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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

Eighth periodical report
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THE NETHERLANDS

EIGHTH REPORT BY THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

On the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

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INTRODUCTION

In the period of 2021-2026, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has continued to commit to the protection and promotion of the languages recognised under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This report will discuss the main developments during that period and the recommendations from the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers, as adopted on 19 November 2024.

In the process of acceptance of the Charter, the Netherlands undertook the obligation to apply Part II of the Charter to the following regional or non-territorial languages: Papiamentu, Limburgish, Low Saxon, Yiddish, and the Romani languages. For the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the provisions of the Charter took effect on 1 March 1998. Within the Kingdom, the European Charter applies to the (European) Netherlands only.

In respect of the Frisian language in the Province of Fryslân,, in accordance with Article 2(2) of the Charter, the Netherlands also undertook to apply at least thirty-five paragraphs or sub-paragraphs chosen from among the provisions of Part III of the Charter. Upon acceptance of the Charter, the Netherlands undertook to apply 48 provisions. The selection of the provisions was directed by the government policy on Frisian language and culture.

The eighth report by the Netherlands has been drafted in cooperation with the Provinces involved and the *openbaar lichaam* (Public Entity) of Bonaire. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has requested input from several linguistic organisations for this report. A list of the organisations involved in the regional languages is included at the end of this report. This report will simultaneously be sent to the House of Representatives of the States General and published online on www.rijksoverheid.nl.

The following section will address the developments relating to the regional and minority languages between the seventh report (as filed on 31 May 2021) and the summer of 2026. Subsequently, the implementation of the Charter will be discussed on an article-by-article basis for each individual language. Finally, a list of contacts is attached for each of the languages.

DEVELOPMENTS

Since filing the seventh report in 2021, the Netherlands has taken further steps to protect and promote the regional and minority languages covered by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. It has thereby focused on reinforcing the collaboration between government authorities and social organisations, improving the institutional assurance of language policy, and increasing the visibility of the recognised languages.

An important development has been the reinforcement of the position of Papiamentu. In January 2024, Papiamentu on Bonaire was brought under the scope of Part III of the European Charter. Subsequently, on 1 July 2024, Papiamentu was also recognised under Part III of the Charter in the European Netherlands, thus giving effect to the administrative agreements made with the Public Entity of Bonaire in 2021 about the protection and promotion of Papiamentu. These recognitions form an important expansion of the scope of the Charter within the Kingdom and reinforce the protection of Papiamentu, both in Bonaire and in the European Netherlands.

Steps have also been taken in respect of Limburgish. In 2024, a new covenant was entered into between the Central Government and the Province of Limburg about Dutch recognition of the Limburgish language. This covenant builds on the previous collaboration and contains agreements about the preservation, promotion and visibility of Limburgish. The covenant, thus, provides a renewed framework for the collaboration between the Central Government and the Province in the field of Limburgish language policy.

Important developments have been realised for the Frisian language as well. For purposes of the *Bestjoersôfspraak Fryske Taal en Kultuer* (BFTK) 2024–2028, new agreements have been made between the Central Government and the Province of Fryslân about the implementation of Frisian language policy. In addition, in July 2025, a covenant was entered into between the Central Government, the Province of Fryslân, and the University of Groningen to safeguard the Bachelor's degree programme for Frisian language and culture. This has been an important step towards preservation of the academic infrastructure for the Frisian language and the education of future experts and teachers.

Another strong focus, in addition to these language-specific developments, was on reinforcement of the collaboration between the various recognised languages. In April 2025, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations first organised a national symposium on the recognised languages in the Netherlands. The symposium brought representatives of the various language communities, government authorities, knowledge institutions, and social organisations together to share experiences and discuss common issues in the field of language policy, language acquisition, and visibility of the recognised languages. This symposium emphasised the importance of mutual collaboration and knowledge exchange among the various language communities.

The developments since 2021 show that the Netherlands has further enhanced the implementation of the Charter, both through new legal recognitions and through administrative agreements and institutional facilities, paying attention to the position of the individual languages as well as to a more coherent approach of the policy for the recognised regional and minority languages.

THE INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

I. FRISIAN

Developments regarding the Frisian language

In consultation with the Province of Fryslân and the Division of Minority Languages of the Council of Europe, it has been decided to send the Frisian part of the report on implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to the Council of Europe in early 2027 rather than in 2026. The reason is that the interim report on the implementation of the *Bestjoersôfspraak Fryske Taal en Kultuer* (BFTK) 2024–2028 will be drafted by the end of 2026. That interim report will provide an up-to-date picture of the progress and the results of the agreements made. By allowing the report for the Council of Europe to link up to that interim report, the findings from the interim report can be incorporated in the report on the Frisian language. As a result, in early 2027, the report will be able to provide a more up-to-date and complete picture of the recent developments in Frisian language policy. The text below will outline, *inter alia* against the background of the seventh report from 2021, the main developments in language policy in relation to the Frisian language since 2021.

The seventh report from 2021 was an important reference point for the further development of the Dutch language policy in relation to the Frisian language. This report discussed the implementation of the obligations undertaken by the Netherlands for the Frisian language pursuant to the European Charter. It paid attention, among other things, to the use of the Frisian language in education, administrative communication and legal relations, the media, and cultural life. The report showed that the Frisian language held a solid position in various domains, but that, at the same time, aspects such as language acquisition, the availability of sufficient qualified teachers, and the position of the Frisian language in new social and digital developments required constant attention. The report and the subsequent monitoring by the Council of Europe have since constituted an important context for Dutch language policy.

An important development in the period that followed was the drafting of the *Bestjoersôfspraak Fryske Taal en Kultuer* (BFTK) 2024–2028. On 8 April 2024, the Central Government and the Province of Fryslân signed the new administrative agreement setting forth the joint ambitions for the protection and promotion of the Frisian language and culture for the period of 2024–2028. The BFTK is the main framework for the collaboration between the Central Government and the Province of Fryslân in the field of the Frisian language. A total amount of EUR 18 million is available to implement the agreements. The administrative agreement contains agreements on subjects such as language acquisition, education and research, digitisation, the visibility of the Frisian language, and decentralised language policy. This means that a broad approach to language policy is being used, focusing not only on the formal position of the Frisian language but also on its actual use and language acquisition.

In terms of education, the *Taalplan Frysk 2030* forms an important basis for the development of Frisian language policy. Set up in early 2021, this partnership focuses on reinforcement of the Frisian language throughout the education chain. An important basic principle is the realisation of a continuous learning line for the Frisian language, from the pre-school period up to and including university education. Several parties within the Frisian education chain are thereby working together on the development and implementation of the language policy. The *Taalplan Frysk 2030*, thus, provides a coherent framework for further reinforcement of education of and about the Frisian language in the various educational sectors.

The reinforcement of the educational infrastructure for the Frisian language has continued on various levels over the past few years. In senior secondary vocational education (mbo), the development of a practorate, an expertise platform for research and innovation in mbo, for the Frisian language, which will contribute to knowledge development, innovation and further anchoring of the Frisian language in mbo education. In university education, the position of the Frisian language and Frisistyk have also been expressly on the agenda. The position of the Frisian language on university level had been under pressure over the past few years. Therefore, it was agreed in the BFTK 2024–2028 that the Central Government and the Province would join forces in order to set up a full-fledged and long-term Bachelor's degree programme for the Frisian language. This agreement was laid down in concrete terms on 10 July 2025, with the signing of a covenant between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK), the Province

of Fryslân, and the University of Groningen (RUG). This covenant formalised the collaboration between the parties involved for the organisation, promotion and maintenance of the Bachelor's degree programme for the Frisian language. The programme contributes to maintaining the academic infrastructure for the Frisian language and is important to the education of future research fellows, teachers, and other language professionals. The mbo practorate and the agreements on the perpetuation of Frisistyk in university education can, thus, be regarded as important elements of the continuous learning line pursued by the *Taalplan Frysk 2030*.

The development of the Frisian Bachelor's degree programme and the practorate do not stand alone. The BFTK increasingly focuses on reinforcement of the educational infrastructure for the Frisian language. For example, it pays attention to the education and availability of teachers, research, and language and reading education. Initiatives in the field of journalism in the Frisian language also contribute to reinforcement of the ecosystem surrounding the Frisian language. This is to create a better connection between the various sections of the education chain and to safeguard the availability of sufficient expertise on the Frisian language for the longer term.

Another development has been the reinforcement of the knowledge base for Frisian language policy. DINGtiid has recommended to set up a *Landelijke Kennistafel Fries* (National Knowledge Table for the Frisian Language, LKF). The proposed Knowledge Table is to provide a structural place for bringing together knowledge and expertise on the Frisian language from a variety of organisations and disciplines. This will create a better connection between knowledge institutions, the Province, social organisations, and the Central Government. The development of the Knowledge Table is in line with a broader movement for a stronger basis of language policy in available knowledge, research and monitoring. In September 2025, the Cabinet informed the House of Representatives of its response to the DINGtiid advice on the organisation of the Knowledge Table. This has been a new step in the process to come to such a national knowledge and advisory structure. The further organisation and practical elaboration are yet to be implemented. In the longer term, the proposed Knowledge Table can contribute to a more structural knowledge exchange on the Frisian language and to a better substantiation of the language policy.

Over the past few years, in addition to these administrative and institutional developments, increasing attention has been paid to the digital position and the visibility of the Frisian language. In the BFTK 2024-2028, agreements have been made on digitisation and increasing the presence of the Frisian language in the digital living environment. This is important because the vitality of a language is increasingly connected with the degree to which the language is also available online and in digital applications. Furthermore, there is continued attention for the visibility of the Frisian language in the public area, the media, and the cultural domain. This is not only to safeguard the position of the Frisian language legally and administratively, but also to keep it visible and usable in everyday life.

In the cultural domain, steps have been taken since 2021 to reinforce the position of the Frisian language further as well. In order to implement the recommendations from the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe (ComEx) and DINGtiid and, thus, give effect to the obligations ensuing from the European Charter, the Central Government is structurally releasing more funding within the BFTK 2024-2028 for Frisian makers, researchers and productions themed around the Frisian language and culture. In addition, in the cultural basic infrastructure for the period of 2025-2028, a structural place has been included for a Frisian-language theatre company. This will further reinforce the position of the Frisian language within the professional cultural sector.

The position of Frisian literature has been further anchored over the past few years as well. In the run-up to the policy period 2025-2028, *Nederlands Letterenfonds* (the Dutch Foundation for Literature) has broadened the objects according to its bylaws. Within that period, the focus for the Dutch and Frisian languages, as well as for Papiamentu and Dutch Sign Language (NGT), will be, *inter alia*, on promoting the quality and diversity of the literary supply, stimulating high-quality literary translations and the international distribution thereof, promoting a rich supply in translated literature from other language areas, and supporting activities and policy in the field of promoting reading and literature. This broadening will contribute to a structural embedding of the Frisian language in national literature policy.

II. PAPIAMENTU

Implementation of Part II of the Charter

Since the recognition of Papiamentu under Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter: the "Charter") in Bonaire with effect from 1 July 2024, the Central Government has mainly engaged in the implementation of the resulting obligations. The main focus during this reporting period has been on the preparation and implementation of measures in Bonaire, in cooperation with the Public Entity of Bonaire. In that process, it has also been reviewed what the recognition of Papiamentu under Part II of the Charter will mean for the European Netherlands. The elaboration of the Part II status is still in an exploratory phase, so that, in this reporting period, there have mostly been some minor policy measures or implementation activities within the European Netherlands. Below is an outline of several general developments relating to the recognition of Papiamentu.

General developments

An important foundation for these developments was laid with the signing of the Papiamentu on Bonaire Administrative Agreement on 11 March 2021 by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK), the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), and the Public Entity of Bonaire (OLB). These administrative agreements comprise the policy framework for the protection, promotion and institutional reinforcement of Papiamentu on Bonaire.

For purposes of implementation of these administrative agreements, OLB has set up a work group tasked with the drafting of a practical implementation plan for the agreed measures. In addition, the work group has consulted with representatives of the Ministry of BZK about the provisions of the Charter that, based on the existing laws and regulations, would qualify for application under Part III. These preparatory activities have significantly contributed to the further development of the language policy and the eventual recognition of Papiamentu under Part III of the Charter.

An important milestone was the expansion of the protection of Papiamentu within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As from January 2024, Papiamentu was recognised under Part II of the Charter in the European Netherlands. Subsequently, as from 1 July 2024, Papiamentu on Bonaire was brought under the scope of Part III of the Charter. With this recognition, additional obligations with respect to the protection, promotion and use of Papiamentu came into effect for several policy domains, including education, culture, public administration, and social services.

In the third quarter of 2026, in line with these developments, OLB adopted the updated *Uitvoeringsplan Bestuursafspraken Papiaments op Bonaire* (Administrative Agreements Implementation Plan for Papiamentu on Bonaire). Furthermore, the Governing Council adopted the *Implementatieplan Eilandelijk Taalbeleid Bonaire* (Bonaire Island Language Policy Implementation Plan). These documents together form the strategic and operational framework for the further implementation of the language policy in Bonaire and for the implementation of the obligations ensuing from the Charter.

Another important development in this reporting period has been the further institutional anchoring of language policy. In the *Bestuursakkoord Bonaire-Rijk* (Administrative Agreement between Bonaire and the Central Government) for 2024-2027, it was agreed to set up an independent language institution to reinforce the long-term assurance of Papiamentu. The language institution will act as the executive and coordinating organisation for the implementation of both the Administrative Agreements Implementation Plan for Papiamentu on Bonaire and the Bonaire Island Language Policy Implementation Plan. In addition, the institution will be responsible for activities in the field of language development, language promotion, standardisation, documentation, research, advice, and monitoring. This will provide a structural organisational facility that will implement both the island policy objectives and the obligations ensuing from the Charter.

In December 2024, the Dutch government made an amount of USD 1,110,000 available for the further reinforcement of Papiamentu to support these developments. These resources have been used, *inter alia*, to prepare for the setup and operationalisation of the language institution and a multi-year working programme. Although this contribution has proved essential for the start-up phase, the available resources are insufficient to safeguard the structural maintenance of the institution and the long-term implementation of the policy objectives¹. Given the one-off nature of the resources made available, it is necessary for OLB and the Central Government to reach agreements in the short term about the structural funding of the language institution after 2028. In this respect, a financial allocation formula should be adopted that will do justice to the joint responsibility of both government authorities for the protection, promotion and institutional assurance of Papiamentu.

Starting from 2027, to safeguard the long-term nature of the language policy, OLB will allocate structural resources within the island budget. In addition, it consults with the Central Government about the structural financial detailing of the joint responsibilities as laid down in the Papiamentu on Bonaire Administrative Agreement, in particular Article 3.7 on the funding of the implementation. Both OLB and the Central Government endorse the importance of a long-term financing structure to safeguard the continuity of the language policy and the performance of the language institution in the longer term.

During the reporting period, investments were also made in reinforcement of policy-driven capacity in the field of recognised languages. From September 2024 to February 2025 inclusive, a secondment took place under which the OLB policy adviser for Education was temporarily deployed to the Ministry of BZK as a Policy Adviser for Recognised Languages. This secondment was aimed at assuring the continuity and progress of the policy development and implementation relating to the languages recognised under Part III of the Charter, namely Frisian and Papiamentu. These activities included exploring the possibilities to recognise the Papiamentu-language people in Bonaire under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. In addition, it was explored how the communication policy of the Central Government in the Frisian and Papiamentu languages could be further reinforced, and it was investigated which additional provisions of the Charter could be applicable within the existing legal frameworks.

