NATIONAL MINORITIES AND THE QUESTION OF THE AUTONOMY IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN*

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Resumen: The 21st century is the age of globalisation. It is also the time of minorities, identities moving back towards nationality-consciousness, minority rights and autonomies. These factors have a significant influence on the multinational state structures in both the developed and semi-peripheral areas of the world. The transformation of the unitarian centralised states and territorial systems carried out by devolitional, decentralised and region-regulatory processes as well as the development of the local councils and self-governing systems representing territorial autonomies of different levels indicate general tendencies. In the life of national minorities living in the territories of multinational states the mother tongue is the primary representative of national identity and serves as an increasingly powerful factor in the lives of national minorities. On the basis of the National Censuses in 2011, the study analyses the possible framework, circumstances and the demographic factors in the Carpathian Basin.

Palabras clave: National minorities, National identities, self-government, Autonomy models, Spain, Federalism, Catalan experiences, Carpathian Basin, Seklerland, Hungarian minorities, Romania.

1. GLOBALISATION, THE RISE OF IDENTITIES AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE STATE STRUCTURE

The 21st century is the age of globalisation, the era of connections between cultures and civilisations representing different values and value systems. The Westfalian international system based on the principle of the exclusivity and omnipotence of state entities has been transformed and has largely disappeared. The notion of the Nation State, which dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries and conveys the concept of homogeneity, has lost its validity, as well.

Our century is also the time of minorities, the time of identities moving back towards nationality-consciousness and the time of integrational, disintegrational, territorialisation, de-territorialisation and reterritorialisation tendencies in addition to the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity.

All these factors have a significant influence on the multinational state structures in both the developed and semi-peripheral areas of the world. The breakup of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, the federal and structural transformations in Great Britain, Spain and Italy and the state failures in the Third World are manifestations of the same phenomenon.

The transformation of the unitarian centralised states and territorial systems carried out by devolitional, decentralised and region-regulatory processes as well as the development of the local councils and self-governing systems representing territorial, personal and national autonomies of different levels indicate general tendencies. In the life of national minorities living in the territories of multinational states the mother tongue is the primary representative of national identity: it expresses a strong sense of belonging to the given national community. Along with the legal framework that serves to secure minority language rights and institutional...
guarantees given to various types of minority representation, this serves as an increasingly powerful factor in the lives of national minorities

In a Europe of regions, classical definitions of the state, the nation, citizenship, and local self-government systems have been widely modified by the coexistence of identities of different types and foundations, as well as the concurrence of processes of democratisation. Juan José Linz’s 1992 statement on multinational Spain has gradually become universally relevant: “Today Spain means a state for all Spaniards; it means a nation state for a large part of the populace, and a state but no nation for a significant minority”. Around of the millenium the differences between Generalitat (seated in Barcelona) and the Spanish central Government became acute in debating the charge of legal status of Catalonia, its independence as a nation-state, which proved Juan José Linz’s findings. Although this process has not been settled the Catalonian nation-policy offers useful experiences for the autonomy of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin.

This study analyses the possible framework, circumstances and the demographic factors on the basis of the Catalonian experiences and of the National Censuses in 2011 from the viewpoint of the autonomy-endeavour of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin.

2. SPAIN: FROM THE AUTONOMY MODEL TO FEDERALISM

Between 1979 and 1983, in the first phase of the institutional development of the democratic parliamentary monarchy which displaced the Franco system, Spain saw the realisation of democratically regulated coexistence between the state (the Kingdom of Spain), historical nations possessing their own language (Basque, Galician, Catalan, Valencian), and regions without a history (Cantabria, Asturias, Extremadura, Madrid, Murcia, La Rioja etc.). In Spain the population is made up of 20% of Catalans, 6% of Basques, 2,5% of Galicians, and 2,5% of Valencians.

It is a fact that by creating an autonomy model resting on cooperation between seventeen self-governing communities, the Spanish new democracy has played an exemplary role in the solution of a centuries-old ethno-regional problem. The system formed between 1979 and 1983 has proved to be viable to the present day.

