ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code” form.

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Associated Change request number : 2010-039 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : drc (completed by Registration Authority)

PLEASE NOTE: This completed form will become part of the public record of this change request and the history of the ISO 639-3 code set. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

   a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:
      Minderico

   b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
      Minderico, Piação dos Charales do Ninhou

   c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
      Piação

   d) Reason for preferred name:
      It is the smaller self-name and the common name for the language and it is already known as such within the community of documentary linguists.

   e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
      Minderico is the name of the community and the language is spoken by approximately 500 people.

   f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: mdo

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifiers is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

   a) Is this a
      □   Living language
      ☒  Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
      □   Recently extinct language
      □   Historical language

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Ancient language
Artificially constructed language
Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/types.asp)

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
Portugal

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
Minderico is spoken in Minde (a small village that belongs to the municipality of Alcanena and to the district of Santarém; latitude: 39.5143738, longitude: -8.6886615) and, in a more endangered form, in Mira de Aire (a small village that belongs to the municipality of Porto de Mós and to the district of Leiria; latitude: 39.5435227, longitude: -8.7160464)

d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user’s death

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is: [ ] Signed [x] Spoken [ ] Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
Romance

c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
Portuguese

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
There are four locally organised dictionaries and the last one (2004) includes a sample of letters in Minderico, news texts, texts of theater sketches and discourses at public events. The local newspaper ("Jornal de Minde") has a section in Minderico. There is also a small online broadcasting group, "TV-Minde", which belongs to the group "Media Minde" and broadcasts some reports in Minderico about events in Minde and the surrounding region. A recipe book with typical recipes from Minde and a children's book are going to be published till the end of this year. The first textbook is also being prepared.
b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?
No, this language is not officially recognized by any level of government and it is not used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction. It is only taught in a local non-profit organisation, but not officially in the local schools.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
Minde is essentially an industrial town with an almost monoindustry of textiles and wool artefacts. From the 16th century on, the blankets of Minde became famous all over the country. Due to this popularity, the wool carders and merchants of Minde began to use Minderico in order to protect and defend their products from "intruders" and to earn more profit in their commercialization. Later, this language extended to all social and professional groups in Minde and became the main means of communication in the village. The geographical isolation of Minde (it lies in a valley surrounded by two mountains - Serra de Santo António and Serra dos Candeeiros) was also an important factor for the use and preservation of a unique linguistic variety.
Minderico made it possible for the merchants of textile products of Minde to negotiate among each other the prices in front of strangers and/or customers at different markets. Thus, Minderico was initially used among the textile merchants of Minde for price-fixing arrangements. Having such a "secret code" was very helpful if the situation arose where a buyer tried to acquire the same product from a different merchant at a cheaper price.
Initially, in its developing phase, the vocabulary of Minderico, presumably based on regional archaic forms and structures (maybe vestiges of a Mozarabic substrate), covered a wide range of lexemes for money and terms from the domain of textile production. This can be explained by the fact that Minderico was originally the language of a specific social-economic group (the language of merchants).
After this initial phase, Minderico began to expand its vocabulary continuously and creatively. This expansion is intimately related to the socio-cultural experiences of the inhabitants of Minde. With the increase in vocabulary, Minderico also extended its scope of application. It began to be used not only for commercial reasons to conceal information but also in daily social contexts. Consequently, the speech community increased as well and Minderico became to be seen as a unifying identity element. From this period on, Minderico came to be used by all social groups and progressed to become the everyday language in Minde - it was used within the community as a means of communication in all social, economical, cultural, and political contexts.
Today, all speakers of Minderico are bilingual; they speak Portuguese along with Minderico. While Portuguese is the language of administration and school system, Minderico remains almost restricted to the family and circle of friends. But even in this private sector there is a clear pressure from Portuguese on Minderico. Most likely there are no children up to 5 years who understand or use the language today, given that school education has always been in Portuguese in the region and, subsequently, Portuguese has developed into the main means of communication even within families.
Moreover, the speech of Minderico adults is characterized by a kind of Portuguese-Minderico code-switching and code-mixing. The knowledge of Minderico is not very homogeneous among the inhabitants of Minde. Only the older generation (people older than 65) has full competence in the language; younger adults understand Minderico and are able to speak it, but normally they refuse to do so, mainly because they have not fully acquired competence in Minderico.
SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code”

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:
I am linguist (typologist) and one of the speakers of Minderico (I learnt it as a second language). I work linguistically on it since 2000 and since 2008 I am responsible for the documentation of Minderico within a DoBes-project supported by the Volkswagen Foundation.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):

[References added by Registration Authority:

ISO 639-3 Registrar
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA
Email: iso639-3@sil.org
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:
If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers: