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COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Multilingualism: an asset for Europe  
and a shared commitment**

**AN INVENTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF  
MULTILINGUALISM AND RESULTS OF THE ONLINE PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION: A NEW APPROACH**

This staff working paper accompanies the communication 'Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment'. The strategies adopted in that communication go beyond the 'mother tongue plus two' recommendations of the Barcelona Council in that they extend the scope of multilingualism policy to new areas such as the internal market, enterprise and employment.

While the communication sets out the new policy approach on multilingualism, the Commission staff working paper creates a framework by mapping action currently taken in this field by the various Commission departments, paying particular attention to cross-cutting aspects of multilingualism in the Commission, among stakeholder groups and among the general public. The paper also serves as a basis for further work in line with the new policy approach set out in the communication.

The policy messages in the communication rely on the findings of a number of studies conducted in this field during the preparation phase, which are reviewed in Part 3 of this paper.

In drafting the communication, the Commission also consulted widely with policy makers, stakeholders and, most importantly, citizens. An online consultation held between 15 September and 15 November 2007, inviting organisations and individuals to give their views and expectations concerning language policy, attracted 2 419 replies, which the Commission took into consideration (see page 40). A summary of those replies concludes this document. The Annex sets out the follow-up to the first communication on multilingualism in 2005 in a synoptic table.

## **2. THE CONTRIBUTION OF EU PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES TO MULTILINGUALISM**

### **2.1. The follow-up of the 2005 communication "*A new framework strategy for multilingualism*"**

The communication "*A new framework strategy for multilingualism*" was the first step towards promoting multilingualism in a wider context. It reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to multilingualism in the European Union and set out a number of specific actions for the Commission and for Member States.

Commission actions focused mainly on the following policies and sectors: education and training, translation, interpretation, and research and information technologies. Actions concerning education and training ranged from supporting language teaching and learning through Community programmes, making studies available (e.g. on language certification, early language learning, and the impact of shortages of language skills on the European economy) and developing the European language indicator. On translation and interpretation, actions including publishing a multilingual database (IATE), reinforcing initial training for translators and interpreters and launching a Languages portal on Europa. Digital libraries and projects developing language technologies were the main actions carried out in the field of research and information technologies. More detailed information is given in the relevant chapters of this paper. A complete overview of the actions set out, their

state of implementation and main output is given in the Annex. An internal network of Commission departments was set up and recently upgraded into an Interservice Group. It provided information for this paper, laying the foundations for mainstreaming multilingualism across a wider range of European policies.

Member States were invited to send in information as part of the follow-up to the 'Action plan promoting language learning and linguistic diversity, 2004-2006'. In 2006-2007, 19 Member States sent in detailed reports on the implementation of the Action Plan, and 17 provided additional information on the 2005 communication.<sup>1</sup> Most of the actions recommended by the 2005 communication repeated and built upon recommendations in the Action Plan. The Report on the implementation of the Action Plan<sup>2</sup> highlighted positive results (for instance the introduction of early language learning, and a more consistent approach to language teaching and learning and to teacher training) and areas for further cooperation (languages in vocational training and in adult education, groups at disadvantage, and further diversification of languages taught).

Establishing national plans for multilingualism was a new recommendation made in the 2005 communication. The Commission promoted a first exchange of practice in this field through the Working Group on Languages, bringing together Member States' representatives, in 2006.<sup>3</sup> The two last actions recommended by the 2005 communication — setting up a High Level Group on Multilingualism and holding a ministerial conference on multilingualism — paved the way for the current communication, to which this paper is attached.

## 2.2. Education and training

### *Languages as part of education and training policy*

'Improving foreign language learning' is one of the specific objectives of the Education and Training 2010 work programme and part of the broader strategic objective of 'opening up education and training systems to the wider world'. The ability of all European citizens to understand and use a wide range of foreign languages is central to the Union's effort to develop a more dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy, to increase the number and to improve the quality of jobs available, and to ensure that European companies are able to compete advantageously in global market. In addition, language learning promotes mutual understanding and greater tolerance of other cultures, and has relevance for two of the other objectives: developing skills for the knowledge society and supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion.

This objective was further elaborated by the working group on languages, set up to make recommendations and exchange good practice and ideas on how to improve foreign language learning. It includes members appointed by Member States and representatives from the Council of Europe and Eurydice. Having mapped out developments in Member States the group concluded that *'if there is a growing*

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html).

<sup>2</sup> (COM(2007) 554 final/2).

<sup>3</sup> See especially the independent report by Prof Beacco at: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html).

*awareness amongst the general public of the importance of language learning, the perceived value of linguistic diversity in Europe is perhaps less well established. The scene is clearly dominated by the steady increase of English as a second language at European and international level, while pupils, students, their families and even policy makers and authorities responsible for the educational systems do not always seem to fully appreciate the importance of teaching and learning additional foreign languages. The dimension of linguistic diversity should therefore always accompany all efforts aimed at stepping up language teaching and learning*'.<sup>4</sup>

The joint interim report approved in the Spring of 2004 recognised the social and economic value of linguistic skills, underlining that Member States should, in particular, 'develop coherent language policies, including relevant teacher training. Young people, their families, as well as private and public bodies, should also be made more aware of the advantages of learning several languages and preserving linguistic diversity.'<sup>5</sup>

Each of the Union's enlargements also extended to languages, bringing new languages and the challenges of managing them. To cope with the unprecedented scope of the latest enlargement of the European Union the Action Plan 2004-2006 for language learning and linguistic diversity was published. It provided the first comprehensive policy approach to language teaching and learning across Europe. It highlighted the importance of languages in a wider and more diversified area of European development and progress, where the growing internal mobility and ever more intense exchanges within the region and with the outside world have made foreign languages a key competence for every citizen.

In 2005, a framework strategy on multilingualism was published to mark the inclusion of multilingualism in the education and culture portfolio. Another breakthrough in relation to languages came when communication in foreign languages was included in the Recommendation<sup>6</sup> on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, as one of the eight key competences 'which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment'.

Through the working group on languages, in 2007, Member States reported on their progress in implementing the priorities of the Action Plan 2004-2006. The reports show encouraging results on language learning in our education systems. However, they also indicate that more work needs to be done in relation to language learning in adult education, in vocational training and in higher education.

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<sup>4</sup> Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme  
<http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/lang2004.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme  
<http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/lang2004.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning that was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* on 30 December 2006/L394.  
([http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l\\_394/l\\_39420061230en00100018.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_394/l_39420061230en00100018.pdf))

## Statistics

In the absence of statistics on language learning, Eurydice collects quantitative and qualitative data on language learning through its antennae in the Member States. The first issue of the bi-annual study 'Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe', published in January 2005 by the Eurydice European Unit, contains 37 sets of data concerning the context, organisation, participation in, teachers for and pedagogical processes of language learning in Member States. The data collected refer to the academic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003. They are based on the measures included in the official study programmes of the participating countries and therefore describe the intentions of the competent authorities, rather than the reality of foreign language teaching. These data are currently being updated and will be available later this year ([www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)).

In addition, the European Commission's survey and analysis service, Eurobarometer, has carried out two research projects into the language skills of European citizens and their attitudes towards languages, in 2001 and 2006.

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/languages-of-europe/doc137\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/languages-of-europe/doc137_en.htm)

## European Indicator on Language Competence

- The political decision to develop a language indicator was taken in 2002 at the Barcelona European Summit. The Council underlined that speaking foreign languages is a basic skill which needs to be improved by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age.
- The European Language Indicator will show us the general level of foreign language knowledge of the pupils in the Member States and let us see how close we are to achieving our objective of making Europe's citizens multilingual. This will provide invaluable strategic information to policy makers, teachers and learners in all Member States wishing to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages, thereby increasing the mobility of Europeans, and with it the competitiveness of the European Union. The framework was set out in the Commission communication adopted on 13 April 2007,<sup>7</sup> which proposes the following main topics for inclusion in the first round of the survey:

Language skills to be tested: *reading comprehension, listening comprehension and writing*. The Commission will take the initiative to develop instruments to cover a fourth skill, *speaking*, in subsequent surveys.

Languages to be tested: the official EU languages most taught as first and second languages in the European Union, namely *English, French, German, Spanish and Italian*. The framework for testing will be made available for all countries that wish to carry out tests other than in these five languages as national options. The Commission will take the initiative to ensure that the next round of the survey covers all of the official European languages taught in the European Union.

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<sup>7</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council *Framework for the European survey on language competences*, COM(2007)184 final: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc124\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc124_en.htm).

The framework of reference: the survey will be based on an instrument measuring a continuum of increasing levels of competences from level A1 (basic user) to level B2 (independent user), in line with the scales of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Contextual data to be collected: a questionnaire for students, teachers, school principles and governments will be developed, to gather contextual information that will facilitate an analysis of possible factors affecting pupils' language competencies.