Article 148 of the December 1978 constitution taxatively lists issues within the competence of autonomous communities. These are in turn further detailed in the self-government statutes, and the “autonomy pacts” struck by the central government and the national parties.

Map 1. Self-government Communities of Spain

Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Espagne_communaut%C3%A9s_autonomes.png?uselang=es
The next Article, No.149 details issues exclusively belonging to the competence of central national bodies in thirty-two paragraphs. The legislator nevertheless provides the opportunity for the Spanish parliament to transfer or cede all or selected elements in the scope of the central authority to all or selected autonomous communities, thus realising the idea of a rationally regulated democratic constitutional state based of full equality of rights and a fully developed system of national-regional autonomy. The period between 1983 and 2006 saw an unprecedented decentralisation and democratization process in the history of Spain. The initial legal differences between the self-government communities having a parliament of their own and independent representation in the second chamber of the Spanish legislative authority, the Senate became levelled by the middle of 2010. This may primarily be explained by the transfer of authority from the central government to the self-government communities in the areas of healthcare as well as primary and secondary education. The state of autonomies thus exhibits characteristics similar to those of federal systems at present.

The relative stability of a democratic state structure in the historical sense does not preclude change. The institutional system is in a process of constant motion. Changes pointing from the semi-federalism of autonomous communities to federalism, which are based on national and cultural identities, have markedly accelerated from the second half of the 1990s. In July 2006, they led to the passing of the new Autonomy Statute of Catalonia. The separation of the autonomous province, which has gained independent nation status and the formation of an independent state with the capital of Barcelona has presented itself as a realistic alternative.

The Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia, passed on 19th July 2006, joined the institutional strengthening of the self-government system to the aspiration to establish an independent nation status based on cultural, linguistic, and historical identity, as well as the aim to provide a historical foundation and justification to the cause.

The second paragraph of the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia names the Catalan as the official language of Catalonia as opposed to the national language of Spanish. “Catalan is the official language of Catalonia, together with Castilian, the official language of the Spanish State. All persons have the right to use the two official languages and citizens of Catalonia have the right and the duty to know them.” This last point has sparked serious debates and raised grave constitutional concerns in Spain. Many consider the issue worded in the Statute a serious infringement upon political and constitutional order.

The Catalan solution (taking the Basque, Galician, and Valencian claims into consideration) raises and at the same time contains the possibility and the necessity of a transformation of the constitutional model and the launching of a general state reform.

3. THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE MODEL IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN

The events and processes taking place in the larger state on the Iberian peninsula can serve as a lesson for national minorities striving for autonomy in Central and Eastern Europe.

For the Hungarian national minority living in multinational states in our area the Spanish-Catalan solution – in terms of the cultural nation – has put the question of the scheme's validity and its implementation on the agenda. Political self-governance, personal and territorial autonomy, the maintenance of identity through the mother tongue as a possible official language, and the establishment and maintenance of the required institutional system have drawn attention to the adaptability of the democratic practice already valid in the European Union.

The comparative analyses in the field of social sciences have had a positive influence on the political processes as they have listed all the conditions and terms for the establishment and adaptation of various autonomy models, and have surveyed their similarities and differences, drawing the necessary conclusions.

Focusing on the world of analogies we can claim that the directives of the Spanish constitutional model in Catalonia that comprise the linguistic, cultural and political rights of minorities have largely contributed to the preservation of their national identities. The political effort of the Hungarian minorities living in the neighbouring countries also serves as evidence. The planned future autonomies in Transylvania (Romania), Highland (Slovakia), Subcarpathia (The Ukraine), Pannon-Croatia (Croatia) and Vojvodina (Serbia) presuppose...
forms of individual minority autonomy as well as communal minority autonomy that manifests itself in cultural, territorial, self-government, political, economic, and to a certain extent, foreign policy autonomy given to an autonomous region. This autonomous region would be composed of minorities that in certain settlements provide the majority of the population. The third possible type of autonomy is composed by the territorial ones in an autonomy region that possesses cultural, political, economical self-government rights as well as competence for the representation of the region in external relations.

