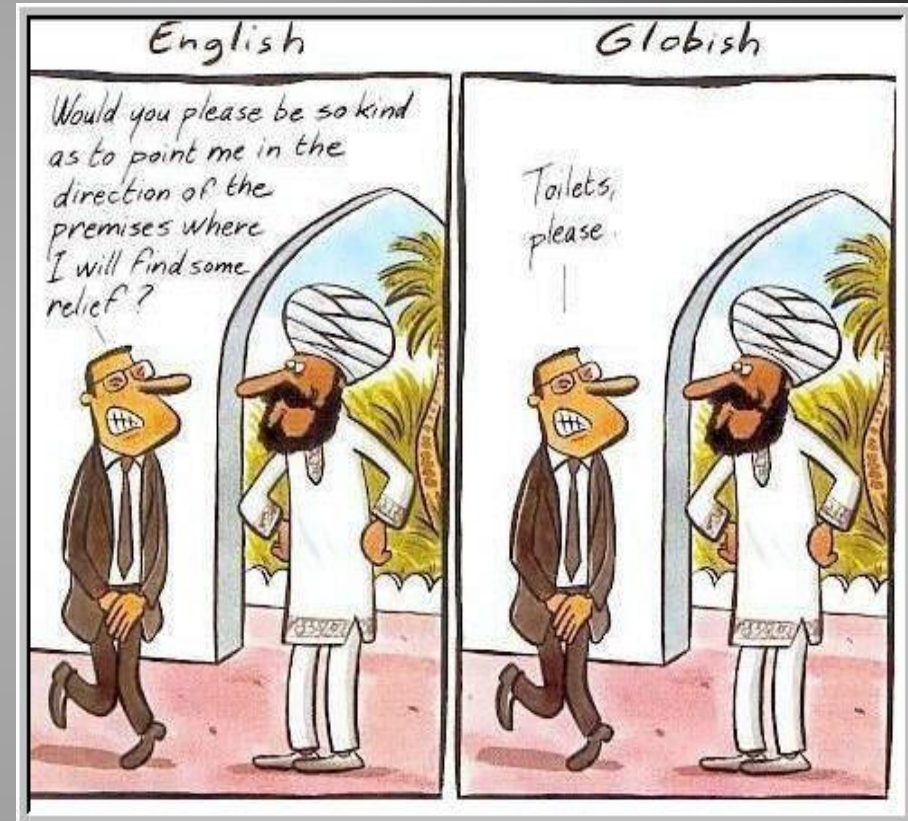
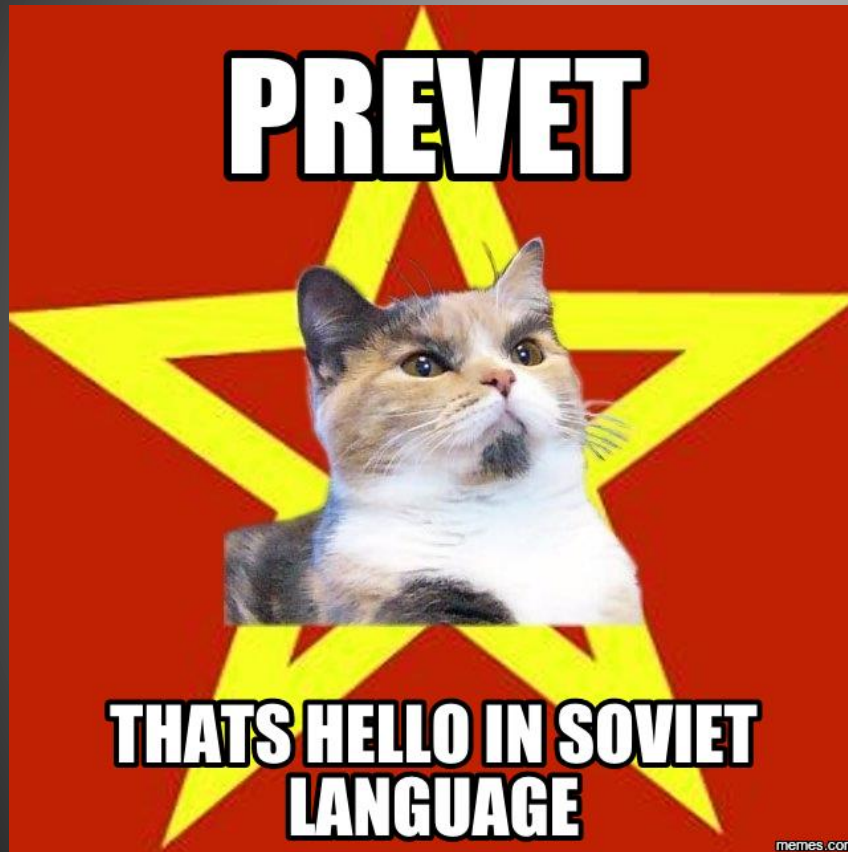


