The Euskalduna Bilbao Basque Language Commission approved our language criteria on February 3, 2025. This report contains the general guidelines for the use of the two official languages of the Basque Country and aims to establish a series of linguistic criteria for application in all departments of Euskalduna Bilbao.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The establishment of these linguistic criteria pursues three main objectives:

- To guarantee the linguistic rights of Basque citizens and achieve effective linguistic equality in their communication with Euskalduna Bilbao. In this regard, all necessary actions will be taken to overcome any obstacles that prevent achieving this goal.
- To normalise and promote the use of Basque at Euskalduna Bilbao, so that Basque is also a service and working language.
- To offer some example good practices and ensure that Euskalduna Bilbao becomes a leader in the normalisation of the use of the Basque language.

CRITERIA FOR THE USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

1st AXIS: MANAGEMENT

1.0.1. GENERAL MANAGEMENT OF THE BASQUE LANGUAGE

- The management of official languages is part of the general institutional management system.
- To safeguard and enforce citizens' linguistic rights, as well as to achieve equal use of both languages, Euskalduna Bilbao has agreed on the following:
  - 2024-2027 Strategic Plan
  - 2024-2025 Management Plan
  - 2025 Linguistic Criteria
- Euskalduna Bilbao has the following technical and institutional resources to implement the plans for Basque language use:

- **Basque language service coordination group**: This group is made up of the person responsible for the Basque Language Service and the external technical adviser.
- **Basque Language Commission**: The Basque Language Commission is made up of the head of the Basque Language Service, the external technical adviser, representatives from the departments, and the director.

1.0.2. LEADERSHIP

- The Euskalduna Bilbao Basque Language Committee will promote language management, with those responsible for each area being responsible for implementing said language management and disseminating information related therewith to their colleagues.
- Those responsible will participate proactively in the design, development, and monitoring of the Basque language use plan.

1.0.3. STAFF

- The organisation will inform its staff about the language use plan, the management plan, and the approved language criteria so that employees are always aware of their institution's vision and strategy regarding language management, as well as the language they must use to communicate when performing their duties.

1.0.4. LANGUAGE ABILITY

- Euskalduna Bilbao will organise and review the language profiles and mandatory dates at the beginning of each planning period. These are the main goals of the review:
  - For Euskalduna to show a commitment to the normalisation of Basque in the workplace.
  - To consolidate the achievements made in normalising the Basque language and to obtain the maximum possible return from all efforts made by those responsible and staff.

- Political and technical leaders, as well as the organisation's staff will work in Basque to the extent possible (in accordance with their linguistic proficiency) and will strive to promote Basque as a working language in their departments. Governmental institutions will provide staff with the necessary tools and resources so they can carry out their work in Basque.

1.0.5. DISSEMINATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING THE USE OF BASQUE

- All players involved will participate in initiatives to learn about and share experiences of normalising and revitalising the use of Basque, sharing their best practices and learning from the best practices of others.

1.0.6. LANGUAGE CLAUSES

PUBLIC CONTRACTS

- In contracts signed by Euskalduna Bilbao, the entity will analyse the possibility of including any clauses necessary (depending on the case) to guarantee citizens' access to the activities/services covered by the contract under the same language conditions as those required of the entities themselves, always taking into account compliance with regulations on the official nature of both Basque and Spanish.
- Euskalduna Bilbao will uphold the dual official status scheme (Basque and Spanish) for language in public contracts. Consequently, language requirements will be set forth in the specific administrative clauses in accordance with the scope of the contract in question.
- Monitoring compliance with language requirements is the responsibility of the board of directors through the designated contract manager. Failure to comply with language requirements will result in the application of rules for breach of contract.

