary school). At the ikastola schools, the classes of CP, CE1, CE2, CM1, and CM2 are called first year, second year, third year, fourth year, and fifth year, respectively.

Each pupil, following bilingual education or not, must acquire the common base of knowledge, skills, and culture during their schooling (Decree on the common base of knowledge, skills and culture, 2015). The school programmes (the most recent ones are from 2016) are built according to the fields of this base (Programmes d'enseignement du cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux (cycle 2), du cycle de consolidation (cycle 3) et du cycle des approfondissements (cycle 4) [Curricula for the fundamental learning cycle (cycle 2), the consolidation cycle (cycle 3) and the deepening cycle (cycle 4)], 2015). National curricula only exist for compulsory subjects. All pupils are assessed in French and mathematics in CE1, when they are 8 years old, and in CM2, when they are 11 years old.

### *legislation*

Primary education, under the authority of the Ministry of National Education, is governed by the Law of orientation and programme for the future of the school (2005) that establishes its organisation and functioning. The latest regulations in force are the Decree on the organisation of school time in pre-schools and primary schools (2013) and the Law of orientation and programming for the refoundation of the school of the republic (2013).

The service of teachers is 27 hours weekly, including 24 hours of lessons spread across 4 or 5 days, depending on the school. An average of 3 hours weekly is added to these core hours for, among others, consultation, training, complementary activities, support for pupils who need it, and reception of parents.

## *language use*

As is the case in pre-school education, the majority of schools offer Basque education through immersive or semi-immersive education, or through an optional introductory course. Most pupils, however, follow monolingual French education.

### ■ *Basque as a subject*

In Iparralde, some primary schools offer optional Basque introductory courses of 1 or 1.5 hours a week. The objective for pupils who follow these courses is to reach level A1 of the CEFRL at the end of cycle 3 (12-year-olds).

Within bilingual education, pupils work on oral language development, reading, writing, studying the language (grammar, spelling, and lexicon), and on the languages' literary and artistic cultures.

The framework document indicates 3.5 hours of teaching Basque in cycle 2, and 3 hours in cycle 3, every week (Cohéré et al., 2018). It should be emphasised that this document is applied in semi-immersive schools as immersive schools do not follow a specific document for the number of hours for the teaching of Basque. The framework document can, however, help us to estimate the number of hours devoted to the teaching of Basque since immersive schools must follow the same programmes for other subjects set by the Ministry of National Education.

### ■ *Basque as a medium of instruction*

The immersive primary schools use Basque as a medium of instruction, and French is introduced at the age of 7 for 3 hours per week, steadily increasing to 8 hours at the end of primary education. In addition to French language classes, geometry is also taught in French. These immersive schools aim to develop balanced bilingualism. The first linguistic objective, at the end of the primary education, is to ensure that the pupil has the same level of mastery in both French and Basque (Coyos, 2016). Concretely, this corresponds to level A1 or A2 at the end of cycle 2 (9-year-olds) and level A2 or B1 at the end of cycle 3 (12-year-olds). The difference in level is due to the geographic location of the schools (more or less Basque-speaking environment) as well as the linguistic profile of the pupils (Basque or French as first language).

Semi-immersive bilingual education is offered at some public and Catholic private primary schools. At these schools, Basque is used for around 12 hours per week, which amounts to half of the teaching time. Basque is partly used for mathematics, physical education, arts, history-geography-moral and civic education, science and technology, and the Basque language itself (Cohéré et al., 2018). The two half-time teachings are organised over two full non-consecutive days (e.g. Monday and Thursday in French, Tuesday and Friday in Basque) for bilingual schools, which share teachers (in French or Basque) with another school. At schools where teachers have full-time positions, teachers in French and Basque can choose to alternate with the bilingual class by

half-days. The last framework document (Cohéré et al., 2018) evokes the following positive points of full-day teaching in one language, in comparison to half days: improved spatial awareness and perception of time, management of personal work by pupils, facilitation of teacher consultations, and consistency of programming, among others.

Each year, the schools plan the hourly schedule for the week, depending on the number of pupils by level, the number of bilingual pupils within the school, the odd or even number of teaching groups in Basque, and the planning of other schools.

The objective regarding the Basque language in semi-immersive bilingual education is to reach level A1 at the end of cycle 2 (9-year-olds), and level A2 at the end of cycle 3 (12-year-olds; Circular relating to the teaching of regional languages and cultures, 2017; Cohéré et al., 2018). Bilingual pupils enrolled in this model are assessed in CM2 (11-year-olds) on their oral and written language skills in Basque, according to a protocol validated by the academic authorities.

### ***teaching materials***

As previously mentioned (see *support structure* in Chapter 1), the main creator of materials for Basque education (for each school category) is the IKAS educational centre (IKAS, 2021a). The tools created, such as specific materials and translations and adaptations of existing textbooks in French or other languages, are designed based on the programmes in force and teachers' needs. They are also validated by the academic authorities on the educational level and by the Basque Academy on the linguistic level. Teachers also develop their own materials, and associations or publishing houses offer resources that may be adequate. Furthermore, all the Basque materials created in Hegoalde, as well as many methods in French, can be adapted and used in schools in Iparralde.

### ***statistics***

Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of schools offering and pupils following Basque education at primary school. In the school year 2004/05, 26.9% of pupils followed Basque education, and in the school year 2019/20, this was 39.6% (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* [Overall education data 2019-20], personal communication, 2020; Sanchez, 2007). The distribution of these pupils in 2019/20 and the evolution of the number of bilingual pupils attending primary schools in Iparralde since 2004/05 can be seen in detail in [Table 2](#) and [Table 8](#) in Chapter 10, respectively.

In the school year 2019/20, out of the 233 primary schools in Iparralde, 95 public schools and 32 Catholic private schools offered the semi-immersion model, which is 55% of all schools. There were also 32 ikastola immersive schools, which is 14% of all schools. In the semi-immersion model, 4,848 pupils were enrolled (28.9% of pupils in Iparralde), and 1,529 pupils were enrolled in the immersion model (9.1% of pupils in Iparralde).

The introductory course was followed by 275 pupils (1.6% of pupils in Iparralde) from 16 primary schools, which is 7% of the total number of schools. At the time of writing this dossier, eight of those schools were moving towards the bilingual semi-immersive model. The other eight schools were monolingual French schools.

The DDEC does not set up introductory teaching in Basque at the first level, but in rare cases, private unilingual Catholic schools, with their management body and their parents association, take the initiative to offer such education.

It should also be noted that in the Bearnaise part of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques (therefore not included in the EEP figures), one of the itinerant Basque teachers worked at the school of Esquiule at the time this dossier was written (34 pupils followed the introductory course to Basque).

## 4 Secondary education

### *target group*

Secondary education is for children aged 11/12 to 17/18 years, and attendance is compulsory until the age of 16. Admission to public schools is free. Each academic subject is taught by a different teacher.

### *structure*

Secondary education is divided into two levels, namely collège and lycée. The lower level (collège) has four grades for 11/12 to 14/15-year-olds and is compulsory for everyone. The first year of collège (called *sixième*) is part of cycle 3. The other years of collège (*cinquième*, *quatrième*, and *troisième*) form cycle 4, also known as the deepening cycle. During the last year, the pupils are provided with the possibility to orientate themselves towards their future. Moreover, the pupils are prepared for the *Diplôme National du Brevet* (DNB; National Patent Diploma), and they have to complete a short-term traineeship. The completion of collège provides access to either vocational education or the upper level of secondary education (lycée).

The lycées (15/16 to 17/18 years) form the upper level of secondary education (with the classes *seconde* – 16 years, *première* – 17 years, and *terminale* – 18 years). The three main streams of general education (literature, science, and economics) disappeared with the reform of the baccalauréat in 2022 (see Note de service n° 2018-115 du 26-9-2018: Procédure d'orientation en fin de classe de seconde [Service note No. 2018-115 about guidance procedure at the end of the class of seconde], 2018). Pupils follow a common core curriculum and choose three special courses in the second year (*première*), two of which are pursued in the last year (*terminale*). Other types include technical lycées (subdivided into several specialisations) and vocational lycées. They all prepare pupils for the *baccalauréat* certificate (French high-school degree) or a technical certificate.