Map 2. Ethnographical Composition of Hungary, 1910

Following the Catalan example, the process must include the formation of an effective institutional system, guarantees for minority interest representation, the economic prosperity of the area, a strong sense of regionality within the minority consciousness of the people, and a conscious assertion of communal self-identity. Financial resources are required for the maintainance supported by the national majority of the state, the ruling political elite and other social formations. Last but not least, the success of this arrangement requires a consensus-based relationship between the political parties in Hungary and the Hungarian political parties in the neighbourig countries as well as cultural and scientific foundations and civil societies on both sides of the border.

Beside parallels and analogies between the situation of Hungarian people in the Carpathian basin and Catalan people living in Catalonia, Spain, there are significant differences that have arisen in the course of national self-realisation. The present-day Hungarian situation dates back to the Treaty of Trianon, signed on 4th June 1920. The provisions of the Trianon peace dictate were maintained at the peace negotiations of Paris in 1947. This was the reason that the minority issue in the Carpathian basin got swept under the carpet, instead of being settled fair-mindedly and evenhandedly. Supported by international law, dictated by the interests of Great Powers, carried out through political forces, the dictate was in effect reinforced twice in three decades.
92 years have passed since 1920. During this period the percentage of the Hungarian population in the Carpathian basin has greatly changed due to assimilation, migration, forced population exchanges, political and economic disadvantages affecting minorities, persecution, injustice, reprisals and global tendencies governing our age.

According to the monograph published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Geographical Institute and Research Centre, by 2011 the number of Hungarians in the given area decreased from 46.7% (1920) to 40.1% (2001), whereas the population increased from 9,710,500 (1920) to 11,822,000 (2001). Reading the data there is no cause for joy because since 1980, which could be considered the peak year of population size, the numbers of Hungarian people have decreased by 1,581,300 from 13,403,300 to 11,822,000. In Hungary the number of the citizens dropped under 10 million.

Map 3. Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, 2011

In 1920 in Transylvania (Romania) 1,305,800 people declared themselves Hungarian. At that time the population in Transylvania was made up of 25.5% Hungarians. In 2001 the sources mentioned 1,416,800 Hungarians; this meant 19.6% of the population living in Transylvania, as the Romanians who had migrated into Transylvania had had higher birth-rates than Hungarians. The Romanian national census of 30-31 October 2011 reported that the population with Hungarian as a mother tongue is decreasing. At that time Romania had a population of 1,238,000 citizens of Hungarian nationality. It amounted to 6.5% of the whole Romanian population.

If the data of the national census can be taken as a trustworthy resource, it is clear that in the 10 years from 2002 to 2011, between two censuses, the number of ethnic Hungarians diminished by 178,800. (The official resources published a different figure: 194,000 people. The Romanian statistics are different from the ones which are reported in the monograph of HSA: in 2002 they stated that there were 1,432,000 people with Hungarian as their mother tongue). Over the past ten years the number of inhabitants in Romania has decreased by 2.6 million people. thus hardly exceeding 19 million. As the enclosed chart shows, the major reason for this is emigration from Romania to other countries, mainly within the EU.
Figure 1. Romanian emigration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>813,037</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>810,471</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>189,055</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>182,099</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>171,253</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>134,911</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>96,209</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>56,932</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>54,305</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>53,081</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>207,700</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum total</strong></td>
<td>2,769,053</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In consequence of these processes the proportion of Romanian Hungarians did not change significantly between 2002 and 2011. The Hungarian population in Romania must be taken as the largest nationality which comprises 6.5% of the entire population, compared to the 6.6% counted ten years ago. After the Hungarian minority the second largest community is represented by the Romanians with their 3.2% of the entire population. Their number is 619,000, which means an increase if we take the previous data: ten years ago their community consisted of 535,140 people.

In two Romanian districts the Hungarians outnumber other nations. In Hargita county the population is made up of 84.4% Hungarians and in Kovászna county, 73.6%. The proportion of Hungarian people is significant in Maros county (37.8%), Bihar county (25.2%) and Szilágy county (23.2%); at the same time in Kolozs county it only amounts to 15.7%.