Population to be tested in the survey: pupils enrolled in the final year of lower secondary education (ISCED<sup>8</sup> 2), (or the second year of upper secondary education — ISCED 3 — if a second foreign language is not taught in lower secondary education) who are taught the language being tested.

Testing instruments: both computer-based tests, using open source software, and paper and pencil tests should be made available to countries participating in the survey. The testing instrument should permit adaptive testing.

The Commission's timetable for conducting the survey is as follows:

2008: Develop and conduct the pilot tests, obtain advice on setting up national coordination structures in participating countries.

2009: Publish interim report on the pilot phase in the first quarter, then develop the full sets of tests.

2010: Hold field trials in February to March and then fine-tune the survey.

2011: Conduct main survey in February-March followed by processing and evaluation.

2012: Present initial results and complete a detailed analysis of the findings of the survey.

#### *The Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013) and languages*

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) integrates the various European education and training initiatives under a single umbrella. With a budget of nearly €7 billion for the period 2007 to 2013, it replaced the former education, vocational training and e-Learning programmes, which ended in 2006. The LLP consists of four sub-programmes, each one addressing a specific education sector: Comenius (for schools), Erasmus (for higher education), Leonardo da Vinci (for vocational education and training) and Grundtvig (for adult education). A cross-cutting programme complements these four sub-programmes to ensure that they achieve the best results. This cross-cutting programme is composed of four key activities (KAs) focusing on: (a) policy cooperation, (b) languages, (c) information and communication technologies, and (d) effective dissemination and exploitation of project results. Finally, the Jean Monnet programme stimulates teaching, reflection

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<sup>8</sup> The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) designed by UNESCO.

and debate on the European integration process at higher education institutions worldwide.

One of the specific objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme is to promote language learning and linguistic diversity. This means proposals for language projects, networks and other language-oriented activities (for instance linked to mobility of students, teachers and workers) can be submitted for European co-funding under the different parts of the Programme (the sub-programmes or the cross-cutting programme). All languages are eligible under this Programme.

### *Specific contributions from the different LLP sub-programmes to the promotion of multilingualism*

#### *Comenius*

All the Comenius actions promote the learning of foreign languages by school pupils and school staff through class exchanges, assistantships for future teachers and in-service teacher training. Both Comenius multilateral projects and Comenius networks contribute to the development of language learning in schools. Comenius also contributes to better preparing teachers to teach heterogeneous classes (of pupils from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as with different levels of ability / disability, different special needs etc.).

eTwinning is an initiative to encourage all schools in Europe to form collaborative partnerships using different types of communication technology. It began in January 2005 under the eLearning Programme and is now an integrated part of Comenius. At European level, it has a Central Support Service coordinated by the European Schoolnet., which manages the European eTwinning portal. The portal, accessible in 23 languages, provides ideas, suggestions, ready made kits and contacts and is updated on a daily basis.

<http://www.etwinning.net/ww/en/pub/etwinning/index2006.htm>

#### *Erasmus*

Erasmus supports different language-oriented initiatives in higher education, in particular multilateral projects, networks and the Erasmus Intensive Language Courses (EILC).

The EILC are specialised courses in the less widely used and less taught languages, held in the countries where these languages are spoken. They give Erasmus students visiting these countries for studies and placements the opportunity to study the language concerned for up to six weeks (with a minimum of 60 teaching hours) in preparation for their stay. Participation in EILC has risen annually, to 4 700 students in 2006/2007 with over 270 courses provided in the 23 participating countries.

#### *Leonardo*

Linguistic preparation is an essential part of Leonardo mobility periods and all projects must, where appropriate, include linguistic and cultural preparation. Under the LLP, a flat-rate amount of up to €500 per participant can be paid for linguistic, cultural and pedagogical preparation. Vocationally-Oriented Language Learning

(VOLL) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) are cross-cutting priorities for all Leonardo projects.

### *Grundtvig*

All Grundtvig actions promote the learning of foreign languages for adults. Both in-service training for teachers and other staff in adult education and the mobility components of the Grundtvig learning partnerships contribute to the development of language learning and the practising of languages with native speakers and others. Grants for language preparation for individuals are awarded in cases where language training is needed for (a) partner(s) in a learning partnership. Language learning is also an important aspect of the Grundtvig multilateral projects and networks, which require communication through foreign languages. The new Grundtvig actions under development will also promote the learning of / training in foreign languages for adults.

### *The Key Activities (LLP cross-cutting programme)*

Every Key Activity can support language-oriented projects and other linguistic activities in their specialised areas.

The Key Activity 'Languages' (KAL) has a budget of roughly €12 million per year. It supports the following activities: multilateral projects aimed, *inter alia*, at the promotion of language awareness, access to language learning resources and developing new language learning materials; networks in the field of language learning and linguistic diversity; and other initiatives in line with the objectives of the key activity including dissemination and exploitation conferences, information campaigns and studies on language issues.

### *The first LLP call for proposals (2007)*

- 22 multilateral projects, 3 networks and 1 accompanying measures project were selected under the Key Activity 'Languages' totalling € 817 651.
- Still in the field of languages, 8 Comenius multilateral projects, 4 Grundtvig multilateral projects, 2 Leonardo multilateral projects, 1 Erasmus Virtual Campuses project, 1 Erasmus Network, 1 KA 'Information and Communication Technologies' project and 1 KA 'Dissemination and exploitation of results' project were selected under the other LLP centralised sub-programmes. The total budget for these 18 projects was € 604 410.
- An estimated €35 million more were spent on LLP decentralised actions (managed by the National Agencies of the Programme) linked to languages.

More information on the LLP is available at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html).

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/index_en.html).

### 2.2.1. *Common European tools*

#### *Europass*

The single Community framework for transparent qualifications and competencies — Europass, established in 2006, is designed to encourage mobility and lifelong learning among students, and to clarify the qualifications of the holder for employers. The European Language Portfolio developed by the Council of Europe is incorporated into Europass, as is Europass mobility.

The most important practical contribution to promoting language skills comes through the Europass portal (<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>), developed and run by Cedefop and available in 26 languages (EU+EEA+CC). In particular, it offers citizens the opportunity to complete their Europass CV and Europass Language Passport online, with the help of guidelines and a tutorial. The CV includes a section which summarises language skills. The passport, a component of the European Language Portfolio, specifically allows citizens to describe their language skills in detail. Both documents use the common European frame of reference for languages developed by the Council of Europe as a standard tool for self-assessment.

Since February 2005, 85 000 eLanguage passports have been generated online, while more than 270 000 blank templates have been downloaded to be completed offline. The Europass CV is of course more widespread; so far around 3 million CVs have been generated online and about 3.4 million blank CV templates have been downloaded to be completed offline.

In the first three years since the introduction of Europass, the common framework for languages has therefore been used in about seven million Europass documents.

### 2.3. **Culture**

Contributing to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, respecting their national and regional diversity, and bringing their common cultural heritage to the fore are the fundamental principles of EC cultural policies. Hence, the interconnection with multilingualism is an essential condition of cultural policies and a powerful illustration of the cross-cutting dimension of the two areas. On this premise, a consistent effort is being made in order to ensure that the promotion of culture and cultural diversity, including linguistic diversity, is given due consideration in all regulatory and financial decisions or proposals presented by the Commission.

#### *European Agenda for Culture*

The Commission communication *A European agenda for culture in a globalising world* (May 2007) triggered a wider reflection on the role of culture as a key element of the European integration process, based on common values and a common heritage — a process which builds on cultural diversity and multilingualism, while also taking into account the cross-cutting role of culture in EU policies and actions.

Multilingualism and the promotion of languages are addressed directly in the priority *promoting access to culture*, but also indirectly in the priorities *improving the*

*conditions for the mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field and promoting and implementing the UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions.* Their promotion and implementation by the Commission and Member States addresses the protection and promotion of linguistic diversity as part of cultural diversity.

Under the general priority *access to culture*, the Member States and the Commission are to continue work to digitise and preserve cultural material and to make it accessible online, with a view to setting up a common European digital library. The European digital library would function as a common multilingual access point to the collections of libraries, archives and museums in Europe, thereby making the most of digital cultural heritage and cultural material of different types.

Another line of action linked with multilingualism is the work on synergies between culture and education to be pursued by a new working group of Member States' experts. This will cover formal, non-formal and informal education, including arts in education, and the development of projects to implement 'cultural awareness and expression', defined as a key competence for European citizens alongside communication in foreign languages and social and civic competencies. The work will be channelled into the implementation of the European Agenda for culture through exchange of best practice and peer communication, proposals for cooperation initiatives and policy recommendations, and is inherently linked to the objectives of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009.

