

Why should the Cornish be recognised as a national minority within the UK?

As described in the Framework Convention
for the Protection of National Minorities

Yth On Ni A'n Le Ma

We Are Of This Place

Yth on ni a'n le ma	<i>We are of this place</i>
Ni re berth hy ebrennow	<i>We suffer her skies</i>
Ni re gervyas agan trevow	<i>We have carved our towns</i>
Diworth hy menydhyow	<i>From her hillsides</i>
Ha ni a soenas	<i>And we have charmed</i>
Hy holonn voen	<i>Her mineral heart</i>
Ni re vywas rygdhi	<i>We have lived for it</i>
Merwys rygdhi	<i>Died for it</i>
Trevys yeyn rygdhi	<i>Grown cold for it</i>
Friys rygdhi	<i>Fried for it</i>
Diworth an bannow Bronn Weneli	<i>From the peaks of Brown Willy</i>
Dhe Dhorkoth dhown	<i>To deep Dolcoath</i>
Ni re vywas rygdhi	<i>We have lived for it</i>
Merwys rygdhi	<i>Died for her</i>
Trevys yeyn rygdhi	<i>Grown cold for her</i>
Friys rygdhi	<i>Fried for her</i>
Yth on ni a'n ma.	<i>We are of this place.</i>

Paul Farmer
(Kernewek translation by Pol Hodge)



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Berrskrif gweythresek



Yn unn aswonvos an Gernowyon avel minorityta kenedhlek a-berth y'n Ruvaneth Unys dell veu deskryfys y'n Kuntelles Framweyth rag Difresyans a Vinorytys Kenedhlek a via fordh heb kost dhe afina pella bri an RU avel bro hag a solempen ha skoodhya diversita a'y thrigoryon. Y tiskwedhsa ynwedh diblanseth an bobel gernewek, hag avonsya amkanow erbysek a Gernow, ha'n re na an Ruvaneth Unys dien.

Kernow re omjersyas dasserghyans an taves kernewek, kovheans solempnius a dhiwysyanseth Kernow, diskwedhyans krev a honanieth der an Niveryans ha dres oll yn-mysk tus yowynk, displetyans krev yn fylm, lyen, gwariji, sport ha politegieth. Pub a'n re ma a dhastewyn hy savla fyrv gans an Teylu Keltek.

Agan tus yowynk yw troboyntel dhe'n sewena dhevedhek a Gernow. Aswonvos yn-dann an Kuntelles Framweyth rag Difresyans a Vinorytys Kenedhlek a wra skoodhya speda erbysek, afina gonisogeth Kernow war wariva an RU ha keswlasek ha gallosegi agan tus yowynk dhe omaswon gwell gans aga honanieth wonisogethek. Y hwra kenertha studhow may hyll tus kernewek omglewes gordhys ha talvesys yn settyansow kowethasek, oberi ha sodhogel.

An paper a dhevnydh styr ledanna a'n pyth yw minorityta kenedhlek, dell veu derivys gans Kessedhek Kussulya KFMG Konsel Europa:

An Kessedhek Kussulya KFMG Konsel Europa a breder an gor-fydhys war an breusverk 'bagas-hilek' heb arbrisy an perthynuster possybyl a vreusverkow erel, a alsa sewya yn ekskludyans a vagasow neb a's teves chalenjys laghel dhe vos komprehendys.

Y hwra provia jynnweyth dresto may hyll an Gernowyon fondya ha krevhe kolmow gans bagasow erel yw grontys gre hevelep dres Europa ha war an norvys. Hemma a wra provia yn y dro chonsyow rag moy a geschanjyow freth, nag usi yn unnik yn fordh a wonisogeth, mes ynwedh yn fordhow erbysek ha kenwerthek.

Kernow gans moy a gyfyans, attes gensi hy honan ha kenerthys gans aswonvos a'y dhiblanseth, a sev dhe wari rol posedhek ha dynamek a-berth y'n Ruvaneth Unys. Aswonvos a assa rag avonsyans brassa a negysyow kernewek, gonisogeth ha honanieth a-berth y'n Ruwvaneth Unys, Europ ha pella, ha provia rosweyth parys a gestav gans ranndiryow erel hag a omjers seulabrys aswonnvos a'ga dihevelepter. Henna a servsa an prowyow erbysek ha gonisogethek a Gernow ha'n RU ledanna.

