

# The Basque Language Abroad: Homeland and Diaspora Initiatives for Euskara

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*Diasporako komunitateetan, aberriko hizkuntzaren biziraupena egiazkotasun etnikoari eta legitimotasunari buruzko espektatibei lotuta egon daiteke. Beste komunitate inmigrante batzuek eta geroko belaunaldiek euskaraz hitz egitea goraiatzaren badute ere, euskal diasporaren identitatea arbasoei, aurrekoei, dago lotuta beste ezeri baino gehiago. Landa-lanek erakutsi dutenez, euskalduna izatea ez da euskaraz hitz egiteko gai izatea. Eusko Jaurlaritzak ezarritako programek eta finantzaketak leku askotan oraindik euskara gordetzeko aukera eman dute biziki.*

*Giltza-Hitzak: Euskal. Diaspora. Hizkuntzaren biziraupena. Etnia. Euskal etxeak. Eleaniztasuna.*

*En las comunidades de la diáspora la conservación de la lengua de la patria de origen puede ir ligada a expectativas de autenticidad étnica y legitimidad. Aunque otras comunidades inmigrantes y generaciones futuras alaben el hecho de hablar euskera, la identidad de las diáspora vasca está más vinculada a la ascendencia que a cualquier otro factor. Trabajos de campo han demostrado que “Ser Vasco” no depende de ser capaz de hablar euskera. Los programas y la financiación implantados por el Gobierno Vasco han contribuido enormemente a que aún exista, en numerosos lugares, la posibilidad de conservar la lengua vasca.*

*Palabras Clave: Vasco. Diáspora. Conservación de la lengua. Etnia. Euskal etxeak. Plurilingüismo.*

*Dans les communautés de la diaspora, la conservation de la langue de la patrie d'origine est parfois liée aux attentes d'authenticité ethnique et de légitimité. Quoique d'autres communautés immigrantes et les générations futures considèrent louable le fait de parler euskara, l'identité de la diaspora basque et davantage liée à l'ascendance, par-dessus tout autre facteur. Certains travaux de terrain ont démontré que le fait d' «être Basque» ne dépend pas de la capacité de parler euskara. Les programmes et le financement mis en œuvre par le Gouvernement Basque ont contribué énormément à la possibilité existante encore aujourd'hui, dans de nombreux endroits, de conserver la langue basque.*

*Mots-Clé : Basque. Diaspora. Conservation de la langue. Ethnie. Euskal etxeak. Plurilinguisme.*

Spoken and signed languages are one of the many means of human communication, and importantly also serve to relay and maintain ethnic, social and cultural identity. Language policies are designed to preserve, maintain and in some cases to resuscitate endangered and threatened languages. In diaspora communities, maintaining the language of a homeland is often a goal set with expectations of being considered “more authentically” Armenian, Korean, Jewish, or Basque as the case may be to their homeland brethren. Though speaking Basque for Australian or Belgian or Chilean Basques, for example, is lauded by their fellow immigrants and some latter generation Basques, identity is more tied to ancestry than any other factor. “Being Basque” does not depend on being able to speak Basque, and this attitude toward the significance or non-significance of one’s homeland language affects whether or not it will be used in the new country home, maintained with other language community speakers, or learned by non speakers.

UNESCO declared 2008 as the International Year of Languages, and it is fitting to celebrate this publication and our conference at Stanford University with an analysis and investigation of Euskara’s vitality in its various geographies around the planet. It is estimated that 80% of the world’s 6,000 or so living languages will die in the next century (Crystal 1997:17 as quoted in Derhemi 2002:151), and it will be the lifelong work of many to stop this march.

Basque migration is not new, but rather is a continuum of centuries of movement in and around the Pyrenees mountains to Iberia, and then later to the Americas with the Crown of Castile’s and then Spain’s colonization of the Americas. A heavy flow of Basque mariners, clerics, land developers and commercial agents participated in Spanish “discoveries” of the Atlantic and Pacific lands during the 1500s to late 1800s. The Spanish Carlist Wars of the 1800s and dictatorships of the 1900s and the French nation-building and mandatory military service heavily influenced migration out of the seven territories. However, according to Basque anthropologist José Miguel de Barandiaran, the number one factor pushing Basques out of their homeland was the primogeniture inheritance system practiced in the Basque territories. Only one sibling of a family would inherit an intact farm and the farm could not be subdivided. Unmarried siblings of he or she who inherited could stay on in the family farmstead if it was prosperous enough to support them, however, often it could not. Children who knew they would not inherit were sent to or joined the Catholic Church, others found work on the seas, others joined the military, and others migrated away to new lands being colonized. Additionally, there were favorable pull factors inviting immigrants to the Americas, the Philippines, Australia, and today recent migration has (re)turned to European countries.

Depending on one’s point of origin and family life, there were thousands of emigrants who departed the Basque territories without knowing Euskara well, others understood Euskara but had not learned to speak it properly, and others were completely illiterate. Exiles of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and subsequent dictatorship of Generalissimo Francisco Franco (1939-1975) have vivid

memories of how they were punished for speaking Euskara on the school playground and were made to hold heavy books with their arms outstretched until they dropped from exhaustion. Hundreds of interviewees I have worked with have mentioned how teachers swatted their knuckles or fingernails with a wooden paddleboard for innocently uttering Basque words in the classroom. Euskara was banned from public places, including religious ceremonies, schools, publications, radio and from the streets. After migrating to South America, Spanish was used for communications as it was the host country language and there were existing Basques who were descendants of the Basques who had colonized Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba and so on who had by now long lost their Basque language skills. However, those Basques who migrated to English speaking countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia did often maintain their Basque with their children, or, parents maintained their Basque language with each other and then taught their children Spanish (or French as the case may be) and therefore there were three languages spoken in the home.

Due to the language attitudes of the French and Spanish regimes -additionally covered herein by authors Xabier Irujo and Iñigo Urrutia, and by Francis Jauréguiberry- Basques migrated during times when Basque language had a low social status - accepted as the language of the under-educated rural populations-, and migrants carried those attitudes with them to the new host countries. Earlier migrants did not witness or live the change in attitudes experienced in the homeland after the 1960s. They did not live the development of the improved social status Euskara now enjoys in the homeland, also discussed herein by author Juan Cobarrubias.

The social status of a language -similar to social status as a factor of ethnic identity- is often tied to motivation. What is the motivation for maintaining a Basque identity when living abroad, and for latter generations? What is the motivation for learning and using Basque? In diaspora spaces, the motivation to use Euskara is generally tied to identity and deeply held emotional ties to ancestors. The motivation could also be connected to being “more Basque,” and for some filling a void of feeling not quite as Basque as homeland Basques or as other Basques in their own hostland communities and trying to add authenticity and legitimacy to their own Basqueness.

There are intrinsic rewards for learning and using Euskara, though not instrumental rewards of getting a job, or a raise in salary, or mandatory test passing, etc. There is no economic incentive or legal help for language maintenance, but the reasons for maintaining Euskara among diaspora Basques have to do with their same psychological and emotional reasons for maintaining their ethnic identity. In diaspora communities, maintaining a chain of language transmission is often a part of identity marking and of high status within the community itself. In the Basque case, to speak Euskara is to be Basque, as the word for a Basque person is literally, one who has the Basque language, “*euskalduna*” and to some, it raises one on the hierarchy of the “Basqueness” pyramid. One might be considered *more* Basque, and *more* authentic especial-

ly by those living in diaspora and by those who are constantly trying to prove their ethnic identity.<sup>1</sup>

For the Basques living outside the European homeland, language is one of the most difficult elements of identity to maintain. Because Spanish and French are world languages, if migrating to English-speaking countries, many non English-speaking parents have transmitted to their children either Spanish or French instead of Basque. Migrants who moved to Spanish speaking America simply used their Spanish in the new setting. However, in numerous cases, for migrants who departed to English speaking communities such as North Queensland, Australia, and in San Francisco, Chino, Bakersfield, New York, Elko and Boise in the United States there were sufficient numbers of Basque speakers, endogamy, and constant circular migration back and forth with Basque-speaking areas of the Basque Country that parents did use Basque with their children born in the host settings. Latter generation (second and third generation) Basques have also committed to learning and using Euskara with their children at home, even when their spouse is not a Basque speaker.<sup>2</sup> In other cases, Basque-speaking immigrant parents may have maintained their Euskara as their language of the marital relationship, but then switched to English, Spanish or French when speaking to their children.

