Galician (/ˈɡaːliʃən/; /ˈɡaːliʃiən/; galego) is an Indo-European language of the Western Ibero-Romance branch. It is spoken by some 2.4 million people, mainly in Galicia, an autonomous community located in northwestern Spain, where it is co-official with Spanish. The language is also spoken in some border zones of the neighboring Spanish regions of Asturias and Castile and León, as well as by Galician migrant communities in the rest of Spain, in Latin America including Puerto Rico, the United States, Switzerland and elsewhere in Europe.

Modern Galician is part of the West Iberian languages group, a family of Romance languages that includes the Portuguese language, which developed locally from Vulgar Latin and evolved into what modern scholars have called Galician-Portuguese. Dialectal divergences are observable between the northern and southern forms of Galician-Portuguese in 13th-century texts but the two dialects were similar enough to maintain a high level of cultural unity until the middle of the 14th century, producing the medieval Galician-Portuguese lyric. The divergence has continued to this day, producing the modern languages of Galician and Portuguese.[6]

The lexicon of Galician is predominantly of Latin extraction, although it also contains a moderate number of words of Germanic and Celtic origin, among other substrates and adstrates, having also received, mainly via Spanish, a number of nouns from Andalusian Arabic.

The language is officially regulated in Galicia by the Royal Galician Academy. Other organizations without institutional support, such as the Galician Association of Language and the Galician Academy of the Portuguese Language, include Galician as part of the Portuguese language.

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  - Reintegrationism and political implications
  - Official relations between Galicia and the Lusophony
- Geographic distribution and legal status
- History

### Galician

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<th>[gaˈleɣʊ]</th>
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<td>Native speakers</td>
<td>2.4 million (2012)[1]</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>58% of the population of Galicia (c. 1.56 million) are L1 speakers (2007)[2]</td>
</tr>
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<td>Language family</td>
<td>Indo-European</td>
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<td>- Italic</td>
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</table>

### Language codes

| ISO 639-3  | glg |
| Glottolog  | gali1258 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/gali1258)[3] |
| Linguasphere| 51-AAA-ab |
Modern Galician and Portuguese originated from a common medieval ancestor designated variously by modern linguists as Galician-Portuguese (or as Medieval Galician, Medieval Portuguese, Old Galician or Old Portuguese). This common ancestral stage developed from Vulgar Latin in the territories of the old Kingdom of Galicia, Galicia and Northern Portugal, as a Western Romance language. In the 13th century it became a written and cultivated language with two main varieties, but during the 14th century the standards of these varieties, Galician and Portuguese, began to diverge, as Portuguese became the official language of the independent kingdom of Portugal and its chancellery, while Galician was the language of the scriptoria of the lawyers, noblemen and churchmen of the Kingdom of Galicia, then integrated in the crown of Castile and open to influence from Spanish language, culture, and politics. During the 16th century the Galician language stopped being used in legal documentation, becoming de facto an oral language spoken by the vast majority of the Galicians, but having just some minor written use in lyric, theatre and private letters.

It was not until the 18th century that linguists elaborated the first Galician dictionaries, and the language did not recover a proper literature until the 19th century; only since the last quarter of the 20th century is it taught in schools and used in lawmaking. The first complete translation of the Bible from the original languages dates from 1989. Currently, at the level of rural dialects, Galician forms a dialect continuum with Portuguese in the south and with Astur-Leonese in the east. Mutual intelligibility (estimated at 85% by Robert A. Hall, Jr., 1989) is very high between Galicians and northern Portuguese.
The current linguistic status of Galician with respect to Portuguese is controversial in Galicia, and the issue sometimes carries political overtones. There are linguists who deal with modern Galician and Portuguese as norms or varieties of the same language.\textsuperscript{[11]} Some authors, such as Lindley Cintra,\textsuperscript{[8]} consider that they are still co-dialects of a common language in spite of differences in phonology and vocabulary, while others\textsuperscript{[12],[13]} argue that they have become separate languages due to differences in phonetics and vocabulary usage, and, to a lesser extent, morphology and syntax. Fernández Rei in 1990 stated that the Galician language is, with respect to Portuguese, an \textit{ausbau} language, a language through elaboration, and not an \textit{abstand} language, a language through detachment.\textsuperscript{[14]}

With respect to the external and internal perception of this relation, for instance in past editions of the \textit{Encyclopædia Britannica}, Galician was defined as a Portuguese dialect spoken in northwestern Spain. On the other hand, the director of the Instituto Camões declared in 2019 that Galician and Portuguese were close kin, but different languages.\textsuperscript{[15]} According to the Galician government, universities and main cultural institutions, such as the Galician Language Institute or the Royal Galician Academy, Galician and Portuguese are independent languages that stemmed from medieval Galician-Portuguese\textsuperscript{[16]} and modern Galician must be considered an independent Romance language belonging to the group of Ibero-Romance languages having strong ties with Portuguese and its northern dialects. The standard orthography has its roots in the writing of relatively modern Rexurdimento authors, who largely adapted Spanish orthography to the then mostly unwritten language. Most Galician speakers do not regard Galician as a variety of Portuguese, but as a different language,\textsuperscript{[17],[18]} which evolved without interruption and in situ from Latin, both languages maintaining separate literary traditions since the 14th century.