Dhyworth poynt a vu a savla Kernow y'n RU, gre Minorityta Kenedhlek a servsa dhe grevhe hemma dre dhiskwedhes y hyll hi gwari rann vewek yn kowethas predennek, ha kevri dhe ddiversita solempnys an RU.

Executive summary

“A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture”.

John Hutchinson & Anthony D Smith Oxford University Press 1994

Acknowledging the Cornish as a national minority within the United Kingdom as described in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities would be a cost-free way to further enhance the UK's reputation as a country that celebrates and supports the diversity of its inhabitants. It would also demonstrate the distinctiveness of the Cornish people, and further Cornwall's economic objectives, and those of the United Kingdom as a whole.

Cornwall has enjoyed a revival of the Cornish language, a celebratory commemoration of Cornwall's industrialisation, a strong expression of identity through the census and particularly amongst young people, a strong showing in film, literature, theatre, sport and politics. All of these reflect its firm place with the Celtic family.

Our young people are crucial to the future success of Cornwall. Recognition under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities will empower our young people to better identify with their own cultural identity, enhance Cornwall's culture on a UK and international stage and support Cornwall's economic prosperity. It will encourage conditions in which young Cornish people can feel respected and valued in social, working and formal settings.

A wider definition of what a national minority is, as stated by the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Advisory Committee (FCNM):

The Council of Europe FCNM Advisory Committee considers the over-reliance on the 'racial-group' criterion without evaluating the possible relevance of other criteria, may result in exclusions of groups that have legitimate claims to be covered.

It will provide a mechanism whereby the Cornish can establish and strengthen links with other groups accorded similar status across Europe and around the world. This will in turn provide opportunities for more vigorous exchanges, not just in terms of culture, but also in economic and commercial ways.

A more confident Cornwall, comfortable with itself and encouraged by the recognition of its distinctiveness, stands to play a positive and dynamic role within the United Kingdom. Recognition would allow for a greater promotion of Cornish business, culture and identity within the UK, Europe and further afield, and provide a ready-made network of contacts with other areas which already enjoy recognition of their difference. This would serve the economic and cultural interests of Cornwall and of the wider UK.

National minority status would serve to strengthen Cornwall's place in the UK by demonstrating that it can play an active part in British society, and contribute to the celebrated diversity of the UK.



Acknowledgements

A significant number of individuals and organisations have contributed to this paper and through the Cornish Minority Reports One and Two.



These combined efforts over a number of years have resulted in the Coalition Government's intent to recognise the Cornish as a national minority under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, as announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander MP on 24 April 2014.

Cllr John Pollard
Cllr Bert Biscoe
Cllr Julian German
Cllr Dick Cole
Cllr Malcolm Brown
Cllr Douglas Scrafton

Dan Rogerson MP
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Hugh Rowe
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Jim Pengelly

Gorsedh Kernow
The Federation of Old
Cornwall Societies
Celtic Congress
(Kernow)
Cornish Constitutional
Convention
Joseph Rowntree
Reform Trust
Tinopolis
Cornish Solidarity
Eurolang
ELEN

Introduction

Why should the Cornish be recognised as a national minority within the United Kingdom as described in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities?

Because this would be a cost-free way to recognise the distinctiveness of the Cornish people, and to further Cornwall's economic objectives, and those of the United Kingdom (UK) as a whole.



National and linguistic minorities are an asset for the economic and cultural development of all countries. These minorities represent a potential that can often be neglected. Yet when this potential is properly harnessed, it can stimulate cultural and economic activities and make a strong contribution to the prosperity of a country, in this case the UK.

National minorities in some of Europe's wealthiest areas, such as South Tyrol¹ and the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein, enjoy full recognition as a national minority under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

This recognition has led to the national minority feeling more confident and assertive, which is reflected in greater private sector activity across all economic sectors.