In diaspora communities where there are no “governing bodies” for language use, and legitimacy of elected authorities comes from their status of being trusted, elected, and volunteer leaders but not usually specialists and especially not linguists or sociolinguists, there generally are not any Basque Center language policies for learning Basque, using Basque or preserving Basque. There are generally no Basque Center policies dealing with language use in the day to day activities, projects or functions of the Basque Center itself except in regards to hosting language courses. This is very different from a language policy of mandating or actively promoting the use of Euskara at the Basque Center and creating diglossic or bilingual areas or activities. By ignoring Euskara use at the club-houses and in the community activities, the host country’s language (English, Spanish, French, Italian, etc. depending on the host country) is privileged.

There are no “affirmative action” policies inside the Basque Center communities to assist diaspora Basques who use Basque, for example giving hiring preference to the bar tenders or waitresses that speak Euskara. In the case of Australia, there were Australian government policies in the 1990s and 2000s which aided original language maintenance for immigrants who wanted after school programs for their children, and federal government funds supported those who

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1. See also David Lasagabaster, 2004, and his various interviews, especially that with Mansisor on page 332. PJ Mansisor states that he is not an “exceptional” Basque, -comparing qualities needed for being an exceptional Basque to being an exceptional athlete- because he does not speak Euskara.

2. See Totoricagüena 2004, *Boise Basques: Dreamers and Doers*; Totoricagüena 2005, *The Basques of New York: A Cosmopolitan Experience*; and Totoricagüena 2008, *Australia: Vasconia and the Lucky Country*.

organized courses and teachers. However, none of the three Australian Basque communities took advantage of this program. Sydney Basques organized their own language courses at their Basque clubhouse but paid for it with Basque Government grants. There is little or no language planning at all in most of the *euskal etxeak*, or Basque houses or Basque centers, themselves except for in Argentina,<sup>3</sup> and use of Euskara basically remains a result of random chance and personal interest.

Regardless of time period and geography of the formation of Basque associations, since the 1600s nearly all of the Basque organizations were originally established to help the Basque immigrants create social networks, to assist with finding employment, housing, language of host country issues, and to protect and promote Basque culture. However, in many associations the focus was on helping the immigrants adapt to host country customs. Today, the Basque Centers are introducing latter generation descendants to the land of their own ancestors. The focus is aimed back at the seven territories and to teaching today's Basques abroad about their homeland, language, and customs and so on. However, those who have traveled to *Euskal Herria*, the Basque Country, will witness that they do not generally hear Basque spoken on the streets of the larger cities, and that in some cases it is easier to find English speakers rather than Basque speakers.

In Europe, the Commission of the European Communities, High Level Group on Multilingualism Final Report of 2007 states that English is the number one foreign language learned in schools (2007:7) and that 90% of all secondary education pupils in the European Union are studying English (Eurydice 2005 as quoted in Commission of the European Communities, High Level Group on Multilingualism Final Report of 2007:7).<sup>4</sup> It also specifically points to the educational system successes in the Basque territories. Referring to bilingual communities and regional<sup>5</sup> and minority languages, it specifies that the Basque Country could be used as a model for other European countries. The Commission of the European Communities High Level Group on Multilingualism states,

Members of the Group shared the view that the revitalization, maintenance, further development, and long-term survival of Europe's regional and minority languages should continue to be a matter of European concern, and they welcomed the fact that Community support would continue to be available for networks and platforms dedicated to this aim (Commission of the European Communities 2007:18).

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3. The *Argentinan Euskaraz* program has more than fifteen years of Basque language planning, programming, and implementation of teacher training, courses, weekend retreats, and established diglossic areas of Basque Centers.

4. The Eurydice is an information network on the Internet that makes available the details of studies on education in European Union countries. This report is available in several different languages at: <http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/showPresentation?pubid=049EN>.

5. Can a language be referred to anymore as a "regional" language when it is spoken by communities around the world?

Diaspora Basques might ask whether the concern is for the language itself or for the people using it? Would this European support extend to the diaspora communities promoting and protecting Basque though they do not live in a European Union country? Would “rights” for language use extend to any person because the objective is that the European language is to be saved, or, is it a right for the individual person using the language because they are European? Is the right directed at the language, or, at the person? What is the geography of language rights?

Multilingualism can be defined as the ability to communicate in more than one language. While in Europe it might be considered a life skill to speak more than one language, bilingualism and attention to language in the Americas is much less significant -except for Basques in Quebec- and this affects the attitudes toward languages in general in the Basque diaspora communities in these countries.

Though European Union education and institutional programs promote and expect multilingualism, in the Basque diaspora communities of the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking Americas, there is no similar expectation. Attitudes toward indigenous, mother-tongue, and/or second language learning and/or use are often negative and other-language use is even considered impolite, improper and unpatriotic by some in the English-speaking countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States. Basque immigrants to the United States, Australia, and non-French-speaking Canada detail in fieldwork interviews how they purposefully did not speak Basque to their children “so that they would fit in.” “Fit in” in this sense meant speaking only one language – the host country main language.

In France, second language acquisition and use is also frowned up by some in the media and in politics such as in May, 2008, when the French Parliament debated the status of the Basque language in France, followed with a declaration by the Minister of Culture, Christine Albanel, that France would not ratify the European charter on regional languages although it had been signed in 1999. There were members of the French Academy of Languages that upon learning that there were discussions of constitutional reform to include regional and minority languages believed it to be “an attack against the national identity.”<sup>6</sup> However, one article to be put forward for constitutional reform consideration includes an addition to Article One of the French Constitution stating that the regional languages pertain to the patrimony of France. It is assumed that once designated as state patrimony, the regional languages will have the same protection as all other entities, programs and projects that are considered patrimony of France.

In Spanish colonized America, indigenous languages were nearly all eliminated, the same is true for the English colonization of the United States and Australia, and less so but still the case for Canada. Basques in those communities

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6. For additional information in Spanish see reports of May 7, 2008 of the Basque Radio and Television, EITB, at [www.eitb24.com/es/B24\\_97446/](http://www.eitb24.com/es/B24_97446/) and of the newspaper *El País* of June 16, 2008.

do not have the same experience with language issues as do Europeans, who are surrounded by multilingual media and expectations for second and third language acquisition and use, and this negatively affects diaspora Basques' motivation to learn and use Euskara. Though the Americas and Australia are receiving countries for immigration and residents are accustomed to multiple identities, they have tended to expect one unifying language for those multiple identities. In Europe, the idea of having multiple identities is contested and multiple language use is expected.

Diaspora communities are indeed speech communities, and the factors influencing their choices of language use are equally complex to homeland circumstances for minority language users. Basque communities are spread throughout Central and South America with the largest population in Argentina. In North America, Basques are throughout Mexico, the west coast of the United States, New York, Louisiana and Florida, and in Canada mostly in Montreal and Vancouver. Three Basque communities are also on the east coast of Australia in North Queensland, Sydney and Melbourne areas. In the Philippines there are many people of Basque heritage but no Basque center or ethnic cultural organization, nor are there sufficient numbers of Basque language speakers to expect any sort of language maintenance. Basques are also living throughout Europe, with significant immigrant communities outside the seven Basque territories in Madrid, Barcelona, Valladolid, Paris, Milan, Brussels, and London. Nearly three quarters of Basque emigration in the last twenty years is to European destinations.

Euskara has been maintained and taught in the diaspora since the 1500s when Balthasar de Echave, in Mexico, first wrote about protecting the language of the motherland.

In 1607, Balthasar de Echave published a work in Mexico City regarding loyalty to the Basque language as mother tongue, reminding Basques that their first and foremost loyalty should not be to the 'Castilian Foreigner' or its language, but to their 'true and legitimate mother,' that of Basque identity (Echave 1971:84 as quoted in Toticagüena 2004:58).

For diaspora parishes with substantial Basque populations, the Vatican sent Basque priests to administer to the faithful, and there were Basque communities who enjoyed Catholic masses in the Basque language with regularity. There are still Basque priests in San Francisco and Buenos Aires assigned to the diaspora populations. Other Basque priests have coincidentally been sent to areas that have large Basque populations (which are not difficult to find in South America) but have not been sent specifically as Basque-speaking priests for a Basque-speaking population. Many of those priests coincidentally assigned between the 1960s and 1990s did not speak Basque at all as a consequence of the Franco dictatorial policies prohibiting, or later limiting, the use of Basque in Spain. Boise, Idaho had its own Basque Church of the Good Shepherd, built with funds raised by the Basque community there, with a Basque-speaking priest sent to administer to the Basque-speaking population. In 1910, the Bishop of Idaho, Alphonse Glorieux, requested a Basque-speaking priest for the Basque population of Idaho and Oregon and the Bishop of the Basque territory of Araba responded by send-

ing Father Bernardo Arregui to Boise in 1911. The Church of the Good Shepherd Basque parish was constructed and was dedicated in 1919. However, Idaho Bishop Edward Kelly closed the Basque parish in 1928, putting an end to the separate ethnic parish.<sup>7</sup>

Euskara has been taught at universities outside the Basque Country beginning in the 1940s in Uruguay and Japan, and then later in the United States until today with the Basque Government Department of Culture *Lektorego*, or lecture-ship, program supporting Euskara in eleven countries at twenty-four universities.

