

## PRESENTATION

7

You have come to Catalunya to live. I am sure you have noticed that many people speak in Catalan. This is Catalunya's own language; it has Latin roots, like Portuguese, Castilian, French, Occitane, Italian and Rumanian, and originated at the same time as all the Romance languages: between the 8th and 9th centuries.

Catalan is now spoken over quite a large area: in Catalunya itself, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, North Catalunya (part of France), Andorra and the Italian city of l'Alguer in Sardinia.

You have settled in Catalunya. I am sure you have discovered a society that is different from your own; different customs, a new way of doing things or different ways of looking at life, and almost certainly you have heard many people speaking together in Catalan. It is well known that through language we also express our views of the world and how we co-exist with others, and that many more things are communicated through language than just the actual words. Therefore, if you know the language of the place where you live, you can get to know the people who live there better and the activities they get involved in, and more easily interpret the attitudes you observe, which will make it much easier for you to integrate.

This booklet that you have in your hands has been written with the aim of bringing you closer to our language and helping you to learn it. The situations that you will find described within form part of the daily life of our people; I am sure you will already be able to identify some of them! You can read them, repeat them, practice them and listen to them. You'll see how easy it is!

Learning involves making an effort, but the result is always worth it.

LET'S START TALKING, I'm sure we'll understand each other! You're sure to be a winner in Catalan!

JORDI ROIGÉ I SOLÉ

Director General of Linguistic Policy