Map 4. The distribution of the Hungarian population in Romanian districts, 2011

Source: www.recensamantromanania.ro
From the viewpoint of the whole population Hargita is the biggest, inhabited by the highest number of Hungarians (258 615 people). The county with the second largest Hungarian population is Maros county, with 200 988 Hungarians, the third one is Kovászna county (151 787) then the next counties are as follows: Bihar county (138 441), Szatmár county (113 541), Kolozs (103 457) and Szilágy counties (50 659).

What the above mentioned figures mean in reality must be carefully judged. In the Hargita district there are 304 969 people living there, which is made up of 258 615 Hungarians, 40 431 Romanians and 5422 Roma people. Maros county has 531 381 inhabitants, which is composed of 279 488 (52.65%) Romans, 200 989 Hungarians and 46 637 Romas (8.7%). The ethnic composition of Kovászna county is as follows: Hungarians (151 787), 45 560 Romanians and 8238 Romas. In the three counties forming 90% of Seklerland the proportion of Hungarians reaches 65.26%. Comparing these data to the Catalan case and taking European trends into consideration the demand of Hungarians for a cultural, political, territorial self-governmental autonomy must be considered reasonable, justified and desirable.

The Autonomy Statute was passed in Csikszereda on 4th September 2009 by the DUHR (Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania) and then a day later in Székelyudvarhely by the Sekler National Council at a self-government assembly meeting\(^{12}\). That day the flag and coat of arms previously used by the SNC and the Sekler anthem were declared as official symbols of Seklerland. The map of Seklerland divided into eight administrative areas (szék)\(^{13}\) was also introduced there.

Map 5. Seklerland

![Map of Seklerland](http://www.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Szekelyfoeld)

Data concerning the share of Hungarian population in the Romanian National Census of 2011 is relatively favourable for Hungarian minorities not only in Seklerland but in the northern part of Partium, too. In comparison with the figures of 2002 the number of the Hungarian population seemed to be stable whereas the number of the Romanian population was shown to be decreasing – because of mass emigration to foreign countries.
As far as population rates are concerned, the situation may be considered stable in Bihar, Szatmár and Szilágy counties, and North-Partium, Romania. In that region the rate of Hungarian population has decreased minimally but the rate of Romanians has significantly fallen, whereas in the central and the southern parts of Transylvania the rates have become disadvantageous or highly disadvantageous. In the settlements inhabited mainly by Romanians in Maros, Kolozs and Fehér counties assimilation is proceeding very fast. The emigration of Hungarian people either to the mother country or other (foreign) countries was an instrumental factor to this process. This phenomenon can be seen in Kolozsvár, even despite the fact that the town is the centre of Hungarian culture and education. The rate of the Hungarian population has continued to decrease over the past ten years: according to the census of 2011 the number of Hungarian people has been reduced to 16.04% in Kolozsvár, which means 49 426 Hungarian people living in the city. In the previous 2002 census the number of Hungarian residents of Kolozsvár amounted to 60 287, which meant 18.9% of the whole population. The tendency of decrease has become visible in the entire population of Kolozsvár. As the local paper Szabadság has reported on its website, there were 317 432 people living in the town in 2002 and that number is now reduced to 309 136 inhabitants.

**Figure 2. Sekler flag**

**Figure 3. Sekler coat of arms**

Taking plain numbers into consideration, next to Marosvásárhely it is Kolozsvár where Hungarians provide the largest population group. In Marosvásárhely the total number of inhabitants amounts to 127 849. This number is divided among three nationalities: Romanians (66 441 people; 51.9%), Hungarians (57 632; 44.87%) and Romas (3134; 2.54%). The Hungarian people outnumber other populations in the next further towns: Csikszereda, where 30 719 people (82%), out of 37 411 declared themselves Hungarian, whereas the number of the Romanians was 6734 (17%) and Romas counted 232 people.

Sepsiszentgyörgy’s total number of residents was 54 641 people in 2011. 76.7% of this was composed of Hungarians, which means 41 898 inhabitants. The number of Romanians was 12 142 people (22.2%).