Portuguese Early Modern Era grammars and scholars, at least since Duarte Nunes de Leão in 1606, considered Portuguese and Galician two different languages\textsuperscript{[19]} derived from old Galician, understood as the language spoken in the Northwest before the establishment of the Kingdom of Portugal in the 12th century. The surge of the two languages would be the result of both the elaboration of Portuguese, through the royal court, its internationalization and its study and culture;\textsuperscript{[20]} and of the stagnation of Galician.\textsuperscript{[21],[22]}

The earliest internal attestation of the expression \textit{Galician language} ("lingoajen galego") dates from the 14th century.\textsuperscript{[23]} In Spanish "lenguaje gallego" is already documented in this same century, \textit{circa} 1330,\textsuperscript{[24]} in Occitan \textit{circa} 1290, in the \textit{Regles de Trobar} by Catalan author Jofre de Foixà: \textit{"si tu vols far un cantar en frances, no-s tayn que-y mescles proençal ne cicilia ne gallego ne altre lengatge que sia strayn a aquell" [If you want to compose a song in French, you should not admix Provençal nor Sicilian nor Galician nor other language which is different from it].}\textsuperscript{[25]}

**Reintegrationism and political implications**

Private cultural associations, not endorsed by Galician or Portuguese governments, such as the Galician Language Association (\textit{Associaçom Galega da Língua}) and Galician Academy of the Portuguese Language (\textit{Academia Galega da Língua Portuguesa}), advocates of the minority Reintegrationist movement, support the idea that differences between Galician and Portuguese speech are not enough to justify considering them as separate languages: Galician would be simply one variety of Galician-Portuguese,\textsuperscript{[26]} along with Brazilian Portuguese; African Portuguese; the Galician-Portuguese still spoken in Spanish Extremadura, Fala; and other dialects. They have adopted slightly-modified or actual Portuguese orthography, which has its roots in medieval Galician-Portuguese poetry as later adapted by the Portuguese Chancellery.
According to Reintegrationists, considering Galician as an independent language reduces contact with Portuguese culture, leaving Galician as a minor language with less capacity to counterbalance the influence of Spanish, the only official language between the 18th century and 1975. On the other hand, viewing Galician as a part of the Lusophony, while not denying its own characteristics (cf. Swiss German), shifts cultural influence from the Spanish domain to the Portuguese. Although it is difficult to clarify the political positions of those who favor one view or the other, Reintegrationism is usually associated with the more radical spectrum of Galician independenceism. Some scholars have described the situation as properly a continuum, from the Galician variants of Portuguese in one extreme to the Spanish language in the other (which would represent the complete linguistic shift from Galician to Spanish); reintegrationist points of view are closer to the Portuguese extreme, and so-called isolationist ones would be closer to the Spanish one[27]; however, the major Galician nationalist parties, Anova–Nationalist Brotherhood and Galician Nationalist Bloc, do not use reintegrationist orthographical conventions.

**Official relations between Galicia and the Lusophony**

In 2014, the parliament of Galicia unanimously approved Law 1/2014 regarding the promotion of the Portuguese language and links with the Lusophony.[28] Similarly, on 20 October 2016, the city of Santiago de Compostela, the political capital of Galicia, approved by unanimity a proposal to become an observer member of the Union of Portuguese-Speaking Capitals (UCCLA).[29] Also, on 1 November 2016, the Council of Galician Culture (Consello da Cultura Galega) was admitted as a consultative observer of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP).[30]

A "friendship and cooperation" protocol was signed between the Royal Galician Academy (RAG) and the Brazilian Academy of Letters on 10 January 2019. Víctor F. Freixanes, president of the RAG, stated during the ceremony that “there is a conscience that the Galician language is part of a family which includes our brothers from Portugal, Brasil, Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique... a territory full of possibilities also for Galician. We always said that Galician is not a regional language, but is in fact part of that international project.”[31]

**Geographic distribution and legal status**

Galician is spoken by some three million people, including most of the population of Galicia and the numerous Galician communities established elsewhere, in Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Biscay), in other European cities (Andorra la Vella, Geneva, London, Paris), and in the Americas (New York, New Jersey, Buenos Aires, Cordoba/Argentina, Montevideo, Havana, Caracas, San Juan in Puerto Rico, São Paulo, Managua, Mayagüez, Ponce, Panama City).

Galician is today official, together with the Spanish language, in the autonomous community of Galicia, where it is recognized as the autochthonous language (lingua propia), being by law the first language of the local administrations and governments. It is supposed by law to be taught bilingually, alongside Spanish, in both primary and secondary education, although the accomplishment of this law is allegedly doubted. It is also used at the three universities established in Galicia, having also the consideration of official language of the three institutions. Galician has also legal recognition in the Bierzo region in León, and in four municipalities in Zamora. The other languages with official status elsewhere in Spain are Spanish, Catalan (or Valencian), Basque and Aranese. Galician has also been accepted orally as Portuguese in the European Parliament, having been used by some Galician representatives, among others: José Posada, Camilo Nogueira and Xosé Manuel Beiras.