### *legislation*

With the introduction of the Law on education (Loi n° 75-620 du 11 juillet 1975 relative à l'éducation, 1975), all pupils receive the same education in collège. The latest regulations to enter into force are the Decree on the organisation of teaching in lower secondary schools (Décret n° 2015-544 du 19 mai 2015 relatif à l'organisation des enseignements au collège, 2015) and the Decree amending the provisions of the Education Code relating to teaching leading to the general baccalauréat and to technological training leading to the

technological baccalauréat (Décret n° 2018-614 du 16 juillet 2018 modifiant les dispositions du code de l'éducation relatives aux enseignements conduisant au baccalauréat général et aux formations technologiques conduisant au baccalauréat technologique, 2018). The collèges have the status of local public institutions. All pupils attending collège have 26 hours of compulsory lessons per week, to which optional lessons can be added. The service of certified secondary teachers is 18 hours of weekly lessons. The lycées are non-compulsory secondary schools, which lead to a baccalauréat, and they provide admission to higher education. Weekly teaching time is around 27–28 hours depending on the school, and this can vary with optional lessons.

## *language use*

### ■ *Basque as a subject*

At secondary schools where Basque education is offered, pupils generally have 3 hours of Basque language education per week in collège, and 2 to 3 hours or more if Basque is in their specialisation in lycée. Pupils following an introductory course in Basque have 2 hours of class per week at collège and 3 hours at lycée.

The official language objectives for the pupils following the introductory teaching of Basque are to try to achieve level A2 at the end of collège (for details, see the Circular relating to the teaching of regional languages and cultures, 2017) and B1 at the end of lycée. For pupils following bilingual semi-immersive education, the objective is level B1 in all language activities (listening, reading, writing, continuous speaking, and oral interaction) and B2 in several language activities at the end of collège, and B2 in all language activities and C1 in several of them at the end of lycée, according to the Circular relating to the teaching of regional languages and cultures (2017). Immersive schools also set target levels of B1 or B2 at the end of collège and level B2 or C1 at the end of lycée.

Pupils attending bilingual education take a B2 level Basque assessment at the end of collège. They also have the opportunity to take the C1 level certification in the second year of lycée. All pupils following the immersive path take it, as well as volunteers from the other paths.

### ■ *Basque as a medium of instruction*

At private immersive collèges and lycées, Basque is used as the language of instruction for NLS. At semi-immersive collèges and lycées (public or private Catholic), the number of subjects taught in Basque depends on the availability of Basque-speaking teachers and on the will of the school board. This number increases with the years, and it goes from one subject taught in Basque to an hourly parity between the subjects taught in Basque and those taught in French.

For the DNB and baccalauréat certificate, the pupils of the bilingual sections can choose



to take some tests in Basque. Not all subjects can be taken in Basque, despite social demands to make this possible. It is also worth mentioning the case of collège pupils of the Seaska federation who have been allowed to sit their science tests of the DNB in Basque since 2017, and whose written parts of the tests were not assessed in 2018 and 2019 because of technical and legal arguments (see IGEN, 2016, p. 71).

### ***teaching materials***

As for pre-school and primary education, instruction materials for teaching Basque in secondary education are mainly prepared by the teachers. The IKAS centre puts numerous suitable pedagogical materials at the teachers' disposal, by adapting to regular programme modifications in the different subjects (IKAS, 2021b). The materials developed in Hegoalde (in Basque) or France (in French) can also be adapted and used by Basque teachers in Iparralde.

### ***statistics***

The figures for schools offering and pupils following Basque education in secondary school have increased in recent years. In the school year 2004/05, 18.3% of pupils in collèges followed Basque language education, as did 9.1% of pupils in general and technological lycées (this represents 15% of all pupils in secondary education, excluding vocational education; Sanchez, 2007). In the school year 2019/20, 28.9% of pupils at collèges followed Basque language education, as did 13.4% of pupils at general and technological lycées (23.1% in secondary education; Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019-20* [Overall education data 2019-20], personal communication, 2020). The distribution of these pupils in 2019/20 and the evolution of the number of bilingual pupils in general secondary education in Iparralde since 2004/05 can be seen in detail in [Table 4](#) and [Table 9](#) in Chapter 10, respectively.

In the school year 2019/20, out of 40 collèges, 32 offered bilingual education, as did 15 (of 18) public education collèges, 13 (of 18) private Catholic education collèges, and four immersive collèges of the Seaska federation. The fact that a collège offers bilingual education does not mean that all pupils follow it.

At bilingual semi-immersive public and private Catholic schools, hourly parity is offered at 11 of these collèges (seven public and four private Catholic), at least for one of the 4 years of collège. When a collège decides to teach an NLS in Basque, the class is initially offered to first-year students, then this cohort continues in the following years. The introductory education is offered at 22 collèges (13 public and nine private Catholic).

Out of 16 general and/or technological lycées, 11 offer bilingual education and 10 introductory education (some schools offer both types of education). Out of eight public education lycées, bilingual general education is offered at six, and introductory education at five (some offer both). Out of seven general and/or technological private Catholic lycées, bilingual general education is offered at three (one of which has reached hourly parity), bilingual general and technological education at one, and bilingual technological education at one.

An introductory course is offered by five Catholic private lycées. It should again be noted that the fact that a lycée offers bilingual education does not mean that all pupils follow it. The immersive lycée of the Seaska federation also offers general and technological bilingual education.

In the school year 2019/20, 2,105 pupils followed semi-immersive teaching in collège (15.5% of the pupils in collège in Iparralde), 949 followed immersive teaching (7% of the pupils in collège in Iparralde), and 867 followed an introductory course (6.4% of the pupils in collège in Iparralde). At general and technological lycées, 526 pupils attended semi-immersive classes (6.6% of the pupils in lycée in Iparralde), 322 attended immersive classes (4% of the pupils in lycée in Iparralde), and 221 attended an introductory course (2.8% of the pupils in lycée in Iparralde).

The figures in [Table 8](#) and [Table 9](#) (Chapter 10) confirm that one of the weak points of bilingual education is the lack of continuity in the transition from primary to secondary education (between the ages of 10 and 11), when about a third of pupils drop out of bilingual education, according to official estimates (IGEN, 2016, p. 54), followed by the transition from collège to lycée during secondary education (between the ages of 14 and 15), when again half of them drop out (for more information, see [Chapter 9](#)).

## 5 Vocational education

### *target group*

Vocational education is offered to pupils aged 15–16 years after completion of lower secondary school (collège) as an alternative to academic education.

### *structure*

Vocational high schools offer alternative education focused on companies and professions (in various sectors) to develop pupils' general and professional skills and knowledge. Professional integration and further studies are the two goals sought.

At secondary level, there are various vocational streams within the lycée, leading to a Certificate of Professional Aptitude (CPA) in 2 years, which mainly leads to working life, or to a vocational baccalauréat in 3 years, which allows integration into working life or pursuing higher education. A student can continue towards higher vocational and technological education to prepare for the Certificate of Advanced Technician within 2 years.

Education at this level includes theoretical courses, practical work at the workplace, and several months of traineeship in a company. General theoretical lessons and technical and professional lessons are balanced.

Professional diplomas can be obtained by completing an apprenticeship, which combines a traineeship at an employer and classes at an apprenticeship training centre for one third of the time. The apprentices have employee status.

### *legislation*

The Ministry of National Education tries to ensure that every pupil who does not follow general or technological secondary education from the age of 16 undergoes vocational training before leaving the education system. In 1993, this resulted in a law introducing regional plans for the development of vocational training (Loi n° 93-1313 quinquennale du 20 décembre 1993 quinquennale relative au travail, à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle [Law on work, employment and vocational training], 1993). The latest reform, modifying the curricula of vocational education, is that of 2019 (provided for by the Law for a school of trust, 2019).

## *language use*

Some vocational high schools are starting to offer bilingual education in professional courses in fields such as local services and local life, support, care and personal services, trade and sales, and service to people and communities. This development is part of a logical response to the needs of Basque-speaking professionals as recognised in the EEP's linguistic policy (early childhood, personal services, etc.) and by the heads of the schools.