2nd AXIS: USE

2.1.- SERVICE LANGUAGE

2.1.1. GRAPHICS

SIGNS (FIXED AND TEMPORARY)

- All interior and exterior signs (fixed or temporary) for offices and other infrastructure at Euskalduna Bilbao will be written in both official languages, regardless of their format, always prioritising Basque.
- Signage may be in Basque only in the following cases:
    - When the text is very similar in both Basque and Spanish.
    - When the sign in Basque does not cause confusion.
    - When the message is accompanied by a pictogram that makes it easy and unambiguous to understand.

AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS

- General verbal messages (broadcast via loudspeakers, other audio devices, and similar pieces of equipment) will be delivered first in Basque and then in Spanish.
- These announcements may only be made in Basque when the linguistic characteristics of the message recipients so allow.

PUBLICATIONS

- Euskalduna Bilbao publications will be made available in Basque and Spanish, with priority given to Basque through orthotypography and text placement.
    - If the texts in Basque and Spanish are divided into columns, the Basque content will appear on the left side and the Spanish content on the right side.
    - Some form-type documents primarily request information (name and surname, address, telephone number, etc.). When this is the case, our recommendation is to place both languages side by side, first in Basque.

- If each version of the text is on a side of the same sheet of paper, we must pay attention to the folding of the sheet when placing it in an envelope. This should be done so that when the sheet is opened, the reader will stumble upon the version we prioritise: the Basque version, in this case.
- If it is a longer text (reports, minutes, publications, etc.), it is preferable to opt either for two separate pages (one for each language) or a bilingual edition, with one language on each side of the book.

ADVERTISEMENTS AND MARKETING MATERIALS

- In general, advertising and marketing materials will be disseminated in both official languages, and efforts will be made to ensure that both languages are used in equal proportion.
- When contracting advertising campaigns, special care will be taken to ensure that slogans in Basque were originally created in said language and are not merely translations of the Spanish slogan. This requirement will be expressly included in the clauses of the contract documents.

PRESS RELEASES

- Press releases will be sent in both languages. When submitted via email, the summary of the release will appear first in Basque, followed by the Spanish version.

PUBLIC EVENTS

- For external events organised by Euskalduna Bilbao, the criteria for language use must be systematically taken into account from the design phase. The use of Basque will be stipulated for each event in accordance with the characteristics of the event and the intended audience.
    - As a general rule, when the recipients are Basque speakers or when it is known that they regularly perform their duties in Basque, the events will be conducted in Basque.

  - In all other cases, events will be held in Basque and Spanish, with priority given to Basque. When this is not possible, Basque's presence must at least be guaranteed.
- Paper correspondence will be written in Basque and Spanish, with priority given to Basque (invitations, registration forms, programmes, written agendas, presentations, etc.).

PRESS CONFERENCES

- When organising press conferences, the way in which the two official languages will be used must be analysed. As a general rule, efforts will be made to ensure —to the extent possible— a balance between the two.
- Regarding the length or volume of text in each language, in addition to considering balance, it will be ensured that important content is also conveyed in Basque.
- In cases when it is decided to disseminate the same content in both languages, Basque will be used first.
- Likewise, any documentation distributed at press conferences must be written in both official languages.

WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- The website will be available in Basque (in an accessible format) and also in Spanish. Site content will be disseminated in full in both languages; the same amount of information will be provided in both languages.
- Documents under the responsibility of Euskalduna Bilbao which have been prepared to provide information to the general public and can be found online must be available in both Basque and Spanish simultaneously.
- If paperwork processing is offered online or through the intranet, both Basque and Spanish versions must be guaranteed to be available.
- The Euskalduna Bilbao culture website and email will have the *.eus* domain.

2.1.2. OUTREACH TO CITIZENS

VERBAL COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS

- When providing telephone assistance to citizens, Basque will be guaranteed to be available.
    - Customer service staff will answer the phone as follows: *"Euskalduna Bilbao, egun on / arratsalde on".*
    - The person who answered the phone will then continue the conversation in whatever language the customer uses.
    - If the worker is not able to continue due to his or her linguistic abilities, he or she will answer "*itxaron apur bat, mesedez, oraintxe erantzungo dizugu*" and transfer the call to a colleague who can provide the service in Basque.