Cornwall is an economically disadvantaged part of the United Kingdom as recognised by its continuing qualification for EU Convergence funding. Yet there is significant potential for its economy to develop in ways that would bring not just local benefit, but would also be to the advantage of the UK economy in many ways. Recognition will provide legitimisation for the Cornish to build upon its already widely recognised brand in a positive, productive and distinctive way.

Cornwall is geographically and culturally distinct from much of the rest of the United Kingdom. It enjoys a strong brand image as a unique blend of 'people and place' where the environment is valued both as a business asset and an inspiration for life.

"The culture, communities and environment of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will remain special and unique." Guiding principle of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Nature Partnership²

Our young people, crucial to the future of Cornwall, increasingly identify themselves as Cornish, yet too many have to leave for purposes of education and employment. National minority status, by recognising not just their distinctiveness, but also the legitimacy of this distinctiveness, would generate greater self confidence amongst the Cornish, and in particular young people. A consequent increase in economic activity, would enable more people to remain in Cornwall. It would enable them to identify with their cultural identity and develop their own lives in the way they would prefer.

National minority status would serve to strengthen the 'Cornish' brand, enhancing its place as an internationally recognised trademark, and thus further support the aims and ambitions of the Economic Growth Strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This would offer a significant opportunity to add value to the circa €590m EU funding, which will be match funded to give a total of £1bn being delivered from 2015.

We believe recognition would improve social capital for Cornwall by creating new links between our communities and enable a greater understanding of our shared values, so that the people of Cornwall can further work together to bring greater prosperity.

¹ In 2006 the regional gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant in South Tyrol was 32,900 EUR 31% higher than the national average of Italy (25,100 EUR), plus with an unemployment rate half that of the rest of Italy.

² <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/5830535/CIoSLNP-Draft-Framework.pdf>

Communities of all shapes and sizes in Cornwall have always had a heightened sense of community and civic pride. So much so, that Cornwall has one of the most vibrant and active voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors in the UK. Over 37% of the adult population in Cornwall volunteer not only for themselves but for their communities.³ The social capital generated by our communities produces over £500m worth of economic benefit and well-being to Cornwall each year. We believe recognition under the Framework Convention would support further development of this.

A more confident Cornwall, comfortable with itself and encouraged by the recognition of its distinctiveness, stands to play a positive and dynamic role within the United Kingdom. Recognition would allow for a greater promotion of Cornish business, culture and identity within the UK, Europe and further afield, and provide a ready-made network with other areas which already enjoy recognition of their difference. This would serve the economic and cultural interests of Cornwall and of the wider UK.

From the point of view of Cornwall's place in the UK, national minority status would serve to strengthen this by demonstrating that it can play an active part in British society, and contribute to the celebrated diversity of the UK.



³ Cornwall and Isles of Scilly EU Employment and Skills Strategy, 2014 <http://www.cornwallandislesofscillylep.com/assets/file/Employment%20and%20Skills/AP%20Draft%20Employment%20and%20Skills%20Strategy%20v2.1.pdf>

Cornish – defining a national minority



“Cornwall is a nation with its own identity, culture, traditions and history”.

A declaration signed by 50,000 people in 2001.

At present HM Government’s main criterion for inclusion under the Framework Convention is the definition of ‘racial groups’ under the Equalities Act 2010 which has superseded the Race Relations Act 1976.

Until now the Government has used the above definition when considering inclusion for the Framework Convention. This definition is too narrow. We and others propose a wider and more positive definition to include a broader set of characteristics.

The Council of Europe FCNM Advisory Committee considers the over-reliance on the ‘racial-group’ criterion without evaluating the possible relevance of other criteria, may result in exclusions of groups that have legitimate claims to be covered.⁴

A wider definition of a national minority includes national characteristics as set out in the national origins section of this paper: language, religion, traditions, politics, culture, food and drink and sport.