In collaboration with several partners, a contribution was also given during the Recognised Languages Symposium organised on 10 April 2025 around the “Audible and Visible” theme². During the symposium, workshops were organised on Papiamentu and on the opportunities and challenges for (recognised) minority languages offered by new technologies, such as artificial intelligence. In addition, during the *Streektaalconferentie* (Regional Languages Conference) in Roermond (September 2024), a presentation was given on the process that had led to the recognition of Papiamentu under Part III of the Charter.

Further promotion of Papiamentu by OLB

For purposes of compliance with the ratified provisions of the Charter, OLB highly values the structural reinforcement, promotion and prudent use of Papiamentu in all social domains. OLB endorses the importance of preservation and further development of Papiamentu as a full-fledged, connecting and culturally embedded language, which forms an essential part of the identity, heritage and social cohesion of Bonaire.

¹ Public Entity of Bonaire, Letter to the House of Representatives of the States-General, z/25/027784, 27 June 2025,

Structurele bescherming en bevordering van het Papiaments op Bonaire (Structural protection and promotion of Papiamentu on Bonaire), available in the annex.

² Dutch Studies, ‘10 April 2025: Symposium Erkende Talen’ (Recognised Languages Symposium), 28 March 2025, available on:

<https://neerlandistiek.nl/2025/03/10-april-2025-symposium-erkende-talen>

It is against this background that OLB has taken further steps to reinforce the use, quality, visibility and institutional assurance of Papiamentu. An important development was the appointment of a Language programme manager in October 2025. The programme manager is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the island language policy, and arranges the integrated coordination of the policy objectives ensuing from the Administrative Agreements on Papiamentu on Bonaire, the Administrative Agreement between Bonaire and the Central Government for 2024-2027, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This role works closely together with educational institutions, cultural organisations, language institutions, social partners, and the ministries involved on long-term reinforcement of the position of Papiamentu and promotion of the implementation of language-related policy issues.

Furthermore, in the fourth quarter of 2025, OLB instructed *Fundashon Akademia Papiamentu* to update the *Bon Uso di Papiamentu* method for the Bonaire context, in close cooperation with the *Instituto Nashonal di Idioma di Kòrsou*. The objective of the *Bon Uso di Papiamentu na Boneiru* training course is to promote proper and conscious use of language within sectors such as public administration, education, culture, media, business, and the judiciary. This updating is intended to further reinforce the quality of oral and written use of Papiamentu.

Furthermore, in cooperation with several linguistic organisations and social partners, OLB supports the provision of training courses and programmes in the field of spelling, grammar and language proficiency. These activities contribute to greater visibility of Papiamentu and promote the use of the language within several social domains. At the same time, it is recognised that additional investments are necessary to further expand the reach of such activities.

Future points for attention

Although considerable progress has been made since 2021 on a policy, organisational and institutional level, it is also established that the existing Administrative Agreements on Papiamentu date back from before the recognition of Papiamentu under Part III of the Charter. As a result, not all the obligations ensuing from that recognition have been fully incorporated in the current agreements. The Administrative Agreements on Papiamentu mainly focus on the domains of education (Articles 3.1 - 3.4), transnational exchanges (Article 3.5), and administration (Article 3.6). With the recognition of Papiamentu under Part III of the Charter, however, obligations have become applicable in other policy domains as well. These include the judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transnational exchanges. These subjects have not, or hardly, been worked out in the current Administrative Agreements.

Therefore, OLB deems it advisable to update the administrative agreements in due course. In this respect, it may, for example, look at the scope of the agreements, the allocation of responsibilities between the Central Government and OLB, the monitoring and evaluation system, the implementation of additional obligations for each policy domain, and the structural financing arrangements.

Outlook

The developments realised demonstrate that substantial progress has been made in the reporting period in terms of protection and promotion of Papiamentu on Bonaire. The further operationalisation of the language institution, the implementation of the obligations from Part III of the Charter, and the assurance of a long-term financing structure are the main points for attention for the coming reporting period.

Implementation of Part III of the Charter

Article 8 Education

As laid down in Article 11(7) of the BES Primary Education Act, primary education in Bonaire is provided in both Dutch and Papiamentu. The Papiamentu on Bonaire Administrative Agreement (2021) has ratified that the use of Papiamentu as an instruction language in primary education. The decision as to whether they wish to use this opportunity is left to the discretion of the schools themselves. It also provides that Papiamentu forms part of the key objectives for primary education. This means that all pupils in primary education must be taught the basics of Papiamentu. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (hereinafter: Ministry of OCW) is committed to facilitating the parameters to enable schools to do so. Firstly, at the moment - following up on the curriculum revision in the European Netherlands - it is updating the new key objectives so that they will also apply to education in Bonaire. Secondly, on the instructions of the Ministry of OCW, a pupil monitoring system has been delivered which schools can use to monitor the personal development of their pupils, including monitoring tests for the knowledge and proficiency in Papiamentu. Thirdly, a specific transition test for Bonaire has been developed, in which the proficiency in Papiamentu are tested as well. This gives the school a complete picture of what the pupil is capable of, so that it can, subsequently, determine what level of secondary education would best fit that particular child. A final, important parameter for providing good education in Papiamentu is suitable teaching material. Although commercial publishers are primarily responsible for this, the Ministry of OCW will review whether this market offering covers everything that is needed, and whether contributions may be required from the Central Government.

Papiamentu programme in school

In secondary education, Dutch is the language of instruction and examination, with the exception of practical training. For practical training, the instruction language chosen is Papiamentu. In the constitutional reform of 10 October 2010, it was decided for secondary education in Bonaire to maintain the instruction language, examination language and examination structure as used at the time of the Netherlands Antilles. The instruction language within secondary education was, and remained, Dutch. Within the structure of laws and regulations, Papiamentu is a subject in the optional part. Teachers can use Papiamentu in all subjects to explain something.

The Ministry of OCW is committed to facilitating the parameters in secondary education as well, so that proper education can be given in Papiamentu. Also in secondary education, it will be reviewed whether the market offering of suitable teaching material covers everything and whether a contribution may be required from the Central Government. The Ministry of OCW is aware of the vulnerability of the small group of teachers who are qualified to teach the subject of Papiamentu. This signal has repeatedly been given.

Qualified teachers of Papiamentu

The University of Curaçao currently offers a Papiamentu teacher training programme. The Dutch Government highly values this training programme. The government is discussing the possibility of granting a subsidy with the university. The university already receives a subsidy for the provision of the *Lerarenopleiding Funderend Onderwijs op Bonaire* (Basic Education in Bonaire Teacher Training).

In respect of Papiamentu language and culture, it should be noted that the government has recognised the language under the Charter: in the European Netherlands under Part II, and in Bonaire under Part III. The recognition in Part II in the European Netherlands means that the government has undertaken not to include any restrictions for the use of these languages in laws or regulations. This is the case. Article 7.2 of the *Wet op hoger onderwijs en wetenschap* (Higher Education and Science Act) provides that education given in a language other than Dutch is possible.

For purposes of recognition of Part III in Bonaire, the Central Government has ratified Article 8.e.ii, since it is not possible to provide university education in Bonaire, as there is no university there. This means that the Central Government encourages and/or permits the study of the language. The University of Curaçao offers a Bachelor's and a Master's degree teacher training programme in

Papiamentu. This university does not come under the Dutch higher education system, but the Dutch government and the Public Entity of Bonaire have indicated that it is important to have this education. Furthermore, this university has chairs to research Papiamentu in the context of their field of study.

The Ministry of OCW highly values the autonomy that institutions have in terms of education, research, and the discretion to spend their resources. Of course, the funded universities and universities for applied sciences in the Netherlands are free to provide education on the Papiamentu language and culture out of the Central Government contribution that they receive from the Ministry of OCW.

Education on Papiamentu language and culture

Article 11 of the BES Primary Education Act not only provides that education in Bonaire must include Papiamentu, but also that in any event attention must thereby be paid to geography, history, nature (including biology), social relationships (including internal organisation of the state), and spiritual movements. The key objectives decree provides for the subject of Papiamentu that, in addition to language as a system, language use must be reflected on as well. This reflection on language is not a subject in itself, but is integrated with (parts of) other key objectives. These values have also been incorporated when updating the key objectives for Bonaire.

Article 9 Judicial authorities

The current basic principle of the *Gemeenschappelijk Hof van Justitie* (Joint Court of Justice) (hereinafter: GHvJ) is that for every hearing an interpreter must be present, so that everyone can at all times express themselves in the working language of the GHvJ of their choice (without cost): Papiamentu, Dutch or English (see also Article 9 of the *Rijkswet Gemeenschappelijk Hof van Justitie* (Kingdom Act on the Joint Court of Justice)). A (free) interpreter used to be arranged by the GHvJ only in criminal cases and in cases relating to the law of persons and family law. Today, given the foregoing basic principle, the GHvJ has expanded its use of interpreters to all kinds of cases, including other civil cases and all administrative and tax law cases. Procedural documents and other documents relating to a court case can be filed in the abovementioned languages.

Employees of the GHvJ who do not have command of Papiamentu are given the opportunity to take training courses focusing on reading, writing and speaking skills.

Article 10 Administrative authorities and public services

As indicated in paragraph 1(a), everyone can use Papiamentu, in addition to Dutch, in the oral and written communication with the Public Entity of Bonaire, the *Rijksvetegenwoordiger* (the Kingdom Representative), and the *Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland* (the Department for the Netherlands in the Caribbean)

According to paragraph 2(a), everyone can use Papiamentu in oral communications with the agencies of the Public Entity of Bonaire. Requests can be filed either orally or in writing, as paragraph 2(b) requires. In line with paragraph 2(d), the Public Entity of Bonaire can also publish official documents in Papiamentu. Furthermore, in meetings of the Island Council of the Public Entity of Bonaire, anyone can use Papiamentu, as paragraph 2(f) intends.

OLB actively contributes to the visibility, accessibility and every-day use of Papiamentu by structurally using the language in the communication with citizens. Article 1(1) of the *Eilandsverordening* (Island Ordinance) of 14 February 2013, no. 2, adopting Dutch and Papiamentu in administrative communication (the *Verordening talen bestuurlijk verkeer* (the Administrative Communication Languages Ordinance)), provides that the government will use the Dutch or Papiamentu language in the oral and written communication with residents. In accordance with this ordinance, OLB offers residents the option to communicate with the government in Papiamentu, both orally and in writing. Where possible, any correspondence conducted in Papiamentu will also be answered in Papiamentu. This increases the accessibility of the government for the people and encourages and normalises the use of Papiamentu in public life.

The traditional and correct forms of toponyms in Papiamentu must be used, see paragraph 2(g). Street names and such like are, *de facto*, in Papiamentu, as the Public Entity of Bonaire is authorised to do. As regards paragraph 4, for the subparagraphs under Article 10, translation or interpreter

services are used where necessary. For example, the tax inspector may allow the taxpayer to seek assistance from an interpreter.

OLB establishes, however, that the route towards certification as an interpreter or translator of Papiamentu is currently insufficiently transparent and accessible, in terms of both the available training facilities and the conditions and procedures for formal certification. As a result, the possibilities to develop a professional career as an interpreter or translator of Papiamentu are not very transparent, which may affect the availability of qualified language professionals.

Given the importance of high-quality interpreter and translator services for the implementation of the obligations ensuing from the Charter, OLB deems it advisable for the Central Government, in cooperation with the partners involved, where necessary, to further formalise and actively publicise the existing training and certification possibilities. In addition, it is recommended to make the training and career possibilities in the field of interpreter and translator services more visible and attractive for Papiamentu-speaking people, including by giving specific information, and by offering career prospects and capability development programmes.

On an official level, OLB has already brought this focus point to the attention of the Ministry of BZK, indicating that a clear and accessible certification structure can contribute to the further professionalisation of interpreter and translator services, reinforcement of the position of Papiamentu in public administration and the judiciary, and effective exercise of language rights by Papiamentu-speaking people. Therefore, a joint exploration of possible follow-up steps is deemed advisable.

Reinforcement of the number of qualified and certified interpreters and translators can contribute to a better exercise of the language rights as provided for by the Charter and to long-term assurance of the availability of Papiamentu-language services within the public sector.

Furthermore, civil servants tasked with a role in Bonaire are required to be able to understand Papiamentu within one year. For purposes of Article 3.6 of the Papiamentu on Bonaire Administrative Agreement, the parties are using their best efforts to further shape the obligation as set forth in Article 11 of the *Rechtspositiebesluit ambtenaren BES* (BES Civil Servants Legal Position Decree) to learn Papiamentu. In order to do so, OLB structurally facilitates Papiamentu language courses for civil servants and other interested persons. The training courses offered consist of several levels and focus on reading, writing as well as speaking skills:

- *Kurso Basiko di Papiamentu*: for beginners. Participants get acquainted with the basics of the language, including simple vocabulary, syntax, and everyday communication.
- *Kurso Avansá di Papiamentu*: for participants with a basic knowledge of Papiamentu. The emphasis is on expansion of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and a better understanding and practical use of the language.
- *Kombersashon na Papiamentu*: aimed at enhancement of the speaking skills. This training course is intended for participants with a basic knowledge, who actively wish to develop their language skills through conversation and practical exercises.

With these training courses, OLB promotes the knowledge and use of Papiamentu within the government and contributes to accessible provision of services to citizens who address the government in Papiamentu. It also gives effect to the administrative ambition to further reinforce the use of Papiamentu in public administration.

As provided in paragraph 5, it has been laid down in law that the family name can be changed upon request.

Article 11 Media

Article 2 and Article 3 of the *Mediawet BES* (BES Media Act) apply here. A broadcasting organisation applies for permission from the *Commissariaat voor de Media* (the Dutch Media Authority) to broadcast, and also requires an authorisation pursuant to the *Wet telecommunicatievoorzieningen BES* (BES Telecommunications Act). The request will only be denied if it is incorrect or incomplete,

or if it is reasonably likely that the applicant will not comply with the statutory requirements. A public service within the meaning of paragraph 1(a) is a TV or radio broadcaster which generally contributes to society. It may be a public service broadcaster or a commercial channel. For now, a public service broadcaster, such as the European Netherlands broadcasting model, is not yet possible in the Caribbean Netherlands, as the necessary statutory (public media remit), financial and organisational infrastructure are not yet in place. Bonaire provides media in Papiamentu. The BES Media Act does not impose any restrictions on broadcasts in Papiamentu.

Article 5 of the BES Media Act provides that a broadcasting organisation can determine the form and substance of its own programme content. This means that there is no impediment on the provision of broadcasts in the Papiamentu language. The Dutch Media Authority provides the information on how to obtain permission for a broadcaster in Papiamentu as well.

Article 7 of the Constitution protects several forms of expression. That article provides, *inter alia*, for press freedom. Thus, it also codifies the press freedom in the Caribbean Netherlands. Bonaire has newspapers and TV channels in the Papiamentu language. Its content has traditionally overlapped with Curaçao. In addition, both Article 7 of the Constitution and the BES Media Act provide the safeguards for freedom of speech. Aruba and Curaçao are neighbouring countries that also speak Papiamentu. There are no impediments in laws and regulations that stand in the way of the direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from Aruba and Curaçao.

Article 12 Cultural activities and facilities

OLB is currently updating its cultural policy, including a related implementation plan, while at the same time shaping the 2024-2028 Cultural Agenda.

The Bonaire Public Library fulfils its five statutory duties as a full-fledged public library facility, as laid down in the *Wettelijk Stelsel voor Openbare Bibliotheken* (Statutory Public Library System (WSOB)). It takes into account the multilingual island language policy, with special attention for reinforcement of the position of Papiamentu. The instruction language of most library activities is Papiamentu and, where necessary, translations are provided on the spot in order to support the multilingual public.