#### *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 and follow-up*

One of the key themes addressed in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 is the issue of multilingualism since, in Europe, the knowledge of languages is essential to meeting and engaging in dialogue with others. The Council Conclusions on intercultural competencies adopted on 21-22 May 2008 include foreign languages skills among the key competencies for the development of intercultural competencies. The document addresses both active promotion of language learning (education policy) and support for translation to facilitate access to artistic expression in different languages (cultural policy). The Council calls for the development of a sustainable and cross-sectoral approach to intercultural dialogue, incorporating and supporting initiatives in the culture, education, youth and audiovisual fields.

More information is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm).

#### *The Culture programme*

The European Commission encourages and supports cultural activities under the Culture programme (running from 2007 to 2013). Based on Article 151 of the EC Treaty, the programme aims to enhance the cultural space shared by Europeans and based on common cultural values, through the development of cooperation between creators, players and institutions. Over the years this programme, although small in size, has made an important contribution to supporting cultural cooperation in Europe. The programme also provides support for the translation of works of fiction

from one European language into another.<sup>9</sup> Community support for literary translation is aimed at enhancing knowledge of the literature and literary heritage of other European countries by promoting the movement of literary works between countries, through subsidies to publishers.

From 2000 to 2006, Culture 2000 funded the translation of 2 149 fiction and human science titles. Under the new Culture Programme (2007-2013), only works of fiction are eligible, irrespective of literary genre — novels, tales, short stories, plays, poetry and comics. The works must have been published already, and they must not have been previously translated into the target language. Under the 2007 Call for proposals, the programme funded the translation of 258 works of fiction.

More information is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm).

## **2.4. The Youth in Action Programme**

The Youth in Action Programme aims to inspire a sense of active citizenship and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future. It promotes multilingualism by bringing young people of different nationalities and different languages together and by giving them the opportunity to participate in activities outside their country of residence.

Although Youth in Action is not a linguistic programme, the non-formal education and youth projects that it mainly supports are based on trans-national partnerships, which give young people a wonderful opportunity to become acquainted with other languages and cultures.

The use of different languages is not compulsory, but is strongly encouraged. Linguistic diversity is encouraged within the wider framework of promoting cultural diversity and inter-cultural dialogue, which is a priority of the Programme.

More specifically, the European Voluntary Service component of the Programme (Action 2) promotes the learning of foreign languages in a highly practical way: young people may do voluntary work in another country for up to one year. Promoters have to ensure that volunteers receive adequate linguistic training when they arrive in the country.

More information on youth policy is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm).

More information on the Youth in Action Programme is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc74\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc74_en.htm)

## **2.5. Active European citizenship**

'Europe for citizens', the current programme to promote active European citizenship and civic participation, encourages the participation of citizens and their organisations from different countries in debates and projects with a European

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<sup>9</sup> The languages eligible are the official languages of the eligible countries (as defined by their Constitution or basic laws) plus Latin and ancient Greek.

dimension. The ‘Europe for citizens’ programme helps promote linguistic diversity as it brings together European citizens of different nationalities who speak different languages and gives them the opportunity to participate in common activities.

Promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity is a feature of the Programme across the board, and promoters are strongly encouraged to take it into consideration when planning and implementing their projects. This is clearly stated in the Programme Guide provided to potential applicants, and applies to most actions for the whole programme period (2007-2013). Participation in projects supported by the ‘Europe for citizens’ programme should indeed raise awareness of the richness of the cultural and linguistic environment in Europe. It should also promote mutual understanding and tolerance, thereby contributing to the development of a respectful, dynamic and multifaceted European identity.

All projects supported under this programme therefore directly or indirectly promote linguistic diversity. For example, almost all town twinning projects have to deal with the issue of languages in order to enable the partners to communicate. Some projects take a very active approach by including training in the language of the twinned towns in their programme or in the preparation. There are also good examples of participation in this kind of project significantly raising participants’ motivation to learn a language as part their normal education.

More information is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index\\_fr.html](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_fr.html).

## **2.6. Information society**

In view of the expanding online economy and the ever-increasing information available in the widest array of languages, information and communication technologies (ICT) need to be language-aware and promote content creation in multiple languages, while at the same time providing the means to bridge the language barriers. This overall goal is supported by i2010 — the policy framework for the information society and media — one of the objectives of which is to create a Single European Information Space by ensuring seamless access to ICT-based services and improving conditions for the development of rich, multilingual content.

EU programmes on the information society and media address specific barriers to understanding and promote the adoption of language technologies — automatic solutions that bridge the online language barrier so that information is not only available on the computer screen or mobile phone, but is available in a language and format that the user understands. Language technology can already translate content automatically and classify, filter and present information based on automated analysis of the content.

### *Research*

EU financial support for research is given through multi-annual framework programmes. The current seventh framework programme runs from 2007 to 2013.

The EU supports substantial research efforts to make online content more accessible across languages. Machine translation, self-learning systems, speech recognition, information retrieval and semantic web development are examples of research areas

which invest large amounts of resources to make machines understand and translate human languages. The basic research challenges involve the representation of knowledge and models of language inspired by the way humans acquire, remember and apply knowledge. Another important field of research involves developing algorithms and statistical models that can derive linguistic knowledge (i.e. 'learn' language) automatically from large samples of texts and speech recordings.

Research in language technology has wide application: the car that understands a driver's spoken commands, simultaneous automatic interpretation of lectures, or guiding visitors through museums in multiple languages are just some examples of the application areas addressed by past and current research projects.

#### *Access to multilingual content and ICT services*

Research is not the only tool for supporting and promoting a multilingual information society. The technology developed by researchers needs to be put to productive use in the market and in the public sector, so that it ultimately serves Europe's multilingual citizens. These technologies need to cater for specific business models and public service workflows as well as being suited to people's patterns of use and preferences, so that online content and services can be efficiently delivered multilingually. This will help to create a single market for online content.

One of the objectives of the eContent (2001-2004) and eContentplus (2004-2008) programmes was to improve the usability and accessibility of digital content and ICT services in a multilingual and multicultural environment. The lessons learnt in these two programmes will be taken into account in shaping future action under the ICT policy support programme, part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP).

More information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/ict\\_psp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/index_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/econtentplus/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/econtentplus/index_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/other\\_actions/content\\_online/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/other_actions/content_online/index_en.htm)

#### *Digital libraries*

The Digital Libraries initiative aims at making online access to Europe's cultural and scientific heritage easier and more attractive. It builds on Europe's rich heritage, combining multicultural and multilingual environments with technological advances. A major milestone is the creation of *Europeana*, the European Digital Library, a common multilingual access point to cultural collections from all Member States. The prototype of Europeana will be launched in November 2008 and will give access to over two million digital items through a multilingual interface. By 2010, at least six million digitised items will be available.

The Publications Office is currently digitalizing all EU publications and the results will be accessible from the EU-Bookshop internet website.

More information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/digital\\_libraries/doc/culture\\_council/council\\_conclusions\\_nov\\_2006/en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/doc/culture_council/council_conclusions_nov_2006/en.pdf)

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/digital\\_libraries/doc/recommendation/recommendation/en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/doc/recommendation/recommendation/en.pdf)

<http://www.Europeana.eu>

### *Re-use of public sector language resources*

Language resources are valuable ‘raw material’ for developing machine translation systems and other cross-lingual applications, but also for basic research on language models and theories. The linguistic services of the European institutions create large amounts of language resources, such as translation memories and documents translated in many languages. These resources are one important example of public sector information that has a high potential value outside the public body that created the information. The Commission promotes the re-use of these huge resources held by the public sector for added-value information products and services. One concrete example that can be cited is the DGT-TM language resource that has enjoyed wide popularity since its release. DGT-TM is a public release of the translation memories collected by DG Translation. These machine-readable databases consist of roughly a million sentences translated in 22 European languages. This collection represents the ‘collective memory’ of years of work of EU translators and can be downloaded free of charge at <http://langtech.jrc.it/DGT-TM.html>.

The re-use of public sector information is mostly promoted through legislation that is binding upon Member States and European institutions. The main instruments are the Directive 2003/98/EC (on the re-use of public sector information) and Commission Decision 2006/291/EC (on the re-use of Commission information). The latter decision also concerns language resources created by the European institutions, such as DGT-TM.

The Publications Office makes available upon request a corpus of some 2 million Official Journal documents in all languages.

## **2.7. Research**

Under the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (6FP), research was initiated on the topic “Linguistic diversity in a European knowledge-based society”. The objective of this topic is to examine the role and implication of linguistic diversity in European cultures, specifically in view of the efforts to create a European knowledge-based society which respects cultural diversities and cross-cultural understanding.