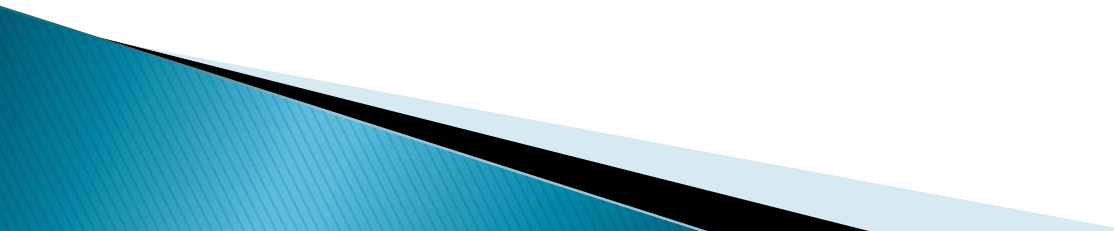
MASS BILINGUALISM IN THE SOVIET UNION AND IN THE EU: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPARISON

Vytenis KONČIUS

From Soviet to Globish in 25 years?




The purpose

- ▶ Our country's historical experience may provide us with deeper insights into the phenomenon of all-pervading bilingualism and better equip us with dealing with potential challenges it presents.
 - ▶ What are the parallels and differences between these two sociolinguistic situations?
 - ▶ What lessons can we learn?
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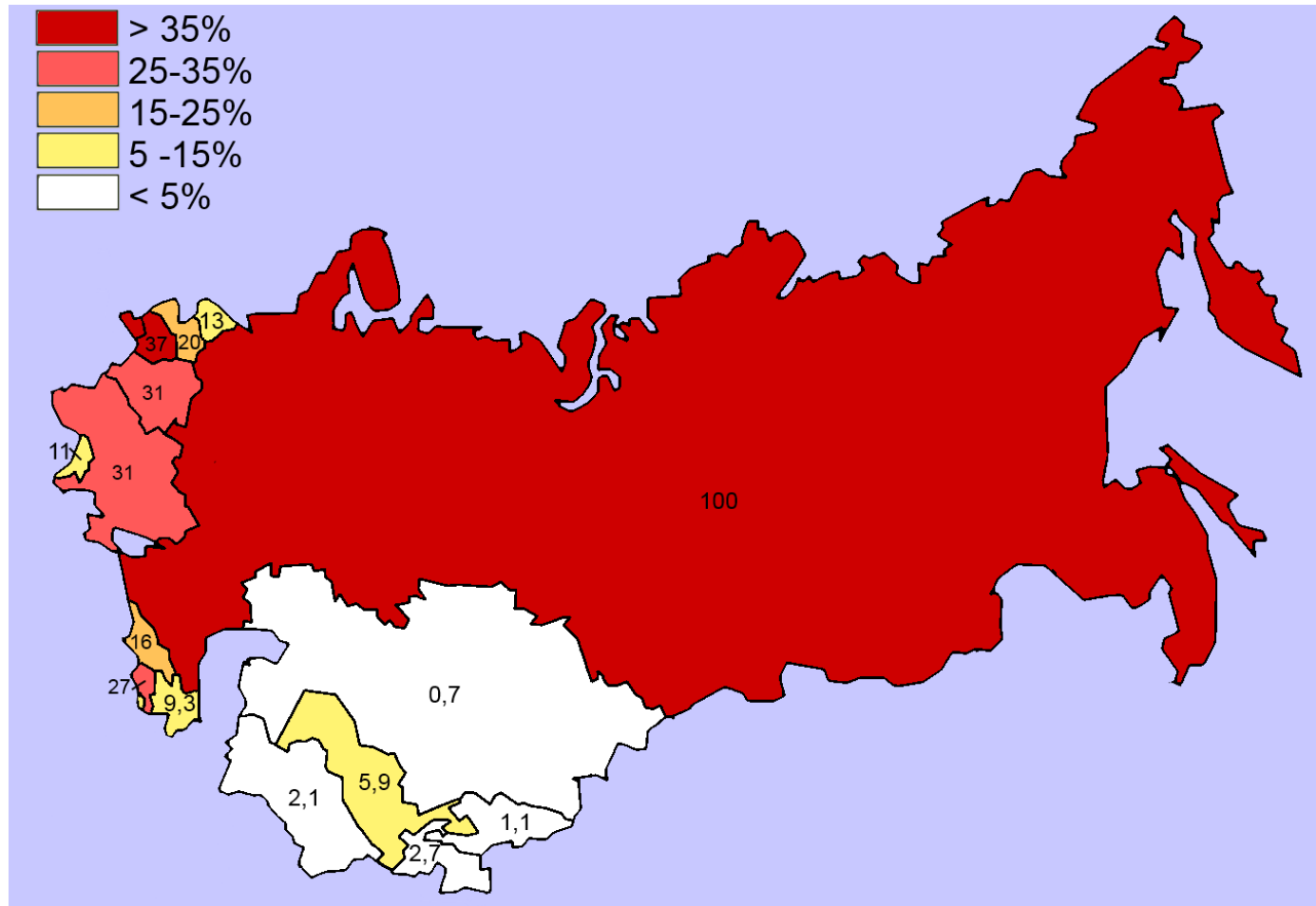
Similarities and differences