## *teaching materials*

In vocational education, bilingual education is under development; therefore, there is little information available on this topic. As in other schools where Basque education is provided, the teachers develop their own materials by using the resources that have been made available in Basque and French. These materials are developed in Hegoalde and Iparralde.

## *statistics*

In the school year 2004/05, only 0.7% of pupils in vocational education took Basque classes; this number rose to 4.8% in the school year 2019/20 (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* [Overall education data 2019-20], personal communication, 2020; Sanchez, 2007).

In the school year 2019/20, out of 13 lycées offering vocational education, three offered bilingual education and two offered an introductory course. One public school (out of eight) offered introductory education, and two private Catholic schools (out of four) offered bilingual education (and one also offered introductory education). The immersive high school in Seaska offered bilingual education as well as preparation for vocational training in the last class of collège (15-year-olds).

At these schools, 50 pupils attended semi-immersive classes (2% of the pupils in vocational education in Iparralde), 41 attended immersive classes (1.6% of the pupils in vocational education in Iparralde), and 29 attended an introductory course (1.2% of the pupils in vocational education in Iparralde).

In [Table 5](#), the four agricultural lycées are not taken into account in the data of the EEP. Three offered Basque courses and in one lycée, even courses in Basque for certain subjects were offered.

There are around 15 apprentice training centres and other schools (hairdressing, aesthetics, maritime high school, etc.) in which Basque education is not practised.

## 6 Higher education

### *structure*

Universities and the Special State Higher Institutes (*grandes écoles*) make up higher education in France. Applicants for all forms of higher education pay a basic fee, but they may also be eligible for financial assistance from the state.

The *licence-master-doctorat* structure for the higher education system is implemented. The first cycle is the licence (bachelor), which lasts 3 years, the second cycle is the master, lasting 2 years, and the third cycle is the doctorat (PhD), which takes 3 years.

There is no licence-master-doctorat course of study other than Basque studies that teaches subjects in Basque. The Interuniversity Department of Basque Studies (French: *Département Interuniversitaire d'Etudes Basques*; DIEB) of Bayonne is the only place in France that offers students a university programme in Basque studies, ranging from the first year of licence to doctorate level, and a specialisation in language, literature, and civilisation. This department is attached to two universities, namely the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour (UPPA) and the University of Bordeaux Montaigne (UBM), and benefits scientifically from the backing of the IKER joint research unit (Centre national de la recherche scientifique [National Centre for Scientific Research] + UPPA + UBM), specialising in research on language, Basque texts, and language teaching. It is the only scientific centre that is specialised in the field of Basque studies in France.

The licence programme in Basque studies is delivered at the UPPA, which also issues the diploma. The programme includes, among others, theoretical and practical lessons in the fields of Basque literature and language, and history and civilisation of the Basque Country (UPPA, 2021). It mainly trains future Basque teachers, but also executives and animators in disciplines such as territorial administration, written and audio-visual press, translation and interpretation services, arts and live performances, interregional and cross-border relations, and the promotion of heritage and cultural spaces.

Several different master's programmes focus on the Basque language. There is a master's in Basque studies (at the UBM) for students who want to focus on doing research. The master's in Teaching, Education and Training (French: *Masters Métiers de l'Enseignement de l'Éducation et de la Formation*; MEEF) is intended for students who want to become a Basque teacher. During the master's, students conduct research, which contributes to their dissertation.

A doctorate in Basque studies can be obtained at the doctoral schools of the UBM (Montaigne Humanités) or at the UPPA (Sciences Sociales et Humanités 481), both associated with the joint IKER research unit.

The DIEB also delivers Basque lessons to students following courses other than Basque studies at the UBM and UPPA. Moreover, it offers training to prepare for university certifications of levels B1, B2, and C1 in the Basque language. In 2018, the UBM set up an online learning environment, which helps students to develop their Basque language proficiency at B2–C1 level (UBM, 2021a).

At the international level, the Basque Etxepare Institute (a public agency created by the Basque government and based in Donostia) has partnership agreements with several universities around the world (37 universities, including the Sorbonne Nouvelle III, Paris, and the UPPA) to offer Basque courses (language and culture) through its lecturers.

The work of the cultural association Udako Euskal Unibertsitatea (Basque Summer University) should also be mentioned. It was organised for the first time in Bayonne by the AEK in 1973, with the aim of developing a Basque University, which, in the whole Basque Country, regularly organises face-to-face or online internships, seminars, conferences, and publications in Basque on various university subjects (anthropology, architecture, economics, literature, health, etc.). This is often carried out in partnership with other organisations.

## *legislation*

The functioning of universities, established by several laws (Loi n° 68-978 du 12 novembre 1968 d'orientation de l'enseignement supérieur [Law on the orientation of higher education], 1968; Loi n° 84-52 du 26 janvier 1984 sur l'enseignement supérieur [Law on higher education], 1984; Loi n° 2007-1199 du 10 août 2007 relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités [Law on the freedom and responsibilities of universities], 2007; Loi n° 2013-660 du 22 juillet 2013 relative à l'enseignement supérieur et à la recherche [Law on higher education and research], 2013), is governed by the articles of the Education Code (Code de l'éducation, 2000). Universities enjoy pedagogical autonomy and are linked to the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

University programmes in Basque studies and diplomas have gradually been implemented. In 1948, the chair of Basque language and literature, unique in France, was created at the University of Bordeaux. This chair made it possible to obtain a diploma in Basque studies followed by a doctorate in Basque studies. In 1986, a convention, signed by the presidents of the two universities of Bordeaux 3 (now the UBM) and the UPPA, offered the curriculum for the Basque University Diploma on the Bayonne campus, as well as the optional units on the Bordeaux and Pau campuses. The Institute of Basque Studies became the Interuniversity Department of Basque Studies (DIEB), as we know it today (IKER, 2021b).

Similarly, a research team associated with the National Centre for Scientific Research was created at Bordeaux 3 in 1983. It was the predecessor of what would become the Centre for Research on the Basque Language and Texts IKER - UMR 5478 in 1999.

## *language use*

In the various courses offered by the DIEB in the Basque studies programme (the only licence-master-doctorat study programme in France in which subjects are taught in Basque), students become specialists in the Basque language, which they will be able to use at a high level (corresponding to C1 or C2 of the CEFRL).

The core of the curriculum is based on language and literacy. The language module entails general linguistics, grammar, Basque language lexicology and dialectology, translation, and Basque text history and discourse analysis. The literacy module covers classic and contemporary Basque texts and an introduction to literacy criticism. There are also classes in Basque geography and history, sociology, Basque civilisation, French literacy and languages (English, Spanish, Occitan, and Latin), an introduction to documentary research, computer science, and office automation and digital technology. Several notions of didactics are taught, including didactics of the Basque language, specificities of bilingual education, teaching of NLS in a second language, and training in plurilingual contexts. Students also have introductory courses in scientific research, preparation for the examinations they take, and hours of observation and evaluation in a professional situation.

In master's programmes and for the preparation of the *agrégation* competition, class hours are supplemented by conferences, study days, roundtables, and symposia. The areas of research during a master's and doctorate can be linguistic studies, text sciences and literary studies, comparative literature in the Basque domain, texts in the Basque domain, didactics, and plurilingualism (UBM, 2021b).

## *teacher training*

Students who want to become a Basque teacher must obtain a MEEF and pass a competitive examination. The examination takes place during the first year of the master's, and the traineeship takes place during the second year.

Students can enrol in a master's degree after obtaining the certificate (licence) in Basque studies, or another certificate (proving that they have a B2 level or higher in Basque and a solid basic knowledge of Basque studies).

### ■ *pre-school and primary training*

The main path to become a Basque teacher for pre-school and primary education is to study the MEEF for the first degree, and take an examination called CRPE (French: *Concours de Recrutement de Professeur des Écoles*; School teacher recruitment competition) for regional languages, which was created in 2002.

Depending on whether one intends to teach in the public or private sector, the MEEF programme can be followed at the Institut national supérieur du professorat et de l'éducation (INSPE; National Higher Institute of Professorship and Education), at the Institut

Supérieur de Formation de l'Enseignement Catholique (ISFEC; Higher Institute of Formation of Catholic Education), or at the training centre of the Seaska federation. The latter is part of the Institut Supérieur des Langues de la République Française (ISLRF; Higher Institute of Languages of the French Republic), which specialises in the field of early and prolonged language immersion in the school curriculum.