Two projects, each with a budget of €5M, were retained for funding in 2006:

1. A Network of Excellence, “Languages in a Network of European Excellence – LINEE”, the main objectives of which are: to de-fragment research on multilingualism by advocating a multidisciplinary approach to the question of linguistic diversity; to innovate by setting up research platforms that are both theoretical and methodological; to promote the added value of European linguistic diversity, both at the level of the general public and at the level of policy-makers. *Duration: 48 months, budget €5M, 9 partners* (<http://www.linee.info>).

2. An Integrated Project, “Languages Dynamics and Management of Diversity – DYLAN”, the main objectives of which are: to study the concrete consequences of the increase in European linguistic diversity following the enlargement process; to show that this increase in European linguistic diversity can be an asset rather than a drawback in the development of a knowledge-based society (different modes of thought and action, linked to different languages, can contribute to the process of creation, transmission and application of knowledge). *Duration: 60 months, budget €5M, 20 partners* (<http://www.dylan-project.org>).

As part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (FP7), under Topic 8 of the “Cooperation” Programme (*Socio-economic sciences and the humanities – Budget €607M*), which aims to analyse and understand the current major societal trends, several research topics will tackle questions linked to multilingualism, either directly or indirectly. For instance, research on cultural interaction, differences in traditions in European societies and cultures, multiculturalism, parallel societies and coexistence of cultural identities, participation and citizenship in Europe, history and identities (origins and development), cultural heritage and the role of language in European identity will be fostered.

## **2.8. Media and the audiovisual sector**

Multilingualism is also promoted in the context of film heritage. In the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2005 on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities<sup>10</sup>, Member States are recommended to encourage and support film heritage institutions to release archival material with subtitles in as many European Union languages as possible (point 22.b of the Recommendation).

The subtitled films and TV programmes could be an attractive and widely accessible means of learning new languages and improving already acquired linguistic skills. MEDIA 2007 is the EU support programme for the European audiovisual industry. Its aims are:

- to strengthen the competitiveness of the European film, TV and new media industries;
- to increase international circulation of European audiovisual works;
- to preserve and enhance European cultural diversity.

The programme is divided into five action lines:

- training of professionals
- development of production projects and companies
- distribution of cinematographic works and audiovisual programmes
- promotion of cinematographic works and audiovisual programmes, including the support for film festivals

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<sup>10</sup> Recommendation 2005/865/CE, OJ L 323, of 9/12/2005 P. 0057 - 0061

- horizontal actions/pilot projects.

In order to increase the circulation of European audiovisual works outside their domestic markets, MEDIA 2007 supports subtitling and/or dubbing of works through the distribution and the promotion action lines.

Through the eContent and the fifth Research Framework Programme, the European Commission has supported the development of automated tools to improve the cost-effectiveness and accuracy of subtitling, such as a system providing automatic transcription of subtitles from speech to text, and automatic (or assisted) translation of subtitles from one language to another.

More information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/media/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/index_en.htm)

<http://www.etime.co.uk/about.php>

<http://sifnos.ilsp.gr/musa>

## **2.9. Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities**

The main task of the European Social Fund (ESF) is to support growth and jobs and thereby strengthen economic and social cohesion.

Supporting language learning is an important factor in maintaining and reinforcing people's skills, facilitating human capital mobility and increasing competitiveness.

Operational programmes supported by the ESF are designed by Member States and approved by the Commission. It is up to Member States to decide on project content. Several operational programmes have tackled the issue of language training and multilingualism, mainly as a way of increasing access to employment, improving adaptability and facilitating the social and labour integration.

For the period 2007 to 2013, the ESF is expected to invest some €1 billion a year across all Member States in improving people's skills and job prospects. Language training is one of the many ways to achieve this objective — particularly as language training can increase aptitude for vocational training and labour market integration. Thus, although 'language training' is not specifically mentioned in the priority 'enhancing access to employment', or the sub-priority 'increasing the participation of migrants in employment' it can, in fact, be supported under any of the priorities of the ESF.

For the period 2000-2006, around EUR 12 billion was allocated to the development of life long learning, including language learning. To give some examples, in Greece, a 2000-2006 ESF initiative 'Greek language for immigrants', was part of a wider policy to encourage the social and economic integration of this community. This project involved almost 15 000 mobile and migrant workers throughout 2 years:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/docs/el4\\_1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/docs/el4_1_en.pdf)

Helping mobile and migrant workers to learn the Greek language is one of the most important

first steps towards finding work and combating social exclusion,” says Dimitris Psallidas, project coordinator within the Ministry of Employment & Social Protection. “This initiative is vital if mobile and migrant workers are to settle and integrate into Greek society.”

In France, the EQUAL initiative FAAR responds to asylum seeker's need for legal advice, in combination with French language courses. This need becomes even more obvious when knowing that in France, asylum seekers rarely receive translation or interpretation services in their relations with the administration. Administrative procedures, documents and interviews are mostly in French and it is up to the asylum seekers to ensure that they understand. Besides dealing with the asylum process, asylum seekers also have to cope in their everyday existence.

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/asyl-07-fr-faar\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/asyl-07-fr-faar_en.cfm)

## **2.10. Single market policy**

Multilingualism policy is of direct relevance for further development and good functioning of the EU's Single Market for two reasons.

Firstly, the more languages European citizens can speak, the easier they can move between Member States to work, live, study or provide services, and therefore, the more they can benefit from the opportunities offered by the Single Market.

Secondly, linguistic diversity being a source of benefit and richness, it can nevertheless create barriers for the functioning of the Single Market, i.e. for workers' mobility, cross-border activities of companies and for effective administrative cooperation between Member States, for those who do not have sufficient knowledge of languages. To overcome those barriers, it is necessary to make more effective use of new technologies, such as automatic translations or automated data exchange systems, to provide linguistic support.

For instance, the Internal Market Information System (IMI)<sup>11</sup> based on automatic translation is being developed in order to support the administrative cooperation obligations of thousands of Member State authorities across the EU under various pieces of EU legislation. The first phase of the IMI is based on pre-translated information in all 23 official EU languages and a facility for automatic translation of additional information in the language pairs available. Both allow Member State Competent Authorities to send and answer information requests in their own language and therefore facilitate the communication between them. The system currently supports information exchange - as required in the Professional Qualifications Directive - in relation to 4 regulated professions (doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists and accountants). DG MARKET is further developing the system to allow information exchanges in relation to more professions and to support the administrative cooperation requirements of the Services Directive. It is intended that IMI can be used in the future to support any area of Internal Market legislation which requires administrative cooperation between Member State authorities.

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<sup>11</sup> The system was opened for Authority registration in early November 2007, and for information exchange – on 22 February 2008. IMI website is available on the following link: [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/imi-net/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/index_en.html)

SOLVIT<sup>12</sup>, an on-line problem solving network between EU Member States, ensures multilingual assistance to ensure that problems caused by the misapplication of Single Market law by public authorities can be effectively solved without legal proceedings. A public website in 25 languages explains what SOLVIT is and how it works to citizens and businesses. Complaints can also be submitted in all of these 25 languages by an on-line form or other means.

Furthermore, in some policy areas, tools have been put in place to make information available in different languages to businesses to increase transparency and therefore, to ensure non-discrimination and greater competition in their cross-border activities. For instance, in the area of public procurement, notices advertising public procurement opportunities are published in the Official Journal of the EU (OJEU)/electronic publication board 'Tenders European Daily' (TED) based on structured online standard forms, large parts of which are standardised and can be automatically translated into and/or read immediately in all official language versions<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, the Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) is used to make it easier for businesses to identify public contracts of interest to them. The CPV is an alpha-numeric nomenclature by which buyers describe their intended purchase of goods and services. In contrast to other classifications available in the market, it exists in all official EU languages<sup>14</sup>. Access to the standards forms, the Common Procurement Vocabulary and general public procurement information is made available in all EU languages through the SIMAP website<sup>15</sup>.

As regards provision of services, the Services Directive<sup>16</sup> obliges Member States to establish "Points of Single Contact" and suggests that those be encouraged to work in different Community languages.

Lastly, as regards patents, automatic translation is used by the European Patent Office (EPO) for the purposes of its patent granting procedure and for the dissemination of patent information<sup>17</sup>, and the use of this system is currently considered also in the context of the discussions on the Community patent.

## 2.11. Enterprise policy

While language learning is not a specific aim of enterprise policy, language barriers can be an obstacle to entrepreneurship.

The new pilot project 'ERASMUS for young entrepreneurs' aims to facilitate training, networking and exchanges of experience among young entrepreneurs by means of traineeships in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in another country.

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<sup>12</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/about/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/about/index_en.htm)

<sup>13</sup> The automatic translation functionality is expected to be further improved with the adoption of an exclusively electronic 'new generation of standard forms' in the near future.