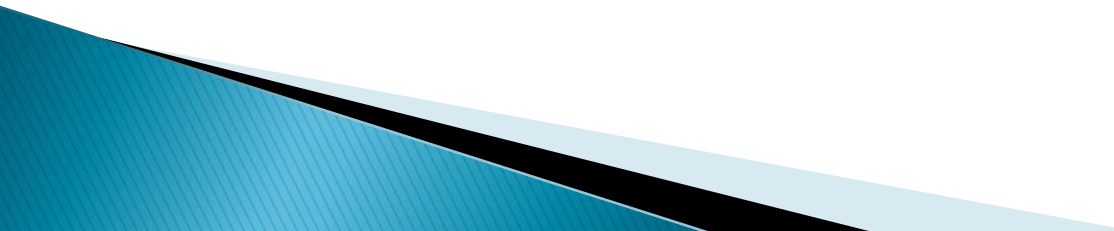
The Soviet language policy

- ▶ No formal official language.
 - ▶ One de-facto lingua franca – Russian.
 - ▶ Centralized control of language policy.
 - ▶ Lip service to declared equality of all the languages of the USSR. Dominance of Russian in practice.
 - ▶ Mass migration (voluntary and forced) spreading the use of Russian in all corners of the Union.
 - ▶ Contrary to popular belief – **russification not an official policy of the state** but rather a matter of political and economic expediency. During various periods – covert attempts at russification (but never open).
 - ▶ As a result, local-Russian unilateral bilingualism almost universal, Russian gradually becoming the dominant language in some non-Russian speaking republics, gradual loss of languages by some local ethnic groups.
- 

Unilateral bilingualism. Percentage of ethnic Russians being able to speak local languages of the Soviet republics (1979 census data)




The EU language policy

- ▶ All languages of EU member states are co-official.
 - ▶ One dominant lingua franca – English.
 - ▶ No centralized control of language policy (directives).
 - ▶ Linguistic diversity and multilingualism promoted in theory. Dominance of English in practice.
 - ▶ Mass migration (both voluntary and economically forced) spreading the use of English throughout the Union.
 - ▶ Instead of declared multilingualism, increasing spread of English and local-English bilingualism.
 - ▶ Local-English bilingualism as a matter of expediency rather than any underlying policy.
 - ▶ As a result, local-English bilingualism almost universal in some countries. No danger (yet?) of English becoming a dominant language in non-English speaking countries, although the pervasiveness of English is increasing.
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Comparing Eurobarometer survey data of 2005 and 2012