In recent years, especially since 2015, the lack of Basque teachers has been a common problem in bilingual educational streams (IGEN, 2016, p. 59). Partnerships between several organisations have been put in place (e.g. the National Education, DDEC, UPPA and UBM universities, the EEP, and AEK) to try to solve this problem.

Some students benefit from the “student apprentice teacher” system, which was established in 2016 and is now called “recruitment of educational assistants in pre-professionalisation”. Students sign a learning contract to combine university training and practical classroom training supervised by a teacher tutor. In the school year 2019/20, five students followed this programme.

Since 2017, the *Euskaraz irakatsi* (Teach in Basque) scholarship has allowed intensive Basque training for teachers and future teachers, based on their initial level. In the academic year 2019/20, 15 people were awarded this scholarship. Moreover, the European cross-border interregional project *Eskola futura* (Future school), which was established in 2018, has enabled around 20 students to learn and improve their Basque or French proficiency (students from Aquitaine learned Basque in the SBC and students from the SBC learned French in Aquitaine), before continuing their education in the MEEF to try to become Basque teachers in Iparralde.

### ■ *secondary training*

The main way to become a teacher of Basque in secondary education is to study the MEEF for the second degree (prepared within the UBM), and take the examination called CAPES (French: *Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second degré*; Certificate of aptitude for secondary education teaching), to be qualified to teach in the public sector. To teach in the private sector, the CAFEP (French: *Certificat d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Enseignement dans les Établissements Privés sous contrat du 2<sup>nd</sup> degré*; Certificate of aptitude for teaching functions in private 2nd degree establishments under contract) must be taken. Both examinations were created in 1992.

To teach an NLS in Basque, at immersive private schools, or public and private schools aiming for hourly parity, teachers who know Basque must apply for the position by contacting the responsible parties of bilingual education, namely the school board and inspectors/recteurs, who check their level of Basque and give their agreement.



## ■ *in-service training*

Basque teachers can regularly attend traineeships, symposia, educational activities, and other study and training days about language teaching and teaching in the regional language, and the specifics of bilingual education. Such study days are frequently arranged by organisations such as the Ministry of National Education, the EEP, universities, Seaska/ISLRF, DDEC/Euskal Haziak, Ikas-bi/FRLPE, the Udako Euskal Unibertsitatea, the IKAS educational centre, as well as certain teacher unions.

Moreover, the DIEB offers the opportunity to prepare for the Basque agrégation competition (languages of France agrégation), and this preparation is mainly followed by Basque secondary school teachers. This agrégation competition was held for the first time in 2018 and will be organised again in the coming years. At the time of writing this dossier, it was not organised yearly. It certifies a specialisation in the subject taught and gives priority access to certain positions, such as those in lycée or even in higher education, as well as a higher salary. Teachers who pass the competition provide a service of 15 hours of weekly lessons.

Likewise, in 2019–2020, the new University Diploma (UD) was created. This continuous training, called “teaching in Basque, Basque and other disciplines”, is open to all Basque teachers. Since 2013, an intensive training programme in the Basque language has been developed. The training programme is part of the partnership systems (consisting of the Ministry of National Education, DDEC, UPPA and UBM universities, the EEP, and AEK) put in place to compensate for the lack of Basque teachers in hourly parity bilingual schools (Basque teachers in primary education, and teachers of NLS in Basque in secondary education). The training offers teachers, who until then have taught in French, the possibility to raise their level of competence in Basque. The aim is to reach C1 level (if possible), to be able to teach in Basque thereafter. In the academic year 2019/20, nine trainees followed this course.

## *statistics*

In the academic year 2019/20, 63 students were enrolled in Basque licence studies at Bayonne-Baiona, 66 students were enrolled in the various master’s programmes described in the previous sections, and 20 PhD students were affiliated to the IKER laboratory (for more details, see [Table 6](#) and [Table 7](#)).

Some students follow part of their Basque studies through the ERASMUS+ programme, validating one or two semesters of their curriculum by following licence or master’s courses outside of their university. Students of the DIEB go to UPV-EHU University in Vitoria-Gasteiz or those studying at UPV-EHU go to Bayonne (two students in 2019).

## 7 Adult education

### *structure and language courses*

The main institution for Basque education for adults in Iparralde is the federation of associations AEK (Coordinator of Literacy and Basque Promotion), created in 1981, which coordinates 12 gau eskola (evening schools), teaching in around 20 locations in Iparralde. Each gau eskola is an autonomous association. All schools are federated within AEK.

As a recognised training centre, AEK exists throughout the Basque Country (in the form of a cooperative in Hegoalde) and offers courses to everyone, such as native Basque speakers who wish to improve their ability in communicating in their first language, and to non-Basque speaking people who wish to learn the language of the area in which they live. In addition to training individuals, it also collaborates with several organisations and institutions to train employees, such as those working at town halls, the Basque Country Community of Agglomeration, the general council of the département of Pyrénées-Atlantique, the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, and the public administrative body responsible for employment, Pôle Emploi.

The first adult education courses, from the introductory to the advanced courses, were given in the evening, hence the name of gau eskola. Since then, the offer has expanded to meet and adapt to the demand. Several programmes are offered, depending on the school. There are always evening courses, but also day courses, and intensive traineeships of varying length, with or without boarding school (or itinerant in Hegoalde).

There are also more or less specialised literacy courses and traineeships, such as the following: oral practice groups; courses adapted to parents whose children are enrolled in bilingual education; professional training courses, in particular for non-Basque speaking professionals working in professions related to education and extracurricular supervision; or linguistic courses about allocutive morphemes in Basque. Most of the courses are face-to-face, but there are also semi-face-to-face lessons, which are partly online (there are fully online courses designed and delivered in Hegoalde).

Some courses prepare more specifically for the Basque language certifications called B1EA (level B1) and EGA (level C1), which are set up and carried out in Iparralde by an agreement between the EEP and UBM-UPPA; AEK is present on the scientific committee. The B2 level certification is in preparation. These certifications are recognised by the National Commission for Professional Certification in France and by the Basque government in Spain.

A standard year offers approximately 5 or 6 hours of lessons per week, from October to June, but the organisation varies.

AEK develops and shares its didactic experience by publishing teaching and learning methods and by offering training to future teachers. The federation also publishes its magazine (AIZU!), which allows people to learn and work on their Basque (AEK, 2021).

The training centres sometimes organise events during the year, allowing people to practise the language as well as raise funds for their functioning. A major event, which has been organised every 2 years by the federation since 1980, is the *Korrika* relay race that lasts 10 days and crosses the Basque provinces. The event is also followed outside the Basque Country in cities where Basque associations exist, such as in Bordeaux, Paris, and Nouméa. Other associations organise similar events in support of their minority language, for example in Brittany, Bearn, and Alsace.

AEK is the best-known association for adult education, but other associations outside the federation also give Basque lessons to adults in Iparralde, namely Angeluko Ikasleak (Anglet students) and Maite dugulako (Because we love it; Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2021).

Basque courses for adults are also offered in France outside of the Basque Country at the universities mentioned in Chapter 6 (see *structure*). Moreover, courses are offered in cities such as Bordeaux, Paris, or Toulouse, where people are interested in learning, improving, or teaching Basque, in particular through associations, Euskal etxe (Basque houses), or other private initiatives.

### ***language use***

The language taught is standard Basque. It is also the language used during lessons. If possible, the trainers try to only use Basque. Depending on the location of the gau eskola, and on the trainers, the specificities of local dialects can also be mentioned in class.

### ***statistics***

In the federation of associations AEK (in Iparralde), there were 50 permanent and other contract workers, around 30 volunteer teachers, and around 1,400 students in 2019. These figures have been fairly stable in recent years (AEK, personal communication, 2020).

## 8 Educational research

Much scientific work regarding the Basque language and its teaching has been carried out in Iparralde, but also elsewhere. Research is conducted at the universities that have been mentioned in this dossier and at their associated research laboratories, with research projects and scientific publications by researchers specialised in this field.