OLB maintains care relationships with several cultural institutions which organise activities that are in line with the ratified articles. Funds from the *Letterenfonds Caribisch Nederland* (Caribbean Netherlands Foundation for Literature) have been used to write several books in Papiamentu and publish those in Bonaire. These books are often published in three languages (Papiamentu, English and Dutch) and are a valuable addition to the library collection.

The library in Bonaire provides information in Papiamentu, and it also offers books in that language. An expansion of the collection, both in Dutch and in Papiamentu, is being discussed. Discussions are going on with the *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* (the National Library of the Netherlands (KB)) and the Foundation for Literature about additional support to develop publications in Papiamentu and encourage authors to write in their mother tongue.

Furthermore, the library organises several activities, such as computer training courses, which are offered in Papiamentu as well. When recruiting new staff members, they are asked about their command of both Dutch and Papiamentu, in accordance with paragraph 1(e). The current staff has command of Papiamentu and communicates in that language, both internally and with visitors. The Facebook page of the library, which announces activities, is in Papiamentu as well.

Cultural communications and initiatives in Papiamentu, as well as access to works produced in the Papiamentu language, are encouraged in various ways. For example, the library in Bonaire holds a collection of books in Papiamentu and organises training courses and workshops in the Papiamentu language. The library in Bonaire and the Library of the Netherlands are discussing an expansion of the collection of the online library with books in Papiamentu. In addition, programmes such as *BoekStart* in Childcare and the Library in School are also used in Bonaire, in order to stimulate the language development and the joy of reading in young children, pupils and students.

The Dutch Foundation for Literature contributes to this through subsidy schemes with the support of the Ministry of OCW. The *Literatuur Caribe* scheme specifically aims at increasing the literary content in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom, with a special focus on Papiamentu. The objective is to ensure that the original stories, poems and performances from and in the islands are widely read and heard.

The Foundation for Literature also has schemes in place for authors and translators. These schemes are also open to makers from the Caribbean part of the Kingdom and support publications and translations in *Papiaments* (both Papiamentu and Papiamentu). The *Leesbevordering* (promotion of reading) scheme supports projects that stimulate reading books and contribute to increasing reading skills, reading motivation and the joy of reading, with Papiamentu being a specific focus point.

Finally, the Film Fund has *Studio Caribe* in place to help realise short (youth) films by makers from the Caribbean part of the Kingdom, offering room for original stories from and about the islands. The Dutch Foundation for Literature has a scheme in place for literary translators to support the provision of high-quality literary translations into Dutch, Frisian, English and Papiamentu. These schemes offer possibilities to translate literary works produced in Papiamentu into other languages.

Pursuant to Article 2 of the *Wet op het specifiek cultuurbeleid* (Specific Cultural Policy Act), the Minister of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for providing a framework for preservation, development, social and geographic dissemination, and expansion of cultural expressions. It focuses on quality and cultural diversity. This policy is implemented, *inter alia*, through the National Cultural Funds and the Cultural Basic Infrastructure.

The integration of Papiamentu in cultural activities is structurally embedded in the bylaws of the Dutch Foundation for Literature. The bylaws provide that the fund offers public support to literature in Dutch, Frisian, Papiamentu and Dutch Sign Language. This ensures the institutional embedding of the attention for Papiamentu as a literary language.

In terms of public libraries, the Caribbean Netherlands comes under the *Wet stelsel openbare bibliotheekvoorzieningen* (Public Library Provisions System Act (Wsob)). Article 17(1)(b) of the Wsob emphasises the reaches of the various target groups. In this context, and based on the statutory duties of the National Library of the Netherlands, there is a partnership with the library in Bonaire to expand the library collection of the online library with books in the Papiamentu language, and to better align it with the needs of the local population.

When recruiting new staff members within the library in Bonaire, attention is paid to the command of both Dutch and Papiamentu. The library employs staff with command of Papiamentu, who actively use that language in their day-to-day services. Papiamentu is used both in the internal communication among the staff and in the external communication with visitors. Furthermore, activities organised by the library are announced on its Facebook page in Papiamentu.

For translations into Papiamentu of programming and communication about schemes, including information on the websites of the National Cultural Funds, the knowledge and expertise of native speakers of Papiamentu and of people with local knowledge of the islands are used. This assures the quality and correctness of the Papiamentu language.

The Dutch cultural policy on the basis of the Specific Cultural Policy Act focuses on a diverse cultural policy, by and for everyone. The National Cultural Funds implement the cultural policy. These are also open to representatives of the users of a specific regional or minority language. Within the schemes, they can submit requests for the provision of facilities and plans for cultural activities. So, there are possibilities for minority languages, but there is no specific policy.

Several Dutch schemes are open to requests for the organisation of suitable cultural activities. The cultural policy is by and for everyone and will not be obstructed by the government. The National Cultural Funds are encouraged to focus on a diverse cultural policy by and for everyone. In September 2022, the Ministry of OCW concluded a cultural covenant with the Caribbean Netherlands, in which they agreed jointly to take responsibility for the cultural infrastructure in the Caribbean Netherlands. One of the objectives is to make the national policy instruments available to applicants from the Caribbean Netherlands.

OLB and the Ministry of OCW have worked out the agreements made in the covenant in further detail in a joint cultural agenda for Bonaire. One of the priorities in this respect is to create a better connection between the supply of cultural financing and the demand by, *inter alia*, increasing the visibility and effective accessibility of the schemes and programmes of the National Cultural Funds.

The policy framework for international cultural policy (ICB) for 2025-2028 works based on principles including reciprocity, diversity, inclusion and fairness. It is based, *inter alia*, on values for which the Netherlands stands, including rights for minorities and minority cultures.

Article 13 Economic and social life

In line with paragraph 1(a), there are no statutory provisions prohibiting or restricting the use of Papiamentu in economic and social life. The Public Entity of Bonaire is committed to combat practices aimed at discouraging the use of Papiamentu in trade and trade activities, in accordance with paragraph 1(c).

In the fourth quarter of 2025, to reinforce the quality and the use of Papiamentu, OLB instructed Fundashon Akademia Papiamentu to update the *Bon Uzo di Papiamentu* method for the Bonaire context. This training course not only targets government employees and education, but also participants from the economic and social sectors. It focuses on promoting correct and conscious language use in trade and industry, social organisations, the cultural sector, the media, and other relevant social domains.

In addition, OLB actively contributes to the visibility and every-day use of Papiamentu by consistently using the language in the communication with citizens. Article 1(1) of the Island Ordinance of 14 February 2013, no. 2, adopting Dutch and Papiamentu in administrative communication (the Administrative Communication Languages Ordinance), provides that the government will use the Dutch or Papiamentu language in the oral and written communication with residents. In accordance with this Ordinance, OLB communicates both in Dutch and in Papiamentu, and residents are actively given the option to address the government in Papiamentu. Where possible, if citizens communicate in Papiamentu, the response will be in Papiamentu as well. This increases the accessibility of the government and encourages and normalises the use of Papiamentu in public life.

To give effect to paragraph 1(d), the use of Papiamentu is also embedded in regulations to be adopted by an employer. In this respect, Article 1613i of Book 7 of the BES Civil Code provides that, in Bonaire, such regulations must be drawn up in Papiamentu.

To give effect to paragraph 2(b), the Public Entity of Bonaire organises activities to promote the use of Papiamentu for economic and social sectors that come under their governance. In accordance with paragraph 2(e), information from government agencies in Bonaire relating to the rights of consumers must be made available in Papiamentu. This intends to reinforce the position of Papiamentu as a full-fledged language in economic and social communications further, and to safeguard the accessibility of public information for the people of Bonaire.

Article 14 Transfrontier exchanges

Partnership agreement between Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao for the development and promotion of Papiamentu. A Papiamentu partnership agreement concluded earlier, in 2019, between Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao has meanwhile expired. The recent developments surrounding the Papiamentu file, including the recognition by the Cabinet under Parts II and III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, gave rise to the need for a renewed agreement.

Signed on 14 July 2025 for a term of three years, the new agreement focuses on reinforcement of the partnership between the three countries, with special attention for knowledge sharing, expertise and respect for each other's autonomy. Initially, the partnership is chaired by Bonaire, followed by Aruba and Curaçao. The agreement stems from the joint belief that the islands share a responsibility for the preservation, reinforcement and long-term development of Papiamentu as a mother tongue. The partnership provides a structural framework for knowledge exchange, policy alignment, and joint initiatives in the field of language policy, education, media, culture, and digitisation. It builds on existing efforts and further reinforces the linguistic and cultural relationship within the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. For Bonaire, the agreement also links up to the implementation of the provisions of the Administrative Agreement to protect Papiamentu on Bonaire.

For purposes of this agreement, a work group has been set up consisting of representatives from Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, tasked with the drafting of a joint working programme. Within the work group, it has been established that it is a priority for Papiamentu to catch up in the field of education.

In addition, it has been agreed to make joint investments in the development of a literary translation training programme for Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. This intends to enhance the quality of literary translations as well as the availability of literature in the Papiamentu language and to further reinforce the cultural cooperation within the Papiamentu-speaking region.

III. LOW SAXON

For the report on Low Saxon, the following linguistic organisations, institutions and authorities have responded to the request for input: Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers, Erfgoed in Groningen, Huus van de Toal, Overijsselacademie, Stichting Stellingwarver Schrieversronte, University of Groningen, Municipality of Bunschoten, Municipality of Ooststellingwerf, Municipality of Urk, Municipality of Weststellingwerf, Province of Drenthe, the Province of Flevoland, Province of Fryslân, Province of Gelderland, Provincie Groningen, and Province of Overijssel. The input provided has both directly and indirectly been incorporated in the following report on the Low Saxon language. Generally, the organisations have provided input on their Low Saxon-related activities, and indicated what they believed were the major points for attention for the Low Saxon language.

Implementation of Part II of the Charter

Article 7.1.a the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth

In 2018, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) entered into the Low Saxon Covenant with the Provinces of Groningen, Drenthe, Overijssel, Gelderland and Fryslân, and the Municipalities of Weststellingwerf and Ooststellingwerf. Since the signing of the Low Saxon Covenant, the Central Government, the Provinces, and the Municipalities involved have jointly expressed that the Low Saxon language forms an essential, full-fledged and independent part of the language system in the Netherlands. The covenant acts as the administrative framework for the promotion of the use and preservation of Low Saxon. In addition, Low Saxon is supported within the provincial cultural and heritage policy through regional language organisations, and regional and interregional projects. In 2023, the Province of Flevoland and the Municipalities of Urk and Bunschoten acceded to the covenant.

The provinces involved and BZK recognise Low Saxon as a living regional language and as part of a broader cultural history. Language and culture are thereby inextricably linked: the language carries stories, history, values and a sense of community, and is given meaning in use and context. In their memorandums on culture, provincial and local authorities in the Low Saxon language region have implemented the Low Saxon language. The way in which it is implemented varies from one province to the next, depending on the regional context, history and needs. For example, in some cases a (considerably) higher budget has been made available.

The recognition is firmly anchored in intention and collaboration, but the every-day use of the language continues to be under pressure. Among persons under 50 years of age, less than 50% has command of the language and approximately 15% are using it as their home language.³ Furthermore, the Low Saxon steering group has established that attention paid in policies is often dependent on administrative and official priorities, and the knowledge of Low Saxon is not always structurally assured, so that sometimes there is no connection with the work field/speaker field. This leads to differences in continuity and implementation.

Article 7.1.b ensuring that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question

The authorities involved are to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Low Saxon. Where necessary, provinces align policy and implementation, working together with municipalities and regional partners. In this respect, it is acknowledged that Low Saxon covers a historically developed linguistic and cultural area crossing administrative borders. There are no proposed administrative reorganisations that would impede the language. The provinces have official and administrative consultations about Low Saxon. Given the growth, the covenant partners have decided to work with an official lead group to prepare the work on behalf of the complete official work group. Since 2020, the regional language organisations themselves have united in an umbrella Low Saxon steering group. The steering group periodically consults with the coordinating Low Saxon Government, currently the Province of Groningen.

³ [Examining maintenance and shift in regional language populations: the case of Frisian and Low Saxon in the Netherlands](#)

Since Low Saxon involves multiple provinces, in actual practice, it sometimes proves difficult to realise the collaboration. To give an example: the funding of initiatives requires promises from various (provincial) authorities, which are difficult to realise. The Province of Groningen, for example, funds the scientific research of the Low Saxon/Groningen language, which tips the research scale towards this variation. A situation in which the scientific research were to be funded by the Central Government (and/or all the Low Saxon provinces jointly) is considered advisable by the fellow authorities and (linguistic) organisations involved. The current situation, however, already shows that universities and universities of applied sciences receive a contribution from the Ministry of OCW by way of a lump sum, and subsequently decide for themselves how they will use those resources for their education and research. So, this research could be expanded, provided that knowledge institutions themselves decide to do so.

Furthermore, a provincial language policy can, in certain administrative contexts, impact the visibility and support of recognised regional and minority languages. An example is the situation in Fryslân with respect to the Stellingwerf linguistic variation. The Municipalities of Ooststellingwerf and Weststellingwerf traditionally speak *Stellingwerfs*, a linguistic variation belonging to the Low Saxon language family. The municipalities, however, see that Stellingwerfs is under pressure, both in everyday use and in school. They see that the provincial language policy in Fryslân focuses on Frisian and the regional languages in the province of Fryslân, the difference being that Frisian is an official language in Fryslân according to the *Wet gebruik Friese taal* (Act on the Use of the Frisian Language). In addition, the Frisian language has been recognised under Part III of the European Charter. Both entail obligations that do not apply to the other regional languages. The Province is to comply with those obligations in accordance with the law and the European conventions. Low Saxon, which is recognised under Part II, on the other hand, enjoys a higher level of recognition than other Frisian regional languages such as *Bildts*, *Stadsfries* or *Kollumerpompsters* (which are not recognised under the Charter). The Municipalities of Ooststellingwerf and Weststellingwerf and the Province of Fryslân are discussing who is primarily responsible when it comes to the regional language policy, the current outcome being that the municipalities themselves bear the largest substantive and financial responsibility. It should be stressed that the province is not primarily responsible, but it does support the regional languages. All the relevant subsidy schemes expressly provide that any reference to Frisian should be understood to include applications being made for a regional language used in Fryslân. Furthermore, regional language organisations, for example for Bildts and Stellingwerfs have structurally been subsidised for decades.

The fellow authorities involved indicate that this situation illustrates how administrative organisations and policy choices may impact the way in which different recognised regional and minority languages within a region are supported and positioned, and where opinions on the effectiveness of the policy may differ. At the same time, according to them, this puts pressure on the importance of attention for the existing linguistic diversity within administrative regions, so that the different languages spoken there can be taken into account. This weighing will continue to be a relevant focus point within the broader language policy.

Article 7.1.c resolute action to promote Low Saxon

In addition to the Low Saxon Covenant, the language is specifically named in memorandums on culture and implementation programmes of the provinces involved. The provinces involved take active and structural action to promote Low Saxon, *inter alia* by supporting linguistic and cultural organisations, heritage institutions, educational projects, media productions, and public activities. The main focus is on increasing the visibility, valuation and acquisition of Low Saxon, with people and communities as the bearers of language and culture.

The specific memorandums on culture and implementation programmes of the provinces and municipalities involved include the following:

- Gelderland: promotion of Low Saxon is named as a policy objective in the *Beleidskader Erfgoed en Cultuur* (Policy Framework for Heritage and Culture) (2024)⁴ and the Gelderland *Erfgoed en Cultuur* (Heritage and Culture) programme (2024)⁵. Based on the task entrusted to it,

⁴ [Beleidskader Erfgoed en Cultuur](#)

⁵ [Gelders programma Erfgoed en Cultuur](#)

Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers provides, among other things, lectures, training courses, and literature to the residents of Gelderland, and organises interesting activities.