Diaspora Basques learning Euskara are most likely to be studying the unified *Euskara Batua*, one or unified Basque language, established by the Basque Language Academy Euskaltzaindia, which is not exactly what their parents or grandparents spoke, and they often begin with a reticent attitude toward the artificial or “fake Basque” as some refer to it. Some become frustrated because they do not recognize the vocabulary, or, when they repeat what they have learned in class to native Basque speakers, there are often unrecognized words or phrases. When the native speakers respond, “Oh, that’s not Basque,” or, “We never say it that way,” this frustrates the learner. However, they are able to read the press on the Internet (nearly always published in *Batua* unless a local town newspaper which uses the local vernacular).

Is it counterproductive and/or unrealistic to promote a *Batua* Basque (unified Basque language) in communities of nearly all Bizkaian speakers or of all Xiberotar speakers<sup>8</sup>? Because of chain migration from one area in the Basque Country to one area abroad, Basque immigrants often maintained the pronunciation and vocabulary of their hometowns, as have their descendants. *Euskara Batua* is sometimes seen as “artificial” especially in the diaspora where Basques were not a part of the daily discussion and media reports when *Batua* was being constructed and decided upon by Euskaltzaindia. They have not lived in the Basque territories during the slow but eventual changes in usage by the next generations and in the media and popular culture. Many diaspora Basques tend to accept *Batua* Basque itself as foreign.

However, younger Basques and those learning without any prior Euskara knowledge whatsoever have the least cognitive dissonance and eagerly seek out the numerous websites to practice their Euskara. One such platform is EuskoSare, Basque Network, which is a web platform established by Eusko Ikaskuntza, Society of Basque Studies, for diaspora groups to use to communi-

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7. See Totoricagüena, 2004. *Boise Basques: Dreamers and Doers* Chapter Four, pp. 79-87.

8. The Bizkaian (of the territory of Bizkaia) and Xiberotar (of the territory of Xiberoa) pronunciations differ, as do some of their local vocabulary. Bizkaians in Argentina might say they cannot understand the Euskara of Xiberoa and vice versa, however, after probing they do tend to admit that if they would actually listen closely and pay attention they could indeed understand each other in nearly any conversation. In California, those Basques of the territory of Lapurdi regularly tease those from Bizkaia, commenting that no one in the world can understand the Euskara of the small fishing towns of Bizkaia, even if they are a linguist.



cate with each other.<sup>9</sup> The goals are to have diaspora Basques communicating with each other via French, Spanish, Basque and/or English, and hopefully practicing their Euskara. By far, the Spanish-language sections record the heaviest use and are used by people with servers in the Spanish-speaking American countries.

The government of the Basque Autonomous Community has been quite exhaustive in trying to assist the promotion of Euskara in the diaspora communities with grant funding and scholarships for students to attend Basque Country public universities. Future teachers of Euskara are given scholarships to travel, live, and study in the Basque Country while perfecting their language and teaching skills, funded by the Basque Government Department of Culture. In the Basque communities abroad, until recently and still in most cases, the teachers of the Euskara classes have been volunteers and are not necessarily qualified and pedagogically trained instructors. Though the individuals may be motivated to teach and pass on their Basque language, they may not actually be effective teachers. Frustrated students have mentioned that sometimes the classes evolve into social hours with other students discussing how their grandparents used Euskara, or what vocabulary they used in comparison to the Euskara Batua being learned now, with the language of the discussion being English or Spanish. These are important and interesting discussions and analyses, however, they also can turn off otherwise motivated pupils who come to learn to speak, read and write in Euskara. They are often busy professional adults not interested in the history or migration stories of others.

## **DIASPORA BASQUES AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND USAGE**

The Basque diaspora communities and institutions could be considered good practice laboratories for potential bilingual and diglossic communities, and they are certainly virgin territory for future linguistics research. In my own research with Basques abroad I have attempted to include investigations into the people's knowledge and use of Euskara and how they intertwine it, or not, with their own Basque identity. Can Basques be Basques without Euskara? Is the loss of the language a part of the loss of identity? By studying the attitudes and opinions of Basques themselves can we further diagnose the likely future for the Basque language outside of the homeland territories?<sup>10</sup>

The following tables are constructed with the data collected from fieldwork in six countries and with 832 representative respondents of four generations completing an anonymous questionnaire.<sup>11</sup> Using statistics from this research I car-

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9. See the website at [www.euskosare.org](http://www.euskosare.org) in English, Basque, Spanish and French.

10. See David Lasagabaster Herrarte, 2004, for an excellent fieldwork study including quantitative and qualitative data and interview notes with Basques of the United States west regarding their attitudes toward Basque language and identity.

11. This research was conducted as a part of my PhD fieldwork at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The dissertation is available at the British Library in London. The 2004 publication, *Identity, Culture, and Politics in the Basque Diaspora*, Reno: University of Nevada Press, is based upon this research.

ried out in Basque communities in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Peru, the United States and Uruguay during 1996-2000, 832 total respondents were asked - among other issues- to rate their knowledge of Euskara. The table below represents their responses by country, where we see that countries with more recent immigration, such as Belgium, Australia and the United States, have higher Euskara self-defined proficiency. While older immigrant communities -in Spanish speaking host countries- have significantly lower rates of Euskara knowledge. This is to be expected from latter generations no longer using their ancestors' homeland language.

**Table 1. How well do you speak Basque?**

	Fluently	With some difficulty	Basic conversation	A few words	None at all
Argentina	8.2%	7.8%	15.3%	43.3%	25.4%
Australia	46.1%	9.8%	6.9%	28.4%	8.8%
Belgium	25%	16.7%	20.8%	25%	12.5%
Peru	15.4%	7.7%	23.1%	38.5%	15.4%
USA	31.3%	14.5%	13.2%	36.1%	4.8%
Uruguay	.9%	.9%	4.4%	27.4%	66.4%

Although in personal interviews, some individuals mentioned that the women were more likely to have maintained their Euskara at home, to be interested in language promotion programs, and were more likely to sign up as students, when controlling for gender and summing the responses of all six sample countries there were no significant differences in language knowledge reporting between males and females, as seen below.

**Table 2. How well do you speak Basque?**

	Fluently	With some difficulty	Basic conversation	A few words	None at all
Female	18.8%	12.3%	13.0%	35.3%	20.8%
Male	24.1%	7.5%	10.9%	37%	20.4%

For the continuation of Euskara, Basque diaspora communities need speakers of all ages. Across the six countries and using the age variable we do see differences that can be accounted for as Basque immigration to these countries has drastically slowed or stopped, except to Belgium.<sup>12</sup>

12. Belgium accepted thousands of Basque refugee children during the Spanish Civil War, and hundreds ended up staying with their Belgian families when they were orphaned, or when they returned to the Basque Country after ten or fifteen years away and too much had changed for them. In the 1980s and 1990s, Basques migrated to Belgium as a part of the intellectual movement of people working in European Union programs.

**Table 3. How well do you speak Basque?**

	Fluently	With some difficulty	Basic conversation	A few words	None at all
18-30 years old	17.3%	7.3%	10.0%	44.7%	20.7%
31-45 years old	16.5%	9.8%	13.9%	39.7%	20.1%
46-60 years old	17.9%	9.2%	13.3%	39.0%	20.6%
61-75 years old	30.5%	7.0%	12.3%	27.8%	22.5%
76-90 years old	37.0%	24.1%	7.4%	14.8%	16.7%

The immigrant generation of the respondents in the host country is also interesting to cross-tabulate with their language knowledge. When combining the data of being able to speak Basque “fluently,” and “with some difficulty,” of all six countries, 67.2% of those born in the Basque Country reported being “fluent” or being able to speak Basque regularly but “with some difficulty” and 41.2% of the first generation born in the host country, 8.1% of second generation born in host country, 4.4% of the third generation born in the host country, and only 2.3% of the fourth generation born in the host country answered the same. Not a part of this study, but interesting for future work is the effect on homeland language maintenance of the impact of the percentages of Basque speakers being the emigrants (usually from rural areas), and Spanish-speaking urbanites having lower migration tendencies. Also likely affecting language maintenance would have been the new immigration into the Basque Country of other Spanish speakers from western and southern Spain. Euskara speakers were more likely to switch and use Spanish than were Spanish speakers likely to learn and use Euskara.