The research dissertations are quite numerous, and it is mainly the students intending to be professors (in the MEEF) who choose subjects related to, among others, the teaching of the Basque language, bilingual education, and didactics of plurilingualism. Some of these works can be consulted online or in the libraries of the universities (UBM, UPPA, and the INSPE) or at the IKER joint research unit.

Several research projects have been carried out by the IKER joint research unit, often in partnership with researchers from other laboratories, located in France, in the SBC, or elsewhere in the world. An example is the *ELEBIDUN* (Bilingual) project (2011), which focuses on bilingual education in Iparralde. Another project they are working on is the AIPBA project (2013) that focuses on the personal initiative of adults to learn Basque. The updated list of all projects can be viewed on the joint research unit's website ([www.iker.cnrs.fr](http://www.iker.cnrs.fr)). Among other matters, they deal with the use of Basque, trilingual speakers, code switching, and contact with other languages. Many results of those research projects have been published in the scientific journal *Lapurdum*, which has been published by the IKER joint research unit since 1996.

The Basque language is also a subject of study in recent doctoral theses, which have been defended or are under development, in the field of teaching and acquisition of the Basque language in the NBC. These theses can be accessed on the following website: [www.theses.fr](http://www.theses.fr). Some examples of the theses regarding the Basque language are the following: *Oral language development in Basque-French bilingual children in the context of simultaneous vs. successive language acquisition* (Duguine, 2013); *A study of Basque-French bilingualism in a Basque immersive primary school* (Lascano, 2016); *History and challenges of regional language teaching in public primary schools: the case of Basque and Breton* (Alcibar, 2016); *Teaching the Basque language orally: linguistic and didactic analysis* (Olçomendy, 2017); *Mastery and practice of Euskara among young people in Iparralde* (Charriton Iriart, forthcoming); and *Comparison of the level of oral expression in LV1 (English) at the end of college between monolingual and bilingual students* (Noriega Aguinaga, forthcoming). Other projects are about to start with regard to, among others, the results of immersive teaching of the all-class-hours-in-Basque type.

## 9 Prospects

In France, it is clear that regional languages being unofficial and the non-ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages jeopardise the sustainability of these languages, and inhibit and seriously harm their development, promotion, and protection. Many people, however, want regional languages to come out of their precarious legislative situation, to receive recognition and genuine respect from the State (Collectif pour que vivent nos langues, 2020). An institutional supply policy and an uninhibited linguistic policy (Escudé, 2013) are the only responses that can bring about a solid and lasting development to change the uncertain situation of regional languages in France. The mobilisation in favour of a specific statute for regional languages is visible in gatherings, regular demonstrations in the regions or in Paris, specific social movements, and delegations meeting with elected officials and ministers. Speakers' social demand for the recognition of their language is a determining factor allowing the implementation of language policy supportive of a language other than French (Urteaga, 2004).

The political decisions in favour of the Basque language in Iparralde and the organisation of its teaching and the development of a linguistic policy that supports the Basque language have been the results of a long and progressive process (Coyos, 2016; Sarraillet, 2009). These decisions derived from experiments, practices, and structures set up by local initiatives, which have responded to the social will.

The figures of Basque in education have increased in recent years. In the school year 2019/20, 32.3% of all pupils in Iparralde were following classes of/in Basque in pre-school, primary, and secondary education, including vocational education. This reflects a growing interest for education in Basque and thus for the normalisation of using the language. It also means, however, that two thirds of pupils in Iparralde have no relation to the Basque language at school, which is a considerable number. For the time being, the Basque language is not immune to its situation as an endangered minority language (Coyos, 2016).

Despite the progress that has been made thus far, further efforts are still required. In the coming years, language transmission, within families or at school, should continue and increase, from early childhood to adult education, while ensuring the quality of the language. The transmission should be accompanied by possibilities to use the language in all fields, by creating or consolidating spaces and environments where it can be practised (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2006; IGEN, 2016); this will motivate speakers and encourage people to embrace the use of Basque in society. In an environment where the vast majority of young parents are not Basque speakers, the lack of transmission in schools (and nurseries) during childhood is still the main contributing factor to the decline of the language. For the moment, the offer of Basque education is still below the demand of the population (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2016c).

Thus, it is important to continue to work on the response to social demands and to the wish of families, with political and scientific support. This work could be carried out in collaboration between the various actors (the national, regional, and local elected officials, the rectorate, academic inspectorate, universities, the EEP, pedagogical advisors, and other representatives of the different streams of Basque education). Collaborative work allows the consultation, planning, and construction of tools for the different ways of teaching Basque, and the diffusion of information. This collaborative work monitors the assessment results of pupils taught Basque, and organises initial and in-service teacher training, based on their needs (linguistically, didactically, etc.). It will prompt the roll-out of research projects and cultural projects in the Basque language in schools.

It would be worth making Basque education (introductory or bilingual education) part of the general curriculum. If possible, this should be achieved at each school or at least a coherent territorial cover should be ensured so that pupils who wish to learn Basque can be enrolled in such tracks at primary or secondary schools (general or technological). At the same time, it will be necessary to continue to qualitatively consolidate the existing sites offering such classes. This includes limiting the age range of pupils in the same group in primary school and developing all-class-hours-in-Basque projects at the pre-schools where they are desired. At secondary public and private denominational schools, this entails developing NLS taught in Basque, including technical and vocational high schools, which are still a weak point. The same is true in higher education, where no teaching paths other than Basque studies offer teaching in Basque.

Another more particular request concerning the teaching of regional languages in France is to allow choosing a regional language specialty course next to a foreign language specialty course, and to present them in the desired order at the baccalauréat (see Collectif pour que vivent nos langues, 2020).

For the Basque language, as for the other regional languages of France, the ultimate goal is to consolidate a significant place for those languages in the education system, that is, to be able to build and recognise the regional languages' bilingual section as a specific curriculum, from pre-school to baccalauréat, with official status. In these sections, the teaching of the regional language must be organised within a curriculum framework that includes a set of skills to be achieved and a process of evaluation and certification. The teaching of NLS in the regional language must be organised, from semi-immersion to full immersion, depending on the school, with possibilities to use the regional language for the final exams in these disciplines. The same is true for introductory teaching of Basque, especially in secondary education, allowing students to have some basic knowledge, even if they have not had the opportunity to enrol in a bilingual education stream at primary school.

The development of and support for public as well as private education in Basque and other regional languages in France naturally requires suitable financial means, stemming from political decisions. It requires the allocation of specific resources in schools, and class hours, to prevent pupils from having to choose between Basque education and another optional lesson, as is sometimes the case now. It is also necessary to abandon the principle of "constant resources", according to which the opening of teaching posts in Basque suppresses those in French (see Ika-s-bi, 2013), to avoid conflicts and disagreements within the schools.

Setting up a support structure also presupposes a proactive policy for recruiting human resources since difficulties in recruiting teachers are a common key problem to the models of teaching Basque (introductory course, and semi-immersion and full immersion models). It requires, if necessary, the creation of partnerships and training programmes, such as the “student apprentice teacher” system or the Euskaraz irakatsi scholarship, the Eskola futura project, and intensive Basque training for teachers so as to establish a support structure. For high-quality bilingual education, all teachers at bilingual schools must be familiar with the concepts and specificities of bilingual education and education in a bilingual context. This includes Basque teachers, but also teachers who teach in French at semi-immersive primary and secondary schools. The effectiveness and the optimisation of bilingualism will benefit from teamwork and pedagogical cohesion in teaching in Basque and in French (Cohéré et al., 2018).

As for human resources, the importance of having bilingual staff at schools must be underlined. Thus, they will be able to communicate in Basque with bilingual pupils outside of class. Bilingual signage in the school buildings is also important. The pupils will see that Basque is not only a language spoken in class, or with a teacher, but they will also learn to use it as a language in everyday life (Bourgoin & Ouret, 2013).

It is also essential that high-quality teaching materials continue to be made available to Basque teachers (materials for Basque education, in each model and for each age group), as is carried out, among others, at the IKAS pedagogical centre. The importance of scientific research should also be mentioned since it makes it possible to validate the consequences of decision-making in matters of education, training, and the creation of materials.