- Overijssel: the focus on Low Saxon language and culture is incorporated in the memorandum on culture for 2025-2028, including a task for OverijsselAcademie, in which activities are offered, such as workshops and training courses, and videos, a podcast, and educational content are produced.⁶
- Drenthe: the focus on the Drenthe regional language and Low Saxon is incorporated in the memorandum on culture for 2025-2028⁷, including a task for *Huus van de Taol* as a provincial support organisation. Youths are the main regional language target group. The province encourages cultural projects that contribute to keeping the regional language alive, for example in film, theatre or other cultural activities inspired by the regional language.
- Groningen: promotion of Low Saxon is named as a policy objective in the Implementation Programme for 2025-2028, including a task for *Erfgoed in Groningen*.⁸
- Fryslân: Fryslân conducts a broad policy in relation to multilingualism. This policy is set forth in the *Taalnota Fansels Frysk*. That memorandum on language includes, *inter alia* in response to an amendment adopted by the Provincial Council, several provisions for the policy on regional languages, including Stellingwerfs.⁹
- The Municipality of Ooststellingwerf is preparing a memorandum on an integrated language policy for Frisian and Stellingwerfs, based on the linguistic barrier flowing through the municipality (the river Tjonger). In addition, both Ooststellingwerf and Weststellingwerf actively support several language initiatives and provide a structural financial contribution to the Stellingwarver Schrieversronte language institution.

The regional covenant partners focus on the promotion of Low Saxon through visibility in culture, heritage, educational projects, and new media. Examples are regional language activities and supporting regional language institutions (such as Huus van de Taol, Erfgoed in Groningen, SSR, and Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers) and campaigns surrounding, for example, the “streektaelmaond” (month of the regional language). In terms of financial support, the Central Government, through the Ministry of BZK, has made a non-recurring contribution in the amount of EUR 75,000 available in the past five years for preservation and promotion of Low Saxon.

Article 7.1.d the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public life (for example education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and/or transnational exchanges) and private life

The covenant partners encourage the use of Low Saxon in several domains, *inter alia* through education, media, cultural projects, social initiatives, and modernisation/digitisation. An example of cross-domain collaboration is the *Proeftuin Meertaligheid* (Multilingualism Testing Ground) (2017-2024), in which cross-province productions using regional languages have been developed and a broad public (including youths) has been reached. In addition, the joint Project *Spraaktechnologie* (Speech Technology) (University of Groningen (RUG)) contributes to reinforcement of usage possibilities in the digital domain (such as text-to-speech and speech recognition), improving the usage possibilities of the language in modern forms of communication. The steering group and the covenant partners see that, for some aspects, the use of Low Saxon in the public domain is increasing, particularly in symbolic (name plaques) and cultural contexts (performing arts). They see that structural use in administrative communication, public services, and health and welfare is not yet obvious. Furthermore, practical experiences show that low-threshold measures, such as visibility in the public area, and practical tools for professionals, can have a major social impact on recognition, normalisation and acceptance. The main challenge is to organise the use on a more long-term and structural basis.

⁶ [Cultuur- en Erfgoedbeleid Overijssel - Morgen wacht niet](#)

⁷ [Cultuurnota Provincie Drenthe 2025-2028](#)

⁸ [Uitvoeringsprogramma cultuur 2025-2028 Provincie Groningen](#)

⁹ [Taalnota Fansels Frysk 2025-2028](#)

Illustrative practical examples

Different provinces shape the promotion of Low Saxon in the public domain differently, according to regional context and policy choices. The following examples are illustrative in nature and not intended to be exhaustive.

Drenthe, for example, makes the use of Low Saxon visible, *inter alia*, through bilingual name plaques, and media productions in which the Drenthe language is used as the self-evident common language. This contributes to recognition and normalisation of the language in the public domain.

In Overijssel, the emphasis is on connecting language with heritage, history and stories of places and communities. Positioning Low Saxon within a broader cultural-historical context makes the language more accessible to a broad public, including people who do not actively speak it.

Gelderland stimulates Low Saxon through projects and activities: in education, through music, through adult education, in healthcare, and through a promotion fund inviting applications for the promotion of the use and preservation of Low Saxon. The Veluwe and Achterhoek language and culture are preserved through use and tradition.

Article 7.1.e the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using the language in the State; the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages

Through both the Low Saxon Steering Group (consisting of regional language organisations) and the Low Saxon Covenant Partners (consisting of the local and provincial authorities and BZK), the various government authorities and organisations involved are working together with a view to the development and preservation of Low Saxon. The covenant partners consult periodically on an administrative and official level. This consultation is currently chaired by the Province of Groningen. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations also participates in the official consultation. The covenant facilitates interregional collaboration and knowledge sharing among Low Saxon areas through structural consultation meetings, joint working conferences, and cross-provincial projects. The Multilingualism Testing Ground (2022) and the Low Saxon Working Conference (2022) have contributed to the exchange of good examples and network formation among government authorities, language institutions and experts.

Provincial regional language organisations are working together within the Low Saxon Steering Group. Each of those provincial organisations are connectors of local initiatives and networks. The steering group structurally meets four times a year and, *de facto*, acts as a joint point for consultation and alignment vis-à-vis the administrative staff of the government authorities involved. Within this framework, knowledge is shared about policy, implementation and joint focus points relating to Low Saxon. The members of the Low Saxon Steering Group maintain close ties with the fellow institutions in Fryslân and Limburg. In these interregional contacts, experiences are shared about language policy, education, visibility in the public domain, and the practical application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

In addition to the collaboration within the Low Saxon language region, a broader collaboration between professional language and regional language institutions takes place on a national and transnational level. In this respect, the *Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten* (Foundation for Dutch Dialects (SND)) is an important consultative body for regional language policy, in which regional language policymakers and linguists from the Netherlands and Flanders participate. This way, Low Saxon is positioned as an open and inclusive heritage in a multilingual society, and connections are created among people, regions and languages.

Article 7.1.f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages

Pre-school education

In the seventh evaluation report (2024), COMEX called on the Dutch Government to promote Low Saxon in pre-school education. It is important for children to develop language skills at as early an age as possible. Therefore, this is tackled as early as the pre-school period. The Central Government provides room in the law for offering Low Saxon in pre-school education, but it is up to the provinces, the municipalities and childcare centres to shape their bilingual content. Low Saxon can be used as a working language in addition to Dutch. Low Saxon is an important language for children in order to be able to keep up with their environment. Moreover, multilingualism helps children understand how language works and more easily recognise patterns in new languages. Finally, this way, a good link can be created to the continuous learning line towards primary education.

Primary and secondary (special needs) education

In the seventh evaluation report, COMEX also called on the Dutch Government to prepare a strategy to assure education in and about Low Saxon as a subject on all levels of education. Recently, the key objectives for (Dutch) language in basic education have been renewed, giving various languages and language variations an explicit place.¹⁰ This includes a statutory requirement for schools to pay attention to, and raise awareness on, regional languages, such as Low Saxon, because it has become part of the national curriculum.¹¹

The renewed key objectives for (Dutch) language came into effect on 1 August 2026. Furthermore, as indicated in previous reports, the Dutch laws on education already offer the possibility to use Low Saxon in education. Schools are free to choose to do so, but education in Low Saxon is not compulsory. With the recognition of Low Saxon under Part II of the European Charter, the government has undertaken only not to include any restrictions for the use of these languages in laws or regulations.

The provinces involved do not have any statutory educational duty in relation to Low Saxon, but are, indeed, looking for ways to encourage the use of Low Saxon in education. Organisations within the Low Saxon Steering Group are developing teaching materials, providing guest classes, and supporting education professionals, paying attention both to language skills and to culture, history and the contemporary relevance of Low Saxon. In addition to active language usage, the focus is on raising awareness, recognition, and valuation.

Education is expressly considered, both by the covenant partners and by the Committee of Experts, as essential to language preservation. In 2023, a motion of the House of Representatives was adopted calling on the Government, in consultation with scientists, and together with provinces, to commit to education in regional languages. Based on the foregoing, a meeting took place between the Ministry of OCW, SONT, the Low Saxon steering group, and the chair of the association for Low Saxon Living Languages about Low Saxon in education and the '*Onwies Nedersaksisch*' project. This was a very positive meeting during which those involved were made aware of the renewed key objectives. In the coming period, the Ministry of OCW will meet with them again to discuss the implementation of the renewed key objectives and raising awareness about the room within the law that schools already have.

¹⁰ [Kerndoelen Nederlands \(2026\)](#)

¹¹ See Key objectives 1: The school provides a rich language and reading environment and objective sentence A: The school provides a rich language and reading environment. This involves, *inter alia*: "... offering room for various languages and language variations of pupils". Or key objective 7: the pupil explores the use of language. And objective sentences A and B:
A: The pupil explores how language helps express identity.
B: The pupil explores language variations and language changes in the Dutch language region. This involves, *inter alia*, exploring your own language repertoire in relation to how you wish to be perceived and what groups you wish to belong to: languages and language variations, gestures, body language, and exploring different language variations of the Dutch language: school language and jargon, group and regional languages.

Current practice shows that, occasionally, education surrounding the regional language is already being provided in primary education, with schools using teaching materials and programmes developed by regional language and heritage organisations. In March of each year, a magazine titled *Wiesneus* is distributed among the participating schools in the Low Saxon language region. Furthermore, there are individual initiatives by the various regional language organisations. For example, the “Van Old noar Jong” app and teaching programme for the Groningen language (financed in 2019 by Google and launched in October 2021), was developed in 2022 in cooperation with the *Nationale Wetenschapsagenda*, the organiser of the Zwarte Cross festival (Alles Komt Goed B.V.) and Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers for Achterhoeks as well (“Van Old naor Jong: Achterhoeks”). Most promising is the development of the MOI project (as per 2026) in Groningen and North Drenthe as part of the Social Agenda for *Nij Begun*. In this project, a continuous learning line for the Groningen and North Drenthe languages for primary education has been developed with support from digital technology, all from the perspective of multilingualism. This means that there is no additional pressure on schools, but they are challenged to provide regular classes in the regional language on a more structural basis. In addition, projects and guest classes are being provided in secondary education, in which the regional language, literature, poetry and media in Low Saxon are used to familiarise pupils with the language and culture.

MBO and HBO

In senior secondary vocational education (MBO), the attention for Low Saxon is *ad hoc* and often project-based. In higher education (HBO), the focus is primarily on the teacher training academies (pabo) and training programmes, where attention is paid, in several regions, to Low Saxon in relation to language development, culture and regional identity. The Low Saxon Steering Group indicates that the educational programmes are limited, partially as a result of the lack of any structural national anchoring.

University education

There is no specific education programme (Bachelor's or Master's) for Low Saxon on a university level. The University of Groningen has a special chair for the Low Saxon/Groningen Language and Culture. No other Dutch university conducts any research on Low Saxon. The responsibilities of this special chair are limited to research (partially because of the limited number of FTEs): 1 day a week). The room in university education for the Groningen and Low Saxon languages has also decreased as a result of the decision of the board of the institution to discontinue the Minorities and Multilingualism Bachelor's programme at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen (within which students could work on regional languages). Originally, Frisian was part of this Minorities and Multilingualism Bachelor's programme, but this is now (through the signing of the Covenant for the Frisian Language and Culture Bachelor's programme in July 2025) provided in cooperation with the programme for Dutch Language and Culture. As a result of the collaboration with Dutch, a full Bachelor's programme in Frisian can be kept afloat with limited resources (EUR 450,000 – EUR 340,000 from Central Government funds, and EUR 110,000 from the Province). According to the partners asked, the same template could be used for Low Saxon (and Limburgish).

Despite the fact that it is understandable that the partners asked see a link with the covenant for the Frisian Bachelor's programme, there are several reasons why it is not possible to continue this line to Low Saxon (and Limburgish). The statutory basis is different, since Frisian is recognised under Part III of the Charter, and Low Saxon (and Limburgish) under Part II. Subsequently, Article 8.e.ii has been ratified for Frisian in higher education. This means that the government has undertaken to provide facilities for the study of the language as a subject in university education. Moreover, following up from the KNAW report “*De toekomst van de Frisistiek*” an amendment has been submitted for the Central Government to make an amount of EUR 340,000 available for this Bachelor's programme on a structural basis. This is highly exceptional. The University of Groningen itself has indicated that it is prepared to develop and provide this Bachelor's programme based on additional resources that have been released by the government. This is important, given the fact that the law provides that the autonomy for starting an educational programme lies with the universities and universities of applied sciences themselves. Universities and universities of applied sciences receive the contribution from OCW as a lump sum, and independently decide how they use those resources for their education and research. With the recognition of Low Saxon/Limburgish under Part II, the government has undertaken only not to include any restrictions for the use of these languages in laws or regulations, which the government does not do. Article 7.2 of the *Wet op hogere onderwijs en wetenschap* (Higher Education and Science Act) provides that education given in a language other than Dutch is possible. Of course, the funded universities and universities of applied

sciences in the Netherlands are free to provide education on the Low Saxon and Limburgish languages and culture, out of the Central Government contribution that they receive from the Ministry of OCW.

Article 7.1.g the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire

The Low Saxon authorities support a variety of initiatives from language institutions that enable adults to learn the language. In the regions, training courses and public activities are provided through provincial language institutions and support centres (such as Huus van de Taol, Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers, and Erfgoed in Groningen). In addition, modern means are used, including online content, such as MOOC Groningen (which will be explained below). Participation in these training courses, workshops, lectures or low-threshold public activities is voluntary, and focuses on accessibility, a positive experience, and engagement in language and culture.

Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers provides language classes for adults by way of a training course in Achterhoeks. Furthermore, adults can take training courses from Erfgoed in Groningen to learn the Groningen language. These training courses usually, however, offer a basic level only. The average age of the teachers is rising. The Low Saxon authorities indicate that training new teachers (for example through a university Bachelor's programme in Low Saxon) is necessary to be able to provide continuity. In cooperation with Erfgoed in Groningen, the University of Groningen has developed a low-threshold Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) (funded by an external foundation), where interested persons are familiarised with the Groningen language by way of a road trip of two young speakers of that language. Participation is free and available via www.groningsleren.nl. Over 800 participants have meanwhile enrolled in the course. This training course has won the 2025 Impact Prize from the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen.

Article 7.1.h the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions

Since 2018, with the support of the Province of Groningen, the University of Groningen has had a Professor by special appointment of Low Saxon / Groningen Language and Culture, Prof. Dr. Martijn Wieling. His first term of five years was renewed in 2023; the renewed term will expire in May 2028. With funding from the Province of Groningen and contributions from the University of Groningen and the Faculty of Arts, he and his colleagues and doctoral candidates and post-docs conduct research in the field of the Low Saxon/Groningen language. This research largely focuses on a study and development of language and speech technology of Low Saxon.

In the field of speech technology, the chair (initiated by Prof. Dr. Goffe Jensma) has developed and improved the corpus application *WoordWaark*¹², which can also be used as a blueprint for other minority languages. Furthermore, on 16 November 2023, Dr. Martijn Bartelds obtained his doctorate, *cum laude*, based on a thesis in which he had developed speech technology for the Low Saxon language and, on 6 June 2024, Dr. Wietse de Vries obtained his doctorate based on a thesis in which he had developed language technology for languages such as Low Saxon. With a subsidy obtained in 2024 from the five Low Saxon provinces (EUR 20,000 per province, and a EUR 65,000 Central Government subsidy) for the Speech Technology Project, in September 2024, Wietse de Vries was appointed post-doctoral researcher to develop speech technology for the entire Low Saxon language region in the Netherlands. This project is developed in cooperation with the regional language organisations in the various Low Saxon provinces, and will end in 2028.