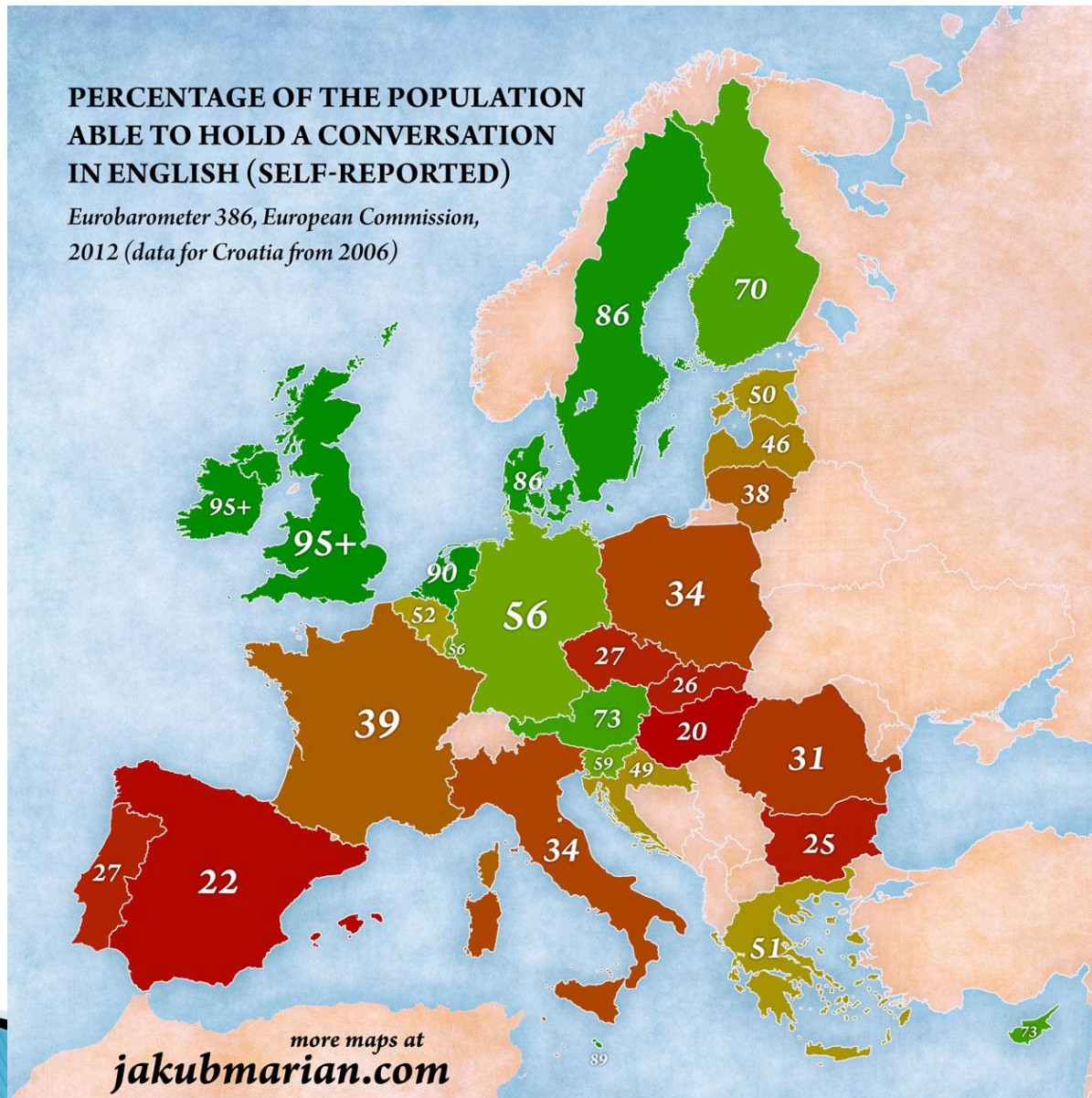
According to Eurobarometer language survey, English and Spanish are the only two languages that show notable increases since 2005 in the proportion of respondents saying that they know them well enough to be able to hold a conversation.