Controversy exists regarding the inclusion of Eonavian (spoken in the western end of Asturias, bordering Galicia) into the Galician language, as it has some traits in common with Western Asturian or bable occidental (spoken in the middle west of Asturias). There are those defending these linguistic varieties as dialects of transition to the Astur-Leonese group on the one hand, and those defending it as clearly Galician varieties on the other. The recent edition of the cartularies of Oscos in Eonavia and cartularies of Obona, Cornellana, Corias and Belmonte in middle west of Asturias have shown a huge difference in the medieval speech between both banks of the Nava river.[32][33][34] An examination of the old documents of the Eonavian monastery of Oscos, written from the late 12th to early 14th century to 16th century, shows a clear identification of this language with the Galician-Portuguese linguistic group; while contemporary parchments elsewhere in Asturias are written in Spanish.[35] The
two most important traits of those commonly used to tell apart Galician-Portuguese and Asturian-Leonese varieties are the preservation of the mid-open vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/, which became diphthongs in Asturian-Leonese, and the loss of intervocalic /n/, preserved in the latter language.[36]

**History**

Latinate Galician charters from the 8th century onward show that the local written Latin was heavily influenced by local spoken Romance, yet is not until the 12th century that we find evidence for the identification of the local language as a language different from Latin itself.[37] During this same 12th century we can find full Galician sentences being inadvertently used inside Latin texts, while its first reckoned use as a literary language dates to the last years of this same century.[38][39]

The linguistic stage from the 13th to the 15th centuries is usually known as Galician-Portuguese (or Old Portuguese, or Old Galician) as an acknowledgement of the cultural and linguistic unity of Galicia and Portugal during the Middle Ages, as the two linguistic varieties differed only in dialectal minor phenomena.

This language flourished during the 13th and 14th centuries as a language of culture, developing a rich lyric tradition of which some 2000 compositions (cantigas, meaning 'songs') have been preserved—a few hundred even with their musical score—in a series of collections, and belonging to four main genres: cantigas de amor, love songs, where a man sings for his ladylove; cantigas de amigo, where a woman sings for her boyfriend; cantigas de escarnio, crude, taunting, and sexual songs of scorn; cantigas de maldecir, where the poet vents his spleen openly; and also the Cantigas de Santa María, which are religious songs.[40]

The oldest known document is the poem Ora faz ost'o Senhor de Navarra by Joam Soares de Paiva, written around 1200. The first non-literary documents in Galician-Portuguese date from the early 13th century, the Noticia de Torto (1211) and the Testamento of Afonso II of Portugal (1214), both samples of medieval notarial prose.

Its most notable patrons—themselves reputed authors—were king Dom Dinis in Portugal, and king Alfonso X the Learned in Galicia, Castile and León, who was a great promoter of both Galician and Castilian Spanish languages. Not just the kings encouraged literary creation in Galician-Portuguese, but also the noble houses of Galicia and Portugal, as being an author or bringing reputed troubadours into one's home became a way of promoting social prestige; as a result many noblemen, businessmen and clergymen of the 13th and 14th centuries became notable authors, such as Paio Gomes Charinho, lord of Rianxo, and the aforementioned kings.
Aside from the lyric genres, Galicia developed also a minor tradition on literary prose, most notably in translation of European popular series, as those dealing with King Arthur written by Chretien de Troyes, or those based on the war of Troy, usually paid and commissioned by noblemen who desired to read those romances in their own language. Other genres include history books (either translation of Spanish ones, or original creations like the *Chronicle of St. Mary of Iria*, by Rui Vasques), religious books, legal studies, and a treaty on horse breeding. Prose literary creation in Galician had stopped by the 16th century, when printing press became popular; the first complete translation of the Bible was not printed until the 20th century.

As for other written uses of Galician, legal charters (last wills, hirings, sales, constitutional charters, city council book of acts, guild constitutions, books of possessions, and any type of public or private contracts and inventories) written in Galicia are to be found from 1230 to 1530—the earliest one probably a document from the monastery of Melón, dated in 1231—being Galician by far the most used language during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, in substitution of Latin.

**Diglossia and influence of the Spanish language**

Galician-Portuguese lost its political unity when the County of Portugal obtained its independence from the Kingdom of Leon, a transition initiated in 1139 and completed in 1179, establishing the Kingdom of Portugal. Meanwhile, the Kingdom of Galicia was united with the Kingdom of León, and later with the Kingdom of Castile, under kings of the House of Burgundy. The Galician and Portuguese standards of the language diverged over time, following independent evolutionary paths. Portuguese was the official language of the Portuguese chancellery, while Galician was the usual language not only of troubadours and peasants, but also of local noblemen and clergy, and of their officials, so forging and maintaining two slightly different standards.

During the reign of Alfonso X, Spanish became the official language of the chancellery of the Kingdom of Castile. However, in Galicia and neighboring regions of Asturias and León in 1200–1500, the local languages remained the usual written languages in any type of document, either legal or narrative, public or private. Spanish was progressively introduced through Royal decrees and the edicts of foreign churchmen and officials. This led, from the late 15th century on, to the end of legal documents in Galician; the last ones were issued around 1530. Also, from 1480 on, notaries of the Crown of Castile were required to obtain their licenses in Toledo, where they had to prove their mastery of Spanish.