As regards an analysis of the change of Low Saxon, in terms of both number of speakers and the language itself, for example, the doctoral candidate Hedwig Sekeres has worked on a thesis since October 2022, focusing on the changes in the Groningen language, but also on how people who learn the Groningen language later in life relate to that language. Dr. Wilbert Heeringa, seconded by the Fryske Akademy, is also researching the historic changes in the Groningen language (also in relation to Frisian). On 13 February 2025, Dr. Raoul Buurke obtained his doctorate based on research of the changes in the Low Saxon and Frisian languages and their use. In his thesis, he saw a strong decrease in the use of Low Saxon, especially because parents hardly passed on Low Saxon to their children.

¹² See: www.woordwaark.nl

In his research, he also found that (over 85% of the) speakers of the language did not sufficiently realise that the dialect they spoke was a dialect of a language other than Dutch. Therefore, in his thesis, he recommended (on p. 165): *“The findings regarding parental language transmission in particular show that if more positive language attitudes are fostered among Low Saxon speakers, language maintenance may follow suit. The Low Saxon speaker population itself must carry the responsibility for improving language attitudes, but the government should also be encouraged to follow through on its commitments to maintaining and promoting linguistic diversity and promoting positive language attitudes toward Low Saxon wherever possible. The more favorable situation of Frisian shows that this non-trivial task is achievable.”*

Within the special chair, in addition to the research of the language, Dr. Maarten Zwiers and the doctoral candidate Mariska van der Velde are researching the history and culture (for example the use of the language in music and the role of the language in the broader heritage of the region). That research pays attention to important social issues, such as the relationship between regional language and (collective) identity. Although there are many researchers in the field of Low Saxon, a caveat should be made here. Many of the research projects are on an *ad hoc* basis and are funded out of the general research budget from the University of Groningen. Because of the reduced financing, however, these possibilities have declined as well, so that the number of doctoral candidates will decrease as well. Furthermore, the research within the special chair is funded solely by the Province of Groningen (to which also the University of Groningen and the Faculty of Arts contribute). To that end, the research focuses heavily on the Groningen language (within Low Saxon). The partners asked indicate that it would be desirable for this research to be financed by the Central Government (and/or all the Low Saxon provinces jointly), so that every variation can be given the same amount of attention within the research. This would mean that Groningen initiatives, such as the online database *WoordWaark*, or the MOOC, could be developed for other variations as well. The current situation, however, shows that universities and universities of applied sciences receive a contribution from the Ministry of OCW by way of a lump sum, and subsequently decide for themselves how they will use those resources for their education and research. So, this research could be expanded, provided that knowledge institutions themselves decide to do so.

Article 7.1.i the promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by the Charter, for the language

Transnational cooperation within the Low Saxon language region is promoted through cultural projects, knowledge sharing, and contacts with neighbouring regions in Germany, approaching language, culture and heritage in their mutual coherence. In particular, the Provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel are working together with the *Landschaftsverband Westfalen Lippe* (Münster) for purposes of alignment of cultural and heritage policy, possibly also including activities in the field of the regional language (currently still under development). In the summer of 2026, an exploratory study was started as to a possible transnational project relating to Low Saxon.

Article 7.2 eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of the language

The authorities involved within the Low Saxon Steering Group are committed to combating unjustified forms of distinction, exclusion or image loss relating to the use of Low Saxon. Recognition, visibility, education, and representation in media and education are used to work on respect, understanding and cultural diversity. The basic principle of the Low Saxon Covenant is to promote use and preservation without any new laws or regulations, by using existing possibilities and partnerships among government authorities. This intends to provide equivalent support of Low Saxon as a recognised regional language within the applicable frameworks.

Article 7.3 promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country; the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language among the objectives of education and training; encouragement of the mass media to incorporate the respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language in their objectives 12

The covenant partners, the steering group, and the organisations involved focus on visibility, awareness and a positive valuation of Low Saxon, *inter alia* through cultural projects and education-related activities. The Multilingualism Testing Ground showed that financial incentives and

collaboration can contribute to a broader acceptance of a regional language as an artistic and social added value.

Article 7.4 take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages; establish bodies for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to the language

The implementation of policies takes into account the needs and wishes of users, communities, and makers of Low Saxon. The Low Saxon Steering Group thereby acts as a consultative and advisory body vis-à-vis government authorities, set up by the field. Within the covenant, structural consultation is organised through official and administrative meetings, in which regional language institutions are periodically involved as well. The lead group (Provinces of Groningen, Drenthe, Overijssel, and Gelderland, and the Municipality of Ooststellingwerf) thereby play a role in preparation and placing issues on the agenda, and constitutes the primary contact for the Central Government. The Committee of Experts recommends that a body on a national level be set up to promote the interests, and to advise, speakers of Low Saxon. No such body has been set up yet.

IV. LIMBURGISH

For the report on Limburgish, the following linguistic organisations, institutions and authorities have responded to the request for input: Province of Limburg, *Ongerwaeg nao Deil III* Action Committee, Hoes veur 't Limburgs, *Levende Talen* (Living Languages) Limburgish Chapter, *Taalcultuur in Limburg* Chair (University of Maastricht), Veldeke Limburg, Vista College, Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, and Huis voor de Kunsten (House of the Arts) Limburg. The input provided has both directly and indirectly been incorporated in the following report on the Limburgish language. Generally, the organisations have provided input on their Limburgish-related activities, and indicated what they believed were the major points for attention for the Limburgish language.

Implementation of Part II of the Charter

Article 7.1.a the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth

The major value of Limburgish is expressly laid down in the Provincial Policy on Culture and Heritage. The programme of the Limburg Provincial Council for the administrative period of 2019-2023 *Vernieuwend verbinden* (Innovative Connections)¹³ read: “Our province also has a wealth of dialects, but they no longer speak (or write) for themselves (...) We stimulate an integrated, joint regional language approach by the regional language organisations” (pp. 51/55). The implementation was subsequently worked out in further detail in two Policy Papers on Heritage, each for a term of two years. The latter of the two is relevant to the current periodical report. This *Beleidsbrief Erfgoed 2022-2023 'De kracht van erfgoed'*¹⁴ aimed at setting up a new project subsidy scheme, with the associated budget, network formation, and the setup of a support partnership.

The programme of the Limburg Provincial Council Coalitieakkoord 2023-2027 ‘Elke Limburger telt’ (Coalition Agreement 2023-2027 ‘Every Limburgian counts’)¹⁵ expressly identifies the value of the Limburgish language: “The preservation and promotion of the Limburgish language is highly important. (...) We support the use and maintenance of the Limburgish language. As a province, we promote that children come into contact with it as early in life as possible. In addition, we expect structural support from the Central Government” (p. 77). The Province has released new, additional, structural resources in an amount of EUR 1.1 million per year out of its own budget for the Limburgish language. The Culture and Heritage Policy Framework for 2024-2027 *Cultuur en erfgoed voor iedereen* (Culture and heritage for everyone)¹⁶ includes the Limburgish language under the cultural policy. The preparation of a separate approach for the Limburgish language in order to give direction to the greater ambition has been announced.

This has resulted in the first specific language memorandum, the *Uitvoeringsprogramma Limburgse taal 2025-2027 Same veur 't Limburgs*¹⁷, which was unanimously adopted on 13 December 2024 by the Provincial Council during a meeting which (for the first time) was held in Limburgish. In respect of the ‘cultural wealth’, the Implementation Programme reads:

¹³ Province of Limburg (2019). *Collegeprogramma 2019-2023. Vernieuwend Verbinden*. Available at: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6173678-Province-Limburg-Coalitieakkoord-2019/>

¹⁴ Province of Limburg (2021). *Beleidsbrief Erfgoed 2022-2023. De kracht van erfgoed*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Agenda/Document/48c836f1-efa0-430c-8b22-982903c8a5ea?documentId=68bc07c2-dae0-4064-b03e-a98815dc0391&agendatitemId=50aaeac6-2ac1-4fba-b874-885907342427>

¹⁵ Province of Limburg (2023). *Coalitieakkoord 2023-2027. Elke Limburger telt*. Available at: <https://www.limburg.nl/bestuur/coalitieakkoord-2023-2027/>

¹⁶ Province of Limburg (2024). *Beleidskader 2024-2027. Cultuur en erfgoed voor iedereen*. Available at: https://www.limburg.nl/publish/pages/7863/cultuur_en_erfgoed_voor_iedereen_beleidskader_2024-2027_1.pdf

¹⁷ Province of Limburg (2024). *Uitvoeringsprogramma Limburgse taal 2024-2027. Same veur 't Limburgs*. Available at: https://www.limburg.nl/publish/pages/8879/uitvoeringsprogramma_limburgse_taal_2025-2027.pdf

“Limburgish! The language of our hearts. The language that belongs to the rich Limburgian culture, and that is worth preserving, in all its variations. Not only because the language connects us, but also because being able to speak Limburgish, and growing up with Limburgish in addition to Dutch, offers important advantages. That is a well-known fact. But we also know that the use of Limburgish is under pressure. Therefore, the Province of Limburg will be investing additional funds in the Limburgish language.” (p. 5)

The Implementation Programme goes on to discuss the Provincial principles of policy and implementation. Based thereon, the ambition for 2030 is set out: submitting a Limburgian proposition to the Central Government for Part III recognition of Limburgish.

The programme describes how the existing and additional resources are being used. This is done along two tracks: Track A: ‘additional commitment to Part II’, and Track B: ‘preparatory work for Part III’. After all, better compliance with Part II is advisable not only according to the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe; it is also the best setup for Part III. The Province indicates that it cannot do the job on its own, and that its own commitment and resources are not enough to preserve and reinforce Limburgish. Network formation (municipalities, education, social sectors) and lobbying (Central Government, Europe) are important elements of the approach. The Provincial Council of Limburg has expressly given direction to the Provincial language policy by way of motions 3033¹⁸ and 3045.¹⁹ Furthermore, the Provincial Council has set up its own *Staatecomité* for the Limburgish language based on the Frisian example (motion 3120²⁰) to promote the interests of the Limburgish language in the broadest sense. The Provincial Council, thus, clearly shows that it assumes a role in the reinforcement of the language ambition.

Article 7.1.b the respect of the geographical area of each regional or minority language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question

No change as compared to the previous report.

Article 7.1.c the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them

The Provincial policy periods that come under the scope of this periodical report are characterised by an intensification of the Provincial attention and financial commitment to the Limburgish language.

(I) Period 2021-2023.

In late 2021, the Province of Limburg published the Heritage Policy Paper 2022-2023 *De kracht van erfgoed* (The power of heritage).²¹ This Policy Paper realised a more structured approach of the policy domain of the Limburgish language than in the previous period, supported by an increase of the available budget. With this Policy Paper, the Province reinforced its leading role as set forth in the Covenant on the Limburgish Language,²² as concluded in 2019 with the Minister of BZK. The following specific actions were incorporated and implemented:

¹⁸ Provincial Council of Limburg (2023). *Amended Motion 3033 Franssen et al. on the Promotion and Protection of the Limburgish Language*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/5849e96c-4ffb-413a-9ce3-a7b6fdd061c0>

¹⁹ Provincial Council of Limburg (2024). *3rd Amended Motion 3045 Wolters et al. on Óngerwaeg nao deil III*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/b9c297b0-32e2-4423-b1f7-e96f0f1aa9f2>

²⁰ Provincial Council of Limburg (2024). *Motion vreemd 3120 Absil et al. on the establishment of a Staatecomité for the Limburgish Language (Provincial Executive Committee for Limburgish)*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/6a5a4214-a17f-4b44-8aa4-337afc15450d>

²¹ Province of Limburg (2021). *Beleidsbrief Erfgoed 2022-2023. De kracht van erfgoed*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Agenda/Document/48c836f1-efa0-430c-8b22-982903c8a5ea?documentId=68bc07c2-dae0-4064-b03e-a98815dc0391&agendaltemId=50aaeac6-2ac1-4fba-b874-885907342427>

²² Minister of BZK and Province of Limburg (2019). *Convenant inzake de Nederlandse erkenning van de Limburgse taal* (Covenant on the Netherlands recognition of the Limburgish language). Available at: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stcrt-2019-64467.html>

a. Subsidy scheme

A new Heritage subsidy scheme 2022-2023 included a section on the 'Limburgish language'.²³ The purpose of the scheme was to encourage, and help realise, projects within the linguistic field, one of the criteria being that a project should focus on maintaining and/or expanding the use of the Limburgish language among young Limburgians between 0 and 18 years of age. This is in line with the recommendations of the Committee of Experts (COMEX) of the Council of Europe. A maximum of EUR 12,500 per project could be applied for. The scheme was renewed until the end of 2024 in order to bridge the period until new policy would come into effect. To that end, the available amount has been replenished. A total of 20 projects received a total of EUR 223,122 in support in the period of 2022-2024, including cultural productions, podcasts, flog series, teaching materials, calendars, and school projects.

b. Discussions with municipalities

In September 2022, in order to encourage municipalities to commit to the promotion of the Limburgish language, the Province organised a meeting for the aldermen for culture and heritage of all the municipalities in Limburg. The ten participating municipalities were told about the advantages of multilingualism, focusing on the Limburgish language, informed of successful projects, and enthused to get started on their own language policies. Nearly all the municipalities present fully endorsed that attention for the Limburgish language, particularly in the context of education and childcare, had added value, and that increasing attention and collaboration offered opportunities. It was concluded that not only financial resources were needed, but also a commitment to actively drawing attention to the language. The meeting was mainly exploratory in nature, for the further purpose of serving as a basis for future meetings.

c. Structural and *ad hoc* financing 'Hoes veur 't Limburgs'

The support for the linguistic field was traditionally implemented on behalf of the Province of Limburg by *Huis voor de Kunsten Limburg* (Limburgian House of Arts), the provincial organisation for culture and heritage. Based on the Covenant for the Limburgish language, Huis voor de Kunsten has submitted a proposal to the Provincial Executive (*Gedeputeerde Staten*(GS))²⁴ on behalf of a steering group from several parties in the linguistic field, to work towards the setup of a 'Hoes veur 't Limburgs'. This should become the place for bundling all the knowledge, supporting projects, and making a service point available for the public. In 2022, the Provincial Executive made a structural amount of EUR 75,000 per year available, with effect from 2023, for the realisation of the *Hoes*. The Province thereby chose to focus on education, in line with the COMEX recommendation regarding the target group of children and youths. In their meeting on 4 November 2022 the Provincial Council for Limburg adopted the additional motion 2924²⁵ requesting the Provincial Executive to contribute an additional non-recurring amount of EUR 50,000 to the development of the *Hoes*.

Based on this development, the Hoes veur 't Limburgs was set up as a collaboration project led by Huis voor de Kunsten, with the ambition to grow and possibly become independent. With effect from 2023, the existing commitment from Huis voor de Kunsten voor the subject of the Limburgish language, approximately EUR 145,000 per year out of the annual Provincial subsidy to Huis voor de Kunsten, was also earmarked as a subsidy to the Hoes.

The Province has discussed structural support on the basis of the covenant for the Limburgish language with the Central Government, *inter alia* on the basis of the aforesaid motion 2924. This did not prove possible; the Central Government did, however, make a non-recurring contribution in the

²³ Province of Limburg (2022). *Nadere subsidieregels erfgoed 2022-2024*. Te raadplegen via <https://lokaleregelgeving.overheid.nl/CVDR675971/2>; see Annex 3 in respect of the Limburgish language.