Moreover, families must continue to be informed about the possibilities of receiving education of and in regional languages, about the benefits of being bilingual, and about the good results of the students who receive Basque education. This could perhaps eliminate or reduce the lack of continuity, which is a fundamental issue, and which remains one of the main weaknesses, especially during the transition from primary to secondary education. Reasons to discontinue bilingual teaching include that it seems more difficult, or some parents are afraid of being unable to help their children with homework (Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, 2013). Maintaining the choice of Basque remains a major challenge, the consolidation of which must be pursued. As reported in this dossier, the majority of the students who start with bilingual education do not finish it. Data suggest that about a third of pupils drop out between primary and lower secondary school, and then half again between lower and high secondary school (IGEN, 2016, p. 54).

It should also be noted that for the moment, the idea of immersive public education beyond pre-school (as is the case in the SBC) does not seem to be a major social demand, nor is it one of the aims of language policy in the NBC. Private schools that have already offered this for about 50 years seem to meet the demand at this level. The two linguistic paths, semi immersion and full immersion, are complementary to each other and each provides specific pedagogical responses to different audiences (IGEN, 2016, p. 73). One other reason why there is no public immersive teaching beyond pre-school is that such a proposal meets a legislative deadlock at national level in France, which is the same for all regional languages.

The idea of an introductory course in Basque systematically offered to all NBC pupils (subject to parental consent) does not seem to be envisioned either. However, it would surely allow for more pupils to have a basic knowledge of Basque when leaving school. As an example, this approach has been proposed in French Polynesia for Polynesian languages and in Corsica for the Corsican language.

It can be concluded that learning Basque at educational institutions rests above all on a motivated choice of families because it is an optional subject, a subject that requires commitment from everyone involved (pupils, parents, school staff, and public authorities) to be taught under good conditions.

The main goal will be to strive for a balance between what is offered and the social will and demand for the language, allowing individuals, who live in or move to Iparralde, to learn Basque, and thus to become “full speakers” if they want to. As previously mentioned, the use of the language remains one of the major challenges and one of the main limits for the Basque language, on the scale of the whole Basque Country, since knowing Basque does not imply that it is used. It is a complex subject, linked to many factors, which goes beyond the sole framework of language teaching and, therefore, beyond the subject of this dossier.



## 10 Summary of statistics

**Table 2** Number of pupils (3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds) in Basque language pre-school education in Iparralde in the school year 2019/20.

School type	French only	Introductory course	Semi-immersion	Immersion	Total
Public	3,582	84	1,885	428 *	5,979
Private Catholic	1,253	-	372	581 *	2,206
Private Seaska	-	-	-	1,065 **	1,065
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,835</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>2,257</b>	<b>2,074</b>	<b>9,250</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>52.3%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* (Overall education data 2019-20), personal communication (2020).

\* all class hours in Basque

\*\* full immersion

**Table 3** Number of pupils (6–10 years old) in Basque language primary education in Iparralde in the school year 2019/20.

School type	French only	Introductory course	Semi-immersion	Immersion	Total
Public	7,269	275	3,406	-	10,950
Private Catholic	2,880	-	1,442	-	4,322
Private Seaska	-	-	-	1,529	1,529
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,149</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>4,848</b>	<b>1,529</b>	<b>16,801</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>60.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* (Overall education data 2019-20), personal communication (2020).

**Table 4** Number of pupils in Basque language secondary education in Iparralde, in general and technological (GT) collèges and lycées, in the school year 2019/20.

School type	French only	Introductory course	Semi-immersion	Immersion	Total
<b>Collèges</b>					
Public	5,532	466	1,225	-	7,223
Private Catholic	4,143	401	880	-	5,424
Private Seaska	-	-	-	949	949
<b>Lycées</b>					
Public GT	4,714	106	325	-	5,145
Private Catholic GT	2,172	115	201	-	2,488
Private Seaska GT	-	-	-	322	322
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,561</b>	<b>1,088</b>	<b>2,631</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>21,551</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>76.8%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* (Overall education data 2019-20), personal communication (2020).

**Table 5** Number of pupils in Basque language vocational education in Iparralde (excluding CPA) in the school year 2019/20.

School type	French only	Introductory course	Semi-immersion	Immersion	Total
Public	1,713	11	-	-	1,724
Private Catholic	689	18	50	-	757
Private Seaska	-	-	-	41	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,402</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2,522</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Données globales enseignement 2019–20* (Overall education data 2019-20), personal communication (2020).

**Table 6** Number of students in Basque studies in Bayonne and Pau in the academic year 2019/20.

Year		Number of students
Licence (63 students)	First year	30
	Second year	18
	Third year	15
Master (66 students)	Basque studies	6 in first year, 4 in second year
	MEEF 2nd degree	3 in first year, 5 in second year
	MEEF 1st degree	30 in first year, 18 in second year
Doctorat (attached to the IKER laboratory)		20 (+ 1 post doc)
Agrégation (2018/2019)		10
UD		29
B1 – B2 – C1 Certification training (2nd semester)		7

*Note.* Data from DIEB (personal communication, 2020). MEEF: Master's in Teaching, Education and Training (French: *Masters Métiers de l'Enseignement de l'Éducation et de la Formation*); UD: University Diploma.

**Table 7** Number of positions filled in examinations leading to Basque teaching qualifications in the academic year 2019/20.

Examination	Number of positions filled
CAPES	2
CAFEP	0 (1 position not allocated)
Agrégation	1
Basque language external CRPE	12

*Note.* Data from DIEB (personal communication, 2020). CAPES: *Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second degré* (Certificate of aptitude for secondary education teaching); CAFEP: *Certificat d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Enseignement dans les Établissements Privés sous contrat du 2<sup>nd</sup> degré* (Certificate of aptitude for teaching functions in private 2nd degree establishments under contract); CRPE: *Concours de Recrutement de Professeur des Écoles* (School teacher recruitment competition).

**Table 8** Evolution of the number of bilingual pupils in pre-school and primary school in Iparralde (semi-immersion and immersion) between the school years 2004/05 and 2019/20.

	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pupils' age
2004/05	914	959	878	844	671	618	520	526	
2005/06	982	971	926	812	800	642	589	491	
2006/07	1106	1010	989	873	783	766	604	582	
2007/08	1093	1197	1032	934	825	742	720	602	
2008/09	1226	1132	1179	965	900	782	710	687	
2009/10	1278	1261	1134	1109	933	819	753	687	
2010/11	1254	1336	1274	1062	1063	890	786	717	
2011/12	1338	1272	1341	1181	1026	976	845	749	
2012/13	1319	1384	1249	1239	1107	955	836	818	
2013/14	1326	1343	1353	1156	1185	1057	817	899	
2014/15	1331	1359	1325	1301	1107	1123	1020	890	
2015/16	1432	1411	1360	1267	1242	1047	1091	993	
2016/17	1282	1501	1429	1303	1219	1193	1007	1046	
2017/18	1423	1364	1529	1359	1273	1183	1157	988	
2018/19	1399	1480	1389	1493	1319	1227	1144	1113	
2019/20	1381	1460	1490	1337	1450	1266	1196	1128	

School year

*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Bilduma 2004/2019* (2004/2019 review), personal communication (2020).

