



CONTEST A (VIRTUAL REALITY) JOURNEY THROUGH EUROPEAN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

In Europe, 40 to 50 million people speak one of its 60 regional and minority languages, each representing their communities' unique history, culture, and traditions.

Those languages account for linguistic diversity and belong to humanity's intangible cultural heritage. Language diversity plays a crucial role in shaping our collective identity and is vital to the fabric of our shared heritage.

Linguistic diversity is not just about communication; it's about preserving the knowledge, stories, and ways of life passed down through generations. Understanding and appreciating these languages fosters greater respect for cultural diversity and strengthens the bonds that unite us as Europeans.

What better way to appreciate and value something than by getting to know it, right? We invite you to help us embark on an exciting journey to discover the linguistic diversity of Europe. That is what this contest is all about: showcasing Europe's linguistic diversity so that, by knowing it, we can learn to love it and preserve it.

CONTEST CONDITIONS

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Secondary and high school students aged 12 to 18 enrolled in any European school in groups of up to 12 students. There are no limitations on groups per school.

CONTEST AIM

To create a virtual reality experience that highlights Europe's linguistic diversity, focusing on the following languages: Catalan, Basque, Galician, Corsican, Breton, Occitan, Ladin, Friulian, Mochèno, Cimbri, Sardinian, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Frisian, Sorbian, Hungarian (in Romania), Swedish (in Finland), Nynorsk, Finnish (in Sweden), Irish, and Macedonian.





WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

Participants are invited to create a story presented through a virtual reality headset. Your challenge is to showcase European linguistic diversity by picking **three of the abovementioned languages**. The story should present those languages in a way that helps other students to learn more about them: their origins, music, literature and artistic production, their sounds, the value they hold for the identity of their speakers, etc.

The following examples aim to inspire you in writing your script.

EXAMPLE 1:

Imagine a Friulian merchant from the 16th century who departs from the city of Udine with his goods, aiming to reach the island of Corsica. Along the way, she passes through the beautiful Val di Fassa, where she encounters the Ladin language of the Dolomites. Days later, she arrives in Luserna and discovers a Germanic language, Cimbrian, which fascinates her. Finally, our merchant reaches the island of Corsica, where she discovers that the Corsican language is the language of socialisation among family and friends. Languages presented: Friulian, Ladin and Corsican.

EXAMPLE 2:

Now, think of a Basque fisherman from the 19th century whose language is Basque. He embarks on a journey along the Atlantic coast until he reaches the port of Brest, where he docks his boat to rest for a few days. There, he discovers the Breton language and explores its music and folklore. Shortly after, he leaves for Galway, but his boat runs aground on some rocks near the Irish town of Tragenma. A fisherman rescues him, and he learns about the Irish language whilst recovering at the family house of the fisherman. Languages presented: Basque, Breton, Irish.

EXAMPLE 3:

Finally, imagine an Erasmus student from Barcelona, a Catalan speaker, who has been accepted to study for a semester in Leeuwarden. He decides to make part of his journey by train, and his first stop is Perpignan, in France. After arriving in the city and walking through the historic centre, he discovers that some locals speak Catalan with each other! Then, he takes a train to Toulouse, where he meets two young Occitan speakers who tell him about their language. Finally, he arrives in Leeuwarden, the capital of the province of Friesland in the north of the Netherlands. On his first day of class, he discovers many students speak Frisian! Languages presented: Catalan, Occitan and Frisian.





GUIDELINES FOR STORY CREATION

NARRATIVE:

1. The story must be told in the first person (main character) but can interact with other characters by talking, showing elements related to the language, etc.
2. The maximum length of the story is three and a half minutes (between 400 and 500 words).
3. You shall portray **three languages** in your story and provide relevant information.

EVENTS AND ELEMENTS:

1. The environment (scenario) can change, and there can be views of different landscapes. This could include train stop signs in other languages, sounds, and music typical of various regions.
2. Include visual elements representing the languages and cultures you want to highlight, such as objects or typical foods.

CREATIVITY AND FREEDOM:

1. Don't feel limited by space or scenery. Although we suggest a train, carriage, or boat, you can imagine any moving vehicle or environment.
2. The way you portray and imagine the scenario is up to you. We want to see your creativity in presenting and representing your chosen languages.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

1. You can use any resources that help you to build your story: Music, objects, characters, and interactions are tools at your disposal, but you are only obliged to use some of them.

...EXTRA TIPS FOR BUILDING STORYTELLING FOR THE VIRTUAL REALITY EPISODE:

1. What is the goal of your story? What is it for?
2. Who is the protagonist of the story?
3. What is the main plot? Are there some dialogues?





4. What specific information should be shared?
5. What emotions would you like to evoke?

ENTRY REQUIREMENT

The storytelling/script, together with any other supportive material (if any) shall be sent by email to npld@npld.eu

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

You must submit your final project, including all the material necessary to evaluate your work (drawings, images, text, etc.), **before February the 3rd, 2025.**

The **contest winner will be emailed by February the 21st, 2025,** on International Mother Language Day.

The **virtual reality episode will be released by May the 5th, 2025.**

JUDGING CRITERIA

1. **Originality and Creativity:** The ability to create a unique and innovative story representing linguistic diversity.
2. **Narrative and Coherence:** Clarity of story, coherence of events, and presentation of the script.
3. **Use of the Setting:** How you use the moving environment to enrich the story and benefit the audience's experience of learning more about Europe's linguistic diversity.
4. **Linguistic Integration:** How you include the languages and cultures represented in your story.

PRIZES & RECOGNITION

The winners will be given the opportunity to work on a second script or piece of storytelling; this time focused exclusively on their language community. This new virtual reality episode will be ready on September 26th, 2025, during the European Day of Languages.





JURY

The jury will consist of a representative of the following NPLD members and a member of the Chair's Committee of the NPLD: Province of Friesland, Autonomous Province of Trento, ARLeF, Partium Christian University, Xarxa Vives d'Universitats, Stockholm University, Provincial Council of Bizkaia, and the Welsh Government.

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY RESOURCES

You may want to check the following documents to learn about the European regional or minority languages. There are many other sources though that you can consult:

1. [Regional and minority languages in the European Union. European Parliament briefing September 2006.](#)
2. [Multilingualism: the language of the European Union. European Parliament briefing September 2019](#)
3. [Article: Why some of Europe's oldest languages are at risk of going extinct](#)
4. [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Council of Europe](#)

DISCLAIMER

The contest "A (virtual reality) journey through European linguistic diversity" is organised by the members of the ECCA project and funded by the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD).