²⁴ Raod veur 't Limburgs, Veldeke Limburg, Levende Talen Limburgs, Limbörgse Academie, Vereniging voor Limburgse Dialect- en Naamkunde, Willy Dols Stichting, and a delegation from childcare, with support from Huis voor de Kunsten Limburg.

²⁵ Provincial Council of Limburg (2022). *Amended Motion 2924 Absil Jetten et al. on Wea geave os Limburgs door*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/a2ad3a1a-aa37-433c-a11e-984f72203a0e>

amount of EUR 75,000 available to the provincial fund in late 2023. This was provided by the Province to the Hoes by way of a subsidy in 2024.

d. other initiatives

In addition to the foregoing, in 2021-2023:

- the Raod veur 't Limburgs advisory body was facilitated with an annual EUR 45,843 (continuation), of which, as from 2023, the *Raod* earmarked EUR 28,000 for the Hoes veur 't Limburgs;
- Veldeke Limburg²⁶ was supported with an annual EUR 28,000 (continuation). Founded in 1926, Veldeke Limburg is an association whose object it is to promote the Limburgish language in speech, reading and writing. The board and the members are Limburgish enthusiasts. Veldeke Limburg has ten local/regional 'circles', each of which develop a broad variety of activities, included lectures and events, training courses, publications, and translation work;
- an *ad hoc* subsidy in the amount of EUR 38,350 was granted to the Dictionair project at Limbörgse Academie²⁷;
- organisers of Limburgish-language events (such as music festivals, carnival expressions, or theatre plays) were offered the possibility of a project subsidy through a number of generic subsidy schemes for cultural events (continuation). Many Limburgian festivals and events - such as musicals, music festivals, carnival sessions, and theatre plays - have a completely or partially Limburgish-language programming. The largest Provincial carnival events and competitions (such as the Limburgs Vastelaovesleedjes Konkoer, the Kinjer Vastelaovend Leedjesfestival', and the Boëtengewoeëne Boëtezitting) have their own scheme, the contribution to which was doubled in 2024 from EUR 5,000 to EUR 10,000/year;
- initiators of projects in/about Limburgish were given the opportunity, through the voordekunst.nl crowd funding platform, to obtain a Provincial contribution (continuation).

(II) Period 2023 to date

In the course of 2023, the Ministry of BZK and the Province of Limburg conducted an evaluation of the shaping of the 2019 Covenant for the Limburgish language. This had been incorporated in the covenant itself as a joint action to be taken, but the implementation had been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The evaluation was sent to both the House of Representatives and the Provincial Council in February 2024.²⁸ The evaluation regarded the implementation of the agreements made in the covenant. An overview was given of the efforts made by the covenant partners. The extent to which the covenant as such had proved an effective instrument for preservation of the Limburgish language was beyond the scope of the evaluation.

During the transitional period between the 2023 Provincial Council Elections and adoption of the new 2024 Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language, the policy as identified under (I) above was continued. In addition, in 2024, in anticipation of the new policy, the Province of Limburg already made an additional EUR 255,000 available to Heus veur 't Limburgs to expand its activities. The Hoes veur 't Limburgs had a grand opening of its physical location in Roermond in September 2024, immediately following the 2024 national Regional Languages Conference, which was hosted by the Hoes.

²⁶ See <https://www.veldeke.net/>

²⁷ See <https://www.limburgs.org/nl/>

²⁸ Province of Limburg (2024). *Communication from the portfolio manager on the Evaluation of the implementation of the Covenant for the Limburgish language, letter from the Provincial Executive Member Kuntzelaers* dated 16 February 2024. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Document/403f134d-d81e-4953-bb8c-fa39e07c7772?documentId=017fb171-6bd0-4020-bc10-bc7c04d9df4b>. The annex to this letter was prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of BZK.

In the preparations for the new Implementation Programme, several working sessions were organised, an external advisory report on the Part III status was delivered²⁹ as per the request in motion 3045³⁰, and a working visit with Provincial Council members and experts to the Province of Fryslân took place, during which information was shared about the Frisian status and practice.

The Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language for 2025-2027 *Same veur 't Limburgs*³¹ was adopted unanimously by the Provincial Council on 13 December 2024, in a meeting which, for the first time, was held in the Limburgish language. The programme determines the course for the years 2025-2027, and provides an outlook on 2030.

The provincial ambition is to prepare Limburg and the Limburgish language optimally for a 'Part III recognition' in 2030. In that year, the Province and its partners intend to demonstrate that they have made every effort to be able to submit an excellent proposition to the Minister of BZK. The aforesaid external advisory report and the Implementation Programme outline that this ambition can count on a support base in society and momentum in Limburg and, considering the unanimous agreement on the Provincial Council, this ambition has a support base in politics as well.

The Implementation Programme expressly links up to the Charter, in terms of both the Part II status and the Part III ambition, as well as to the points for attention as worded by the Council of Europe in the seventh periodical report. This states that, despite the additional investments, the Province of Limburg cannot maintain the Limburgish language on its own, but that further network formation and a contribution from the Central Government will be required.

The Implementation Programme follows two parallel tracks:

Track A: 'additional commitment to Part II'.

In sum, this track comprises the following activities:

- a. Improvement of the use of Limburgish by youths, in childcare, and in teaching and education (see Articles 7.1.f and 7.1.g);
- b. The design and implementation of an awareness campaign (see Article 7.1.d);
- c. Contributions to various projects and initiatives from the field, by way of a scheme and on the basis of *ad hoc* subsidies provided by the Provincial Executive;
- d. Knowledge development: knowledge partners from the field, including Zuyd University of Applied Science and the University of Maastricht, are detailing a limited research agenda, which they will also be working on themselves (see Article 7.1.h);
- e. The digitisation task, including the further development of a Limburgish corpus (see Articles 7.1.h and 7.2);
- f. Positioning of the Limburg Museum as a propagator of the Limburgish language and identity (see Article 7.1.d);
- g. Further development of the Hoes veur 't Limburgs as a support organisation. The Hoes is the key implementer of, and/or is the key party involved in, all the items under a-f above. Furthermore, the Hoes fulfils a service point function and shares its expertise.

In addition to these activities, the commitment identified in the previous administrative period is being continued:

- Contribution to Veldeke Limburg;
- Generic event schemes for culture, where Limburgish-language events can submit an application;

²⁹ Bureau Berenschot on the instructions of the Province of Limburg (2024). *Neet langer een kwestie van geduld*.

Available at

https://www.limburg.nl/publish/pages/8879/berenschot_neet_langer_een_kwestie_vaan_geduld.pdf

³⁰ Provincial Council of Limburg (2024). *3rd Amended Motion 3045 Wolters et al. on Ongerwaeg nao deil III*.

Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/b9c297b0-32e2-4423-b1f7-e96f0f1aa9f2>

³¹ Province of Limburg (2024). *Uitvoeringsprogramma Limburgse taal 2024-2027. Same veur 't Limburgs*. Available at: https://www.limburg.nl/publish/pages/8879/uitvoeringsprogramma_limburgse_taal_2025-2027.pdf

- Scheme for major carnival events;
- Crowd funding scheme with voordekunst.nl.

After, in the first few years, having functioned as a collaboration project of the linguistic organisations - coached by a steering group and under the wings of the Huis voor de Kunsten Limburg -, on 15 May 2025, the first board was appointed of a new and independent organisation with its own legal structure: the cooperative society Hoes veur 't Limburgs (also: 't Hoes). The Province has embraced this development by subsidising the annual plan of 't Hoes.³² The members of the cooperative society are Levende Talen sectie Limburgs, Limbörgse Academie, Limburgs Museum, Veldeke Limburg, Vereniging Limburgse Dialect- en Naamkunde, and the Willy Dols Stichting. Huis voor de Kunsten is involved in an HR and facilitating sense, and as a network partner.³³

Track B: 'preparatory work for Part III'.

On 1 July 2025, as announced in the Implementation Programme, the Provincial Executive of Limburg appointed the 'Öngerwaeg nao Deil III' Action Committee³⁴. This independent committee has seven members. It explores the conditions under which, in 2030, an application for Part III protection of Limburgish would be possible. The committee provides the Provincial Executive with expert advice but, at this stage, is also a quartermaster for the Provincial ambition. The subjects on which it advises are the domains as listed in the articles of Part III of the Charter. A first advice regarded the regional media (see further under Article 7.1.d). A second advice (prepared in 2025) related to the legal framework for the use of Limburgish in pre-school education and the possibilities for regional authorities to facilitate this.³⁵ Another topic on which the Action Committee advises is network formation, such as a future commitment of municipalities to the joint Limburgian ambition. To that end, after the 2026 Municipal Council elections, a number of meetings will be organised. Furthermore, the Implementation Programme provides that the Action Committee will advise on the 2019 Covenant for the Limburgish Language.

Simultaneously with the appointment of the Action Committee, its predecessor the Raod veur 't Limburgs was cancelled with effect from 1 July 2025.

Collaboration with the Provincial Council

In the implementation of its policy, the Provincial Executive expressly seeks alignment with the Staotecomité set up by the Provincial Council of Limburg, after the Frisian example, pursuant to the PS motion 3120.³⁶ The Provincial Executive and the Provincial Council jointly involve their constituencies and network, and make joint working visits. Where necessary, the Hoes or the Action Committee join the periodic meetings.

In 2025, in the run-up to the elections for the House of Representatives of 29 October 2025, the Staotecomité and the Provincial Executive advocated with the candidates Members of Parliament to consider the Limburgish language and its status. Subsequently, they identified which parties paid attention in their electoral programmes to Limburgish or regional languages. Many of the parties have more or less done so. Where appropriate, members of the Provincial Council called on their national fellow party members to pay attention to this issue.

³² Hoes veur 't Limburgs (2025). *2025 Working Plan Hoes veur 't Limburgs*. Available at <https://hoesveurtlimburgs.b-cdn.net/uploads/Downloads/Werkplan-Hoes-veur-t-Limburgs-2025.pdf>.

³³ See <https://hoesveurtlimburgs.nl/over-het-hoes/netwerk-limburgse-taal>

³⁴ Province of Limburg (2025). *Communication from the portfolio manager on the Appointment of the committee members and chairperson of the Action Committee for the Limburgish Language*, letter from the Provincial Executive Member Kuntzelaers dated 24 June 2025. Available at <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/bc24ded9-66a2-4ff7-9a41-74d0782327d1>

³⁵ Province of Limburg (2026). *Communication from the Portfolio Manager on the advice from the Action Committee for the Limburgish Language in Childcare*, letter from the Provincial Executive Member Kuntzelaers dated 13 January 2026. Available at <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/bcd2f410-2616-41f9-8c02-663b7f1f561c>

³⁶ Provincial Council of Limburg (2024). *Motion vreemd 3120 Absil et al. on the establishment of a Staotecomité for the Limburgish Language (Provincial Executive Committee for Limburgish)*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/6a5a4214-a17f-4b44-8aa4-337afc15450d>

Furthermore, the Provincial Council and the Provincial Executive made a similar call on the municipal political groups in view of the municipal council elections of 18 March 2026.

Financial resources

As indicated, since 2024, the Province of Limburg has structurally made an additional 1.1 million euros per year available for the Limburgish language, in accordance with the Coalition Agreement 2023-2027 *Elke Limburger telt!*. The *Implementation Programme* contains an estimate of the allocation of these, as well as existing, resources (p. 25). In 2025, the first year of implementation of the new policy, a total of EUR 1,664,585 in Provincial resources was available for the Limburgish language, not including the contributions provided under generic cultural schemes (particularly for festivals and events).

Progress Report

On 25 November 2025, the Provincial Executive of Limburg adopted the first Progress Report on the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language and shared it with the Provincial Council.³⁷ This report contains a detailed overview of the activities performed, presents the current financial situation, and provides an outlook on 2026. The report shows that the activities referred to in the Implementation Programme, for both Track A and Track B, have been started up, continued, expanded, or prepared in further detail for start-up in 2026 (such as the new contribution scheme for smaller projects of the Hoes veur 't Limburgs, and the awareness campaign).

Article 7.1.d the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life

Public life: Judicial authorities

The Province of Limburg does not have legal or delegated authority over judicial authorities. With a view to the Limburgian Part III ambition under the Charter in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027, the way in which the judicial authorities are to be involved has been assigned to the Óngerwaeg nao Deil III Action Committee as an issue to advise on. On the initiative of a Member of the Provincial Council, exploratory questions have been submitted to the court, which may be incorporated in a future advice.

Public life: Administrative authorities and public services

The Province of Limburg does not have legal or delegated authority. The extent to, or the conditions under, which conducting meetings in Limburgish was possible was, however, a topic of discussion in the Provincial Council. In this context, there have been contacts with the responsible Ministry of BZK. On 5 April 2024, the Provincial Council adopted the motion 3043 on *asse mich versteis - debat in het plat* (debate in dialect).³⁸ The Provincial Council thereby indicated that it wanted to debate at least one item on the agenda of a Provincial Council meeting in Limburgish each year. The first time that it did was the discussion of the *Uitvoeringsprogramma Limburgse taal 2025-2027* (Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027) on 13 December 2024. Measures were taken to ensure that everyone could understand the debate, including the availability of interpreters.

Public life: Media

During the debate in the Dutch Senate on the amendment of the Media Act (parliamentary year 2023/2024), the State Secretary for Culture and Media confirmed that the legislative proposal related exclusively to Dutch and Frisian. On the insistence of Members of the Senate, it was promised to investigate if and how, through a separate amendment of the Media Act - with a turnover time of approximately 1.5 to 2 years, preferably linked to a future amendment - regional languages,

³⁷ Province of Limburg (2025). *Communication from the portfolio manager on the Progress Report for the Limburgish language, letter from the Provincial Executive Member Kuntzelaers dated 25 November 2025*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/aff8f71-1168-449a-b44f-b1d6f5564251>

³⁸ Provincial Council of Limburg (2024). *Amended Motion 3043 Jenneskens et al. on asse mich versteis - debat in het plat*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/7f3862d9-238d-47d1-b37b-3c5af3968f67>

obligations under the Charter could be complied with for regional languages such as Limburgish and Low Saxon. On a policy level, the existing framework has remained unchanged to date.³⁹

The proposed amendment of the Media Act 2008⁴⁰ requires a certain attentiveness, since the use of Limburgish is not embedded in the Media Act. The province notes that, in the proposed amendment, it remains unclear whether the allocation of criteria sufficiently reflects the local connection between broadcaster and service area, as the assessment of geographic, and social and cultural, diversity, and the visibility of the media content lies with NLPO rather than with the municipalities.⁴¹ These criteria are, however, partially decisive for that local connection, including the use of the regional language, and deprive the regional authorities of the possibility to monitor the obligation under the Charter to safeguard the Limburgish language in the media.

The Province of Limburg (the Provincial Council) has a statutory advisory duty under the Media Act with respect to the designation of the regional broadcaster, particularly in terms of representativeness of the media council. In Limburg, this is the channel L1. This procedure was a topic of debate in the second semester of 2025, with a view to a new five-year term for the broadcaster. This is the only statutory involvement that the Provinces have vis-à-vis the regional media. As, however, the Charter and the recommendations from the seventh advisory report from COMEX advocate reinforcement of Limburgish in the regional media, this issue, nevertheless, has the attention of the Province. With a view to the Limburgian Part III ambition under the Charter in the Implementation Programme for 2025-2027, the role of the Media has been assigned to the Óngerwaeg nao Deil III Action Committee as an issue to advise on. Through the Action Committee, the Provincial Executive has received an advice in that context relating to the designation. That advice read:

“As regards the media council, we establish that there is currently no member of L1 representing the Limburgish language and culture, so that the council does not have a fair representation in terms of the Limburgish Language.