In spite of Galician being the most spoken language, during the 17th century the elites of the Kingdom began speaking Spanish, most notably in towns and cities. The linguistic situation in Galicia became one of diglossia, with Galician as the low variety and Spanish as the high one. In reaction to the relegation of the autochthonous language, a series of literary and historical works (always written in Spanish) appeared in the 17th century through 19th century, meant to vindicate the history, language, people, and culture of Galicia. The period from the 16th century to the early 19th century, when Galician had little literary—and no legal—use, is considered the dark age of Galician language. The Galician spoken and written then is usually referred to as *Middle Galician*.

**Middle Galician**
Middle Galician is known mostly through popular literature (songs, carols, proverbs, theatrical scripts, personal letters), but also through the frequent apparition of Galician interferences and personal and place names in local works and documents otherwise written in Spanish. Other important sources are a number of sonnets and other lyric poetry, as well as other literate productions, including the forgery of allegedly mediaeval scriptures or chronicles under diverse pretensions—usually to show the ancient nobility of the forger's family—being these writings elaborated in an archaic looking Galician which nevertheless could not conceal the state of the language during this period.

Middle Galician is characterized by a series of phonetic processes which led to a further separation from Portuguese, and to the apparition of some of the more notorious dialectal features, among other phenomena: emergence of the *gheada* or pronunciation of /ɡ/ as a pharyngeal fricative; denasalization of nasal vowels in most of Galicia, becoming oral vowels in the east, or a group formed by an oral vowels plus a nasal in the west; reduction of the sibilant system, with the confluence (except in the Baixa Limia region) of voiced and voiceless fricatives, followed by a process of de-affrication which led to different results in the west and in the east.[46]

The most important author during this period of the language was the enlightened scholar Martín Sarmiento, unconditional defender and the first researcher of Galician language (history, evolution, lexicon, etymology, onomastics). His *Elementos etimológicos según el método de Euclides* (1766), written in Spanish but dealing with Galician, was in fact one of the first comprehensive studies on sound change and evolution of any European language.[47]

**Rexurdimento (Renaissance)**

During the 19th century a thriving literature developed, in what was called the *Rexurdimento* (Resurgence), of the Galician language.[48] It was headed by three main authors: Rosalia de Castro, an intimist poet; Eduardo Pondal, of nationalist ideology, who championed a Celtic revival; and Manuel Curros Enríquez, a liberal and anticlerical author whose ideas and proclamations were scandalous for part of the 19th-century society.

An important landmark was the establishment of the Seminario de Estudos Galegos in 1923, devoted to research and study of Galician culture. It was created by a group of students: Fermín Bouza Brey, Xosé Filgueira Valverde, Lois Tobío Fernández, with the collaboration of Ricardo Carvalho Calero, Antón Fraguas and Xaquín Lorenzo Fernández.

Following the victory of General Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War, the written or public use of the Galician language was outlawed.[49]

Publishing of Galician-language material revived on a small scale in the 1950s.[50]

**The Galician language today**

With the advent of democracy, Galician has been brought into the country's institutions, and it is now co-official with Spanish in Galicia.[50] Galician is taught in schools, and there is a public Galician-language television channel, Televisión de Galicia.
Today, the most common language for everyday use in the largest cities of Galicia is Spanish rather than Galician, as a result of this long process of language shift. However, Galician is still the main language in rural areas.

The Royal Galician Academy and other Galician institutions celebrate each 17 May as Galician Literature Day (Día das Letras Galegas), dedicated each year to a deceased Galician-language writer chosen by the academy.