In addition to rates of knowing and understanding Euskara, we also want to compare how often the respondents actually use their Basque language, which gives an indication of transmission for future generations.

**Table 4. How often do you speak Basque at home?**

	Everyday	I switch back and forth <sup>13</sup>	Only for certain topics	Only for special greetings, such as Happy Birthday	Never
18-30 years	8.0%	6.0%	8.7%	39.3%	38.0%
31-45 years	1.6%	5.2%	16.2%	37.7%	39.3%
46-60 years	4.2%	4.2%	15.3%	33.3%	43.1%
61-75 years	5.9%	5.4%	16.2%	22.2%	50.3%
76-90 years	7.4%	7.4%	22.2%	16.7%	46.3%

13. The complete response included “I switch back and forth between Basque and English” for those in English speaking countries, and “I switch back and forth between Basque and Spanish” for those in Spanish speaking countries.

It is expected that those who do not know Basque would not use it. Tragically, those who *do* know Basque are not using it either. When we compare the age groups of those who do know Basque (the 76-90 and the 61-75 age categories), 61.1% of those 71-90 years old do know Basque, however only 14.8% are using it. Of those 61-75 years old, though 32.5% respond affirmatively to knowing Basque only 11.3% are using it. In every age group, though people reported knowing Euskara, the percentages of their responses demonstrate that they also reported that they are not using it.

A similar study conducted with Basques in Barcelona demonstrated that among Basques of the *euskal etxea* there, 43% speak Basque, another 35% say they can understand Basque (total 78%) but only 25% use Basque as the normal language of home life in their families, 64% use Spanish and 11% speak in Catalan (Medina 2003: 172).

Literacy in Basque is much more difficult to expect for these communities because even the immigrants themselves who departed at the time of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and subsequent General Francisco Franco dictatorship (1939-1975) were most often illiterate in Euskara due to the Spanish state policies of Basque not being allowed in education. The same was true for the French insistence on French language instruction. However, a surprising majority of those born in the seven territories report being able to read and write in Basque.

**Table 5. Can you read and write in Basque?**

	Fluently	With some difficulty	Basic conversation	A few words	None at all
Born in Euskal Herria	28.7%	30.5%	12.2%	14.0%	14.6%
1 <sup>st</sup> generation in host country	6.9%	14.4%	17.5%	28.9%	32.3%
2 <sup>nd</sup> generation in host country	.5%	7.2%	7.7%	32.5%	52.2%
3 <sup>rd</sup> generation in host country	1.1%	2.2%	9.9%	25.3%	61.5%
4 <sup>th</sup> generation in host country	0%	4.7%	7.0%	25.6%	62.8%

The continuation of diaspora Basque culture having ties to learning and using the Basque language seem to be rather weak according to questionnaire data. Only the youngest age category, 18-30 year olds, had a slight majority agree that learning and using Euskara was of “great” or “very great importance.” Interestingly, the elder Basques –those who had the highest rates of knowing the language– also had the highest rates (19.6% and 17.8%) of thinking it of “no importance” to Basque culture.

**Table 6. What is the importance of learning and using Euskara to Basque culture?**

	18-30 years	31-45 years	46-60 years	61-75 years	76-90 years
No opinion	.7%	.5%	3.1%	2.5%	2.2%
No Importance	12.2%	11.0%	15.3%	19.6%	17.8%
Some Importance	36.7%	45.1%	41.8%	40.5%	48.9%
Great importance	27.2%	24.2%	24.0%	22.8%	20.0%
Very Great Importance	23.1%	19.2%	15.8%	14.6%	11.1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Although in Euskara, the word for a Basque person is *euskalduna*, translated as “one who has the Basque language,” when the 832 respondents were asked to react to the statement, “Basque culture can be maintained without the Basque language,” we see that in every country except Uruguay, a majority disagreed. They believed that the culture itself does need the language, in contradiction to their responses in Table 6.

**Table 7. Basque culture can be maintained without the Basque language**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Argentina	11.2%	25.3%	6.4%	30.5%	26.5%
Australia	5.2%	30.9%	5.2%	35.1%	23.7%
Belgium	25.0%	8.3%	0%	20.8%	45.8%
Peru	16.7%	16.7%	0%	33.3%	33.3%
USA	7.1%	27.4%	8.1%	37.5%	19.9%
Uruguay	27.4%	29.2%	7.5%	18.9%	17.0%
TOTALS of all six countries	11.6%	26.7%	6.8%	31.9%	23.1%

As mentioned above, in Euskara the word for a Basque person is “one who has the Basque language,” *euskalduna*. This definition is pointed to regularly in literature and diaspora Basques are reminded by language protectors that they should learn and use Basque. However, the data show that the respondents do not adhere to this viewpoint, or to a linguistic definition or categorization of what makes a person Basque. Obviously, diaspora Basques who themselves do not speak Euskara, would hardly use this definition and thereby eliminate themselves from being Basque. Latter generation Basques who do not speak Euskara might also argue that they have been able to maintain their culture and identity just fine without speaking Euskara.

**Table 8. “To be considered a Basque, one must speak the Basque language”**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18-30 years old	6.1%	12.9%	7.5%	41.5%	31.3%
31-45 years old	6.8%	13.5%	5.7%	48.4%	25.5%
46-60 years old	9.4%	10.8%	7.4%	50.7%	21.7%
61-75 years old	5.5%	12.8%	11.6%	54.9%	15.2%
76-90 years old	2.0%	14.3%	14.3%	57.1%	12.2%

The teaching and preservation of ethnic identities are generational endeavors and must be repeated, similarly to any identity -homeland or diasporic. The Basque cultural centers, *euskal etxeak*, have served their members over the decades by providing activities and in many cases a physical space where those of Basque heritage can meet and practice their identity. These organizations have proved essential to maintaining Basque identity through music, dance, cuisine, educational seminars, courses, publications, language, sport, song, community work, and camaraderie.

## **EUSKARA AND THE EUSKAL ETXEAK**

During the years of the Franco dictatorship the Basque Government-in-exile maintained political and economic representation, “Delegations”, in London, Paris, New York City, Mexico City, Caracas, Bogotá, Panama City, Santo Domingo, Havana, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo. Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia also had Basque delegation representatives. Relations with the Basque immigrant communities were strong and mainly focused on political identity issues and to returning democracy to Spain. Franco’s death in 1975, together with the beginning of the Transition to democracy, the establishment of the two autonomous governments - in Navarre (the Foral Community of Navarre) and in Euskadi (Basque Autonomous Community)-, and the development of cultural policies for the diaspora in the departments of Culture and of Education and in the Office of the Presidency in Euskadi all combined to make a significant impact on the Basque communities abroad. During the 1990s, there was a qualitative shift in relations between the Basque centers and the government of the Basque Autonomous Community with an increase in intensity, funding, engagement, and communications with Basques living around the world. A grants program began to support short-term projects and programs such as building renovations, dance troupe uniforms, academic fieldwork research, cultural activities, and Euskara classes. The language preservation had consistently been a theme for these immigrant communities throughout their histories.

Basques in California published two different Basque language newspapers in the late 1800s, *Eskualdun Gazeta* 1885-1886 from Los Angeles, and *California-ko Eskual Herria* 1893-1898 also from Los Angeles. In 1901, the *Laurak Bat*

Basque center of Buenos Aires news bulletin had articles written in Spanish and in Basque and scattered conferences were given in Euskara (Ezkerro 2003:194). By 1903, the name spelling of the Basques' Buenos Aires newspaper, *La Vasconia*, was changed to the Basque spelling *La Baskonia* and now Euskara was being used more often by its editor, José R. Urriarte (ibid). In 1905, Father Francisco Laphitz in Buenos Aires was giving sermons from the pulpit in which he encouraged his Basque parishioners to create Basque language schools for their Argentina-born children (Ezkerro 2003:194). The children's *Colegio Euskal Echea* of Llavallol (in the province of Buenos Aires) began teaching Basque language to their students in the early 1900s. In 1906, *Laurak Bat* was teaching Basque classes, however, with little interest and they were not continued the next year. Other early attempts to keep Basque language in the media prevailed with Euskara used partially for certain articles or sections. During 1907-1909 the *Euzkotarra* was published from New Orleans, Louisiana. *Aberrri* was published in New York from 1925-1928 and from Boise, Idaho the city newspaper, *The Boise Capital News*, regularly published one of its pages in Basque during 1938-1939 for its large immigrant community there.