For English the biggest improvements are in:

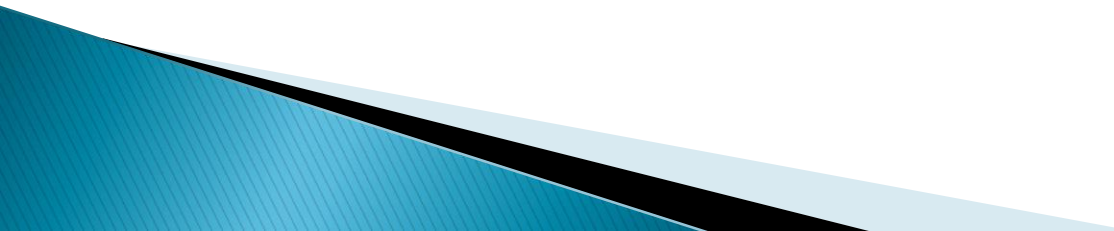
- ▶ Austria (+15 percentage points to 73%),
 - ▶ Finland (+7 points to 70%),
 - ▶ Latvia (+7 points to 46%)
 - ▶ Lithuania (+6 points to 38%).
- 

**PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION
ABLE TO HOLD A CONVERSATION
IN ENGLISH (SELF-REPORTED)**

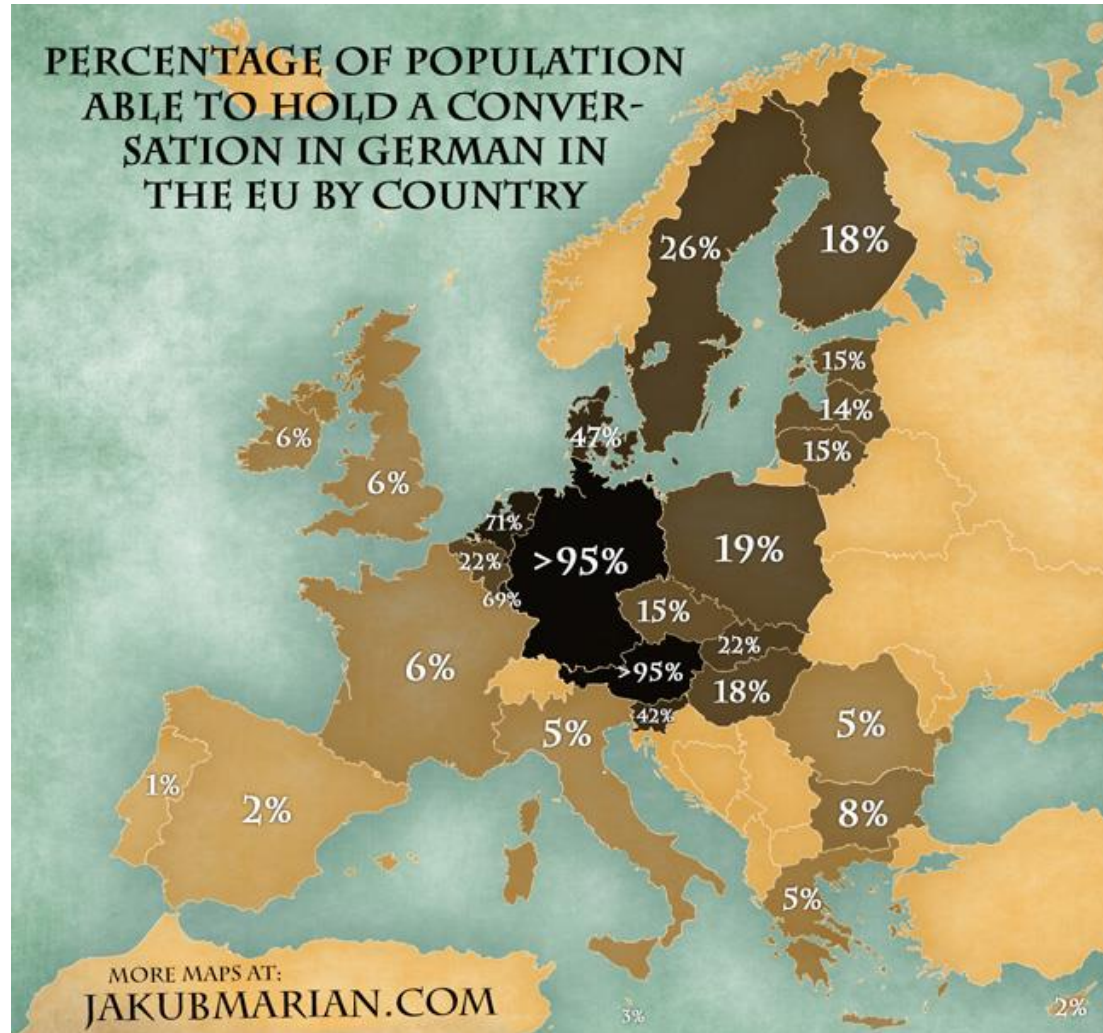
*Eurobarometer 386, European Commission,
2012 (data for Croatia from 2006)*