**Use of the Galician language**

Use of Galician splits by age, with over half of those over 45 indicating that Galician is their primary language, with lower numbers for the younger population. Those under 45 were more likely than those over 45 to answer that they never use Galician.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always speaks in Galician</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaks more often in Galician than Spanish</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaks more often in Spanish than Galician</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always speaks in Spanish</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other situations</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[51]
Use of Galician also varies greatly depending on the regions and municipalities of Galicia. While in two areas of the Province of A Coruña (Costa da Morte and the Southeast) more than 90% of the population always or mostly speaks in Galician, only the 15.2% of the population does the same in the city of Vigo.[62]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Comarcas included</th>
<th>Galician speakers (percentage)[a]</th>
<th>Spanish speakers (percentage)[b]</th>
<th>Galician speakers (number)[c]</th>
<th>Spanish speakers (number)[d]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Barbanza-Noia</td>
<td>A Barbanza and Noia</td>
<td>88.85</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>82,434</td>
<td>10,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Coruña</td>
<td>A Coruña and Betanzos</td>
<td>33.55</td>
<td>66.45</td>
<td>137,812</td>
<td>272,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Mariña</td>
<td>A Mariña Oriental, A Mariña Central and A Mariña Occidental</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>24.15</td>
<td>50,420</td>
<td>16,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldas-O Salnés</td>
<td>Caldas and O Salnés</td>
<td>63.40</td>
<td>36.60</td>
<td>86,575</td>
<td>49,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Lugo</td>
<td>Terra Chá, Lugo, A Ulloa and Meira</td>
<td>65.04</td>
<td>34.96</td>
<td>105,423</td>
<td>56,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Ourense</td>
<td>Valdeorras, Allariz-Maceda, Terra de Caldelas and Terra de Trives</td>
<td>69.45</td>
<td>30.55</td>
<td>30,152</td>
<td>13,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa da Morte</td>
<td>Bergantiños, Terra de Soneira, Fisterra, Muros and O Xallas</td>
<td>92.43</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>117,630</td>
<td>9,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Lugo</td>
<td>Os Ancares, A Fonsagrada and Sarria</td>
<td>88.50</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>32,025</td>
<td>4,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrol-Eume-Ortegal</td>
<td>Ferrolterra, O Eume and O Barbadán</td>
<td>33.75</td>
<td>66.25</td>
<td>60,202</td>
<td>118,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Pontevedra</td>
<td>O Deza and Tabeirós-Terra de Montes</td>
<td>81.85</td>
<td>18.15</td>
<td>50,720</td>
<td>11,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Carballiño-O Ribeiro</td>
<td>Carballiño and O Ribeiro</td>
<td>76.42</td>
<td>23.58</td>
<td>30,586</td>
<td>9,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Morrazo</td>
<td>O Morrazo</td>
<td>40.56</td>
<td>59.44</td>
<td>31,554</td>
<td>46,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ourense</td>
<td>Ourense</td>
<td>39.85</td>
<td>60.15</td>
<td>52,632</td>
<td>79,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontevedra</td>
<td>Pontevedra</td>
<td>38.82</td>
<td>61.18</td>
<td>45,865</td>
<td>72,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Santiago de Compostela, A Barcalá and O Sar</td>
<td>55.39</td>
<td>44.61</td>
<td>102,260</td>
<td>82,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast A Coruña</td>
<td>Arzúa, Terra de Melide and Ordes</td>
<td>93.14</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>59,415</td>
<td>4,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Lugo</td>
<td>Terra de Lemos, Quiroga and Chantada</td>
<td>67.19</td>
<td>32.81</td>
<td>31,065</td>
<td>15,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Ourense</td>
<td>A Baixa Limia, A Limia, Verín and Viana</td>
<td>88.00</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>64,878</td>
<td>8,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Pontevedra</td>
<td>O Baixo Miño, O Condado and A Paradanta</td>
<td>58.56</td>
<td>41.44</td>
<td>60,392</td>
<td>42,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigo</td>
<td>Vigo</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>74.50</td>
<td>99,968</td>
<td>292,115</td>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
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<td>More Galician than Spanish</td>
<td>More Spanish than Galician</td>
<td>Always speaks Spanish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A Coruña</td>
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<td>14.64</td>
<td>31.40</td>
<td>48.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrol</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>29.59</td>
<td>52.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lugo</td>
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<td>28.88</td>
<td>26.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ourense</td>
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<td>22.80</td>
<td>38.85</td>
<td>27.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pontevedra</td>
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<td>14.62</td>
<td>35.94</td>
<td>41.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago de Compostela</td>
<td>20.58</td>
<td>23.31</td>
<td>33.46</td>
<td>22.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigo</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>11.36</td>
<td>39.49</td>
<td>45.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dialects**

Some authors are of the opinion that Galician possesses no real dialects. Despite this, Galician local varieties are collected in three main dialectal blocks, each block comprising a series of areas, being local linguistic varieties that are all mutually intelligible. Some of the main features which distinguish the three blocks are:

- The resolution of medieval nasalized vowels and hiatus: these sometimes turned into diphthongs in the east, while in the center and west the vowels in the hiatus were sometimes assimilated. Later, in the eastern—except Ancarese Galician—and central blocks, the nasal trait was lost, while in the west the nasal trait usually developed into an implosive nasal consonant /ŋ/. In general, these led to important dialectal variability in the inflection in genre and number of words ended in a nasal consonant. So, from medieval irmão 'brother', ladrões 'robbers', irmãas 'sisters' we have eastern Galician irmão, ladrões, irmãs; central Galician irmão, ladrós, irmás; western Galician irmán, ladróns, irmáns.

An exception to this rule is constituted by the hiatus in which the first vowel was a nasalized i or u. In those cases, a nasal, palatal /ɲ/ or velar /ŋ/ was usually inserted: ūa 'a (fem.)' > unha (Portuguese uma), -iña > -iã > -iña (Portuguese -inha). Nevertheless, in Ancarese and Asturian Galician, this process did not take place: A-G vecía, Ancarese vecĩa vs. standard veciña '(female) neighbor' (Port. vizinha), A-G ūa, Ancarese ūa vs. standard unha (Port. uma).

- The resolution of hiatus formed by oral vowels had similar developments, most notably those derived from the loss of /l/, which again had important consequences for the declension of words ending in /l/. So, Medieval Galician animaes 'animals' (sing. animal); central and western Galician animás; eastern Galician animais; Asturian Galician animales (/l/ is preserved).

In the west, /ɡ/ is rendered as a fricative [x ~ h ~ h] (gheada), except after a nasal, where it can become a stop [k].

- Stressed vowel metaphony is most notable in the west and center, while in the east it is unknown. It is triggered by a final /o/, which tends to close open-mid vowels, or by a final /a/ which tends to open close-mid ones.