This wider definition has been tested in Court, Lord Fraser in the case of *Mandla v. Dowell Lee* (1983):

“a group which was a segment of the population distinguished from others by a sufficient combination of shared customs, beliefs, traditions and characteristics derived from a common or presumed common past, even if not drawn from what in biological terms was a common racial stock in that it was that combination which gave them an historically determined social identity in their own eyes and in those outside the group”.

To argue that to be included as a national minority under the Framework Convention, an act of discrimination against an individual has to be proven in Court. This would suggest that the Cornish would suffer through a lack of recognition until such time as the rights of one member of the Cornish minority group were infringed to the extent that they have a cause of action which can be determined by the Courts.

⁴ P61 Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities, compilation of opinions of the advisory committee relating to article 3 of the Framework Convention.

In effect this would seem contrary to the stated intentions of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities⁵ recognises this in their response:

“The Advisory Committee notes that the Government of the United Kingdom has not accepted the representations made by Cornish organisations and individuals concerning the possible inclusion of the Cornish under the Framework Convention’s scope of application. These representations, which began as the submission of information concerning the Celtic identity and the specific history, language and culture of the Cornish, have gained in magnitude over the years, culminating most recently in an application for judicial review concerning the Government’s non-inclusion of the Cornish in the second State Report. The Advisory Committee considers that the “racial group” criterion, which requires a Court to determine liability in a claim of racial discrimination, appears to be too rigid to accommodate the situation of the Cornish, whose “separate identity and distinctiveness” is recognised by the Government of the United Kingdom in their second State Report”.



Young children reading one of the ‘Porth’ series of Cornish language story books, the flagship resource for teaching Kernewek in schools.

⁵ Second Opinion on the United Kingdom 6 June 2007, paragraph 33

The Cornish – who are we?



National origins

The territorial boundary of Cornwall, as it stands today, was first recorded in 936AD when King Hywel of Cornwall and King Athelstan of Wessex agreed the east bank of the Tamar as the border between the two territories. The Normans maintained the territorial integrity of Cornwall in 1068 with the creation of an Earldom, and the territory was bestowed with a unique and distinctive constitutional position in 1337, through the creation of the Royal Duchy, with a Stannary Parliament and Courts. Beyond the sixteenth century laws were still applied in '*Anglia et Cornubia*' (England and Cornwall).

The Cornish call their territory *Kernow*, a term believed to have been in use for at least 2000 years. The name Cornwall, like Wales, is derived from the Saxon word *wealh* meaning foreigner, the *Corn* element possibly meaning peninsula, thus *peninsula of foreigners*.

In early English references, Cornwall is sometimes described as 'West Wales'.

"the whole Countrie of Britain...is divided into iiii partes; whereof the one is inhabited of Englishmen, the other of Scottes, the third of Wallshemen, [and] the fowerthe of Cornishe people, which all differ emonge them selves, either in tongue, either in manners, or ells in lawes and ordinaunces" - 'Anglica Historia' Polydore Vergil 1535.

Cornwall as a distinct identity is recognised by at least thirty different languages across the world, for example.

Kernewek (Cornish) – Kernow

Cymraeg (Welsh) – Cernyw

Gàidhlig (Scots Gaelic) – A' Chorn

Asturianu (Asturian) – Cornualles

Na hEireann (Irish) – Corn na Breataine

Brezhoneg (Breton) -- Kernev-Veur

Català (Catalan) – Cornualla

Castellano (Castilian) – Cornualles

Euskara (Basque) – Kornualles

Français (French) – Cornouailles

Italiano (Italian) – Cornovaglia

Latīna (Latin) – Cornubia

Polski (Polish) – Kornwalia



Johannes Honter's map of 1561 showing Anglia, Cornubia, Scotia and Wallia as the constituent territories of Britannica.

Language

The Cornish language, or Kernewek, is a key indicator of Cornish national identity. Cornish, Welsh and Breton, developed from an indigenous British language, and were mutually intelligible in the early medieval period. Cornish and Welsh developed differently as the British-speaking population became separated by an English (Anglo-Saxon) speaking population.

We would argue that it is entirely logical that the Cornish having been recognised by the UK Government in 2005 when Kernewek was included under Part II of the European Charter for the Protection of Regional Minority Languages, the people who historically and presently speak it should also receive recognition as a national minority.

