



STRATEGIC IMPACTS OF META-NET

A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT

António Branco



META-NET

- **European network of excellence for language technology**

- 60 centers; 34 countries



- **Language White Paper series**

- status of preparation for the digital age
- 30 languages; 200+ experts
- dissemination, assessment, recommendation

- **Portuguese language**

- 10 coauthors; Portugal and Brazil



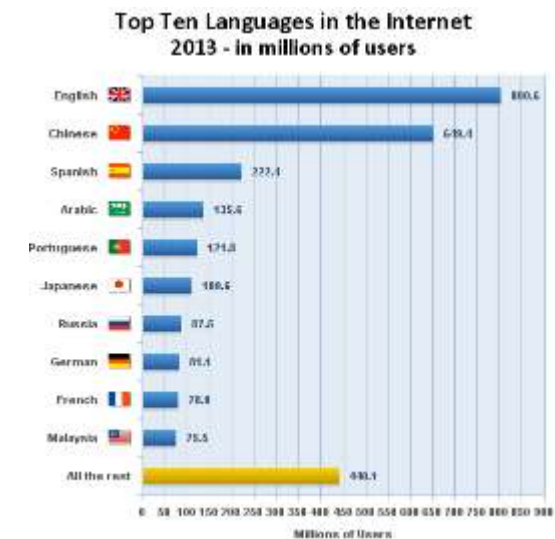
A. Impacting public opinion

- mass email distribution of eBook version
- news articles on the white paper
- interviews
- op-ed articles
- overview articles on language technology (Dec 2014)



Key message (1/2) ...

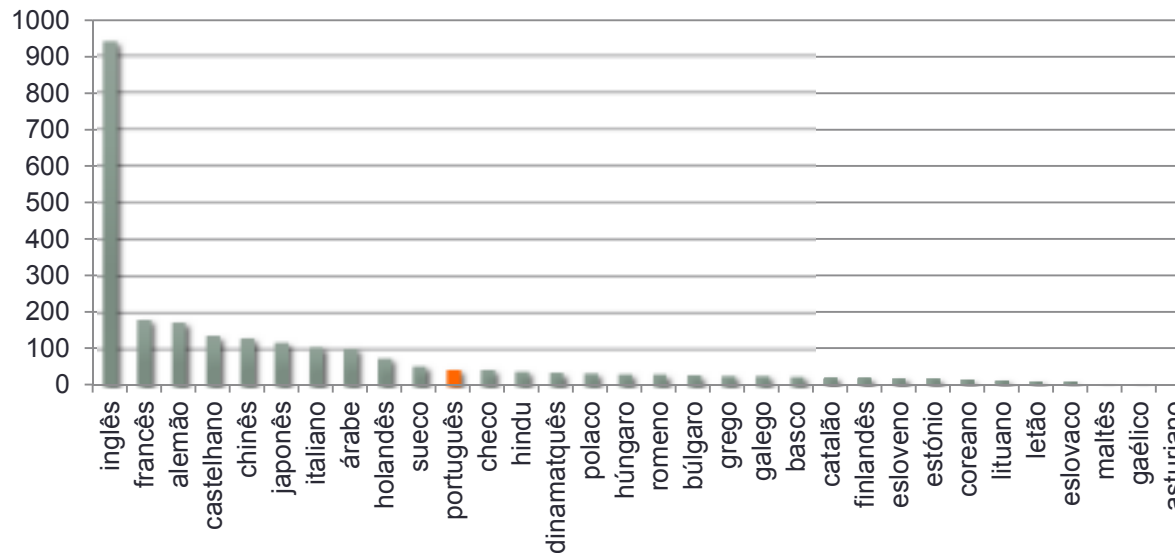
- A global language (# speakers):
 - **6th language in the world**
 - 260 million in 4 continents
 - 3rd European language in the world
 - **5th language in the internet**
 - 120 million users
- Internet penetration:
 - **39% in the world population**
 - **47% in the 8 Portuguese speaking countries**
 - 65% in Portugal
- **Speakers are getting ready for the digital age...**
- 31/12/2013, internet world stats



... key message (2/2):

Residual research effort

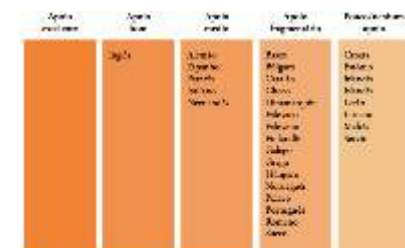
- #references in scientific articles in 10 top-conferences 2010-2012