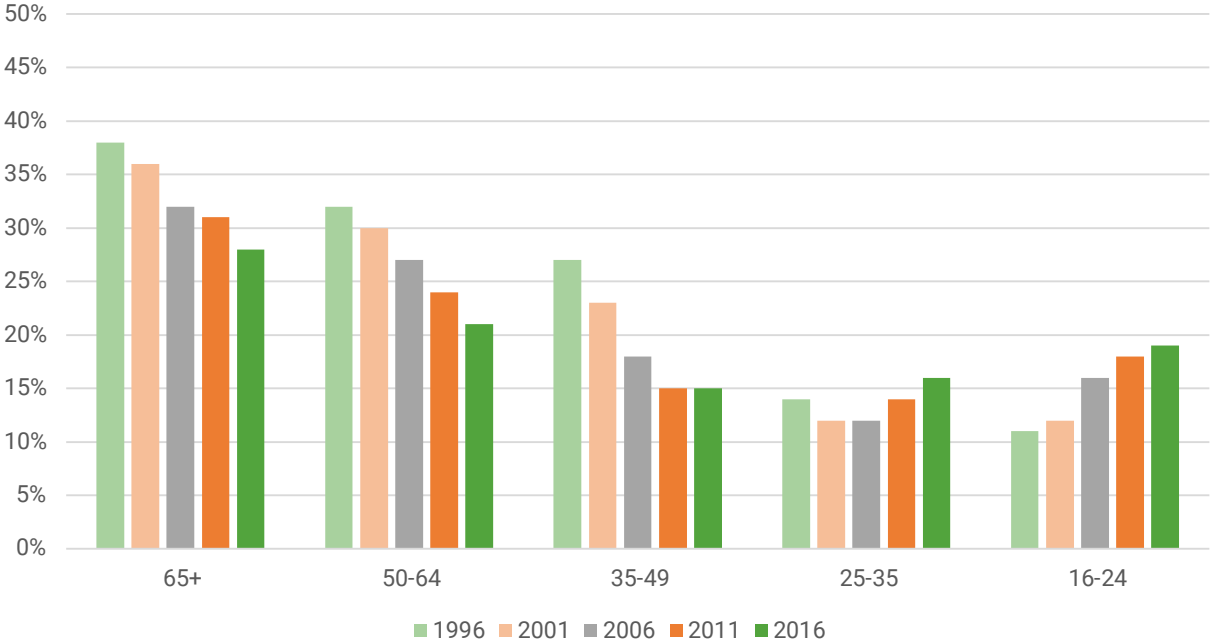
**Table 9** Evolution of the number of bilingual pupils in general secondary education in Iparralde (semi-immersion and immersion) between the school years 2004/05 and 2019/20.

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Pupils' age
2004/05	354	361	282	266	152	101	103	
2005/06	460	336	353	264	136	129	104	
2006/07	391	426	327	329	116	112	124	
2007/08	481	372	399	294	194	115	110	
2008/09	472	476	361	378	140	169	109	
2009/10	553	428	439	331	195	117	159	
2010/11	526	520	412	393	162	160	114	
2011/12	523	514	499	390	180	143	160	
2012/13	544	506	479	479	193	149	140	
2013/14	606	530	496	459	208	170	144	
2014/15	629	574	510	468	231	188	159	
2015/16	662	599	552	496	208	193	182	
2016/17	734	647	584	533	252	208	190	
2017/18	843	722	620	564	299	217	180	
2018/19	772	788	697	623	323	246	209	
2019/20	862	744	782	666	313	261	244	

School year

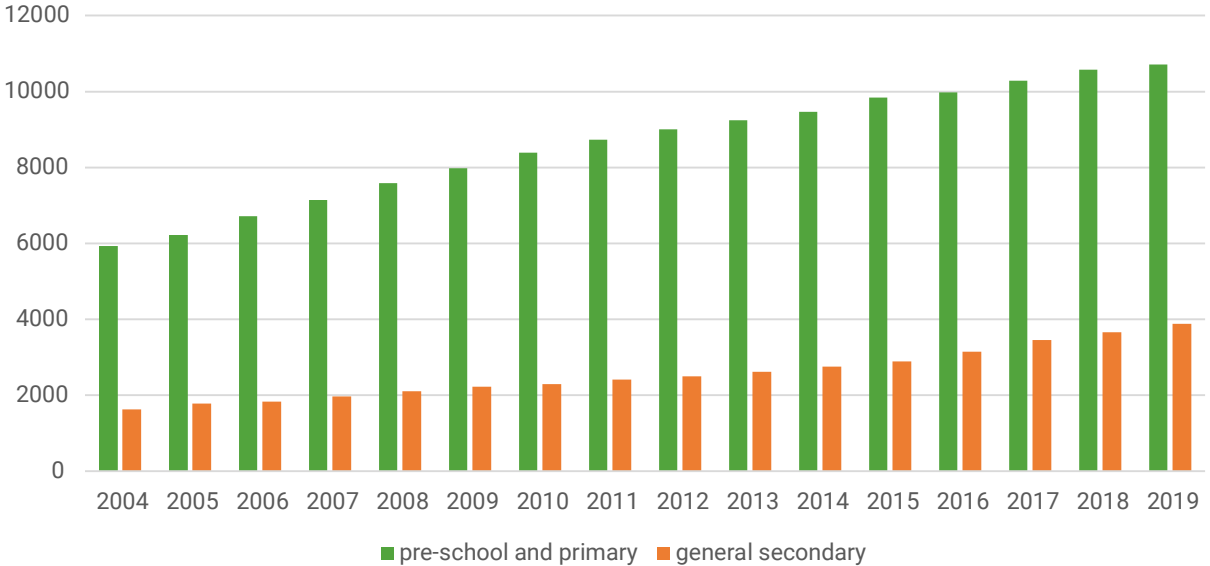
*Note.* Data from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Bilduma 2004/2019* (2004/2019 review), personal communication (2020).

**Figure 3** Evolution of active Basque speakers in Iparralde by age between 1996 and 2016.



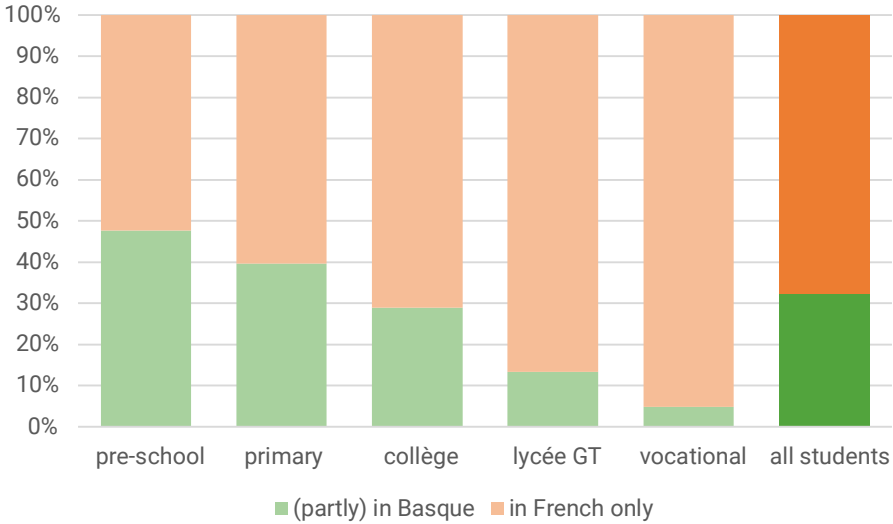
*Note.* From Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa (2016b).