<sup>14</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/publicprocurement/e-procurement\\_en.htm#cpv](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/e-procurement_en.htm#cpv)  
<sup>15</sup> [www.simap.europa.eu](http://www.simap.europa.eu)

<sup>16</sup> Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market, OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> Automatic translations are currently available for English, German, Spanish, Japanese, Korean and Chinese documents. The development of the system is in progress and further languages will be added to it in the near future.

Participating young entrepreneurs must prove that they have sufficient linguistic skills before going abroad to work with another entrepreneur. They are offered pre-departure induction covering information on the mobility scheme, inter-cultural learning and relevant EU level information (on the internal market, European law issues etc.). Depending on the needs and the nature / specific needs of the relationship with the host entrepreneur, young entrepreneurs may also participate in language courses (either before or during their stay abroad).

For more information on the pilot project, see:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support\\_measures/erasmus/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/index.htm)

#### *Technical Regulations Information System — TRIS database*

The public information website TRIS provides economic operators with information on and access to draft technical regulations concerning products and information system services, in all EU languages, before they are adopted in national law by Member States (with the exception of texts above 50 pages, which are available in DE/EN/FR). This enables operators to participate in discussions on the draft legislation notified and to anticipate legislative changes, for example by adapting the products/information society services that they sell or provide in the Member States concerned in good time.

TRIS: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/>

## **2.12. External relations and development policy**

Languages play an important role in cooperation and public diplomacy activities.

For instance, EU development policy seeks to improve the quality of university education in developing countries by funding students from developing countries studying at European universities and helping developing countries build the capacity to train and retain qualified university staff. Two of the most important EU programmes in this respect are Erasmus Mundus and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. Students with a university degree may be sent abroad to a training in the language of their choice (EN, FR, ES or PT).

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/9interventionareas/humandev/humandedveduc5\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/9interventionareas/humandev/humandedveduc5_en.cfm)

For EuropeAid, multilingualism is very important. Within the framework of its mission to implement external aid programmes and projects with developing countries, the Office has daily work contacts with aid workers both in Europe and in the partner countries. The Office is, consequently, for numerous European citizens, a “showcase” of Europe in an area considered as exemplary in terms of Community action. It is also a “showcase” of Europe for numerous players in the field outside Europe. The appraisal of those involved in cooperation in the field is crucial for the image of the Commission and directly affects the political credibility of its activity. The Office must therefore be very sensitive to the question of multilingualism, insofar as language is a major component of everyone’s culture and identity, respect for which is deemed as the most elementary form of respect due to citizens, both inside and outside of Europe.

One of the major objectives in this respect is to focus actions on the appropriation of their cultural identity by the groups targeted by the projects/programmes, in order to preserve cultural diversity as a condition for dialogue, and therefore conflict prevention, and in turn development. Language is an essential component of this policy and it goes without saying that linguistic diversity constitutes and will constitute in the future an objective in its own right of cooperation and development actions with the EuropeAid partners.

Examples of programmes and actions managed by EuropeAid Co-operation Office and EC Delegations include:

“Transcultura”, financed under the pilot budget line Culture (2004), focuses on developing a worldwide observatory on the cultural content and meaning of words and vocabulary in all languages and between civilisations.

“Apoyo al sector educativo en Guatemala (PROASE)” (1998-2005), is a programme to support the education sector. One of its objectives is to improve the quality of the Guatemalan education system, in particular through the development of intercultural bilingual education, while taking account of related issues. Through the reduction of illiteracy and the improvement of the education system, one finds recognition and revalorisation of indigenous languages and cultures which are the subject of an overall reform of the Guatemalan education system.

“Formación Profesional Tecnológica y Pedagógica en Perú – FORTE-PE” is an older project undertaken in Peru in 1995. It included a component, “PROEBI”, consisting in offering bilingual training in Amazonia, adapted to the culture and needs of indigenous people in order to improve their basic education and their integration.

### **2.13. Justice, freedom and security**

Multilingualism contributes to better understanding between European citizens and, in particular, to improving their awareness of their rights, and facilitates their access to reliable information. In line with this, art. 21 of the EC treaty provides all the citizens of the Union with the right to write to any of the institutions or bodies in one of the official languages, and to receive an answer in the same language.

Under the financial instruments in the field of integration of non-EU nationals (INTI, Integration Fund, European Refugee Fund), the Commission supports actions which, *inter alia*, address language training for migrants and refugees. Under the new External Border Fund and the European Refugee Fund, border guards and staff dealing with processing asylum claims and interviews can also be given extra language training.

One of the aims of the policy reflected in the Programme ‘Fundamental Rights and Citizenship’ is to foster interfaith and multicultural dialogue in the European Union. Multilingualism should play a significant role in this, especially as the goal is to promote exchange of views and experience and to involve Member States as much as possible in proposing common projects.

*Criminal Justice Programme*

The Criminal Justice Programme aims *inter alia* to promoting judicial cooperation based on mutual recognition and mutual confidence, promoting the compatibility in rules applicable in the Member States as may be necessary to improve judicial cooperation and to improve exchange of information. For 2008, the Commission has proposed a budget for this programme of €29.8 million.

In order to raise mutual confidence between the authorities of the Member States, judicial training (of legal practitioners, i.e. judges, prosecutors, defence lawyers, etc.) is one of the priority areas promoted by this programme (by means of action grants covering 70 % of the total eligible costs of the projects). Judicial training aims at improving familiarity with EU legal instruments and policies, improving language skills of legal practitioners and developing familiarity with the legal and judicial systems of other Member States. The language training covers the development of common training modules, the use of modern technologies and training on interpretation and translation.

Furthermore, the JPEN programme has entrusted the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) to execute a specific exchange programme which allows financing the organisation of internships or secondment of judges and prosecutors from one Member State to the courts or prosecution offices of another. The Programme should also contribute to improving language skills. Therefore, language training with a view to preparing the exchanges themselves may be included, as well as the development of on-line training and the drafting of a glossary of legal terminology.

#### *Civil Justice Programme*

The Civil Justice Programme aims *inter alia* to promoting judicial cooperation based on mutual recognition and mutual confidence, promoting the elimination of obstacles to the good functioning of cross-border civil proceedings in the member States and to improve exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support of judicial training. For 2008, the Commission has proposed a budget for this programme of €14.3 million.

In order to raise mutual confidence between the authorities of the Member States, judicial training is one of the priority areas promoted by this programme (by means of action grants covering 80 % of the total eligible costs of the projects). Judicial training aims at improving exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions. The language training is also a key issue to ensure the better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals. European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters

The European Judicial Network aims to reinforce judicial cooperation in civil matters. The two basic objectives of the Network are improving effective judicial cooperation between the Members States in civil and commercial matters and assuring effective access to justice for persons engaging in cross-border litigation.

The Network was formed with the aim of making matters easier for those who become involved in cross-border disputes, that is disputes with links to more than one country, by providing help with practical matters. The Network therefore facilitates appropriate contacts between the authorities of the Member States, holds periodic meetings of contact points and members of the Network and draws up and

updates information on judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters and the legal systems of the Member States.

The Network has developed an Internet-based system containing information on EU and national law. The information is available in all EU official languages (except Irish). Therefore, multilingualism is extremely helpful here in facilitating and ensuring effective access to justice for citizens and enterprises.

### *Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters*

The European Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters is a very practical tool created by the Commission which can be found online at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice\\_home/judicialatlascivil](http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/judicialatlascivil). Through this tool, any legal professional or citizen can accede, in one of the European Union official languages (except Irish), to the designations, addresses and territorial jurisdiction of all the European Union courts. Furthermore, the corresponding procedures are facilitated as far as possible by enabling the user to fill in on line the various forms that exist for the application of the different legal instruments. Therefore, multilingualism is extremely helpful here in facilitating and ensuring effective access to justice and better cooperation between judicial authorities.

### *e-Justice*

As the demands on judicial systems increase across Europe and transnational demand grows steadily, because of enhanced mobility of economic operators and citizens, traditional systems are failing to provide an adequate response to new needs. Transnational justice presents peculiar features and poses particular challenges which require adequate and innovative solutions. Among the main drawbacks of transnational justice are language barriers.

e-Justice represents an initial response to the threefold need to improve access to justice, cooperation between legal authorities and the effectiveness of the judicial system itself. In the framework of the Communication on e-Justice, multilingualism represents a major challenge to the development of a genuine European judicial area. Judicial proceedings take place almost exclusively in the national language, and the use of foreign languages is admitted only marginally. The Commission is therefore proposing actions targeting translation and interpretation in judicial settings.