Speakers are prepared for the digital age
but the language is not

Idioma	Português	Castelhano	Francês	Alemão	Italiano	Japonês	Chinês	Árabe	Eslovaco	Esloveno	Húngaro	Romeno	Búlgaro	Grego	Galego	Basco	Catalão	Finlandês	Estónio	Coreano	Lituano	Letão	Eslovaco	Maltês	Gaélico	Asturiano
Investigação e Inovação: Conferência de Especialistas em Inovação	2	2	4	2	2	4																				
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0. Estudo de dados científicos e tecnológicos da língua portuguesa



10. Análise do texto científico e tecnológico em português nos 20 idiomas europeus



10. Secção linguística e análise de dados de tecnologia da língua portuguesa nos 20 idiomas europeus

B. Impacting business

- 11/2011 stand in major ICT fair
- 11/2012 launching workshop
- “New Technologies and the Future of Languages”
- 11/2012 stand in major ICT fair



C. Impacting decision makers

- **Presenting White Paper results:**

- At invited hearing

- parliament

- At proposed meetings

- European Parliament member
- directors of departments
- presidents of agencies and institutes
- secretaries of state
- minister



D. Impacting language policy

- 4/2012 **Colloquium on the Portuguese Language in the Internet and the Digital World, Brazil**
 - CPLP, Community of Portuguese Language Countries
 - IILP, International Institute for the Portuguese Language
 - **Charter of recommendations:**
 - “[...] to foster R&D programs for language technology and the computational processing of Portuguese.” (p.5)
- 11/2013 **2nd conference on the Portuguese Language in the World System, Lisbon**
- **CPLP Ministers Council Resolution**
February 2014



E. Impacting R&I policy... (1/3)

... in the “Portugal 2020” master plan

- *Partnership Agreement 2014-2020*
 - July 2014

“[...] The application of **language technology** to the Portuguese language will induce a wide range of impacts, with deep economic importance, as a factor of enhanced innovation and competitiveness in the **global digital market** [...] The innovative exploration of **business opportunities** on the basis of the **computational processing of the Portuguese language** are important opportunities [to foster].” (p. 17)



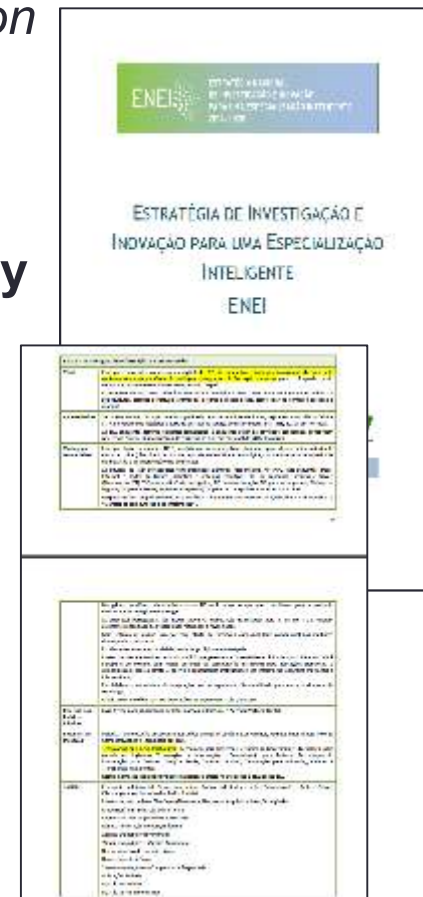
E. Impacting R&I policy... (2/3)

... in the smart specialization strategy plan

- *Research and Innovation Strategy for a Smart Specialization*
 - November 2014, pp.32-33
- Strategic priorities (15 priorities):
- **Priority 2 – Information and Communication Technology**
 - **Vision (3 sentences)**

“[...] ICT is a cross-sector strategic asset of the contemporary society for the projection of the Portuguese language in the world[...].”
 - **Topics of innovation potential (8 topics)**

“[...] **Language Technology for Portuguese** [...]”



E. Impacting R&I policy... (3/3)

... in the roadmap of strategic infrastructures

- December 2014
- **Strategic Research Infrastructure for Science and Technology of the Portuguese Language**
 - 21 research centers (including from Brazil)
 - Computation, Linguistics, Engineering, Artificial Intelligence, Psychology, Humanities
- node of European CLARIN infrastructure



Virtuous circle closing... (1/2)

- Conference “**Languages: Translating the Future**”

- September 2014
- Parliament, Language Institute “Camões”, Portuguese Dep. DGT-EC



- **Recommendations:**

“[...] **MT@EC**, an application for machine translation, proposed by DGT-EC, **should be made available** not only to the translators of public administration, but in a **generalized way for all civil servants.**

The **Agency for Administrative Modernization** should play a driving role, for this solution to be available at all public services.” (p.2)



... virtuous circle closing: (2/2)

- **Active national support** for an enhanced European policy for **multilingual European digital single market** and language technology
- **2016 Summit in Lisbon**



Strategic impacts of META-NET



Thank you

António Branco

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