

What are the key recommendations from the Council of Europe's Fourth Opinion?

Language Department for Communities and Local Government to reconsider cuts to Cornish Language funding.

Engagement Authorities to engage with minorities to ensure policy is developed with consideration of traditions and identity of the minority.

Data The Office for National Statistics to include the option for the Cornish to self-identify as Cornish through a 'tick-box' in the next Census.

Media The BBC Charter should include support for national minorities and specifically the Cornish language.

Policy Authorities should ensure necessary steps are taken to ensure the Cornish have access to the rights provided by the Framework Convention.

The British-Irish Council should address the Cornish language in its work and involve the Cornwall authorities.

Education The Cornish should be engaged when considering a flexible and pragmatic approach to the provision of Cornish language teaching.

This list is not exhaustive, if you would like more information please visit Cornwall Council's website www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornishminority

Further information

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Cornish minority status

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Framework Convention of the
Protection of National Minorities



www.cornwall.gov.uk

What is the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities?

The Framework Convention came into force on 1 February 1998 and is one of the most comprehensive treaties designed to protect the rights of persons belonging to a national minority.

Parties to this Convention undertake to promote the full and effective equality of persons belonging to minorities in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life together with the conditions that will allow them to express, preserve and develop their culture and identity.

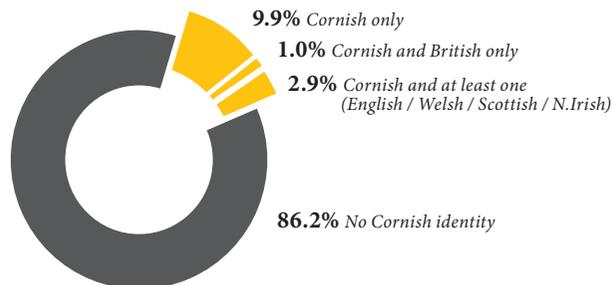
The UK Government recognised the Cornish as a national minority in April 2014. The Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention published its Fourth Opinion on the United Kingdom in March 2017, the first since the Cornish were recognised, which sets out recommendations for the Government and local authorities to work towards.

What is a National Minority?

There is no general definition agreed upon by the Council of Europe member states about what constitutes a National Minority. Each party to the Framework Convention is therefore able to assess which groups are to be covered by the Convention within their own area.

For the Advisory Committee, the Framework Convention is not an “all-or-nothing” instrument. This Advisory Committee has therefore adopted an article by article approach to the question of the groups covered by the Framework Convention, recognising that some articles in the convention have a larger scope to include a wide range of groups than do others.

14% of Cornwall's total population identify as being Cornish*



* 73,200 people stated in the 2011 Census that they identify as being Cornish

The 2011 Census was the first to enable people to identify themselves as Cornish under the White: British category, by writing in the word 'Cornish'. It was also the first time that people could record their language as Cornish, again as a write-in option.

What is Cornwall Council's role?

Cornwall Council has a Cornish Minority Status Working Group, which includes members and officers from across the Council, together with key partners.

This group works on co-ordinating activity to support Cornish culture, language and heritage and strives to implement recommendations from the Council of Europe.

More detailed information is available on the Council's website.

www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornishminority

Will exiting the EU impact this status?

In June 2016 the UK voted to leave the EU. This caused concern among some community groups about whether the Council of Europe's protection of national minorities would still be upheld after the UK leaves the EU and whether the Government will be committed to carrying on supporting the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

Cornwall Council contacted the Integration and Faith Division at the Department for Communities and Local Government and they confirmed in February 2017 that:

“The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is a Council of Europe instrument, and has nothing to do with the European Union. The UK ratified the Framework Convention in 1998 and this will be unaffected by the UK leaving the EU.”

Who decides whether someone belongs to a National Minority?

Individuals are free to decide whether or not they wish to be treated as belonging to a national minority.

This does not mean that each person can arbitrarily choose to belong to any national minority. An individual's choice must be based on objective criteria connected with that person's identity, such as language, religion and culture.