Moreover, the creation of a European e-Justice portal for the public and enterprises will serve as the face of the European area of justice *vis-à-vis* citizens, facilitating access to information and direct access to certain European procedures. In this respect multilingualism should play a significant role, facilitating access by citizens and enterprises to justice in Europe and leading to more effective judicial cooperation.

## **2.14. Communication**

The Commission considers that citizens have the right to be informed on European policies in the language that they understand. This has been formally stated in its action plan for communication.

In concrete terms, the Commission meets the need to address citizens in a language which is appropriate for them in the following way:

- At national and local level, the **Commission Representations** address the public in their own national language (s). Therefore several information messages and products relating to the EU are translated and adapted to the different national contexts by the "field offices" of DGT in the Representations. The Commission Representations also work with the European Parliament Information Offices in order to provide meeting and debating opportunities, national or transnational, between citizens and institutions in order to develop a European public sphere within which multilingualism plays a key role: projects supported by the "Debate Europe" initiative or the "European Public Spaces" currently in preparation are concrete examples. Moreover, the information relays spread across the European Union, such as "Europe Direct", also address the public in its own national language (s). In some cases (such as boundary or touristic regions) they will also offer information in other languages.
- **Information campaigns** on a specific topic incorporate the dimension of multilingualism from the design phase, since the number of languages used depends on the needs of the audience targeted and the regions covered.
- The **EuropeDirect call centre**, accessible via a free number, answers telephone calls and e-mails in the 23 official languages.
- The **written publications** for the general public are also written in the 23 official languages. In an ad hoc way, some publications targeted at a specialised public can be published only in a limited number of language versions.

On the **Europa website** the pages of general interest targeted at the general public are essentially multilingual, i.e. published in all the official languages. For the specialised pages (targeted at professionals), the choice of languages depends on the targeted audience. For pages with fleeting contents, the speed of on-line publication is essential and the number of language versions has to be limited. In any case, with the aim of maximising the number of visitors, the Commission endeavours to achieve the right balance between the number of languages used, the quantity of information published, and the resources needed for the translation and administration of the sites.

Within the framework of its support to the dissemination of information on the European Union, the Commission has a contract with the Euronews television network, which is by nature multilingual, and with a network of different language radios which share their productions after dubbing (Euradio network).

## 2.15. **Health and consumer protection**

Public health is a key issue for all European citizens, and many Commission activities have a highly visible impact in this area. In May 2006, the Commission launched the EU's public health portal on *europa.eu*. It is intended as an easy access 'one-stop shop' for Europeans wanting to find out what is happening across a broad spectrum of health issues in their own country and across Europe. It is also a key means for the Commission to show citizens in their own language what the EU is doing for them, and the means it uses to deploy them. It is, crucially, a gateway to all EU information on public health. In addition, Member States and other organisations provide information for the portal.

[http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/index_en.htm)

## 2.16. Translation

The EU is a major employer of translators and an important player in the European translation market. Therefore, it has ensured an adequate supply of highly-qualified translators to meet its requirements and those of the wider translation market. This is why it follows the developments in translation training in Europe closely and contributes to them. The Commission has built contacts with many European universities via the Visiting Translator Scheme (VTS), where DGT staff participate in teaching while improving their own skills in the local language.

### *Initiatives to promote the profession of translator*

The ‘*European Master’s in Translation*’ (EMT) is a project that encourages European universities to establish a common curriculum for translator training.

The EMT aims to:

- encourage universities to develop post-graduate courses in translation and provide them with a model curriculum of a Master’s degree in translation;
- develop the labour market for translators in the new Member States;
- make DGT standards visible to the academic world across the European Union;
- promote multilingualism by strengthening the Commission’s ties with universities involved in translation research and teaching, and train professional translators, enhancing standards where necessary.

Following the second EMT conference, which took place in March 2008, universities across the EU are being encouraged to join the EMT network and actively participate. An open call will be made in the second half of 2008.

The initiative *Juvenes Translatores* is a translation contest for pupils of European schools intended to disseminate understanding of the translation profession and, in addition, to familiarise students with European language policy.

The contest, announced in the 2005 Communication on multilingualism, took place in 2007 as a contribution to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Treaties. It was held simultaneously in all Member States on 14 November 2007. Just under 300 schools from all over the EU entered the contest. The winner in each country was invited to Brussels and received an award from Commissioner Orban on 10 March 2008. The contest will be held again on 27 November 2008.

### *Communicating on multilingualism*

The themes of the Commission’s languages portal are linguistic diversity, language learning, language teaching, translation, interpretation and language technology. All contents are published in 23 languages.

<http://europa.eu/languages/>

The Commission is active in terminology work and, together with other European institutions, has created the terminology database *IATE (Interactive Terminology for Europe)*, which is accessible on the Internet to European institutions' staff and to external users all over the world, including the public at large. In this way, the Commission is contributing to the work of translators and all other users interested in terminology work, as well as all those using EU-related expressions in their work.

<http://iate.europa.eu>

Field Offices located in 21 Commission Representations, provide a network for multilingualism in the Member States and act as an interface with national language communities, institutions and researchers dealing with multilingualism. The members of staff visit universities, give lectures and are prime interlocutors for the 'language' community in the Member State.

## **2.17. Interpretation**

The interpreting service of the Commission and the Interpreting Directorate of the European Parliament were instrumental in creating the European Master's in Conference Interpreting (EMCI). This programme is designed for students with European and non-European languages. Its aim is to equip young graduates with the professional skills and knowledge required for conference interpreting. It seeks to meet the demand for highly-qualified conference interpreters, particularly in the area of the less widely-used and less-taught languages and in view of the expansion of the Union and of its increasing dialogue with its non-European partners. The curriculum was developed in consultation with the EU institutions and continuation of this cooperation is an integral part of the Commission's assistance programme.

<http://www.emcinterpreting.org/>

The Commission awards student grants to post-graduate students in interpretation. Since 1998 about 1 185 young people have benefited from this scheme. A considerable number of them completed their studies successfully and work as interpreters for the EU institutions.

Student grants are awarded to nationals of an EU Member State, or one of the candidate countries (Croatia, FYROM and Turkey), who already hold a university degree or equivalent qualification, or are in the final year of a course leading to a university degree or equivalent qualification. To obtain a grant, students must have applied or intend to apply for a full post-graduate course in conference interpreting at a recognised university or university-level institution.

[http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c\\_6344/bourse-d-etudes](http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6344/bourse-d-etudes)

The Commission and the European Parliament jointly provide grants to co-finance actions which bring an additional European dimension to a course, e.g. teaching unusual language combinations, funding cross-border cooperation projects and running post-graduate conference interpreting courses — 17 action grants were awarded in 2007-2008.

The main objectives of these actions are:

- promoting quality and linguistic diversity in the teaching of interpreting in the official languages of the EU, including the less widely used languages, the languages of the candidate countries (Croatia, FYROM and Turkey) and the languages of non-EU countries, where justified by current or future needs;
- promoting the establishment of post-graduate centres of excellence;
- encouraging cooperation among universities from different countries;
- supporting innovative pilot projects.

Cooperation programmes exist with China, Vietnam and Macao. Each year, groups of trainees come to Brussels to be trained by the interpreting service of the Commission. The aim of the traineeships is to teach trainees the basic techniques of conference interpreting — consecutive and simultaneous — as practised in the EU institutions. Trainees also learn about EU culture and institutions, through lectures and visits to Member States. As regards China, after completing their training, former trainees may be called upon to work at meetings (in China) between the EU and China.

A programme of cooperation with Russia has recently been revived. This year, an English interpreter is visiting both St. Petersburg (Herzen State University) and Moscow State Linguistic University, on pedagogical assistance missions. The two universities are in the process of setting up Master's courses, on the model of the EMCI.

The Commission started cooperation with the African Union in 2007 in the framework of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy. Discussions are ongoing on the best way to give assistance in the field of interpretation and conference organisation.

The Commission also provides pedagogical assistance to some universities in the candidate countries: to the interpreter training course at the University of Zagreb (Croatia), and to the course in Skopje (FYROM) that was launched in 2007. Regarding Turkey, Bogaziçi University (Istanbul) and Bilkent University (Ankara) have benefited from DG SCIC's teaching assistance.

DG Interpretation convened a *Reflection Forum on Multilingualism and Interpreter Training*, composed of 7 experts of various nationalities. The Reflection Forum was set up taking into consideration point III.6 of the Commission's Communication *A new framework strategy for multilingualism* (COM(2005) 596 final): "...Interpreters also help the institutions of multilingual societies to function. They support immigrant communities in courts, hospitals, police and immigration services. Properly trained, interpreters thus contribute to safeguarding human and democratic rights."

The main purpose of the Reflection Forum is to provide independent, operational recommendations concerning the wider scope of interpreter training – development of competence descriptions, guidelines, materials, tools, level of training, core curricula, best practices, ethics, code of conduct, and any other related aspects, paying particular attention to Legal Interpreting. These reflections can also contribute to widening training options that may ultimately also benefit the European Institutions.