- There are three main sibilant systems, all derived from the medieval Galician one, which were richer and more complex:

  - The common one, extended in the eastern and center regions, presents an opposition /ʃ/ – /s/ – /θ/. In the westernmost parts of this area the opposition of /s/ and /θ/ is lost in postnuclear position, in the coda, both being produced /s/.

  - In the coastal western areas the opposition is /ʃ/ – /s/; /s/ being produced in some regions as a laminal or in some others as an apical. Sometimes this system is even further reduced to just a single /s/. On the other hand, in some areas final /s/ is produced as /ʃ/. 

  - In the coastal western areas the opposition is /ʃ/ – /s/; /s/ being produced in some regions as a laminal or in some others as an apical. Sometimes this system is even further reduced to just a single /s/. On the other hand, in some areas final /s/ is produced as /ʃ/.

  - In the coastal western areas the opposition is /ʃ/ – /s/; /s/ being produced in some regions as a laminal or in some others as an apical. Sometimes this system is even further reduced to just a single /s/. On the other hand, in some areas final /s/ is produced as /ʃ/.
In the Limia Baixa region an old six sibilant system is still preserved, with voiced/voiceless opposition: /ʃ/ – /ʒ/; /s̺/ – /z̺/ (apical) and /s̻/ – /z̻/ (laminal).[59]

Each dialectal area is then further defined by these and other more restricted traits or isoglosses:

- **Eastern Galician**: Asturian area (Eonavian), Ancares area, Zamora area and Central-Eastern area.
- **Central Galician**: Mindoniense area, Lucu-auriense area, Central Transitional area, and Eastern Transitional area.
- **Western Galician**: Bergantiños area, Fisterra area, Pontevedra area and Lower Limia area.

Standard Galician is usually based on Central Galician characteristics, but it also incorporates western and eastern traits and features.

### Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Eastern</th>
<th>Medieval Galician (13th-15th c.)</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cans [ˈkants]</td>
<td>cas [ˈkas]</td>
<td>cais [ˈkajs]</td>
<td>cães/cããs</td>
<td>canes</td>
<td>perros/canes</td>
<td>canes</td>
<td>dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irmán [iɾˈman]</td>
<td>irmao [iɾˈmao]</td>
<td>irmao [iɾˈmao]</td>
<td>irmão</td>
<td>irmão</td>
<td>hermano</td>
<td>germanus</td>
<td>brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinco [ˈsĩŋko]</td>
<td>cinco [ˈθĩŋko]</td>
<td>cinco [ˈθĩŋko]</td>
<td>cinco</td>
<td>cinco</td>
<td>cinco</td>
<td>quinque</td>
<td>five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hora [ˈɔɾe][61]</td>
<td>hora [ˈɔɾa][ˈore]</td>
<td>hora [ˈɔɾe]</td>
<td>hora</td>
<td>hora</td>
<td>hora</td>
<td>hora</td>
<td>hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cantaste(s)[62]</td>
<td>cantastecantache</td>
<td>cantaste</td>
<td>cantaste</td>
<td>cantaste</td>
<td>cantavisti</td>
<td>you sang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animás[63]</td>
<td>animás[63]</td>
<td>animais[63]</td>
<td>animaes</td>
<td>animais</td>
<td>animales</td>
<td>animalia</td>
<td>animals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Phonology

### Grammar

Galician allows pronominal clitics to be attached to indicative and subjunctive forms, as does Portuguese, unlike modern Spanish. After many centuries of close contact between the two languages, Galician has also adopted many loan words from Spanish, and some calques of Spanish syntax.

Galician usually makes the difference according to gender and categorizes words as masculine "o rapaz" (the young man) or feminine "a rapaza" (the young woman). This difference is present in the articles "o / a / os/ as" (the), nouns "o can / a cadela" (the dog / the (female) dog), pronouns "el / ela", (he / she) and adjectives "bonitiño / bonitiña" (pretty, beautiful). There is also a neuter set of demonstrative pronouns "isto, iso, aquilo" (this / that). The most typical ending for masculine words is -o, whereas the most typical ending for feminine is -a "o prato / a tixola" (the plate / the frying pan). The difference in the grammatical gender of a word may correspond to a real
gender difference in the physical world "xuicioso / xuiciosa" (sensible); the former adjective will qualify a male, and the latter, a female. However, there is no particular reason for objects to be ascribed to a particular grammatical gender or another, it has to do with the gender having been ascribed by tradition and the use of speakers as in the following examples: "o xis / o samba / a mesa / a caricatura" (chalk / the samba / the table / the caricature).

Galician expresses the difference in number with a form for the singular and another for the plural. The most typical suffix to express a plural number is "s", "cantiga / cantigas".

There are two different ways of addressing people: one is the most usual informal pronoun "ti" for the second person singular and "vos" for the second person plural. There are formal ways of addressing directly people "vostede" for the singular and "vostedes" for the plural.

The last review of the official grammar has established that the exclamation and question marks will appear only at the end of the sentence if there is no risk of confusion, thus deprecating the general use of Spanish-like inverted question and exclamation marks.

The verb is inflected. There are regular and irregular verbs in the language. All verbs will appear listed by means of their infinitive form in dictionaries, and there are three typical endings for verbs "-ar / -er / -ir".