Interest in the language is growing across Cornwall and can be seen in street signage, place names and personal names.

The European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages and the FCNM act to complement each other. Recognition under the Framework Convention means that the development of Cornish would be further safeguarded and inclusion will create the environment for Cornish to become an even greater asset for Cornwall and the UK.

The Cornish language plays a positive and sustainable role in the development of Cornwall's economy. Preserving our language requires a long term strategy, taking into account the need to preserve our culture for future generations.

On 21 March 2014 the Deputy Prime Minister announced the latest funding package worth £120,000 to the Cornish Language Partnership. This is in addition to £400,000 previously awarded in 2011. Mr Clegg said:

“It’s a priceless part of Cornwall’s heritage and right we have played our part to keep the Cornish language alive. Cornish is central to Cornwall’s heritage and a living and growing language is what makes the region distinct”.

The 1000th Cornish street sign ‘Marine Drive’ / ‘Rosva Vorek’ was put up in Looe on 29 January 2014.⁶



⁶ Cornwall Council news, March 2014

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/media-releases/news-from-2014/news-from-february-2014/language-milestone-reached-as-the-cornish-language-partnership-completes-1000-cornish-street-signs/?page=36323>

A recent Cornish Language Partnership survey found:

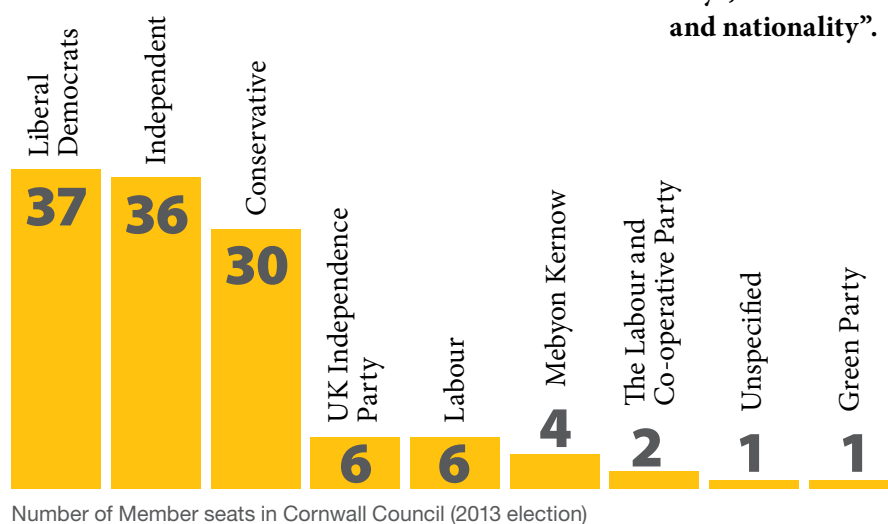
“The different places where people can engage with the language are growing. In particular, many people first encounter spoken Cornish at wider cultural events; storytelling, music and dance were particularly singled out”.

Religion, traditions and politics

The Cornish have a rich history of religious traditions. The religious plays of medieval and early modern Cornwall were written in Kernewek and performed in numerous open-air rounds known as *plen-an-gwari*, examples of which can still be found at St Just in Penwith and Perran Round near Perranporth. The *plen-an-gwari* is a uniquely Cornish cultural monument and is not found elsewhere in the UK.

In Cornwall today, religious expression is dominated by the practice and traditions of non-conformism, in particular Methodism. Per head of population, Methodist Church attendance is three times higher in Cornwall than in England.

This non-conformism is also reflected in the distinctiveness of Cornish Politics, which can be seen from the varied make-up of Cornwall Council Members, which has a strong Independent and Mebyon Kernow representation.



Culture

Cornish cultural identity is keenly expressed in the observance of celebrations such as St Piran’s Day (March 5th) and Flora Day (May 8th). Originally associated with Cornish miners, St Piran is regarded as the patron saint of Cornwall. His banner, a white cross on a field of black, is recognised the world over as the national flag of Cornwall. The flag is displayed throughout the year at events as a symbol of Cornish identity.