Székelyudvarhely has a population of 22 268, with Hungarian residents as a majority.

In conclusion: the numbers of the Hungarian residents and ethnic rates can be regarded favourable although the total numbers of Hungarian residents are decreasing just like the total population of Romania., which has been reduced by 2.6 million people, i.e. by 12.1%.

The decrease of 193 807 in the Hungarian population equals 13.3%. According to the eclosed map this has had grave consequences as far as culture and identity are concerned in the counties of Seklerland and other Hungarian-inhabited settlements.

Ethnic Hungarians have endured significant losses in their numbers in Slovakia, Vojvodina (Serbia), Pannon-Croatia, and the Mura region, Örvidék and Slovenia. I think the different forms of autonomy mean contribution to keep the national identity. The grave loss can be revealed if the census carried out in 1910 is used as a starting point of research work. In 1910 the entire numbers of the Magyars in the Carpathian basin (which was 10 036 200), totalled 49.2% of the whole population of the area. The
proportion of Magyars amounted to 31.6% of the population in Transylvania, 30.2% in Slovakia, 28.0% in Vojvodina, 30.8% in Subcarpathia, 3.5% in Pannon-Croatia, 22.9% in the Mura region and 9% in Orvidék.

Comparing the above mentioned data with the ones of the national census taken in the countries of the Carpathian basin in the year 2011, the decrease of the Hungarian population may clearly be seen.

According to the census taken in Slovakia in 2011, (finished on 21 May 2011) the country had a population of 5 397 036. Over the previous ten years the number of Hungarians had diminished from 520 528 (9.4%) to 458 467 (8.49%), although there were 382 493 people living in Slovakia whose nationality was unknown. This amounted to 7.08% of the population.

In Serbia the census was held between 1st and 15th October 2011. The country had 7 120 666 inhabitants, which amounted to a 5% decrease in the number of people. In Vojvodina fewer than 2 million people (1 916 889) were taken record of. The fall in the population reached about 100 000. The migration balance is negative, although the number of inmigrants is growing; there are 15 000 immigrants that leave Vojvodina every year.

As for the Hungarian nationality in Vojvodina we have data that 12% of new births and 17% of the deceased belong to the Hungarian ethnic group. Forecasts indicate a serious decrease of the number of Magyars in the area: in 2002 14.3% of the residents were Hungarians; by 2011 it amounted to 13% only.

In Croatia the number of inhabitants is also decreasing. According to the census taken between 1st and 28th April 2011 the country had a population of 4 290 612, whereas the previous census showed 4 300 000 residents in Croatia. The number of Hungarians in Croatia did not decrease significantly but the main demographic tendencies do not seem to be favourable. At the time of the Trianon Treaty 120 000 people declared themselves Magyars in Croatia; in 1948 51 000 people; in 1953 48 000; in 1961 42 000; in 1971 35 000; in 1981 25 000; in 1991 22 000; in 2001 10 585, and in 2011 16 000 people considered themselves Hungarians. According to some research work by 2060 the Hungarians will no longer feature as a relevant demographic factor.

Sub-Carpathia, in the Ukraine, has a territory of 12 800 km² and it has a population of 1 254 160. According to the latest data 151 533 Hungarian people live in the territory divided into 13
districts. Beregszász with its 25,000 residents is regarded as the centre of the Hungarian-inhabited territory as half of the residents of the town belong to the Hungarian minority.

Map 7. Regions in Slovakia

Map 8. The Hungarian population in Slovakia

Map 9. Serbia

Source: http://www.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovakia

Source: hwww.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovakia

Source: Forrás: http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6z%C3%A9p-Szerbia

Source: http://www.erdely.ma/tarsmagyarsag.php?id=80368

Map 11. The ethnic map of Croatia (2001)

Source: http://www.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horvátország
Figure 4. The rate of the Hungarian Population in Vojvodina


Map 12. Districts in the Ukraine and Sub-Carpathia

Source: http://www.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karpatalja