**Orthography**

The current official Galician orthography is guided by the "Normas ortográficas e morfolóxicas do Idioma Galego"[64] (NOMIGa), first introduced in 1982, by the Royal Galician Academy (RAG), based on a report by the Instituto da Lingua Galega (ILG). These norms were not accepted by some sectors desiring a norm closer to modern Portuguese (see reintegrationism). In July 2003, the Royal Galician Academy modified the language normative to admit and promote some archaic Galician-Portuguese forms conserved in modern Portuguese, merging the NOMIG and the main proposals of the moderate sectors of reintegrationism; the resulting orthography is used by the vast majority of media, cultural production and virtually all official matters including education.

There still exists a minoritary reintegrationist movement that opts for the use of writing systems that range from adapted to whole Portuguese orthography.

**Acute accent**

Syllabic stress is significant in Galician. One syllable in each word receives primary stress. The syllable receiving the primary stress can generally be identified by the spelling of the word according to the language's rules of orthography. In cases where the stress is not at the default location indicated by the spelling, an acute accent (´) is placed over the main vowel of the stressed syllable, as in paspalís ('quail'), móbil ('mobile'), and cárcere ('jail', 'gaol').

The acute accent has some other functions. Sometimes it shows that adjacent vowels represent separate syllables rather than a diphthong, as in aínda ('yet'). Acute accents are written on top of upper- as welll as lower-case letters: Óscar. An acute accent may also be used to distinguish between two words that are otherwise homonyms, as in the case of cómpre ('it is necessary') and compré ('to buy').

**Examples**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Galician (Official)</th>
<th>Galician (Reintegrationist)</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good morning</td>
<td>bo día / bos días</td>
<td>bom dia</td>
<td>bom dia / bons días</td>
<td>buenos días</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your name?</td>
<td>Como te chamas?</td>
<td>¿Cómo te llamas?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love you</td>
<td>quérote / ámote</td>
<td>amo-te</td>
<td>te quiero / te amo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excuse me</td>
<td>desculpe</td>
<td>perdón / disculpe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thanks / thank you</td>
<td>grazas</td>
<td>obrigado</td>
<td>gracias</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welcome</td>
<td>benvido</td>
<td>bem-vido</td>
<td>bem-vindo</td>
<td>bienvenido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goodbye</td>
<td>adeus</td>
<td>adiós</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>sim</td>
<td>sí</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>non</td>
<td>nom</td>
<td>não</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>cam</td>
<td>cão</td>
<td>perro (rarely, can)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandfather</td>
<td>avó / a ‘bo/</td>
<td>avó[66]</td>
<td>te ‘vo/</td>
<td>abuelo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper</td>
<td>periódico / xornal</td>
<td>jornal</td>
<td>periódico</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirror</td>
<td>espello</td>
<td>espelho</td>
<td>espejo</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Galician (Official)</th>
<th>Galician (Reintegrationist)</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Father who art in heaven,</td>
<td>Noso Pai que estás no ceo;</td>
<td>Nosso Pai que estais no Céu:</td>
<td>Pai Nosso que estais no Céu:</td>
<td>Padre nuestro que estáis en los cielos:</td>
<td>Pater noster qui est in caelis:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.</td>
<td>santificado sexa o teu nome, venha a nós o Teu reino e fágase a Tua vontade aqui na terra como nos Céus.</td>
<td>santificado seja o Teu nome, venha a nós o Vosso reino e seja feita a Vossa vontade assim na Terra como no Céu.</td>
<td>santificado seja o Vosso nome, venha a nós o Vosso reino, seja feita a Vossa vontade assim na Terra como no Céu.</td>
<td>sanctificetur nomen tuum, adveniat regnum tuum, fiat voluntas tua sicut in caelo et in terra.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give us this day our daily bread,</td>
<td>O noso pan de cada día dánolo hoxe;</td>
<td>O nosso pan de cada dia dá-no-lo hoje;</td>
<td>O pão nosso de cada dia nos dai hoje;</td>
<td>Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día;</td>
<td>panem nostrum quotidiamum da nobis hodie;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,</td>
<td>e perdóanos as nosas ofensas como tamén perdoamos nós a quem nos ten ofendido;</td>
<td>e perdoa-nos as nossas ofensas como tamén perdoamos nós a quem nos tem ofendido;</td>
<td>Perdoai-nos as nossas ofensas assim como nós perdoamos a quem nos tem ofendido;</td>
<td>et dimite nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimitimus debitoribus nostris;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and let us not fall into temptation, but liberate us from evil.</td>
<td>e non nos deixes caer na tentación, mais libranos do mal.</td>
<td>e nom nos deixes cair na tentação, mas livrai-nos do mal.</td>
<td>e não nos deixes cair em tentação, mas livrai-nos do mal.</td>
<td>et ne nos inducas in tentationem; sed libera nos a malo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also

- Barallete
- Castrapo
- *Fala dos arxiñas*, a jargon of Galician masons
- Galician-language literature
- Languages of Spain
References