After the Spanish Civil war and the exile of thousands of Basques to Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Venezuela, Uruguay and Argentina, we see the effect in an upsurge in the interest for maintaining the language. *Euskaltzaleak* was formed in Buenos Aires to protect and promote Basque language. The publishing house of *Ekin* was founded by Dr. Isaac López Mendizábal and Dr. Andrés María de Irujo y Olló in 1941 and supported by the printing and graphics business of Sebastián de Amorortu and sons. *Editorial Vasca Ekin* published the series Basque Culture Collection. This initiative eventually produced more than 100 books on Basque topics, some of them written in, or translated to, Euskara. Ekin publications from Argentina helped keep Euskara alive for another generation from its base in exile.

In Uruguay, a group of Basque immigrants formed the Basque Book Club and from the 1940s created a collection and library of materials written in Basque at the Basque center Euskal Erria in Montevideo. In 1944, the University of the Republic in Montevideo created the first chair for Basque language in all of the Americas in their School of Humanities (Irujo and Irigoyen 2007:255). Bingen Ametzaga taught for eleven years followed by José Mendiola. Due to the success of the Basque language classes a Department of Basque Studies was initiated the very next year.

*Eusko Ikaskuntza*, Basque Studies Society initiated the International Day of Euskara in 1948, from the VII Eusko Ikaskuntza Congress held that year in Baiona, Lapurdi (Bayonne, Labourd in Franch) with the various leaders agreeing that global action was necessary to promote Euskara. Manuel de Ynchausti then wrote to leaders throughout the Basque communities of the world encouraging them to organize for the next year, and to send any funds raised through Day of Euskara activities and other events throughout the year at their Basque Centers to *Iparralde*, the northern part of the Basque Country located in France, to help support the financial costs of publishing in Basque, and for organizing Basque language schools due to the fact that this was prohibited in Spain. *Euskararen*

*Eguna* caught on and was first celebrated in 1949 in various Basque communities in South America and has been consistently ever since then.

In Japan, Kansai Gaidai University in Hirakata city (Osaka prefecture) was teaching Basque as a part of its language school offerings by the second half of the 1940s, and continues to this day. Jon Bilbao taught Basque language at Boise State University in the 1940s and Jon Oñatibia began teaching Euskara in New York in the 1950s.<sup>14</sup> The journal *Eusko Gogoia* was written by Father Jokin Zaitegi from Guatemala and began publication in 1950 with distribution to Basque communities in the Americas, Europe, and even made its way to the Basques in North Queensland, Australia (Archivo del Nacionalismo Vasco, Fundación Sabino Arana. Correspondencia / 1947-1958/ FONDOS-002-02 as referenced in Totoricagüena *Vasconia* 2008:250). The first Basque translations of classics, such as works of Shakespeare, came from Uruguay in the late 1940s and into the 1950s (Irujo and Irigoyen 2007: 252-253) as did their own publications of works in Euskara by the language study group *Euskaltzaleak*.

In 1955, Basque President-in-exile José Antonio Aguirre, met with Bingen Ametzaga in Caracas to discuss the possibilities of creating a Basque Cultural Center that would be dedicated to promoting Euskara and writing, publishing and distributing Basque language materials internationally (Irujo and Irigoyen 2007:254). There were not sufficient funds and in the end this was not implemented, but the idea is important that during the Franco dictatorship, Basques abroad took leadership and accepted responsibility to maintain, preserve and promote the Basque language.

Basques in Buffalo, Wyoming established the *Euskaldun Ordua*, or “Basque Hour” radio program, which first aired on Sundays in 1956 with volunteer announcers and the financial sponsorship of the Buffalo area Basques. The program continued every Sunday at noon with local and homeland news and music in Euskara for forty years. Basque language radio in Idaho began in the early 1950s with Julian Lachiondo and Cecil Jayo. Espectación “Espe” Alegria led “The Basque Program” from Boise, Idaho from 1956 to 1982. Caracas and Montevideo also retransmitted Basque radio programs from the 1940s, and in 1947 *Euzkadi Irratia Montevideo*, Basque radio from Europe, was retransmitted to Uruguayans on the airwaves (Irujo and Irigoyen 2007:226). Joseph V. Eiguren from Oregon, wrote a manual in 1965 in English for how to learn Basque and in 1974 he wrote one of the first ever English-Basque dictionaries. The University of Nevada, Reno Basque Studies Program was founded in 1967 and the Idaho Basque Studies Center established their Basque language classes in Boise in 1971.

The Basques of Caracas founded the *Ikastola Euzkadi* in 1962, a full immersion Basque-medium primary school. In Boise, Idaho the first ikastola was an

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14. See Totoricagüena. 2003. *The Basques of New York: A Cosmopolitan Experience*. Urazandi Collection Volume 12. Vitoria-Gasteiz: Basque Government Central Publications Office.



after-school full immersion program for primary school aged children established in 1973, and today's *Boise'ko Ikastola*, founded in 1998, is the actual full immersion Basque language school for children four to six years old. Children attend Monday through Friday for full day instruction and play in Euskara. The San Francisco Basque Cultural Center sponsors a Saturday morning Basque language immersion play time and lessons for children two to ten years old, *Koxkorak Goiz Eskola* (morning school for the little ones).

Today there are 161 Basque organizations that are officially registered and "recognized" by the Basque Government by means of Decree 318/1994, of July 28th, 1994<sup>15</sup> and communications between the diaspora and this office are stable, consistent and very positive. The trajectory of relations between the Autonomous Basque Community's government and the *euskal etxeak* has consistently included Basque language issues and today, the Basque Government Office for Relations with the Basque Collectivities reports 68% of the *euskal etxeak* claim to organize Basque language classes according to a 2007 questionnaire they conducted (Bilbao 2007:9).<sup>16</sup> The year after the establishment of the Basque Autonomous Community government, the First Congress of Basques was held in 1982 in Donostia-San Sebastián and included 203 Delegates from nine countries. From the delegates there was a request for grants for pedagogical training for teachers of Basque language, and for materials and teaching aides for Euskara in the diaspora. Soon after, there was an appointment of a Basque Government Advisor for Relations with Basque Communities and Centers in 1985, and contact and communications resumed almost to the level of the 1940s and 1950s with the Basque Government-in-exile. In 1986, the Basque Government Department of Culture assumed responsibility for relations with the *euskal etxeak*, and in 1988 the homeland began providing grants to them for cultural activities.

The First World Congress of Basque Centers was held in Argentina in 1989, with delegates traveling from eleven countries, and one again the discussion turned to the necessary training for teachers of Basque language to be sent to the communities abroad. In 1991, the Basque Government Office of the Presidency created the General Secretariat of Foreign Action and one of its dependents was created as the Directorate of Relations with Basque Collectivities. The move into the Office of the Presidency denoted an increase in the importance given to the diaspora Basques. This was a qualitative change as well as quantitative when comparing appropriations for their activities. The results have been marked with a significant strengthening of international relations among Basques in

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15. For a current list of the Basque diaspora organization registered with the Basque Autonomous Government please see [http://www.lehendakaritza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r48-3872/en/contenidos/informacion/03\\_listado\\_centros/en\\_lista/centros.html](http://www.lehendakaritza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r48-3872/en/contenidos/informacion/03_listado_centros/en_lista/centros.html)

16. In 2006 and 2007 a survey was sent to all diaspora Basque organizations registered with the Basque Government. Of the 161 registered, only 111 *euskal etxeak* answered and returned the surveys to the Basque Government. I believe this percentage to be high should all Basque Centers have answered this questionnaire.

these communities and an increase in the number of new *euskal etxeak* and in the quantity and quality of activities carried out for diaspora Basques.

The 1995 First World Congress of Basque Collectivities<sup>17</sup>, held in Vitoria-Gasteiz had Basques from fourteen countries, in 1999 the Second Congress had representation from eighteen countries, in 2003, 150 delegates from nineteen countries attended, and in 2007 the same countries sent representation. Since 1999, forty-one new *euskal etxeak* have been founded, more than half in Argentina. This is not due to new immigration. Basque Immigration Observatory data for the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre demonstrate that from 2002 to 2005, 70% of the emigration out of the Basque Autonomous Community and 62% from Navarre have gone to European destinations. During the same time period, fewer have gone to the Americas; 24% for the Basque Autonomous Community and 42% for Navarre (Bilbao 2007:3). The growth is from renewed interest in their ethnic heritage. In fact, Argentina alone has seventy-six registered Basque Centers, nearly half of the total number of *euskal etxeak* registered with the Basque Autonomous Government, and Argentina has also led the way with Basque language instruction.