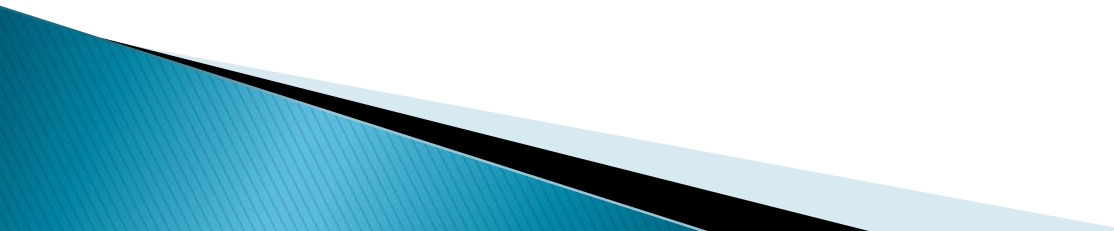
For German language there are decreases in:

- ▶ Luxembourg (–19 points to 69%),
 - ▶ the Czech Republic (–13 points to 15%),
 - ▶ Denmark (–11 points to 47%),
 - ▶ Slovakia (–10 points to 22%),
 - ▶ Slovenia (–8 points to 42%),
 - ▶ Hungary (–7 points to 18%),
 - ▶ Estonia (–7 points to 15%).
- 

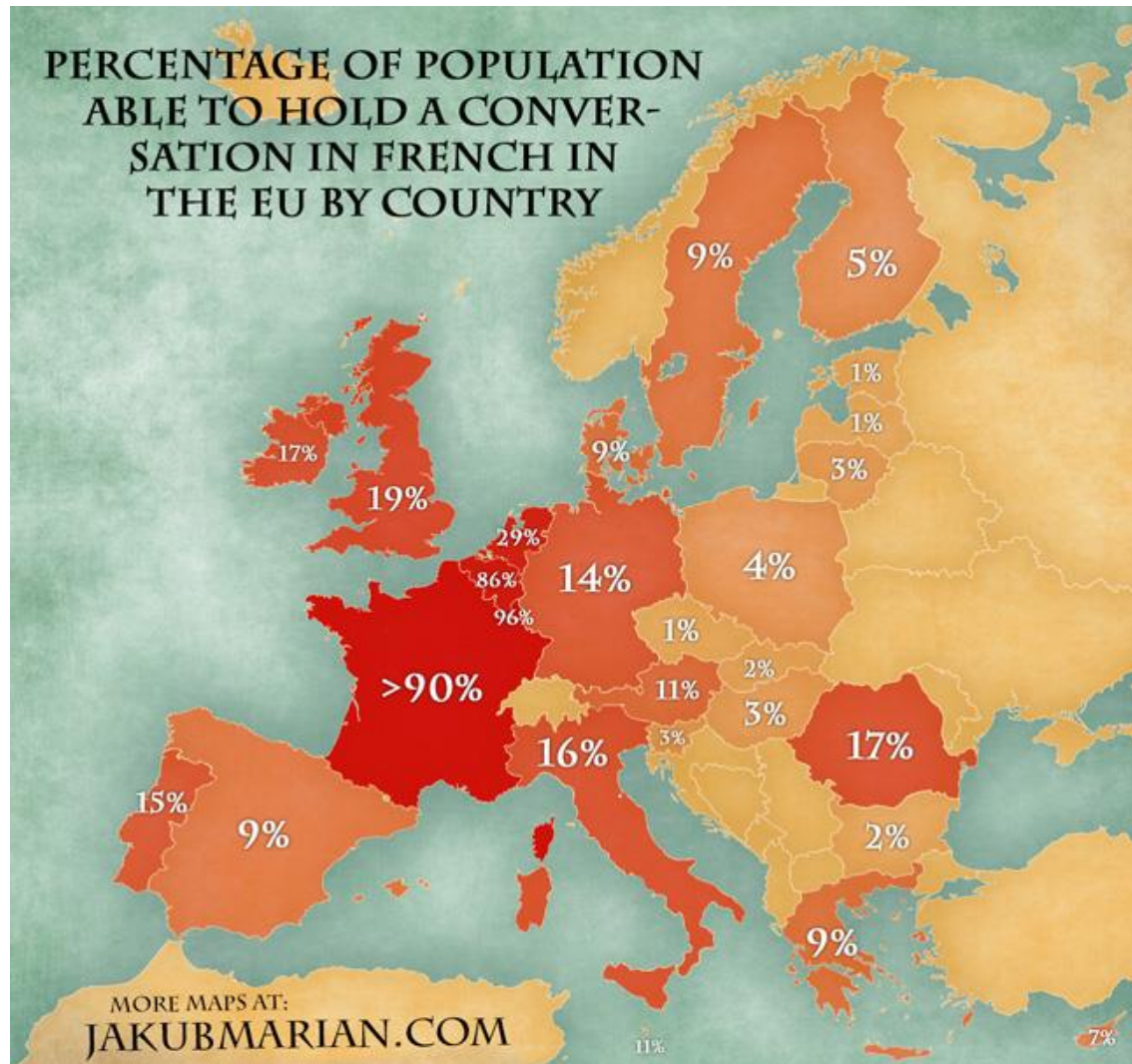
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION
ABLE TO HOLD A CONVER-
SATION IN GERMAN IN
THE EU BY COUNTRY