Map 13. Subcarpathia Ukraine districts

Source: http://www.hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karpatalja
In conclusion it may be stated that “... the homeland of 90% of the entire Hungarian population, which amounts to 13-14 million people is the Carpathian basin, which is the thousand-year-old historic territory of the Hungarian state. Approximately 3 million Hungarians live beyond the boundaries of Hungary in other European countries. Those Hungarians are considered as ethnic minorities which outnumber the populations of 86 countries on the Earth e.g. Mongolia, Latvia, or Namibia. 9,4 million people who declare themselves Hungarian live in Hungary, 1,4 million in Transylvania, Romania, 520 000 in Slovakia, 290 000 in Vojvodina, Serbia, 151 000 in Sub-Carpathia, the Ukraine and 15 000 in Pannon-Croatia\textsuperscript{xiv}.

The Hungarian minority living beyond the boundaries of Hungary in the Carpathian basin constitutes a compact territorial unity- just like Catalans\textsuperscript{XV}.

\textbf{Map 14. Catalonia}

Source: http://www.matula.hu/index.php?section=article&rel=45&id=548

This fact and the previously outlined system of conditions, the principle of subsidiarity as a general organising principle of society, the rights of minorities to self-determination, present this minority with the opportunity to create a political ethnic minority-based self-government and create a self-governing with territorial autonomy in the given country at an upper middle level.

This solution does not contain any elements that would affect the status quo of international law. Dual nationality does not involve interference in the international affairs of another country. The legal regulation in terms of dual nationality between Spain and other Latin-American countries serves as a good example.

At the same time there are demonstrable differences in the historical position and the organisation of states between Catalonia, Spain and the case of Magyars in the Carpathian basin. Since the unification of the country in 1492 by the “Catholic Kings” – Izabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon - Catalonia has been a province of Spain with certain self-government rights but has remained a part of the unified Spanish kingdom. The Generalitat established in 1359 was only revived much later, in 1932, by a self-government Statute and was in the second step expanded under the institutional system of the new democracy in the Statutes of 2006. Catalans constitute 20% of the population of Spain.

Hungarian statehood in the Carpathian basin is 1000 years old and the rate of Hungarians in the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom in 1910 amounted to 49,2%. At present Hungarians are striving to achieve the peaceful unification of the nation via the establishment of identity-based political, cultural and self-governing autonomy. Finally we may state that the Spanish-Catalan solution involving the notion of the concept of the cultural nation may draw official attention to the issue of the validity and feasibility of this model in the case of minorities living in the multinational states of our region. The reality of political self-government, territorial autonomy, the preservation of identity and its connection to the official use of language as well as the creation and maintenance of the necessary institutional framework calls attention to the practicability of a democratic state-formation procedure already existing in the European Union. However, there should be absolutely no doubt that self-governments of various types, levels and foundation principles will continue to play an important role in the lives of states and the system of international relations.
NOTAS

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  10/1-2010-0029 at University of Pécs, Hungary.


2 José Linz (1992): Politics in a Multilingual Society with Dominant World Language. In: J. G. Savard and
  R. Vigeault (comps.): Les états multilingues. Problèmes et solutions. Presses de Université Laval,
  Québec, 1994, p. 423.

3 For a detailed discussion see: Roberto Blanco Valdés. Nacionalidades históricas y regiones sin historia.
  Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 2005

4 Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, the Balearics, the Basque Country, the Canaries, Cantabria, Castile La
  Mancha, Castile-Leon, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia, Navarre, La Rioja, the
  Valencian Community.

5 For Statutes of Self-Government Communities see:

6 The 28th February 1992 Autonomy Agreements, the Barcelona Declaration by the Catalan and Galician
  National Parties on 16th July 1998, the Pact of Estella (Lizarra) signed in Basque Country on 12th
  September, 1998, and several constitutional amendments and Constitutional Court decisions related
  to the issue.