The relations between the Basque Autonomous Government and the Basque Communities Abroad are regulated by Public Law 8/1994, passed May 27, 1994.<sup>18</sup> Article 8, clause 7 states that Basques abroad have, “The right to a supply of published and audiovisual material designed to facilitate the transmission of knowledge of Basque history, culture, language and social reality, for display and distribution among members of Basque communities;” Article 8, clause 10 states, “The organization of courses to learn the Basque language;” and Article 9, clause 1 (b) states, “To study and to know the Basque language. To this effect, resources will be provided to Basque centers for the organization of courses in

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17. The 1995 congress began the Basque Government’s “world congresses” which are held once every four years in the Basque Country itself. See Totoricagüena 2004, *Identity, Culture, and Politics in the Basque Diaspora*, and Ugalde Zubiri 2007, *Memoria de la Dirección de Relaciones con las Colectividades Vascas en el Exterior del Gobierno Vasco (1980-2005)*.

18. See [http://www.lehendakaritza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r48-3872/en/contenidos/informacion/disposiciones\\_normat/en\\_706/18\\_i.html](http://www.lehendakaritza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r48-3872/en/contenidos/informacion/disposiciones_normat/en_706/18_i.html) for the details of decrees regarding Basque communities abroad: DECREE 318/1994, of July 28th, by which the Recognition and Registry of the Basque Centers located outside of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country are regulated. DECREE 234/1995, of April 11th, in which the organizations of Relations with Basque Communities are regulated. DECREE 106/1996, of the 14th of May, which modifies the Decree regulating the Recognition and Registration of Basque Centers located outside the Basque Autonomous Community. DECREE 98/2000, dated 6th of June, which regulates the “Andrés de Irujo” Award for creative or investigative works relating to overseas Basque communities. DECREE 124/2003, dated June 10, to regulate the subsidy scheme for Basque Centers/Euskal Etxeak. DECREE 186/2003, dated 29 July, which regulates the program of subsidies for cultural tours to countries in which Basque Centers are located. DECREE 221/2003, dated 30 September, which regulates grants for specialists in the area of foreign relations and Basque Centers and Communities overseas. DECREE 222/2003, dated 30 September, which regulates the system of granting financial aid to Basque Centers to attend to the general welfare needs and cases of extreme poverty facing members of Basque Communities overseas. DECREE 316/2003, dated 23 December, regulating the Gaztemundu program. DECREE 238/2006, dated 28 November, which regulates the e-proceedings (applying for grants via Internet, using Spanish and Basque only).

the Basque language, within budgetary means. Regulations will be established in respect of systems and procedures, in accordance with which members of Basque communities may obtain certificates of knowledge of the Basque language awarded by the competent body of the public administration of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.”

Language learning is tied to one’s attitude toward that language. Many immigrants and latter generation Basques in the diaspora now have a very positive attitude toward ethnic identification, and do promote the general idea that Euskara is a significant characteristic for “being Basque” and that it must be protected and preserved. However, protection (as in a museum) does not necessarily extend out to learning and using it themselves. Because they are able to express their Basqueness by many other means which are less time consuming and much easier to learn such as Basque cuisine, folk dancing, history, choral songs, playing pelota (handball) etc.

For those Basques living abroad, learning Basque could be considered for some a hobby, for others the fulfillment of a responsibility to their ancestors and to their own sense of identity. In fieldwork in six countries with 832 respondents, no one ever mentioned an economic instrumental reason for learning Basque such as seeking employment in their *euskal etxea* or elsewhere in the host country or the homeland, earning a promotion, being named to a special post in the Basque Center or with the Basque community. As a matter of fact, there have been situations where the person in charge of organizing Basque language classes, or writing grants for funding Basque language events, or in charge of the total Basque language programs for a Basque Center did not themselves know Euskara.

The Fourth World Congress of Basque Collectivities of 2007 requested that their next meeting in 2011 be conducted in Euskara. They asked for additional funding from the Basque Government to finance activities for children, for adolescents a program that could organize summer home stays in the Basque territories with Basque-speaking families, and the training of teachers from their own communities to then return and teach Basque in their centers. The leadership and usual delegates to the world congresses will themselves have to begin studying Euskara if they wish to participate in the 2011 Congress as most of the attendees of 2007 were not Euskara speakers.

## **HABE AND PROGRAMS FOR EUSKARA IN THE EUSKAL ETXEAK**

After Franco’s death in 1975, the development of a network of Basque language schools for adults sprung up in the Basque homeland, known as AEK, a coordinator for the teaching of Basque language and literacy, and others soon followed. By 1981, the Basque Government created an institute for the teaching of Basque language and literacy for adults known as HABE, *Helduen Alfabetatze eta Berreuskalduntzeako Erakunde Sortaraztezkua eta Euskaltegiak Araupetzekua*, Institute for Adult Literacy and Basque Language and Regulation of the Basque

Language Schools, with the 1983 public law Ley 23/1983.<sup>19</sup> HABE promotes Basque language learning and literacy, especially for adults, through programs for the training of Basque language teachers, after-work language courses, creation of pedagogical materials for both children and adults, the establishment of various publications and radio programs. They are also charged with the promotion and coordination of Basque language programs organized outside of the three Basque territories that make up Euskadi (Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa) through and with funding of the Basque Autonomous Community's Department of Culture.

HABE's original engagement with the diaspora resulted from Argentine Basque initiatives wishing to promote Euskara. *Argentinan Euskaraz*, Euskara in Argentina, began in 1990 after the Federation of Argentine Basque Entities requested Basque Government aid for training language teachers and adapting and preparing Basque language materials for its diaspora Basque communities. After a decade of success in teaching Basque in Argentina, the Department of Culture through HABE expanded the program by offering it to other Basque Centers around the world.

In 2003, HABE began training forty teachers from Uruguay and Argentina; in 2008, twenty-three of them finished the four year preparation necessary to pass the exams and earn the teacher's certification. During 2004-2007, the twenty-three Argentine Basques studied and trained to become Basque language teachers for Basque communities in Argentina. Finishing exams and immersion practicum in June 2008, eight of them will even teach at the university level in Argentina. During the period 2008-2011, five additional countries have been added to what was started with Argentine Basques and will include ten future teachers from Argentina, ten from Uruguay, two from Brazil, four from Chile, one from Colombia and one from Peru. These future instructors are taught in their home countries via Internet and then participate in biannual total immersion programs in the Basque Country. After years of supplying excellent quality materials to the Basque Centers -that often remained in boxes in closets- the Basque Government now is also providing professional pedagogical training for the formation of teachers, and consequently the sent materials now are being used. The software for computerized self-taught Basque language, BOGA (a multimedia system for learning Euskara through the Internet), is installed onto the computers of any member of a Basque Center free of charge. Virtual via Internet and personal tutorials from the diaspora community teachers are given to students and students able to meet physically do so, generally once or twice a month. For the 2007-2008 academic year, 210,000 Euros were dedicated from HABE for the BOGA classes and seventy-five Basque communities around the world offered the courses. Though there are various levels of courses, in 2008-2009, there were 218,400 Euros appropriated and approximately 1,182 students enrolled in the *euskal etxeak* classes of HABE.

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19. To see the Basque and Spanish language versions of the Basque parliamentary decree from the Official Bulletin of the Basque Autonomous Community go to [http://www.habe.euskadi.net/s23-4728/es/contenidos/informacion/aurrekariak/es\\_9361/adjuntos/HABESEA.pdf](http://www.habe.euskadi.net/s23-4728/es/contenidos/informacion/aurrekariak/es_9361/adjuntos/HABESEA.pdf)

Separately, there are children's Basque language play groups established in different centers which receive various amounts of aid depending on the institution's application for a Basque Government grant. *Euskara Munduan*, Basque language in the world, is the name of this initiative of HABA which is aimed taking Euskara to the international arena. HABA administers this program directly with the individual Basque Centers and also works with the federations of Basque Centers in Argentina (*Federación de Entidades Vascas Argentinas*, FEVA), Uruguay (*Federación de Instituciones Vascas Uruguayas*, FIVU) and the United State (North American Basque Organizations, NABO).

The total 2008 budget for HABA was set at 42,900,000 €. Below we see how most of the funding was spent and that the programs for Euskara in the Basque diaspora receive the lowest amount, yet they are quite efficient and productive. An approximate 10,000,000 Euros are spent on administration, offices, salaries and operations.