The work of the Reflection Forum will take into consideration DG Interpretation's expertise in conference interpreter training, as well as other activities, in particular those already carried out in the field of justice, freedom and security in the past few years. The work of the Forum is expected to be finalized at the end of 2008 or early 2009.

### **3. STUDIES ON MULTILINGUALISM AND THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGES**

#### **3.1. The Intercultural Competences Developed in Compulsory Foreign Languages Education in the European Union (LACE)**

This study identified and assessed the nature, scope and extent of intercultural skills currently taught in compulsory foreign language education in the European Union.

The study concludes that foreign language classes provide appropriate settings for developing intercultural competence. They already fulfil this purpose on quite a wide scale, though the range of intercultural competence prescribed for development by the curriculum is often limited. At EU level, research should continue. It should be expanded to other levels of education and should raise awareness of the nature of and need for intercultural competence development. Support for intercultural competence development in foreign-language learning should be available within the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme. As a prerequisite to improving intercultural competence development at national level, the study recommends increased teacher mobility, teacher and school exchanges, partnerships and visits, and increased understanding of intercultural competence development among teachers and administrators. The study also considers it important to allocate more funding and give more time to intercultural competence development in foreign language and other classes. Greater attention to intercultural competence in initial foreign-language teacher education and in professional development courses is recommended, as is a clear specification in foreign language curricula of objectives on intercultural competence development, attainment levels and assessment. Finally, development of suitable approaches, methodologies, teaching and learning resources is necessary.

The work, completed in 2007, was carried out by a team of 20 experts and researchers from 12 European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom and Netherlands). The point of departure was a review of national curricula in the 12 countries to examine the development of intercultural competence, the main teaching methods they recommend, and how this matches with practice in the classroom. The study was confined to foreign language teaching at ISCED levels 1 and 2, i.e. primary and lower secondary education. After the curricula were examined, an online survey of 213 foreign language teachers was held and telephone interviews conducted with 78 of them (34 teaching in primary and 54 in lower secondary education). These interviews provided detailed information about the practices they most commonly used in the classroom.

Full study and summary can be downloaded from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/key/studies\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/key/studies_en.html)

### **3.2. Report on the diversity of language teaching offered in the European Union**

In order to evaluate developments in language teaching in the various Member States at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level, the report addressed a number of questions, including which languages are being taught in EU Member States, at what stage and in which order they are introduced. It also looks at emerging trends.

Many countries pay little attention to the study of languages other than English at primary school level, though some are making the effort to increase the number of languages taught. Similar findings emerge at lower and upper secondary school levels, but every Member State has its own priorities. One way of increasing the teaching of languages is to introduce the learning of several languages in the same school year. Certain countries which have several official languages (like Belgium and Luxembourg) do this. Others prefer to offer language studies as a specialisation. In very few Member States do significant numbers of pupils learn languages other than those most commonly taught (English, French, German and Spanish), and these tend to be cases in which the languages of: neighbouring states (such as Italian in Malta), national minorities (Hungarian in the Czech Republic) or former powers (such as Russian in Bulgaria or Danish in Iceland) are offered.

This report shows that there is support for linguistic diversity but it also mentions competition between languages and between subjects for time in the curriculum as well as competition between schools for pupils. The main motivating factor behind expanding the study of languages is often prestige: the value of a language for social mobility. The most efficient way to teach languages is to introduce a greater number of compulsory languages, and/or to introduce languages at an earlier age. Policies should try to avoid placing languages in competition, perhaps by offering them successively so that the gain in one language can be exploited for another. There must be a change away from teaching languages as autonomous subjects. Use of language in a social context emphasises the role of all subjects in language teaching, and the role of language in every subject.

The indicators used in the report are the proportion of pupils learning languages and the number of languages taught. The data used to establish whether or not a county had increased the number of languages taught or the number of pupils learning languages come from Eurostat sources. A collection of examples of good practice and recommendations for further development complete the report.

The full study and summary can be downloaded from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/key/studies\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/key/studies_en.html).

### **3.3. Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise (ELAN)**

The objective of the ELAN survey was to provide the Commission and decision-makers in Member States with practical information and analysis of the use of language skills by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their impact on business performance.

According to this study, 11% of exporting European SMEs (945 000 companies) had lost business due to a lack of language skills. It also identified a clear link between languages and export success. The four central elements of language management associated with successful export performance are: taking a strategic approach to multilingual communication, appointing native speakers, recruiting staff with language skills and using translators and interpreters. There could be very significant gains across the whole EU economy if all exporting SMEs employed one or more of these techniques. The survey also confirmed the importance of English as the world business language. Thus there is a need for a range of other languages if business relationships are to be built successfully. Those cited as being the most important include the main European languages, such as German, French and Spanish, but increasingly also other world languages like Mandarin, Arabic and Russian. Moreover, according to the research, nearly half of the exporting SMEs surveyed were planning to expand into new foreign markets in the next three years and their demand for language skills would increase accordingly. However, instead of investing in language training themselves, they preferred to look to the Member States' education and training systems to provide graduates with the right language skills or they simply searched on the labour market for geographically mobile people with the required language skills.

The report recommends identifying and disseminating models of successful collaboration between business and education, directed towards the promotion of language skills, and the examination of the potential of existing mobility programmes to accommodate periods of work experience in other countries for SME employees. Another suggestion concerned developing and supporting programmes to raise awareness of the importance of language skills and of the availability of support systems. The researchers recommended supporting businesses to become more expert at managing language skills and in applying the elements of language management which are associated with improved export performance. They also proposed strengthening (foreign) language learning in education and training at all levels and improving the supply of interpreters and translators in less commonly-taught languages. They would like to see a period of mobility in another European country become an expectation for every student in tertiary education and to build on existing language skills by encouraging development of the languages spoken by children of migrant workers alongside the national language of their host country.

The results build on a survey of nearly 2000 SMEs from 29 European states (EU, EEA and candidate countries). Data was collected on approaches to the use of language skills, intercultural competence, awareness of language strategies, loss of business owing to lack of language skills, future exporting intentions and hence projected requirements for further language skills. The report was presented in December 2006.

This research was undertaken by CILT, the UK National Centre for Languages in collaboration with InterAct International and an international team of researchers.

The full study can be downloaded from:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/elan\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/elan_en.pdf).

A summary is available at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/elansum\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/elansum_en.pdf).

### **3.4. The main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners**

The purpose of this study was to examine the main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners as evidenced in literature and current best practice, taking into account the conceptual differences between Member States. It was launched in the context of the Action Plan 2004-2006, which furthers the principle of ‘mother tongue plus two other languages’ from an early age, and the numerous initiatives in Member States to introduce early language learning programmes, and was completed in 2007.

The authors analysed the literature and research published since 1998 when a report by Blondin *et al* reviewed the literature on early language learning, and extracted the pedagogical principles dealt with. The studies reviewed offer no conclusive evidence of the positive effects of early language learning (ELL). What they do show is that it is in no way damaging and certainly contributes to building language competence early, assuming that it is not forced and that it is accompanied by good teaching methods and skills, a supportive environment and continuity. Success in teaching a modern language to young learners, if it is to extend beyond the individual school and inspired individual teacher, is heavily dependent on a whole range of factors: sufficient amount and distribution of time and intensity, well trained teachers supported by suitable language pedagogy, teaching and learning strategies, evaluation and ICT tools, etc. National authorities and transnational bodies should support ELL through planned initiatives which include systematic research and development.

Practice in European countries considered by professionals to be ‘good’ was then discussed thoroughly with researchers and policy makers and compared with official documents prescribing early language learning at national level. On the basis of the analysis, a number of important principles were identified.

Principles with a clear relationship to the personality of the child and his or her cognitive functioning include: frequent exposure to the foreign language; taking account of the full range of learner characteristics; encouraging tolerance towards others and providing familiarity with different sets of values.

General principles related to learning, didactical concepts and instruction include: taking account of the learning strategies and learning styles of children; providing meaningful contexts and relevant themes; and putting comprehension skills before production.

Principles related to language learning include: holistic language learning; a visual approach and multi-sensory learning; learning should be age-related, taking full advantage of the children’s physical predispositions.

Among the principles defined as unique to early language learning are: more comprehension than production; positive motivation to learn; training of the ear and training in pronunciation, and extension and training of the relationship in a foreign language between phonetics and graphemes.