7. Fernández Rei 2003, p. 17
9. "Today, from a point of view which is exclusively linguistic, both banks of the Minho river speak the same language, since the Minhoto and Trás-os-Montes dialects are a continuation of the Galician varieties, sharing common traits that differentiate them from the dialect of Central and Southern Portugal; but at the level of the common language, and in a sociolinguistic perspective, in the west of the peninsula there are two modern languages, with differences in pronunciation, morphosyntax and vocabulary", "Na actualidade, desde o ponto de vista estrictamente linguístico, às dúas marxes do Miño fálase o mesmo idioma, pois os dialectos miñotos e trasmontanos son unha continuación dos falares galegos, cos que compartenc trazos comúns que os diferencian dos do centro e sur de Portugal; pero no plano da lingua común, e desde unha perspectiva sociolingüística, hai no occidente peninsular dúas línguas modernas, con diferencias fonéticas, morfosintácticas e léxicas". Fernández Rei 2003, p. 17
32. Like a rainbow between two close colours, there is a moment, in the way of the West, when we get to feel us into the Galician area, and another side, to the East, in which we get to feel us into Asturian, but there is also a mixed zone, in which, after all, the distinction depends on our way to appreciate and read will depend on a serial linguistics facts. Some another time, I will deal with this question. It is enough saying today that the oldest statement about Galician extending into Asturias up to the Navia River, (Menéndez Pidal, "El dialecto leonés", § 1, 2, 1906) cannot be more right, in spite of typical linguistic Asturian features crossing to the west over that border. These dialects between the rivers Navia and Eo, mainly Galician, but with clear Asturian features, are what we call "Gallego-Asturiano". Damaso Alonso Obras Completas, Editorial Gredos (1971), tomo I, página 391.


36. Fernández Rei 2003, pp. 18–23

37. As an example, in a passage of the Historia Compostellana it is stated, as a notable event, that bishop Diego Gelmirez spoke publicly in Latin.


42. Minahan, James (2000). One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press. p. 279. ISBN 978-0-313-04866-1. "Following Franco's 1939 victory, the Galicians suffered severe punishment – their culture was suppressed, and edicts were issued forbidding the speaking, teaching, or publishing of books or newspapers in the Galician language."

a. % of the population that always or mostly speaks in Galician. This percentage excludes those that mainly speak in Spanish but also use Galician.

b. % of the population that always or mostly speaks in Spanish. This percentage excludes those that mainly speak in Galician but also use Spanish.
c. Number of people that always or mostly speaks in Galician. This percentage excludes those that mainly speak in Spanish but also use Galician.
d. Number of people that always or mostly speaks in Spanish. This percentage excludes those that mainly speak in Galician but also use Spanish.

Further reading


External links

Galician guides:

- lingua.gal (http://www.lingua.gal) – Galician government's portal on the Galician language
- Basic information on Galician language (http://www.galego.org/english/index.html) (in Galician, Spanish, and English)

Records, phonetic and dialectology:


Corpora:

- Corpus Xelmirez (http://sli.uvigo.es/xelmirez/) – A corpus on medieval Galician documentation, in Galician, Latin, and Spanish.
- Tesouro informatizado da lingua galega (http://ilg.usc.es/TILG/?lng=en). (in English and Galician)

Dictionaries:

- Royal Galician Academy Dictionary (http://www.realacadeemiagalega.org/dicionario) (in Galician)
- Appendix: Galician pronouns – on Wiktionary
- English-Galician CLUVI Online Dictionary (http://sli.uvigo.es/CLIG/index_en.html) (official Galician),
Dicionario de dicionarios do galego medieval (http://sli.uvigo.es/DDGM/) – A dictionary of Old Galician dictionaries. (in Galician)

Dicionario de dicionarios (http://sli.uvigo.es/ddd/index.html) – A dictionary of Galician dictionaries. (in Galician)

e-Estraviz (http://www.estraviz.org/) – Isaac Alonso Estraviz’s dictionary (on-line). (reintegrationist norm and official norm)

Texts:

Gallaeciae Monumenta Historica (http://gmh.consellodacultura.org/) – An on-line repository of medieval texts (in Galician)

Cantigas Medievais Galego-Portuguesas (http://cantigas.fcsh.unl.pt/index.asp) – A complete DB, containing the totality of the medieval profane lyric. (in Portuguese)


Cantigas de Santa Maria (http://www.cantigasdesantamaria.com/)

Newspapers in Galician:


Sermos Galiza (http://www.sermosgaliza.com/) – weekly newspaper and online news portal (in Galician)

Galiciaé.es (http://www.galiciae.com/) – online news portal (in Galician)

Galicia Hoxe (http://www.galiciahoxe.com/) – online news portal (in Galician)

Praza Pública (http://www.praza.com/) – online news portal (in Galician)

Dioivo (http://www.dioivo.eu/) – online news portal (in Galician)

Arroutada Noticias (http://www.arroutadanoticias.com/) – online news portal (in Galician)

Diário Liberdade (http://www.diarioliberdade.org/) – online news portal (in reintegrationist Galician)

Novas da Galiza (http://www.novasgz.com/) – monthly newspaper (in reintegrationist Galician)


Other links related to Galician:

Royal Galician Academy (http://www.realacademiagalega.org/) (in Galician)

Instituto da Língua Galega (http://lig.usc.es/) (in Galician)

Academia Galega da Língua Portuguesa (http://www.academiagalega.org/) (reintegrationist Galician)


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