Public programs for adults Basque language immersion	10,438,500 €
Private programs for adults Basque language immersion	20,777,100 €
<b>Diaspora Basque Centers</b>	<b>218,400 €</b>
General students	1,300,000 €
Total	32,723,600 €

## **EITB, BASQUE RADIO AND TELEVISION, AND NEW GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Participants of the 2003 Third World Congress of Basque Collectivities asked the Basque Government for projects related to the dissemination of Basque language television programming for adults and children, via Internet and/or cable television contracts. Communities in South and Central America and the east coast of North America had access to cable television programming via satellite only if their local cable companies subscribed to the offerings of Euskadi Irrati Telebista, EITB, Basque Radio and Television, or if they owned a satellite dish that received the transmissions. However, Basques in Europe, the North American west, Australia and the Philippines did not have access to Basque language television or radio. Subsequently in 2004, [www.eitb24.com](http://www.eitb24.com) was created, a twenty-four hour broadcast in Spanish and Basque on its own Internet website. EITB had the following goals for their Internet endeavor: to use new mediums for the production of Basque language programming, to make Basque issues information more accessible to Basques abroad, and to produce their own news site with Basque current affairs and project it to the world in general as well.

According to Miren Azkarate, Department of Culture Counsellor, EITB was able to transmit specific programming for America with its satellite channel *Canal Vasco*, and also able to provide for European audiences through *ETBSat*. A collaboration agreement with the Latin American Association of Regional and Local Television was signed in order to exchange programming with open access television in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador. EITB also signed an agreement with the Latin American Educational Television Association

to broadcast Basque television programming via *European Hispasat* and *American Hispasat*, increasing coverage to fifteen countries in the Americas and Europe (Azkarate 2007).

Basque Radio and Television also worked to produce a daily television program of information specifically for Basques living abroad, but mostly for Americans. Begun in 2003, a half hour information program, *Canal Vasco News*, gives details about events in the Basque Country to a general audience. It is broadcast to most of Central and South America and to eastern North America.<sup>20</sup> Though the language used is Spanish and not Basque, listeners become informed about Basque Country issues.

In 2002, five radio stations were linked for Internet accessibility, and in 2003, commencement of the satellite broadcast of *Euskadi Irratia*, or Basque Country Radio, which is broadcast in Euskara, and *Radio Euskadi*, or Basque Country Radio, which is broadcast in Spanish, began in both America and Europe.

The *Euskadi-Vascos en el Mundo*, or Basque Country and Basques in the World, space on the eitb.com webpage (published in Basque, Spanish and English) has increased its offerings in Euskara with new sections and correspondents, now in France, England, United States, Belgium, Argentina and Mexico, and consequently given additional “attention and coverage of political, cultural and social events that affect Basque communities abroad” (Azkarate 2007). The Basque Government’s funding of EITB has doubled the availability of Basque language programming that is accessible around the world thanks to satellites and the Internet. According to Azkarate’s presentation there is “a) Twice the coverage on international television via satellite (ETBsat and Canal Vasco), b) Twice the availability of radio via satellite (*Euskadi Irratia* and *Radio Euskadi*), c) International Internet broadcast, the Group’s five radio stations can be received anywhere in the world, as well as ETBsat on [www.eitb.com](http://www.eitb.com), and *Canal Vasco*, thanks to an agreement signed with JumpTV” which puts television broadcasting on the Internet.<sup>21</sup>

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20. According to Azkarate’s presentation at the 2007 Fourth World Congress of Basque Collectivities, *Canal Vasco News* is broadcast through *Canal Vasco* and other platforms that guarantee access to millions of homes: Plus Satelital (Argentina, Uruguay), five million homes; HITN, Dish Network (accessible all over the USA and Puerto Rico); TV Familia, Caracas (accessible throughout the entire Republic); Agora TV, San Salvador (accessible in the entire country); Chile has coverage through different open access channels; FeTV, Panama (accessible all over the country); UV Televisión of Ecuador; Star Cable in Peru; and VideoCable of Santa Rita, Costa Rica. Another program known as “*Basque Country-Basque in the World*” has six broadcast areas: South Cone, Andean America, the Caribbean, North America, Europe and the rest of the world.

21. From the JumpTV website [www.jumptv.com/en/about](http://www.jumptv.com/en/about) : “JumpTV International has over 300 channels originating from more than 80 countries, JumpTV offers the greatest range of “International” or non-English-language television available on any one network in the world. The composition of our global channel lineup is both broad geographically and deep in variety — including top national broadcasters in nearly every country represented as well as leading regional and specialized channels for sports, music, news, culture and movies. The majority of JumpTV’s content is streamed live as we believe people want to view sports and news as it is happening. Viewers have fresh content often unavailable through any other means. JumpTV also increasingly offers a significant amount of programming on a video-on-demand (VoD) basis.”

## **LEKTOREGO: THE EXPORTATION OF LECTURESHIPS FOR EUSKARA**

The Department of Culture publication, "A Language Policy for the Future" details the implementation of the Basque Government Vice-Counsellor for Language Policy's five-year plan for 2005-09. Section twenty-five states, "Increase the presence of the Basque language abroad through actions that will include the strengthening of cooperative links with the *euskal etxeak* and the program of university language assistants" (Azkarate 2005:58). In 2004-5, the Department of Culture established the *Lektorego*, or lectureship, program, which is managed from the Basque Government's Directorate for the Promotion of the Basque Language.

The *Lektorego* program was developed through the various agreements signed between the Basque Government's Department of Culture (and in some cases in conjunction with the Department of Education, Universities and Investigation and with the General Secretariat of Foreign Affairs in the Office of the Presidency of the Basque Government) and different university departments around the world. Managed by the Department of Culture's Vice-Counsellor of Linguistic Policy, the programs have been met with tremendous success when measured by student registration and participation in the courses. All courses are established with specific requirements to meet the academic expectations of the housing departments and have their corresponding syllabi, required theses and assignments, and exams. Begun with pilot programs in Chile and Uruguay in 2003, the *Lektorego* program was formally established in the Department of Culture in 2005.

The government of the Basque Autonomous Community provides financial and human networking support. It helps the foreign university by funding the annual salary of a Basque language teacher position and in some cases the university also funds a portion of the expenses for travel, entrance visas, insurance, etc. Classroom teaching materials and assessment tools are also provided to teachers through H.A.B.E.

Basque culture and Basque language classes are currently being offered through this program at twenty-four universities in eleven different countries with approximately 600 students participating. For the 2008-2009 academic year this is expected to grow to twenty-seven universities and approximately 700 students (Zinkunegui communications 2008). During 2007-2008 the following universities are participating in the *Lektorego* program and were offering annual courses: University of Chile; Pontifical Catholic University of Chile; University of Valparaiso; Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaiso; National Autonomous University of Mexico; University of the Republic Montevideo, Uruguay; Boise State University; University of Warsaw; University of Helsinki; Popular University of Rome, UPTER; University of Valencia; Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic; University of Barcelona; Autonomous University of Barcelona; and the Complutense University of Madrid; Free University of Berlin; Goethe University, Berlin.

In Germany, the Freie Universität of Berlin was one of the first institutions to establish a Basque language assistant program. An agreement between the

Department of Culture and the Freie Universität established the Basque language courses, located within the Institute of Romance Philology, for the 2004-5 academic year. An agreement for the period 2004-6 was signed with the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main as was the creation of a center called *Euskal Ikaskuntzen Alemaniako Etxea, Euskal Liburutegia*, the Basque Studies Center of Germany and the Basque Library. The Department of Education, Universities and Research, the Office of the Presidency and the Department of Culture of the Basque Government were all parties to this agreement.

In Italy, in 2003, it was the Italian Basque organization *Associazione Culturale Euskara - Erromako Euskal Etxea*, the Basque Center of Rome, which began to offer Basque classes at the Università Popolare di Roma, UPTER. The same year, this association contacted the Department of Culture Directorate for the Promotion of the Basque Language and requested financial or teacher assistance to continue providing activities and student courses. The Department of Culture and UPTER agreed to establish the Basque Lektorego Program in 2005-06 with its own Basque Language Department responsible for organizing general and non-academic cultural activities for the university and local community. Today it offers Basque I, Basque II, Basque III, and also a Basque Conversation course. There is also an offering of Basque Culture which includes language, history, literature, mythology and geography.

In the United States, an agreement with Boise State University in Idaho was confirmed for 2005-2008. Boise State was in the process of forming a Minor Degree in Basque Studies through the university's Department of Modern Languages and as in the case of Frankfurt, the Basque Government Department of Culture, the Department of Education and the Office of the Presidency are also parties to this agreement. In this case the funding was substantial enough to also offer several courses and weekend workshops in Basque culture.