2014 St Piran’s Day events in Redruth and Truro saw thousands of people turn up to peacefully and joyously celebrate St Piran’s Day as an expression of their culture. Numerous other celebrations were held in villages across Cornwall, the UK and internationally.

Participation in traditions and Cornish cultural life is lively both in Cornwall and around the world where Cornish emigrants settled in numbers, as evidenced by the Cornish Associations throughout England, North America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Cuba and Mexico. The Cornish Gorseth, re-established in 1928, is closely associated with the Gorsedds of Wales and Brittany and confers honours on people for services to Cornwall and Cornish culture. The Federation of Old Cornwall Societies was established in 1924 and today forty Old Cornwall Societies work together to collect and maintain:

“all those ancient things that make the spirit of Cornwall - its traditions, its old words and ways, and what remains of its Celtic language and nationality”.

Clockwise from top left:

People celebrating St Piran's Day 2013, near Perranporth, Cornwall.

St Piran's Day celebrations, Truro, Cornwall in 2014.⁷

Grand Bard, Maureen Fuller, celebrating St Piran's Day in Australia 2014, with members of the Cornwall Association of Victoria.



⁷ Photographer: Jon Jacobs 2014

Food and drink

Cornish food and drink is a strong brand recognised internationally.

There are numerous food and drink festivals throughout the year in Cornwall celebrating Cornish food and drink, for example; the Falmouth and Rock Oyster Festivals, the Looe Festival of Food and Drink, Fowey Mussel Fest, Newlyn and Newquay Fish Festivals and the Cornish Pasty Festival.

The pasty is considered the national food of Cornwall and many believe it symbolises Cornishness with its intrinsic links to Cornwall's mining history. The significance of the Cornish pasty was recognised by the European Union in 2001 when it was awarded with Protected Geographical Indication status.⁸ 2012 saw large numbers of people demonstrating in Cornwall against the introduction of taxation on pasties.⁹



Even the bad weather could not dampen the Cornish enthusiasm for pasties; the pasty tax march, 2012 in Falmouth, Cornwall.¹⁰

⁸ Cornish Pasty Association, 2014 <http://www.cornishpastyassociation.co.uk/about-pgi/frequently-asked-questions/>

⁹ West Briton, April 2012, <http://www.westbriton.co.uk/Hundreds-march-pasty-tax-Falmouth/story-15951414-detail/story.html>

¹⁰ Brian Robinson Photographer of the Pasty Tax march, April 2012.

Sport

Sport is a powerful indicator of cultural distinctiveness for the Cornish. Traditional sports such as hurling, Cornish wrestling or wrasslin, and Cornish pilot gig racing are very popular and unique to Cornwall.

Cornwall significantly contributes to the international pilot gig world championships, held in the Isles of Scilly annually, and celebrated its 25th year in 2014, hosting 130 gigs and their crews.

An estimated 40,000 Cornish people, 10% of Cornwall's population travelled to Twickenham to attend the 1991 Rugby County Championship Final, vastly outnumbering opposition supporters.

Cornwall also has its own rugby club based in London, the London Cornish RFC based close to Richmond Park, this is alongside the London Welsh, London Scottish and London Irish teams.

Cornish wrasslin



How we self-identify as Cornish



Identifying as Cornish is important to many people both inside and outside of Cornwall.