As regards the regional broadcaster designation procedure, the Action Committee establishes that a provincial policy for the Limburgish language is necessary to substantiate an assessment of the criteria in that designation procedure, *inter alia*, to meet requirements of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Given this advice, the Provincial Executive has proposed to the Provincial Council that, after the Provincial Council has approved the renewed designation, the Provincial Executive will consult with L1 about the composition of the media council. The motion is to include the theme of the Limburgish language within the existing flows of the media council, so as to create more room for the Limburgish language within the L1 programming. In order to prepare for its decision-making process, the Provincial Council has submitted some clarifying questions to the Provincial Executive.⁴² In the meeting where the decision was to be adopted, of 31 October 2025, the Provincial Council approved the motion of the Provincial Executive.⁴³ The Provincial Executive thereby promised not only to place the safeguarding of the Limburgish language as a separate flow in the media council on the agenda

³⁹ Senate, session 2023-2024, Minutes of the plenary meeting of Tuesday, 24 October 2023. Available at <https://www.eerstekamer.nl/verslag/20231024/verslag>.

⁴⁰ Legislative proposal on reinforcement of local public service broadcaster K-1. Available at: <https://wetgevingskalender.overheid.nl/regeling/WGK025408/documenten/Raad%20van%20State/Adviesaanvr aag%20aanhangig%20bij%20Raad%20van%20State/1>

⁴¹ Council of State (2025). W05.25.00173/I – Amendment of the Mediawet 2008 to reinforce the implementation of the public media remit on a local level [Advice]. Available at <https://www.raadvanstate.nl/adviezen/@152197/w05-25-00173/>

⁴² Province of Limburg (2025). Communication from the portfolio manager on the designation of the regional broadcaster, letter from the Provincial Executive Member Kuntzelaers dated 28 October 2025. Available at <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/bf489a6a-a866-4e9d-8582-a3d5d852083e>

⁴³ Province of Limburg (2025). Motion of the Provincial Executive on Advice on the designation of the regional public broadcaster, letter from the Provincial Executive dated 16 September 2025. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Document/a83032af-1b63-4d44-990b-3d2b0ea88076?documentId=2f0d848d-0c43-43f5-8f94-7e457bbe14b8>. This motion references the advice of the Action Committee.

for in its meeting with L1, but also to discuss the use of Limburgish in the L1 content (despite the fact that the Provincial Executive does not have any formal authority when it comes to the programming). The meeting will take place in the first quarter of 2026.

Municipal councils also have a statutory advisory duty under the Media Act in relation to the designation of a local broadcaster. It is unknown whether any considerations about the Limburgish language have played a role in any of the decision-making processes.

Public life: Cultural activities and facilities

Cultural activities in Limburg are closely connected with the Limburgish language. Music, theatre, plays, literature, and carnival expressions have an express linguistic tradition. Conversely, the popularity of, for example, carnival is a reason to get started on Limburgish. One may think of carnival song competitions for adults, teenagers and children. People write lyrics and perform them, submerging themselves in Limburgish. The Province of Limburg has supported cultural expressions in Limburgish through:

- The specific subsidy scheme for the Limburgish language 2022-2024, in which a substantial part of the grants had a cultural component;
- The support and service point of Heus veur 't Limburgs, with a new contribution scheme under preparation;
- Two generic subsidy schemes for smaller and larger cultural events, respectively. Contributions to the voordekunst.nl crowd funding platform. The Limburgish language often forms part of applications. These initiatives are not financed out of the Limburgian language resources, but out of the resources for culture and/or social policy;
- A specific subsidy scheme for nine major carnival events and competitions;
- Supporting Veldeke Limburg, which develops its own initiatives and is involved in cultural activities;
- Supporting the Limburgish corpus development, for which Limburgian cultural expressions are important sources, and which (for example through translation tools) is often used for cultural expressions (see below);
- The announcement in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027 that, in the next subsidy period for Limburgian multi-year subsidised larger cultural institutions, it will be reviewed how Limburgish can be a criterion. The period will commence in 2029, but preparations will start in the short term. Financing is not provided out of the Limburgish language resources, but out of the resources for culture;
- Positioning of the Limburgs Museum.⁴⁴ The Policy Framework for Culture and Heritage 2024-2027 '*Cultuur en Erfgoed voor iedereen*' states that the Limburgs Museum plays a central role in expressing the Limburgish language and Limburgian identity. This is described in further detail in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027. The activities started up by the Limburgs Museum in this context are as follows:
 - Installation of a sound box on language and the home. This is freely accessible interactive foyer exhibition where one can actively engage in a conversation with a Limburgian, in the Limburgish language. Visitor can independently walk through the installation.
 - 'Plat Kalle'. At various locations in the Province, youths are invited to engage in interactive conversations, and to contact the Heus veur 't Limburgs and visit the Limburgs Museum (online);
 - Limburgish as a language at Our Limburgs Museum (the online storytelling platform). This includes the placement of an audio play button with the stories using Limburgish translation technology, to facilitate uploading of audio excerpts with a story for visitors. The data collected are stored in a database.
 - Contribution to the digitisation task (corpus).

⁴⁴ See <https://www.limburgsmuseum.nl/>

Public life: Economic and social life

In the seventh advisory report, COMEX recommends to facilitate and encourage the use of the Limburgish language in public life more. In the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027 a campaign has been included, *inter alia* on the basis of motion 3033⁴⁵. In 2025, Hoes veur 't Limburgs started preparations; launch will follow in 2026. The multi-year campaign is in line with the role of 't Hoes as an information provider. This campaign is designed to raise awareness among the public as to how the Limburgish language is used through all social groups, in different situations. The use of the language is being normalised. Furthermore, the campaign shows that Limburgish has its place everywhere. Moreover, it provides information on the advantages of multilingualism and invites people to make conscious use of the Limburgish language. The Province has also requested the Hoes to review how ambassadors could fit in. Recognisable communications are being developed that can be used by parties involved in the broad Limburgian ambition from the Implementation Programme.

In addition to the initiatives referred to under 7.1.c, we mention the Limburgish-language name plaques, as COMEX included the reinforcement/encouragement of bilingual name plaques as a recommendation in the seventh advisory report. Whether or not they wish to add a Limburgian variation in the name plaques (built-up area) is at the discretion of the municipalities. This means that, if the municipality chooses to do so, this will usually be possible for the entire municipality (all cities/villages) and will be arranged by the municipality. 22 of the 31 Limburgian municipalities have meanwhile chosen to do this. The actual installation of the plaques often takes place in stages, for example if a plaque is to be replaced anyway.⁴⁶ What is also striking is the fact that campaigns on social topics increasingly use the Limburgish language.⁴⁷

Article 7.1.e the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using the language in the State; the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages

The Hoes veur 't Limburgs organises, or acts as a partner, host or speaker at, meetings and lectures on a regular basis, such as the regional language conference in 2024. In addition, 't Hoes actively maintains contacts with both national and international language areas and forums. The Óngerwaeg nao Deil III Action Committee plays a role in this respect by providing advice on the connection between social sectors and the Provincial language ambition, and by maintaining contacts with other language areas and relevant networks. Furthermore, administrative exchanges take place with other regional languages. For example, the Provincial Council, the Provincial Executive, and Limburgian experts visited the Province of Friesland in August 2024, to exchange knowledge and experiences about the policy on regional language and identity. Following up on this, Friesland paid a return visit to Limburg in December 2025.

Based on a promise made by the Provincial Council, the Provincial Executive carried out a concise exploration in 2025 as to the status of the use of Limburgish dialects in the neighbouring countries (Germany, Belgium) and the opportunities and threats. This was discussed in the Staotecomité of the Provincial Council on 26 September 2025.

Article 7.1.f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages

⁴⁵ Provincial Council of Limburg (2023). *Amended Motion 3033 Franssen et al. on the Promotion and Protection of the Limburgish Language*. Available at: <https://limburg.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Item/5849e96c-4ffb-413a-9ce3-a7b6fdd061c0>

⁴⁶ This item from L1 (2025) contains a map stating start dates for each municipality (addition in the map: Maastricht and Venlo have now also started): see <https://www.l1nieuws.nl/nieuws/2911027/helje-thoear-en-sjietekove-gemeenten-kiezen-steeds-vaker-voor-limburgse-komborden>

⁴⁷ For example <https://rwm.nl/samen-scheiden-mit-vastelaovend>

Pre-school education

In the seventh evaluation report (2024), COMEX called on the Dutch Government to promote Limburgish in pre-school education. It is important for children to develop language skills at as early an age as possible. Therefore, this is tackled as early as the pre-school period. The Central Government provides room in the law for offering Limburgish in pre-school education, but it is up to the provinces, the municipalities and childcare centres to shape their bilingual content. Limburgish can be used as a working language in addition to Dutch. Limburgish can be an important language for children in order to be able to keep up with their environment. Moreover, multilingualism helps children understand how language works and more easily recognise patterns in new languages. Finally, this way, a good link can be created to the continuous learning line towards primary education.

Primary and secondary (special needs) education

In the seventh evaluation report, COMEX also called on the Dutch Government to prepare a strategy to assure education in and about Limburgish as a subject on all levels of education.

Recently, the key objectives for (Dutch) language in primary education have been renewed, giving various languages and language variations an explicit place.⁴⁸ This includes a statutory requirement for schools to pay attention to, and raise awareness on, *inter alia*, Limburgish, because it has become part of the national curriculum.⁴⁹ The renewed key objectives for (Dutch) language came into effect on 1 August 2026. In addition, as indicated in previous reports, the Dutch laws on education already offer the possibility to use Limburgish in education. Schools are free to choose to do so, but education in Limburgish is not compulsory. With the recognition of Limburgish under Part II of the European Charter, the government has undertaken only not to include any restrictions for the use of these languages in laws or regulations.

In 2023, a motion of the House of Representatives was adopted calling on the Government, in consultation with scientists, and together with provinces, to commit to education in regional languages. Based on the foregoing, a discussion took place between the Central Government and the Province of Limburg as to how the Limburgish language can be encouraged in schools. During that discussion, good examples were given in relation to Frisian, and the Province of Limburg was brought into contact with Fontys University of Applied Sciences. Fontys has a professor working in the field of multilingualism, who can help the Province of Limburg in the contacts with schools by scientifically substantiating that a multilingual approach has proved to be an effective didactic deployment. In the coming period, the Ministry of OCW will meet with the local authorities and organisations involved to discuss the implementation of the renewed key objectives and raising awareness about the room within the law that schools already have.

Province of Limburg / The Hoes veur 't Limburgs

Given the clear signals from the previous COMEX evaluation report, the Province of Limburg expressly included the subjects of childcare and education in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027, particularly through the programme lines of the Hoes veur 't Limburgs. In view of the language budget of the Province of Limburg (see above), over the past period, the Hoes has been enabled, in stages, to make considerably more investments. This way, the Province provides facilitating opportunities, which provinces are not required by law to do.

⁴⁸ [Actualisatie kerndoelen examenprogramma](#)

⁴⁹ See key objective 1: *The school provides a rich language and reading environment and objective sentence A: The school provides a rich language and reading environment. This involves, inter alia: "... offering room for various languages and language variations of pupils". Or key objective 7: the pupil explores the use of language. And objective sentences A and B: A: The pupil explores how language helps express identity. B: The pupil explores language variations and language changes in the Dutch language region. This involves, inter alia, exploring your own language repertoire in relation to how you wish to be perceived and what groups you wish to belong to: languages and language variations, gestures, body language, and exploring different language variations of the Dutch language: school language and jargon, group and regional languages.*

Pre-school education

The Hoes veur 't Limburgs introduces the subject of the Limburgish language within every sub-region of the Area Health Authority for South Limburg, in line with programmes such as Kansrijke Start (Promising Start), Taalrijke Start (Linguistically Promising Start), and/or Gezinsaanpak Geletterdheid (Family-Based Approach to Literacy). In addition, 't Hoes gives effect to the Zjuulke project for childcare.⁵⁰ This project focuses, first and foremost, on the development of a multilingual approach to childcare in the Province of Limburg, based on current scientific insights.

Subsequently, 't Hoes offers both substantive and facilities support to childcare organisations in the implementation of that approach, also involving the libraries. In November 2025, 28 childcare locations were working with Zjuulke, and 85 childminders had been informed of this programme line. Also in 2025, an evaluation of Zjuulke was started, focusing on the effectiveness of the approach and possible points for improvement. After its appointment in mid 2025, the Òngerwaeg nao Deil III Action Committee started preparing an advice on the legal and regulatory framework and the impediments relating to childcare. This advice was discussed in the Provincial Executive in January 2026, so that it is beyond the scope of this periodical report. The statutory authority with respect to childcare lies with the municipalities. To the extent that local laws and regulations, or their interpretation, should lead to any impediments, the foregoing advice of the Action Committee addresses the actions that the Province can take to help lift those impediments.

Primary education

Hoes veur 't Limburgs carries out the implementation and further development of 'Meer kansen Met Meertaligheid' (More opportunities with Multilingualism (3M)) of NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences in the Limburgian setting. The Hoes does so in collaboration with schools (umbrellas). 2025 has primarily seen a great deal of attention to the successful introduction of the initiative. This requires an intensive approach. Active contacts have been sought with primary schools based on existing leads and suggestions. This has resulted in concrete discussions with representatives of four primary schools in Central and South Limburg, one of which is already known to be participating. North Limburg has first been focusing on two workshops and lectures in the municipality of Venlo. Information has also been shared, among others with 46 participants in the 'Kind, Taal en Toekomst' (Child, Language and Future) meeting. The interest will continue to be followed up on.

Secondary education

Institutions for secondary education can use the service point function and meetings of the Hoes veur 't Limburgs. The province notes that, unfortunately, there is no capacity left for any projects focusing specifically on this level of education. The *Levende Talen* Limburgish chapter (coöperation partner of 't Hoes) does, indeed, provide support to teachers in secondary education, and is involved in the development of materials, in collaboration with, among others, the Low Saxon and Frisian chapters.

Technical and vocational education

Vista College is a prominent organisation in Limburg for senior secondary vocational education (mbo). In 2024, the college started preparing the new optional subject of 'Limburgs als kracht in je beroep' (Limburgish as a strength in your profession) and with the application thereof with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). The Province of Limburg has endorsed this application to support it. In November 2025, the optional subject was actually introduced⁵¹.

Developments are going on in higher secondary vocational education as well. For example, Fontys University of Applied Sciences intends for the teacher training academy (pabo) to start a pilot surrounding the Limburgish language. Fontys is currently discussing possible support for that pilot with the Province of Limburg.

Adult education and continuing training

See under Article 7.1.g. below.

Higher and university education

See under Article 7.1.h. below.

Article 7.1.g. the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire

The Hoes veur 't Limburgs coordinates the use and further development of *Leef Limburgs*, the method for Limburgish as a second language (LT2). This method, which introduces Limburgish as a second language, particularly focuses on speaking and listening skills, and is provided in several regions in Limburg, including Echt, Heerlen, Kerkrade, Maastricht, Panningen, Roermond, Sittard, Weert, and Venlo. The course closely connects to each region where it is provided, and considers the broad variety within Limburgish. For example, the course in Echt is titled *Leef Limburgs, 't Smaalste Stökske*, referring to the location of this town in the narrowest part of the province. In addition to linguistic content, the course expressly pays attention to regional culture, literature, history, and music as well. Furthermore, periodic network events are organised for teachers, re-narrators, and facilitators, such as library staff. In the policy period of 2022-2023, the province provided project resources for this course out of the then subsidy scheme for the Limburgish language (see under 7.1.c). *Leef Limburgs* has also been included as a project in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027. Today, *Leef Limburgs* courses are provided or under preparation in nine locations in Limburg, two of which started for the first time in 2025. The implementation currently involves three authors, 26 re-narrators, 30 teachers, and seven libraries. In 2024, Mr Emile Roemer, King's Commissioner for Limburg, took *Leef Limburgs* classes as well.