**Figure 4** Evolution of the number of bilingual pupils in Iparralde between 2004 and 2019.



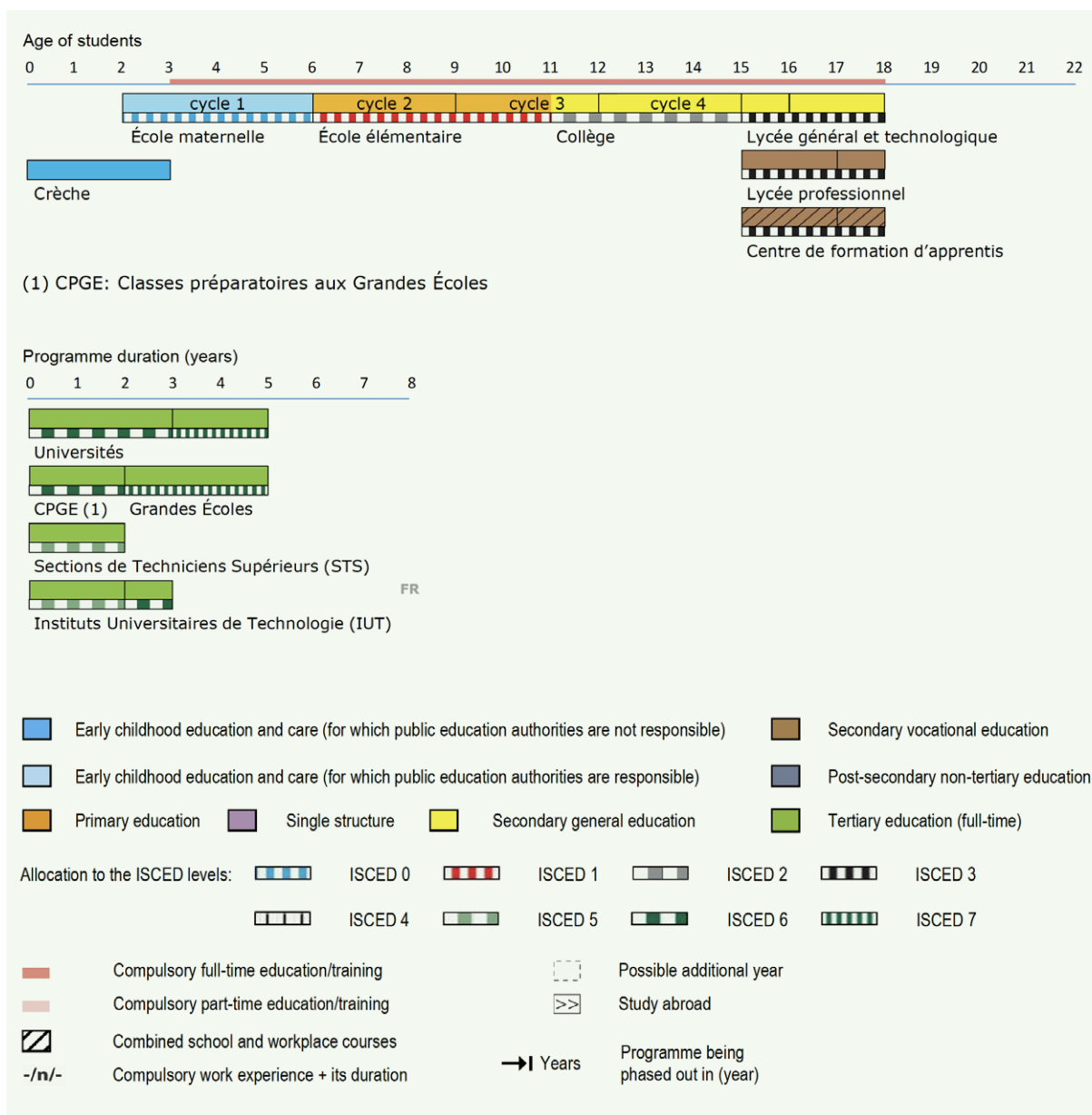
*Note.* Adapted from Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa, *Bilduma 2004/2019* (2004/2019 review), personal communication (2020).

**Figure 5** Percentage of students in Iparralde educated in Basque (introductory course, semi-immersion, and immersion) or in French only in the school year 2019/20.



*Note.* Data from the statistics presented in Tables 2–5.

# Education system in France



**Note.** ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) 4 education covers less than 2% of the total number of students (all levels). Since September 2020, training has become compulsory for students aged between 16 and 18. Young people will be able to fulfil this compulsory training by several means: schooling, apprenticeship, training courses, civic service, and support system or social and professional integration measures. From European Commission, European Education and Culture Executive Agency, & Eurydice (2022).



## References and further reading

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### **Biga bai (two yes/yes to two)**

Association of parents of children in public education who receive bilingual semi-immersive education

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### **Direction Diocésaine de l'Enseignement Catholique (DDEC)**

Diocesan Directorate of Catholic Education (Pyrénées-Atlantiques)

10 Fraï's Bidea/Chemin de Fraï's, 64100 Bayonne/Baiona

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### **Euskal Haziak (Basque seeds)**

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10 Fraï's Bidea/Chemin de Fraï's, 64115 Bayonne/Baiona

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## **Euskararen Erakunde Publikoa (EEP) | Office Public de la Langue Basque**

Public office of the Basque language

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## **Eusko Ikaskuntza**

Society for Basque Studies (Scientific-cultural institution)

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## **Fédération pour les langues régionales dans l'enseignement public**

Federation for regional languages in public education

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W: [www.flarep.com](http://www.flarep.com)

## **IKAS Euskal Pedagogia Zerbitzua**

LEARN | Basque Pedagogical Centre (specialised in teaching Basque)

Lapurdikoko Bizkondeen karrika, 81, 64480-Ustaritz/Uztaritze

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## **IKER (search; UMR 5478)**

Mixed research unit, focused on the study of Basque language, Basque texts and language teaching

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## **Institut national supérieur du professorat et de l'éducation (INSPE)**

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**Institut Supérieur de Formation de l'Enseignement Catholique (ISFEC)**

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**Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale de la Jeunesse et des sports**

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## Other websites on minority languages

### **Mercator European Research Centre**

[www.mercator-research.eu](http://www.mercator-research.eu)

Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the Regional Dossier series, a database of experts, a bibliography, information on current activities, and many links to relevant websites.

### **Mercator Network**

[www.mercator-network.eu](http://www.mercator-network.eu)

General site of the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. It gives information about the network and leads you to the homepages of the network partners.

### **European Commission**

[www.ec.europa.eu/languages](http://www.ec.europa.eu/languages)

The website of the European Commission gives information about the EU's support for language diversity.

### **Council of Europe**

[www.conventions.coe.int](http://www.conventions.coe.int)

*European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.

### **Eurydice**

[www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice](http://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice)

Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

### **European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database**

[www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/home](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/home)

In this database, you will find research papers produced by the European Parliament's research service. A study for the CULT Committee, conducted by the Mercator European Research Centre, was published in 2017: *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls*.

### **NPLD**

[www.npld.eu](http://www.npld.eu)

The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) is a European-wide network working in the field of language policy & planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small-State Languages (CRSS) across Europe.

**FUEN**

[www.fuen.org](http://www.fuen.org)

The Federal Union of European Nationalities is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities at the regional, national, and European levels.

**ELEN**

[www.elen.ngo](http://www.elen.ngo)

The European Language Equality Network (ELEN) is a non-governmental organisation that has as its goal the promotion and protection of European lesser-used (i.e. regional, minority, endangered, indigenous, co-official, and smaller national) languages, to work towards linguistic equality for these languages, and multilingualism, under the broader framework of human rights, and to be a voice for the speakers of these languages at all levels.



## About the Mercator European Research Centre

### *mission & goals*

The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and endeavours to promote linguistic diversity within and outside Europe. The centre focuses on research, policy, and practice in the fields of multilingualism and language learning. Through the acquisition, application, and circulation of knowledge regarding language learning at school, at home, and through cultural participation, the Mercator European Research Centre aims to provide for language communities' increasing need to exchange experiences and to cooperate, not only in the European context, but also beyond the borders of Europe. Although the main focus lies in the field of regional and minority languages, immigrant languages are topics of study as well.

### *partners*

The Mercator European Research Centre is the leading partner of the European Mercator Network, which was initiated by the European Commission in 1987. The Mercator Network partners are the following: Mercator Media, hosted at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David; Mercator Legislation, hosted at the CIEMEN Foundation; the University of Barcelona; Stockholm University in Sweden; and the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Hungary. The Mercator European Research Centre also works closely with a large number of research organisations and universities. This cooperation includes partners in the province of Fryslân and other parts of the Netherlands, as well as partners across Europe and beyond. The main funding body of the Mercator European Research Centre is the provincial government of Fryslân. The EU and regional authorities in Europe also regularly fund projects and activities.

### *research*

The research activities of the Mercator European Research Centre focus on various aspects of bilingual and trilingual education such as language proficiency in different languages, interaction in the multilingual classroom, and teacher qualifications for working in a multilingual classroom. Latest developments look at how educational models for minority languages can also cater for pupils with a migrant background. Whenever possible, research is carried out in a comparative perspective. Results are disseminated through publications and conferences, often in collaboration with the Mercator European Research Centre's partners.

## ***conferences***

The Mercator European Research Centre organises conferences and seminars on a regular basis. The main target groups are professionals, researchers, and policymakers from all member states of the Council of Europe and beyond. Themes for the conferences are assessment & best practice, educational models, development of minimum standards, teacher training, and the application of the Common European Framework of Reference.

## ***contact***

For general enquiries, please contact us at [mercator@fryske-akademy.nl](mailto:mercator@fryske-akademy.nl).

For enquiries about our Regional Dossier series, please contact the editors at [mercator-regionaldossiers@fryske-akademy.nl](mailto:mercator-regionaldossiers@fryske-akademy.nl).





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# THE BASQUE LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN FRANCE



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