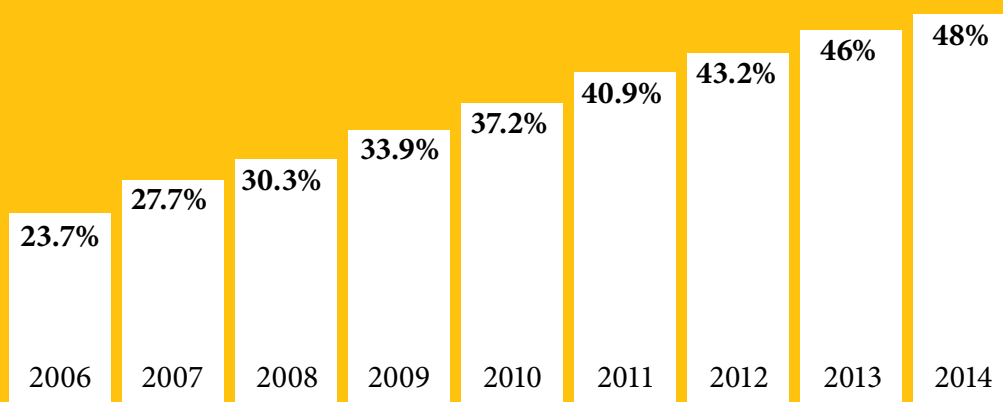
Recent figures from the Census and Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) show the number of people identifying themselves as Cornish is increasing. This is especially true with younger people, who have shown a 3% increase year on year in the PLASC.

73,200 or 14% of the population living in Cornwall have self identified as Cornish in the 2011 census,¹¹ a significant number considering no tick box option was available, with people having to write in 'Cornish' under the 'Other' option. Drawing on examples from elsewhere we believe that this figure would be significantly higher if a tick box was provided, similar to the levels represented in the PLASC.

Wales and the census:

In the 2001 census people were able to define themselves as Irish or Scottish, but there was no option to tick Welsh. The omission in 2001 sparked widespread protests, resulting in a campaign for the form to be changed. A Welsh tick-box was subsequently included in the 2011 census.

In 2001 14.4% of residents in Wales wrote in their national identity as Welsh. Following the inclusion of the Welsh tick box in the 2011 Census this increased by nearly two thirds to 66% of the residents of Wales expressed their national identity as Welsh.



Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) show that people identifying themselves as Cornish is increasing

¹¹ http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/data-and-research/data-by-topic/2011-census/2011-census-cornish-identity/?page=26948&altTemplate=_Standard

The impact of including the Cornish as a national minority

Managing expectations

Cornwall Council recognises that public expectation may exceed the initial benefits of being bestowed national minority status. What it will bring to the Cornish is visibility, confidence and legitimacy.

Cornish would be consistently recognised across Government departments and public bodies and a parity of respect with the other autochthonous minorities in the UK. Cornwall Council will work hard to ensure that the people of Cornwall fully understand what inclusion in the Framework Convention means and does not mean for Cornwall.



The Children's Dance at the Helston Furry. The Furry is another important Cornish cultural event and includes a performance of the *Hal-an-Tow* mystery play.

Are there additional burdens on Government departments?

It is recognised that the Government could perceive that bestowing minority status on Cornwall could increase the burdens on Government departments, local authorities, and other public bodies in order to comply with the terms of the Framework Convention.

Cornwall Council believes that, far from putting an extra burden on Government departments and public bodies, national minority status will remedy the confusion which sometimes exists in some Government departments and public bodies. For example, the Office for National Statistics has recognised and recorded 'Cornish' as a national identity in the census since 2001. However the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills will not register Company Directors who identify themselves as Cornish, as it does not recognise this to be a 'valid nationality'. Clarifying this sort of confusion will reduce the burden Government departments and public bodies currently face.

Cornwall Council already has in place an Equality and Diversity Framework which states:

“...Cornwall Council will also take full account of those people in our communities that identify themselves as Cornish and who consider themselves a minority group. We will collect data about Cornish ethnicity and encourage our partners to do so”.

Are there additional burdens to the UK for European reporting?

European reporting burdens regarding the Cornish language and the European Charter for regional or Minority Languages are themselves light. The UK Government reports to the Council of Europe on a three year cycle and on each occasion ask the Cornish Language Partnership to prepare material to populate the report.

The assertion that inclusion of Cornish under the ECRML is sufficient for Cornwall is, in our view, flawed. Whilst the ECRML and the Framework Convention complement each other in certain areas they do serve very different purposes. Professor Robert Dunbar, Council of Europe advisory expert has stated:

“The Language Charter does not make reference to concepts such as ‘minorities’ or ‘national minorities’, and indeed does not define its obligations by reference to people – either individuals or groups – but by reference to languages themselves”.¹²

It is our belief that the inclusion of Cornish under the ECRML does not therefore bestow any recognition on the Cornish people; rather it seeks to protect and promote a minority language as a threatened aspect of the UK’s and Europe’s cultural heritage. However, inclusion for Cornwall under the Framework Convention formally recognises the Cornish as a national minority.