- When providing face-to-face assistance to citizens, Basque will be guaranteed to be available.
    - The protocol will be the same as in the telephone service. If the employee is unable to respond in Basque, he or she will answer the customer as follows: *"Mesedez, joan zaitez nire lankide horrengana".*

- Under no circumstances will public staff members ask the person being served to express themselves in one language or another and they must offer their services in the language chosen by the citizen.
- The entity will ensure that interactions with citizens are staffed by Basque-trained personnel and that citizen service is provided in Basque.
- Oral messages without a known recipient (delivered through answering machines, telephones, loudspeakers, etc.) will be sent in Basque and Spanish, in that order. If the message to be transmitted is long, it will be done in sections: Basque-Spanish, Basque-Spanish.
- In the event of a violation of the language rights of the person(s) being served, they will be informed of the procedure to follow for filing the corresponding complaint and will be given the opportunity

to contact *Elebide*, the Basque Service for the Guarantee of Language Rights.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS

- The first piece of correspondence sent by Euskalduna Bilbao will be sent in both languages.
- The entity will issue written documents only in Basque if:
  - The other party has expressed their preference for communicating in Basque.
  - The other party has used Basque to contact the entity.
- Generally speaking, all printed materials, standard documents, and templates used by Euskalduna Bilbao will be written in Basque and Spanish.
- Regarding electronic correspondence, the use of the language option chosen by the other party will be guaranteed (requests, registration forms, appointments, complaint forms, etc.). The entity will ensure that standard documents offered through governmental applications can be obtained in the language chosen by the other party or in both official languages.
- When the entity must respond to a document submitted by a citizen, it will act as follows:
  - If the language of choice is Basque, or if the documents have been submitted in that language, the response will be provided in Basque.
  - Bilingual correspondence will be answered in both official languages.
  - Correspondence written in Spanish will be responded to in Spanish or in both languages.
  - The possibility of communicating in Basque will always be offered in the future.

2.2 WORKING LANGUAGE

2.2.1. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Steps will be taken to ensure that Euskalduna Bilbao's internal communications are generally conducted in Basque under normal circumstances. To that end, and to ensure the use of Basque as a working language, the entity will implement a plan for the general and standardised use of Basque in all of its procedures and activities.

WORK MEETINGS

- The following criteria will be followed for work meetings in terms of language management:
    - At internal meetings organised by the different departments, a way to ensure the use of Basque must be thought about in advance.
    - The meeting's call and minutes will be written in Basque and Spanish.
    - If all members present have sufficient linguistic competence in Basque, the meeting will be held in Basque.
    - If not all meeting participants are fluent in Basque but they are able to understand messages in that language, the meeting may be held primarily in Basque, ensuring that those unable to express themselves in said language can do so in Spanish.
- The use of Basque will be promoted among staff in oral communication, both by telephone and in person, and the importance of ensuring that this communication is not limited to the first word but instead extends to the rest of the conversation will be emphasised.
- The same approach will be taken with subcontractors, as the work activities of most Euskalduna Bilbao employees are related therewith.

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

- Paperwork and administrative procedures will be processed in both official languages, Basque and Spanish.
- Regarding Euskalduna Bilbao's electronic record keeping, the collection and processing of data from notifications and documents will be carried out in Basque and Spanish.

GENERAL RULES

- The Basque Country's public sector must incorporate the normalisation of the use of Basque into the procedures established for drafting general regulations and provisions. It is the responsibility of the Vice-Ministry for Language Policy to verify the aforementioned.

LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE

- The elements of the linguistic landscape linked to the work environment must guarantee the presence of Basque, as well as proper linguistic correctness (among other guarantees), in the following cases:
    - Minor labelling: folder spines, shelf labels, files, etc.
    - Variable and informal labelling (temporary in nature).
    - Name of specific projects.
    - Guidelines for naming folders and documents on the network and/or on physical media.
    - Labelling associated with occupational risk prevention and the environment.
    - Labelling of coffee and food vending machines, photocopiers, etc.

COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION TOOLS

- In general correspondence carried out through the communication tools managed by Euskalduna Bilbao (memos, notifications, intranet, releases, notice boards, etc.), the presence of Basque must be guaranteed.
- Said correspondence will be conducted in Basque and Spanish, with priority given to Basque.
- Documents that the entity is responsible for and which are accessible on the intranet must be available in both Basque and Spanish.

2.2.2. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Euskalduna Bilbao will promote a progressive increase in the use of Basque in correspondence with the rest of the governmental agencies

located in the Basque Autonomous Community, as well as with governmental agencies located in regions where Basque is an official language or has legal effect.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE BASQUE PUBLIC SECTOR

- Staff members will initially address their counterparts from other agencies in Basque. If the counterpart is proficient in this language, the conversation will continue in Basque.
- When communication is initiated by another agency, staff will respond in the language used by that agency. That is, if communication was initiated in Basque, the response will be in Basque; and if it was initiated in Spanish, the response will be in Spanish.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION WITH THE BASQUE PUBLIC SECTOR

- Correspondence in Basque will be promoted within the public sector.
- Documentation produced by Euskalduna Bilbao (and copies thereof) —addressed to other public sector entities located in the Basque Autonomous Community and other regions where Basque is an official language or where its use has legal effect— will be issued in bilingual format, with Basque as the primary language.
- Documents and copies sent to public sector entities that have expressed their willingness to communicate in Basque will be processed in said language.
- Likewise, Basque will be used when responding to a document or request written in said language.
- If the document was received in both languages or in Spanish, a response will be given in both official languages, with Basque being prioritised.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION WITH PRIVATE ENTITIES

- Euskalduna Bilbao staff will always speak Basque first. If the person they are speaking to is competent in that language, the conversation will continue in Basque.
- When communication is initiated by the staff members of a private entity, Euskalduna Bilbao's staff will respond in the language used by that entity. That is, if communication was initiated in Basque, the response will be in Basque; and if it was initiated in Spanish, the response will be in Spanish.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION WITH PRIVATE ENTITIES

- The use of Basque will be favoured in correspondence with private entities.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES

- The use of Basque will be favoured in correspondence with other entities (public entities, public companies, etc.).

2.2.3. TRAINING

- Whenever possible, courses organised by Euskalduna Bilbao will be conducted in Basque.
- All staff members are entitled to receive training in Basque. The department responsible for staff training will take appropriate measures to ensure this.
- If employees opt for courses to improve their Basque language skills, the following compensation system approved by the entity will be used: 50% of the hours spent obtaining the language level will be paid for.
- All computer tools and other resources available for course registration will be offered in both official languages.

2.2.4. COMPUTER RESOURCES

- Software created specifically for use at Euskalduna Bilbao must be available in Basque, although it may also be used in Spanish.
- When developing new software, the supplying company will be required to provide both languages.
- For apps and websites, users will be able to select Basque or Spanish, as well as other languages (if applicable).
- Staff will also be encouraged to use standard operating systems and software in their Basque versions and to maintain said use over time.

2.2.5. LANGUAGE OF CREATION

As a general rule, the creation of internal documents in Basque —not just in Spanish— will be encouraged. To that end, the entity will provide the necessary resources.

TRANSLATION CRITERIA

- Euskalduna Bilbao will make reasonable use of translation and interpretation services in its internal operations.
- All staff will have access to neural machine translation.
    - The quality of the translations done by neural machine translation is high, but there are some limitations. Thus, it is essential to review the texts and make appropriate corrections when necessary.
    - Users of neural machine translators will be directly responsible for the texts they generate and any consequences that may arise therefrom.

- Staff may use documents previously approved by the translation service or by language standardisation staff instead of machine translations.

Bilbao, 26 February 2025