7 At the behest of civic organisations a referendum on the independence of Catalonia was held on 13th
  December 2009 in more than 160 towns and villages with the participation of 700,000 voters. The ballot
  question was as follows: “Do you agree that the Catalan nation should become a state-of-law,
  independent, democratic and social, integrated in the European Union?” Although the result of the vote
  was non-binding, as according to the Constitution referendums may only be initiated by the Madrid
  government, Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero announced that he will not recognise the
  referendum. The referendum in any case was inexplicable, as only a little over 30% of registered
  voters cast their ballots and the referendum was not supported by the Generalitat either. Those who voted
  nevertheless decided for independence for Catalonia with a 95% majority. Several other organisations
  have voiced their intention to call for further referendums in 2010 in the major cities of the self-
  government community.

On the autonomy elections of November 25, 2012

Artur Mas, the leader of the Catalan Party Convergencia i Unio-CiU, governing in dominant position, was
having the campaign with the programme of establishing the Catalan independence. The CiU undertook to hold a
referendum on independence in 2016. Contrary to all expectation hoped but could not reach the absolute
majority. The CiU won merely 50 seats in Generalitat of 135. In comparison to the autonomy election in
2010 it meant the loss of 12 seats.

For the lack of the absolut majority the CiU will set out to solve the tasks of historic significance in the
new, stressful period of legislation relying on the radically proindependence party, the Catalonian
Republican Left (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya- ERC) which has 21 seats as well as the leftist radical List of People’s Unity (Candidatura d’Unitat Popular-CUP) not having taken past in the election of 2010 but obtaining 3 seats in 2012.

The CiU – agreed with ERC on December 18, 2012 took on declaration of referendum on independence in
2014, not in 2016.

http://www.gencat.cat/generalditat/eng/estatut/titol_pr
  eliminari.htm#i6 and/or Ley Orgánica 6/2006, 19 de
  julio, Sobre la reforma del Estatuto de Autonomía de
  Cataluña. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2006, núm. 172,
  p. 27270.

9 For a clear discussion of the debate unfolding around the issues of the langue component both in
  constitutional law and political science see: Alberto López Basaguren. Las lenguas oficiales entre
  Constitución y Comunidades Autónomas: ¿desarrollo o transformación del modelo constitucional? Revista
  Española de Derecho Constitucional, núm. 79, enero-abril de 2007, pp. 87-112; and Report of 932
  pages on constitutional reform published by Council of State (Spanish Kingdom) (El Informe del Consejo
  de Estado sobre la reforma constitucional. Texto del informe y debates académicos. Consejo de Estado-
  CEPC, Madrid, 2006, pp. 932). The Resolution of 28, June, 2010 passed by the Constitutional Court
  declared the New Autonomy statutum of Catalonia anti-constitutional. The political and juridical debates
  on this case has not finished yet. See: The Resolution of Constitutional Court: Pleno. Sentencia 31/2010,
  de 28 de junio de 2010. BOE núm. 172, de 16 de julio de 2010.

10 According to Spanish official sources Catalonia – behind Basque Country, Madrid and Navarre self-
  governmental communities – is the fourth in the ranking list from the viewpoint of GDP and economic
development, however scientific analyses say about the end of Catalanian „boom” El ocaso catalán (1975-
2010) Xavier Casals’ book in the subtitle of the author stands the question „Miracle or reality” in the focal
point this research. (Xavier Casals: El oasis catalán.1975-2010, ¿espejismo o realidad? Edhasa,
  Barcelona, 2010).

11 Magyarország térképeken. (Károly Kocsis and Ferenc Schweitzer, eds.). Magyar Tudományos
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  autonomia-
These are: Maros, Udvarhely, Seψi, Orbai, Bardoc-Miklösvár, Csík, Gyergyó, Kézdi. In these regions an indicative rederendum was held on 7th October 2006.


The Balearic Islands are also a Catalan-speaking autonomous province of the Kingdom of Spain. Valenciano, spoken in the Valencian Self-Government Community, may also be regarded a dialect of Catalan. Catalan is also the official language of Andorra and not only Basque but also Catalan is understood in territories of France near the Catalan border. According to official data Catalan is the ninth largest language of the European Union. The Catalan-speaking area comprises 68 000 square km, with a population of 13 530 000. Within this, the government rights of the Self-Government Community of Catalonia cover 32000 square km with 7 500 000 inhabitants.