For French language the biggest declines are in:

- ▶ Luxembourg (–10 points to 80%),
 - ▶ Portugal (–9 points to 15%),
 - ▶ Romania (–7 points to 17%),
 - ▶ Bulgaria (–7 points to 2%),
 - ▶ Malta (–6 points to 11%).
- 

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION
ABLE TO HOLD A CONVER-
SATION IN FRENCH IN
THE EU BY COUNTRY



MOST SPOKEN SECOND LANGUAGES* IN THE EU BY COUNTRY

*LANGUAGES PEOPLE CAN SPEAK WHICH
ARE NOT THEIR MOTHER TONGUE



MORE MAPS AT:
JAKUBMARIAN.COM

Parallels and differences

- ▶ One dominating lingua franca.
 - ▶ Local languages officially recognized and protected.
 - ▶ Promotion of linguistic diversity in theory, spread of de-facto unilateral bilingualism in practice.
 - ▶ Increased pervasiveness of a lingua franca in various spheres of life.
 - ▶ Mass migration facilitating the aggressive spread of a lingua franca.
 - ▶ Economic expediency more than any government policy driving the aggressive spread of a lingua franca.
- ▶ One dominating native speaker group in the USSR. No such group in the EU.
 - ▶ Local languages (still) much stronger in the EU than in the USSR.
 - ▶ In the USSR – russification from above; in the EU – “anglification” from below.
 - ▶ Genuine promotion of local languages in the EU rather, mere lip-service in the USSR.

“Russification from above vs. anglification from below”?

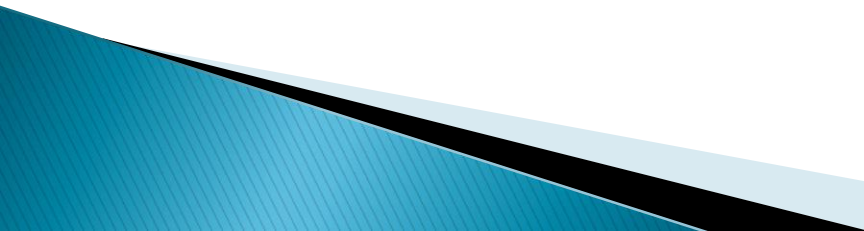
According to 1989 census, fluent command of Russian was reported by:

- ▶ 67% of Latvians
- ▶ 37% of Lithuanians
- ▶ 34% of Estonians.

According to Eurobarometer survey of 2012, fluent command of English was reported by:

- ▶ 46% of Latvians
- ▶ 38% of Lithuanians
- ▶ 50% of Estonians.

