



Facade of the South African Constitutional Court

*The regulation of languages in constitutional and legal norms, and the implementation by public authorities and social actors of policies aimed at safeguarding and promoting the use of languages in different areas is now a world-wide phenomenon. Most countries include language clauses in their constitutions. The concept of official language is the most widely used in legal and constitutional texts when regulating the status of languages, yet some countries choose other formulae to lay down the legal status of the languages present in their territory.*

*In accordance with Linguapax's mission of preserving linguistic diversity as a value to be promoted through different means, this symposium intends to open the debate on the contribution of the legal framework and resulting language policies to the protection of local languages, in the light of the analysis of plural yet comparable experiences such as Finland, India, Malta, Paraguay, Slovenia, South Africa and Switzerland.*

*Updating this debate is necessary due to developments in the regulation of linguistic realities across the world, in the new forms adopted in language policies, as well as in their theoretical study. For this reason we shall examine the foundations of public decisions concerning the status of languages and explore the legal and political elements that influence their materialisation or implementation, always with a view to identifying practical solutions applicable to the protection of linguistic diversity.*

*Our guest experts will bring different perspectives on issues such as:*

- *How can consensus in determining the status of languages be forged?*
- *What is the meaning and content of the official or other legal status of languages provided for in constitutions or legislation?*
- *What is the real or practical impact of the official legal framework, or of the recognition of other forms of status, on languages in shaping linguistic reality?*
- *What kind of interaction or forms of collaboration between public authorities and social actors can contribute to the objectives of language preservation?*
- *On the basis of what principles, including those not provided by law, and through what forms of intervention, are the linguistic policies of public authorities expressed?*
- *What distance is there, if any, between the legal framework of language protection and the practices of political and social actors involved in the protection of languages, and what reasons may help to explain the distance?*

# THE STATUS OF LANGUAGES

## Does official recognition matter?

**International Symposium**  
**Barcelona, 24-25 de November 2016**

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International

### Programme

#### Thursday, November 24

**9.00-9.30 · Registration**

**9.30-10.00 · Opening Session**, with **Agustí Colomines**, director of the School of Public Administration of Catalonia; **Ester Franquesa**, director general of Language Policy of the Catalana Governament and **Mònica Pereña**, president of Linguapax.

**10.00 -11.00 · South Africa**. Speaker: **Matthias Brenzinger**, director of CALDI – Centre for African Language Diversity, Curator of TALA – The African Language Archive (University of Cape Town). Discussant: **Francesc Xavier Vila**, director of the University Centre for Sociolinguistics and Communication, UB.

**11.00-11.30 · Break**

**11.30 - 12.30 · Malta**. Speakers: **Albert Borg** and **Thomas Pace**, National Council for the Maltese Language. Moderator: **Miquel Strubell**, sociolinguist and member of Linguapax.

**12.30 - 13.30 · India**. **Ganesh Devy**, Founder and director of the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre, in Vadodara, and Adivasi Academy, in Tejgadh, Gujarat. Discussant: **Elvira Riera**, Head of Research and Publications of the Public Administration School of Catalonia.

**13.30-15.00 · Break**

**15.00 - 16.00 · Finland**. Speaker: **Markku Suksi**, prof. Public Law, Åbo Akademi University. Discussant: **Eva Pons**, prof. Constitutional Law, University of Barcelona.

**16.00- 17.00 · Round table discussion** "English, official language everywhere?", with the speakers of the day. Moderator: **Emili Boix**.

#### Friday, November 25

**9.30-10.30 · Slovenia** · Speaker: **Albina Nečak Lük**, Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Ljubljana and Senior Researcher at the Institute for Educational Research. Discussant: **Pere Comellas**, Study Group on Endangered Languages (GELA), University of Barcelona.

**10.30-11.30 · Paraguay** · Speaker: **Miguel Ángel Verón Gómez**, director of the Yvy Marãe'ỹ association and former director of Language Planning of Paraguay. Discussant: **Antoni Milian**, Prof. Administrative Law, Autonomous University of Barcelona.

**11.30-12.00 · Break**

**12.00-13.00 · Switzerland** · Speaker: **Nicolas Schmitt**, Institute of Federalism, University of Fribourg. Discussant: **Emili Boix**, prof. Catalan Language and Literature, University of Barcelona.

**13.00-13.30 · Conclusions**, by **Joan Ramon Solé**, Language Policy Department, Catalan Government.

**13.30-16.00 · Break**

**16.00 - 17.30 · Round table discussion** "Linguistic diversity, new cultural expressions and emerging rights". Open event. Moderated by **Mònica Pereña**, president of Linguapax. With **Matthias Brenzinger**, director of CALDI (University of Cape Town) and **Ganesh Devy**, director of the l'Aca-dèmia Adivasi a Tejgadh, Gujarat, who will approach diversity from two different geolinguistic contexts; with **Miquel Strubell**, as a member of the Scientific Committee of the Protocol to Ensure Linguistic Rights and member of Linguapax, for the language policies and rights approach; and with **Eduard Miralles**, president of INTERARTS foundation, from the standpoint of cultural policies and laws.

**In cooperation with:**



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Escola d'Administració Pública**  
de Catalunya



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Departament**  
de Cultura



**Ajuntament**  
de Barcelona

**Registration:** Until Nov. 20 through <http://www.linguapax.org/english/what-we-do/conference-the-status-of-languages/> Fee: 30 € - Students fee: 10 € /

**Place:** Conference room of the EAPC (Public Administration School of Catalonia)  
c/ Girona, 20 - 08010 - Barcelona

**Languages:** Interpretation will be provided in English/Catalan

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