Any increase in reporting obligations will largely fall to Cornwall Council or nominated NGO’s who will provide the Government with the necessary information to submit their compliance reports.

¹² (Filling the Frame – Five years of monitoring the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (2004) – Council of Europe Publishing)

¹³ <http://duchyofcornwall.org/bona-vacantia.html>

¹⁴ (2012) http://www.britishirishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/attachments/244192_BIC_AnRpt2013_WEB.pdf

What about the English counties?

Some have raised concerns that the inclusion of the Cornish under the Framework Convention might encourage people in English counties to seek inclusion. However, we believe that the Cornish have readily demonstrated our national origins which differ entirely from the English counties.

- No English county boasts a distinct Celtic language recognised by the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the UK Government.
- No English county has been shown on maps or recorded by historians as being one of the four constituent nations of Britain.
- No English county has its own name in over 30 different languages of the world.
- No English county has such a distinctive political tradition which includes Mebyon Kernow (MK). They are a Cornish political party which celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 2011. MK currently has four Councillors’ on Cornwall Council and will contest each of the Cornish constituencies in the 2015 General Election.
- No English county has the same unique constitutional status regarding Bona Vacantia. When someone dies in Cornwall with no will or surviving relatives their estate passes to the Duchy of Cornwall.¹³
- No English county has full observer status on the British-Irish Council, Cornwall does by virtue of its language.¹⁴
- Unlike the Cornish, English county identifiers were not recognised as ‘national’ or ‘ethnic’ for the purposes of the 2011 Census.
- Unlike the Cornish, people living in English counties have not campaigned to be recognised as a national minority under the Framework Convention.



The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Barge - 'The Gloriana' on the 3 June 2012. Flying the flags of the constituent territories of the UK including Cornwall.

The advantages of including the Cornish people in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Inclusion in the Framework Convention will serve to further enhance the United Kingdom's reputation as a country that celebrates and supports the diversity of its inhabitants. Furthermore, it has the potential to improve the economic interests of both Cornwall and the UK as a whole.

A UK that demonstrates its self-confidence by supporting the inclusion of the Cornish people in the Framework Convention will benefit, alongside the Cornish people themselves. Recognition will serve to strengthen the confidence of our young people and that they are encouraged to identify with their cultural identity, and that this is valued by the rest of the UK.

It will provide a mechanism whereby Cornish people can establish and strengthen links with other groups accorded similar status across Europe and around the world. This will in turn provide opportunities for more vigorous exchanges, not just in terms of culture, but also in economic and commercial ways, that will benefit not just Cornwall, but the UK more widely.

The Cornish 'brand' is already well-known and admired in other parts of the UK; inclusion in the framework will serve to advertise it further afield.

We are not aware of any English county or region within England that can demonstrate such strong evidence as to why they should be considered as a national minority under the Framework Convention.

In Cornwall we have seen inclusion into the Celtic family, a revival of the Cornish language, a celebratory commemoration of Cornwall's industrialisation, a strong expression of identity through the Census and particularly amongst young people, a strong showing in film, literature, theatre, sport and politics. As seen in the Celtic Film Festival 2014 documentary enclosed.¹⁵

¹⁵ Special episode of Heno aired 8th April 2014 by Tinopolis. With the DVD reference on page 24.



Recognition under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities will positively impact Cornwall's economic prosperity, will enhance Cornwall's culture on a UK and international stage and will empower our young people to be better enabled to identify with their own cultural identity. It will encourage conditions in which young Cornish people can feel respected and un-self-conscious in social, working and official settings. Our young people are crucial to the future success of Cornwall.

Recognition would give confidence and improve attainment, invigorate innovation and creativity and enrich not just the Cornish but UK society as a whole.





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