In each example at the twenty-four different universities, the Basque language courses also include learning about the Basque Country itself; its culture, traditions, identity, and history. It is hoped that these programs will continue and develop into focal points for learning and using the language and for promoting scholarship and publications in Euskara and about Basque topics. By fomenting international and academic allies, the Basque Government is creating a small but global network of protagonists who are in favor of protecting and using Euskara.

## **ETXEPARE BASQUE INSTITUTE: EUSKARA'S INTERNATIONAL FUTURE**

The most substantial and most recent endeavor of the Basque Government to promote Basque language outside of its boundaries comes in form of the Etxepare Basque Institute. In May, 2008, the executive branch of the Basque Government accepted the unanimously approved Basque parliamentary declaration Ley 3/2007 of April 20, 2007 creating the Etxepare Basque Institute. The Etxepare Basque Institute would now be responsible for coordinating and consolidat-



ing all of the various projects and programs of the Basque Government pertaining to the international promotion of Basque culture and language. This institute will be the center point for diaspora communities, universities, language research centers and investigators wishing to obtain materials, teacher training and numerous smaller projects in favor of Euskara and Basque culture. It will have its own separate legal status but is connected to the Department of Culture and the mission of the institute is to take Basque language and culture to the world.

Its objective is the international promotion, diffusion and projection of Euskara and of Basque culture. It will develop its activities within the general framework of Basque Government foreign affairs and the cultural and linguistic policies of the Basque Autonomous Community. It will pay special attention to university research regarding the Basque language, and will implement activities of cultural promotion in collaboration with other national and international entities. The expectation is to create and foment a global interest in the Basque language.

As it develops, the Etxepare Institute will assume the responsibilities of the majority of international programs for Basque language and culture that are currently being developed by the Directorate of Relations with Basque Collectivities and by the Department of Culture (HABE, Vice-Counsellor of Linguistic Policy, Vice-Counsellor of Culture). Both the Department of Culture and the General Secretariat of Foreign Affairs are members of the Council and the Board of Directors of the Etxepare Basque Institute in order to facilitate necessary coordination.

The mission of Etxepare is in line with the motto of poet and writer Bernat Etxepare, who in his 1545 Basque-language publication wrote in his poem, *Kontrapas*, "*Heuscara ialgui adi campora*" in regards to "Basque language going forth into the world."

The aims of the Basque Institute Etxepare are: a) To internationally promote the instruction, study and use of Basque, and to promote and enhance international recognition of the Basque language and encourage all measures and actions to contribute to disseminating and improving the quality of these activities; b) To contribute to the spread abroad of Basque culture in all its forms and in different languages; c) To bring Basque Country current events to Basque-speaking communities throughout the world and to those places where there are immigrant Basque communities, or cultural or historical trade relations.

The Etxepare Institute will have two branches, one general for Basque culture and one specifically for Basque language. Basque Culture programs will include music, performing arts, visual arts, film, architecture and design. The section for Euskara will focus on teaching, study, use and dissemination of Basque among the general public and among public institutions internationally. It will develop research and teaching of Basque, mainly in universities and other centers of higher education outside the Basque Country, by supporting the establishment of teaching lectureships and assistantships for Basque language

and culture, and act as a clearinghouse for cooperation and assistance for researchers and specialists and for foreign research centers.

Similar to institutions such as the United Kingdom's *British Council*, the *Goethe Institut* of Germany, the Spanish *Instituto Cervantes* or the *Institut Ramon Llull* of Catalonia, the Basque Institute Etxepare is expected to be the "go to" center for information. According to Patxi Baztarrika, Vice-Counsellor for Linguistic Policy, it will conduct cultural outreach in collaboration with other national and international centers and will be responsible for representing Basque issues at language, education and culture expos and exhibitions and especially will promote the sharing of information and materials. It will take over the administration of the Lektorego program and the promotion of activities that support Euskara through computer and information technology, audiovisual resources, teacher training and publication of teachers' guides (Baztarrika, various communications 2007). The main offices of the Etxepare Basque Institute will be located in Donostia-San Sebastián and eventually could have a network of branches in various cities around the world.

According to the press release of the Basque President, Mr. Juan José Ibarretxe of July 14, 2008, the institute was created by Public Law 3/2007 of April 20, 2007, of the Basque Parliament. The stated objectives are to:<sup>22</sup>

- a) disseminate Basque artistic creation through the promotion of programming and scheduling on the international scene.
- b) support traveling exhibits for artists and their works.
- c) facilitate information and knowledge of Basque contemporary creativity and artistic heritage.
- d) organize international cultural exchanges.
- e) promote strategic plans for the dissemination of the arts.
- f) design financial aid programs for cultural agents with the aim of publicizing Basque works on the international scene.
- g) promote literature, thought and research in Euskara through outreach works and scientific research as well as through research journals of Basque philosophy and culture.
- h) promote the international dissemination of Basque culture particularly by supporting cultural offerings created in Euskara.
- i) facilitate dialogue and exchange among Basque opinion leaders and researchers around the world.
- j) promote international authorities' research on Basque linguistic diversity and cultural pluralism.
- k) manage grants to public and private entities meant to develop actions leading to the universal promotion of Basque culture ([http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota\\_prensa/etxepare\\_institutua/es\\_etxepare/etxepere\\_institutua.html](http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota_prensa/etxepare_institutua/es_etxepare/etxepere_institutua.html)).

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22. [http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota\\_prensa/etxepare\\_institutua/es\\_etxepare/etxepere\\_institutua.html](http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota_prensa/etxepare_institutua/es_etxepare/etxepere_institutua.html)

The area of Advocacy and Outreach for Euskara aims to promote the actions of teaching, study, use and dissemination of the Basque language to the general public and among public institutions in the international arena. Its functions are to:

- a) promote the presence, study and learning of Euskara in universities and other research centers around the world, particularly by supporting the establishment of lectureships and assistantships at universities and acting as an organ of cooperation and assistance for foreign research centers and Basque specialists.
- b) promote the learning of Basque among Basque-speaking communities around the world, mainly through existing Basque *euskal etxeak*.
- c) facilitate, through its own resources or in collaboration with others, the necessary human resources, and linguistic and educational requirements for the study of Euskara abroad.
- d) boost teacher training for specialists in the teaching of Basque as a second language.
- e) arrange for exams to obtain language certificates of knowledge for Basque speakers abroad.
- f) promote the presence of Euskara in the international arena through participation in language trade fairs and exhibitions.
- g) coordinate the promotion of Euskara with other agencies that aim at the promotion and dissemination of Spanish, Catalan and Galician.
- h) coordinate language promotional activities within the Basque government and other public agencies, and especially with the other the Basque territories.
- i) articulate stable cooperative relations with the entities involved in the normalization of Basque.
- j) formalize agreements and/or partnerships with universities and other entities, public or private, domestic or foreign, with the aim of promoting the dissemination of Euskara and works written in Euskara.
- k) manage grants to public and private entities which will develop projects for the global promotion of Basque.
- l) to promote, on its own initiative or in collaboration with others, the implementation of measures to spread Euskara through telecommunications networks and information technology and communication, as well as through the mass media ([http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota\\_prensa/etxepare\\_institutua/es\\_etxepare/etxepere\\_institutua.html](http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-714/es/contenidos/nota_prensa/etxepare_institutua/es_etxepare/etxepere_institutua.html)).

## CONCLUSIONS

All of these measures are significant, especially for a small government, a small diaspora population and a language that has fewer than one million speakers. The Basque Government also has programs and financing to help support other minority languages around the world such as their agreement with Chile to support teaching and learning methods for Rapa Nui on Easter Island, and

Colombia in its efforts to preserve approximately sixty-five indigenous languages, and they have shown overwhelming solidarity with many minority language initiatives.

We have witnessed a great expansion of availability of access to Basque speakers and materials for learning, practicing and using Euskara through the Internet and satellite programming and technological advancements will continue to facilitate access. Possibilities for human physical contact with other fluent Basque speakers, however, is diminishing, and of course this is the goal, to use Euskara. If the motivation is not instrumental and not immediate, the chances of attracting Basque language learners and users diminishes. The Etxepare Basque Institute constitutes a tremendous effort to create the motivation, the materials and the access to and availability of native Basque speakers to other language enthusiasts around the world. Future fieldwork will define and measure the degree of success these programs may have in keeping Euskara off the endangered list and firmly in the marketplace of languages.

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