Conclusions

- ▶ There are significant parallels between the spread of the respective lingua francas in the two unions, even though the local languages in the EU are still in a much better sociolinguistic situation.
 - ▶ Lingua franca is necessary, universal knowledge of it is not a negative thing in itself.
 - ▶ However, spread of one lingua franca at the expense of other languages, loss of genuine multilingualism in favour of local-English unilateral bilingualism definitely is.
 - ▶ English at the moment does not (yet?) pose a threat like the one Russian posed to the local languages.
 - ▶ However, potential threat to the genuine linguistic diversity and vitality of languages is posed more by the aggressive spread of a lingua franca, decrease of multilingualism in favour of unilateral bilingualism, mass migration, economical expediency and market forces than by presence or absence of any governmental language policy.
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AČIŪ!

How to say THANK YOU in various European languages

ETYMOLOGY

- From Latin *grātia* [gə] ('to thank'), from PIE **grerH-* ('to welcome; to praise'); the same root as 'grace'
- From Latin *mercedem* ('pay; reward'), from Latin *merx* ('merchandise'); the same root as 'mercy', also see **
- From Latin *obligo* ('bind in obligation'), from Latin *ob-* ('to') + *ligo* ('bind; unite'); the same root as 'obligation'
- From the Romanian verb *multumi* ('to thank'), from *la multi ani* (literally: 'to/for many years'), a birthday cheer
- From Proto-Germanic **þankaz* ('thought; remembrance; gratitude'), from PIE **tang-* or **teng-* ('to think; to feel')
- via Old Norse *þakki*, from Proto-Germanic **þankaz*
- via Old High German *dankon*, from Proto-Germanic **þankaz*
- From Old Slavic *blago* ('good') + *dar* ('gift'), partially from PIE **deh₂-* ('to give'), the same root as 'donate'
- From Russian *spasi* ('save') + *bog* ('God'), from Proto-Russian **sūpasī bogū* ('save (us) God')
- From Proto-Slavic **xvala* ('glory'), from Middle Persian *xwarrah* ('glory; prosperity; (good) fortune')
- From Albanian *falem* ('we pray') + *nderit* ('the honor'), partially borrowed from Serbo-Croatian *hvala*
- Equivalents in related languages, but origin is unclear; speculations about connection to Greek *kudos* ('praise')
- From Estonian *aitma*, which is a reduction of Proto-Finnic **aita* ('help') + **jumala* ('God')
- From a reduction of Latvian *palīdz Dievs* ('may God help'), compare Estonian and Russian
- Equivalents in related languages, but origin is unclear; possibly a clipping of multiple words
- From Ancient Greek *eukhrístos* ('pleasant; grateful'), from *eú* ('well; good') + *kharizomai* ('I show favor')
- From Hungarian *köszön* ('to thank') + *-om* (suffix), from Old Turkic *kusa* ('to wish; desire; long for')
- From Georgian *madoba* ('thanks'), from Old Georgian *madli* ('benevolence; mercy')
- From Armenian *snorhakal* ('grateful') + *-ut iwn* (suffix); from Middle Persian *šnōhr* ('gratitude, contentment')
- From Arabic *tašakkur* ('thank') + Turkish *ederim* ('I do'), also see *
- From Arabic *rahmat* ('compassion; mercy')

* PIE = Proto-Indo-European

** merci has become part of the regular lexicon of multiple other languages (esp. Armenian, Bulgarian and Romanian)

¹ from Basque *esker* ('appreciation') + *asko* ('many')

² from Cornish *meur* ('great') + *gras* ('grace'), of Celtic origin

³ from Gallic *trugare* ('negotiation; remove'), of Celtic origin

⁴ from Irish *go raibí agat* ('may... be + wealth (good) + agent (at you) or may you have goodness', of Celtic origin)

⁵ from an earlier form of Italian *grà a Lei* ('how to you')

⁶ from Malay *gras* ('may... be + me (good) + agent (at you), see and compare * of Celtic origin)

⁷ from Scottish Gaelic *tapadh* ('benediction') + *leat* ('with you'), of Celtic origin

⁸ from Old Turkic *say* ('healthy') + *alan* ('be'), variations widely used in Turkish and Azeri as well

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(not all local variations are indicated)