But also outside these courses, the interest in the Limburgish language and culture in education and society is actively stimulated. University College Maastricht (UCM) promotes the interest among students for Limburgish. In late 2024, Universalis students' association set up a special Limburgish committee for that purpose. The first activities, including preparing the regional dish Zoervleisj, a Limburgish language class, and an English-language lecture on the history of the Limburgish language and identity, immediately attracted dozens of students, including many international students. The Province of Limburg is not directly involved in these activities. Furthermore, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences started the development of an interpreter training programme in 2025. This initiative was prompted by the expectation that Limburgish-Dutch interpreters will more often be relied on if Limburgish should be officially recognised under Part III. The training course is scheduled for April 2026. Several partners from the Hoes veur 't Limburgs are involved in this initiative, including Veldeke and Levende Talen Limburgish Chapter.

The Province of Limburg organised an internal training course on the Limburgish language and culture for employees within its own organisation in 2025, by way of a pilot. There was a great deal of interest in this training course, and a follow-up is being considered. Municipalities have developed similar initiatives. Furthermore, it is relevant to note that developments in the field of translation technology and corpus creation, as will be explained in further detail under Article 7.1.h below, expressly contribute to the mutual comprehension among users of different variations of Limburgish, as well as between Limburgish and Dutch.

Article 7.1.h the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions.

The new language policy as set forth in the Implementation Programme for the Limburgish Language 2025-2027 expressly pays attention to this paragraph of the Charter, *inter alia* because of the criticism in the seventh COMEX evaluation report of the studiability of Limburgish and the educational opportunities on all levels (see also under Article 7.1.f), and the recommendation that the study of Limburgish be set up on a university level. The Provincial resources are, however, limited as

compared to this task. Just as in the field of education, the Province can only act as a facilitator and does not have any statutory duty with the associated resources. A Bachelor's degree programme, for example, cannot be financed by the Province.

The basic principle for the higher education system is that institutions for higher education have the autonomy to start educational programmes and are entirely free to decide on the content of their programmes. Universities and universities of applied sciences receive the contribution from OCW as a lump sum, and independently decide how they use those resources for their education and research.

This means that institutions for higher education are free to decide their own educational content. The institutions thereby work intensively together. For example, in higher vocational education (hbo), each sector has its own sectoral advisory board, and in university education, the deans of faculties for each discipline are associated in the discipline bodies. These consultative bodies review, *inter alia*, whether revision and/or expansion of the educational content is necessary and advisable. In this respect, they also consult with the work field. The Ministry of OCW assesses the macro-effectiveness of any new educational content in higher education. This macro-effectiveness policy in higher education is intended to ensure that, after their studies, students will land well, and that the educational content is well aligned to the needs of the labour market, society, and science. Furthermore, institutions have a great deal of free reign when it comes to implementing revisions and changes within the existing educational content.

Because of the way that institutions for higher education are financed within the Dutch higher education system, and the academic freedom and autonomy that the institutions for higher education enjoy in terms of their educational content, there is no room to intervene in the Dutch higher education system in relation to the study of Limburgish. The Ministry of OCW highly values the autonomy that institutions have in terms of education, research, and the discretion to spend their resources. Of course, the funded universities and universities for applied sciences in the Netherlands are free to provide education on the Limburgish language and culture out of the Central Government contribution that they receive from the Ministry of OCW.

For purposes of paragraph 3.5, 'Data and knowledge', from the Implementation Programme, the following actions have been taken:

- The Implementation Programme indicates that the Province intends to ask the institutions for higher education which topics on use, historical or linguistic aspects of Limburgish are worth studying in more detail. Based thereon, the Province intends to provide one or more contributions. On 23 June 2025, the Hoes veur 't Limburgs hosted a start-up meeting for the 'Onderzoeksagenda Limburgse taal' (Research agenda for the Limburgish language). The meeting was attended by several educational and research institutions and experts from the Province of Limburg. From there, a few of the parties, including Zuyd University of Applied Science, University of Maastricht, and Hoes veur 't Limburgs, developed the initiative to come to a small research agenda. They intend to review which themes and trends, but also gaps, there are in research of Limburgish, and what questions can already be answered based on existing data. Furthermore, they intend to issue an advice on a long-term infrastructure for future research of the Limburgian case.
- Data on the use of Limburgish are important to monitor the development, as the Implementation Programme provides. The initiators of the aforesaid research agenda intend to tackle this subject, among other things, by linking up with data from Statistics Netherlands.⁵²
- To make Limburgish accessible, and to be able to use digital applications, such as speech recognition, spelling correction, and machine translation, a public, up-to-date, and representatively accessible, standardised corpus (a database in which large amounts of

⁵² See Statistics Netherlands (2021): <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/longread/statistische-trends/2021/talen-en-dialecten-in-nederland?onepage=true> and Statistics Netherlands (2025): <https://longreads.cbs.nl/nederland-in-cijfers-2025/wat-spreken-mensen-thuis-vooral/>

source material are incorporated and processed) is being developed. The corpus is an essential building block in the digital application of the Limburgish language. In 2025, an umbrella information management plan, prepared under the responsibility of 't Hoes veur 't Limburgs, was worked on. This plan should provide an insight into the needs in terms of technology, the roles and responsibilities of partners involved, and the possibilities to implement the information provision. The University of Maastricht and the Limburgs Museum were among those involved.

Article 7.1.i. the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.

The Limburgish language is spoken in the Belgian and Dutch Provinces of Limburg and the neighbouring Rhineland areas in Germany. Many linguistic borders (isoglosses) run from the north to the south through Limburg. By decree dated 24 December 1990, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation gave several "indigenous regional languages" (LRE) spoken within its territory an official status. This status comprises the various minority languages that have developed parallel to French, whether Roman or German in origin. Relevant to the exchange are the speakers of Brabant Thiois (thiois brabançon), which is recognised in Wallonia, and Meuse-Rhenish Frankish (francique rhéno-mosan).⁵³ In Germany, the Charter is declared applicable to certain regional languages for each *Bundesland*.⁵⁴

Based on a promise made by the Provincial Council, the Provincial Executive carried out a concise exploration in 2025 as to the status of the use of Limburgish dialects in the neighbouring countries (Germany, Belgium) and the opportunities and threats. This was discussed with the Staotecomité for the Limburgish Language of the Provincial Council on 26 September 2025.

Article 7.2 eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of the language.

The efforts focusing on digitisation, corpus, and translation technology (see under Article 7.1.h) contribute to this article. All the efforts of the Hoes veur 't Limburgs as referred to above also focus on promoting positive awareness among the Limburgian population in respect of the position of the Limburgish language as being equivalent to other languages. All the initiatives are aimed at normalisation of the use of the language.

Article 7.3 promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country; the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language among the objectives of education and training; encouragement of the mass media to incorporate the respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language in their objectives.

The efforts focusing on digitisation, corpus, and translation technology (see under Article 7.1.h) contribute to this article. The Hoes veur 't Limburgs actively seeks collaboration with knowledge institutions and language partners outside the Province of Limburg in order to make Limburgish visible as a language worth studying outside the province as well.

⁵³ Décret relatif aux langues régionales endogènes de la Communauté française; text available at: www.languesregionales.cfwb.be

⁵⁴ For Low German in North Rhine-Westphalia:
Article 8, paragraph 1 e iii; g; h; paragraph 2;
Article 9, paragraph 1 b iii; c iii; paragraph 2 a;
Article 11, paragraph 1 d; paragraph 2;
Article 12, paragraph 1 a; d; e; f; g; h; paragraph 2;
Article 13, paragraph 1 a; c; d.

Article 7.4 take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages; establish bodies for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to the language.

In the seventh evaluation report of 2024, the experts of the Committee of Experts recommended as an immediate action that the Dutch government set up a body that will be responsible for representation of the interests of speakers of Limburgish on a national level.

In 2024, COMEX believed that the set-up of a body on a national level to promote the interests of speakers of Limburgish was not contrary to applicable Dutch legislation, the existing language policy, or the Charter. Such a body would be in line with the obligations undertaken by the Netherlands in respect of the Limburgish language pursuant to Article 7(4) of the Charter, since it will reinforce the voice of the speakers when it comes to the participation process on authorisations that are still conferred on local governments. Therefore, COMEX repeated its call to carry out this recommendation urgently, in order to provide effective protection for Limburgish as a recognised regional language, both in and by the Netherlands.

In Limburg, the Provincial Executive has set up the *Actiecommissie Óngerwaeg nao Deil III* advisory committee, and several organisations are working together within *Het Hoes veur 't Limburgs*. There is no national body representing speakers of the Limburgish language.

V. ROMANI AND YIDDISH

Yiddish and Romani are recognised in the Netherlands under Part II of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. These are relatively small language communities with their own history and culture. Unlike Frisian, Limburgish and Low Saxon, Yiddish and Romani are not associated with a certain region in the Netherlands. The communities are spread over the country, and are small in some places. This makes the preservation and acquisition of the languages less than self-evident.

For the preservation of both languages, it is important that they can be used and transmitted within the communities. Supporting initiatives that contribute to the maintenance and visibility of the languages can contribute to this as well. This eighth report will discuss the developments surrounding Yiddish and Romani during the reporting period, as well as the implementation of the obligations ensuing for the Netherlands from recognition of both languages under Part II of the Charter.

Implementation of Part II of the Charter

Article 7.1.a the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth

The Netherlands fully continues to endorse the importance of Yiddish and Romani for the identity of the speakers of those languages.

Article 7.1.b ensuring that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question

No changes as compared to the previous report.

Article 7.1.c resolute action to promote Romani and Yiddish

In its sixth evaluation, the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe (COMEX) already addressed the closed character of the Romani and Yiddish speaking communities. During its visit, COMEX offered to pass on the relevant contact details of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to the various communities. This made it possible for those communities, if so desired, to contact the Central Government about the Romani and Yiddish languages.

Article 7.1.d the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public life (for example education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and/or transnational exchanges) and private life

Until 2022, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) could apply for a subsidy for projects promoting the participation and emancipation of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands. This scheme was the result of what is known as post-war restorative justice. The scheme has meanwhile been completed. Projects ran until no later than 2026. They involved activities aimed at promoting employment, education, and culture and identity. The scheme financed many projects for the purpose of encouraging the use of Romani.

The Dutch culture policy focuses, among other things, on social and geographic spreading or otherwise disseminating cultural expressions, the leading considerations being quality and diversity (Act on specific culture policy). This policy is implemented by six Central Government funds: Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie, Nederlands Letterenfonds, Filmfonds, Fonds Podium Kunsten, Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie, and Mondriaan Fonds. These funds provide opportunities, each in their own field, for cultural expressions or activities, which may also make it easier to use, and/or encourage the use of, the language.

Article 7.1.e the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using the language in the State; the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages

No changes as compared to the previous report.

Article 7.1.f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages

There have not been any changes in the field of education as compared to the previous report. Schools receive additional support from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to provide education to specific target groups, including caravan dweller, Roma and Sinti children. Schools can apply for additional funding if they have four or more children in this target group registered. The OWRS work group (part of Oberon) provides support, on behalf of OCW, to teaching professionals working with Roma and Sinto pupils, *inter alia* by way of knowledge sharing. OWRS is a national platform connecting people to promote education to children of caravan dwellers, Roma and Sinti. OWRS provides support to schools, education consultants and municipalities (school attendance officers).

Article 7.1.g the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire

Until 2022, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) could apply for a subsidy for projects promoting the participation and emancipation of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands. This scheme was the result of what is known as post-war restorative justice. The scheme has meanwhile been completed. Projects ran until no later than 2026. They involved activities aimed at promoting employment, education, and culture and identity. The scheme financed many projects for the purpose of encouraging the use of Romani.

Article 7.1.h the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions

The basic principle for the higher education system in the Netherlands is that institutions for higher education have the autonomy to start educational de programmes and are entirely free to decide on the content of their programmes. Universities and universities of applied sciences receive the contribution from OCW as a lump sum, and independently decide how they use those resources for their education and research.

Article 7.1.i the promotion of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by the Charter, for the language

The international culture policy does not conduct an active language or target group policy, but the relevant subsidy schemes are open to project proposals from Romani and Yiddish speaking communities that meet the subsidy conditions and quality requirements.

Article 7.2 eliminate any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of the language

No changes as compared to the previous report.

Article 7.3 promote mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country; the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language among the objectives of education and training; encouragement of the mass media to incorporate the respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to the language in their objectives

Primary education includes the statutory citizenship task, which requires schools, *inter alia*, to teach their pupils knowledge and respect for differences, for example in religion and origin. This element of the statutory citizenship task is worked out in more concrete terms in the new key citizenship objectives. Schools are required, for example, to teach pupils to recognise and identify stereotyping, discrimination and exclusion, and help them gain experience in dealing with different perspectives and experiences.

Article 7.4 take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages; establish bodies for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to the language

The Netherlands is becoming a highly diverse society. The diversity of the Dutch population has strongly increased over the past few years; 25% have a migration background. The government

highly values a broad and flexible dialogue with society. A flexible dialogue means that the government consults a number of different parties. Depending on the subject, these may be professional experts, opinion leaders, hands-on experts, and/or representatives of communities. The form of this consultation depends on the subject and the parties involved.

As indicated under 7.1.c, except for one case, no wishes and needs have been put forward in relation to Yiddish and Romani. The exception was a subsidy application for Yiddish, which also regarded religious activities. In line with the applicable principle of separation of church and state in the Netherlands, governments in the Netherlands take a neutral and impartial position when it comes to religion. This line is continued to the granting of possible government subsidies. This means that, although governments can grant subsidies to religious organisations, the activities should serve a public purpose. Religious education does not come under this scope. Therefore, the Central Government was unable to accept the application.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR ORGANISATIONS

This section provides a list of the organisations involved in the recognised languages in the Netherlands. Given the public nature of this report and the privacy laws, contact details will be sent to the Council of Europe separately, subject to approval by the relevant organisations. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations acts as the point of contact for the Central Government.

Frisian

- Provinsje Fryslân

Papiamentu

- Public Entity of Bonaire
- SPLIKA
- Akademia Papiamentu

Low Saxon

- Province of Groningen
- Province of Overijssel
- Province of Drenthe
- Province of Gelderland
- Province of Fryslân
- Province of Flevoland
- Municipality of Weststellingwerf
- Municipality of Ooststellingwerf
- Municipality of Urk
- Municipality of Bunschoten
- Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek Liemers
- Erfgoed in Groningen
- Low Saxon Chair, University of Groningen
- Huus van de Taol
- Kreenk vuur de Twentse Sproak
- Overijssel Academy
- Levende Talen Low Saxon Chapter
- SONT
- Stichting Stellingwarver Schrieversronte

Limburgish

- Province of Limburg
- Ongerwaeg nao Deil III Action Committee
- Hoes veur 't Limburgs
- Levende Talen Limburgish Chapter
- Taalcultuur in Limburg Chair, University of Maastricht
- Veldeke Limburg
- Vista College
- Fontys University of Applied Science
- Zuyd University of Applied Science
- Huis voor de Kunsten Limburg

Romani and Yddish

- Jewish Studies, University of Amsterdam