The full study and summary can be downloaded from

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm)

### 3.5. European profile for language teacher education

The objective of this study was to draw up a common set of competencies and values for language teachers in Europe. The curricula and structures for training teachers of a foreign language must adapt to the changing language skills that pupils and students need to acquire, but also to the new realities of the modern school and classroom. The European Profile which resulted in 2004 was conceived as a frame of reference for policy makers and language teacher educators, which should become an essential checklist for all who are involved in language teacher training and education.

Drawing on good practice across Europe and in consultation with a group of international teacher educators, the Profile presents 40 key items which could be included in teacher education courses. It details how courses can best be structured and delivered to give trainee teachers access to essential learning opportunities during initial and in-service teacher education. In particular, it focuses on innovative teacher education practices and ways of promoting cooperation, exchange and mobility among the new generation of Europe's language teachers. The issues developed in the profile are in step with a Commission Communication on improving the quality of teacher education and the Council conclusions which followed in November 2007.

Building on this, the Commission also carried out a preliminary study in 2006 on detecting and removing obstacles to the mobility of foreign language teachers.

Full studies and a summary of the European Profile can be downloaded from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/profile\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/profile_en.pdf)

*Follow up by ELIN*

ELIN — The European Language Inspectors Network set up in 2005 following the Commission Action Plan on Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity 2004-2006 — discussed the 40 recommendations in the European Profile with a view to extracting those considered most essential for language teacher education. Having studied the document in depth, ELIN highlighted the following core elements.

*Dedicated training programme*

In the first place, provision of specific training for language teachers must be assured, the existence of which seemed to be taken for granted in the European Profile. This training should include a curriculum that integrates academic study and practical experience of teaching. This teaching practice (the '*stage*' or '*practicum*') should be guided by an explicit framework which stipulates how teaching practice will be organised and who will be responsible for feedback on the school-based experience.

Foreign-language teacher education should be structured to include experience abroad: a period of work or study in a country or countries where the trainee's foreign language is spoken as native; participation in links with partners abroad, including visits, exchanges or ICT links; and the opportunity to observe and participate in teaching in more than one country. Obstacles to mobility such as those identified through the study mentioned above need to be addressed. The Commission might consider drafting a mobility strategy specifically for foreign language teachers. Working with a mentor and understanding the value of mentoring should be an integral part of the strategy, and for this purpose, training for school-based mentors in how to mentor is essential. Flexible and modular delivery of initial and in-service education is more accessible and attractive to a diverse range of trainees.

During their careers, language teachers require regular paid access to in-service training and opportunities for lifelong learning to enable individual competence development and continuous improvement of teaching skills.

#### *Knowledge, understanding and values*

*Proficiency* in the language to be taught should be reached by the end of training, but a sufficient level of knowledge is required before starting training (level B2 is recommended as a minimum access level). Initial language teacher education should include a course in language proficiency and assess trainees' linguistic competence. The level of proficiency attained will differ depending on whether teachers are preparing for a career in primary or secondary education. Language teachers' continuing professional development should ensure that personal language competence is maintained and enhanced on an ongoing basis.

Teachers need to be conversant with different *pedagogical methods* and state-of-the-art techniques to apply them to the different learning abilities and levels of the student. This requires: training in language teaching methodologies, and in state-of-the-art classroom techniques and activities; training in information and communication technology (ICT) for pedagogical use in the classroom to enhance language learning; ICT for personal planning, organisation and accessing new resources and information; and awareness raising of the use of ICT to develop students' knowledge.

*Assessment techniques* are a crucial part of the job and require training in the application of various assessment (formative, summative and peer assessment, self-assessment) procedures and ways of recording and reporting learners' progress in the skills of language acquisition (listening, speaking, reading, writing), e.g. using the European Language Portfolio. Training in the critical evaluation of nationally or regionally adopted curricula in terms of aims, objectives and outcomes is also necessary.

Foreign language teachers have a vital role to play in promoting social and cultural values. Their training should include awareness and understanding of this role, of linguistic diversity in Europe, of the linguistic profile of the countries in which the languages they teach are spoken, and of how they themselves can create interest in cultures and languages.

It is important to strengthen the self-image of foreign language teachers and their identification with language teachers in general and not with teachers of a particular language only. Team-work, collaboration and networking with peers are relevant areas to be developed in order to achieve this. Contacts and effective professional support networks between language teachers at a regional, national and European level should be encouraged, to enable teachers to keep up with developments in their profession.

The Network judges Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) to be an aspect of language teaching that merits development and wider application.

### **3.6. Study on Dubbing and Subtitling Needs and Practices in the European Audiovisual Industry**

The purpose of the ‘Study on Dubbing and Subtitling Needs and Practices in the European Audiovisual Industry’, is to explore dubbing and subtitling practices in the 31 countries participating in the MEDIA 2007 programme. The study is also intended to provide recommendations regarding measures to be taken by the European Community in order to encourage linguistic diversity, whilst reducing obstacles to the movement of audiovisual works on the international market.

This assessment of current dubbing and subtitling practices was carried out to reflect the goals of the MEDIA programme: increase the circulation of European works; boost the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector; and promote cultural and linguistic diversity.

Among many results are some which concern multilingualism in particular. Firstly, the various language-teaching modalities, and the number of languages spoken from country to country, make for a European map quite different to that suggested by the dubbing/subtitling professions. Television plays a minor role in the learning of languages; in fact, the only situation in which television could be considered to really play a role is in the case of intralinguistic subtitling (not common in Europe) combined with total immersion in the foreign country. Secondly, some university specialists suggest that subtitling can have a positive effect on reducing the level of illiteracy in a country. However, a comparative analysis of data did not lead to any empirical conclusion to this effect.

In the field of multilingualism, the study highlights that an absence of dialogue between research carried out on digital technologies, notably under the Seventh Framework Programme, and financed research on multilingualism is harming prospects for technological innovation, when the two fields overlap as regards audiovisual broadcasting.

It concludes too that language transfer (dubbing/subtitling) is necessary but insufficient to enhance the circulation of European audiovisual works and that the choice of distributors and broadcasters for small countries is determined by the language choices made by the lead countries.

The study also makes two recommendations in the area of multilingualism. Synergies and convergence between European research programs and developments in the digital sector should be promoted. Research into potential co-relations between

subtitling and the development of multilingualism (further research into the field of teaching and training, best practice) should be carried out.

More information is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/media/overview/evaluation/studies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/overview/evaluation/studies/index_en.htm).

#### **4. EXTERNAL REPORTS**

##### **4.1. Report of the High Level Group on Multilingualism**

The High Level Group on Multilingualism (HLGM) was an external group set up in September 2006 to bring about an exchange of ideas, experience and good practice, to develop ideas relevant to policies and practices on multilingualism across the European Union and to make recommendations to the Commission on action in this area. Its creation was announced in the Commission communication *A new framework strategy for multilingualism* in November 2005. The Group was given the general remit of providing support and advice on developing initiatives, together with fresh impetus for and ideas on a comprehensive approach to multilingualism in the European Union.

The HLGM's final report, presented to the Commission on 26 September 2007, presents various aspects of multilingualism such as strategies to promote language learning: raising awareness and enhancing motivation, languages and the media, languages for business, interpretation and translation, new trends and needs, regional or minority languages, and research into multilingualism. It recommends launching information campaigns among *inter alia* young people, parents and organisations related to education and culture in order to raise awareness of language learning. It also advises including languages in extra-curricular activities for young students and in leisure activities, as well as providing 'edutainment' (combining education and entertainment) on television. These elements can increase motivation. The report mentions too that it is necessary to use the potential of immigrants as a source of language knowledge and as a good opportunity for companies to profit from their cultural and linguistic abilities in order to gain access to markets in immigrants' countries of origin. Moreover, it recommends improvement of training in important non-EU languages in order to increase competitiveness. Finally, it highlights the importance of developing Master's qualifications in translation and interpretation, and higher education programmes in the field of legal, court and community translation and interpretation.

The report is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/multishort\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/multishort_en.pdf).

##### **4.2. Report of the 'Group of Intellectuals'**

The objective of the Group of Intellectuals, set up by the European Commission to mark the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, was to make recommendations on the role that multilingualism could play in intercultural dialogue and mutual comprehension among citizens of the European Union.

The report highlights the importance for the European Union of preserving its linguistic heritage. It puts forward two central ideas. Firstly, the EU should promote the idea of a ‘personal adoptive language’, to be seen as a ‘second mother tongue’, with every European citizen being motivated to learn one. It would need to be part and parcel of everyone’s education and professional life, linked to aspects involving history, culture and literature. This adopted language would not be the one normally used for international communication. It should thus overcome any perceived rivalry between English and other languages. Secondly, bilateral relations between the EU countries should hinge on the languages of the two countries involved rather than on a third language. Each country should have enough speakers of the other’s language(s).

The group, composed of 10 personalities with a multicultural and/or literary background, chaired by the Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf, also makes some interesting recommendations. Those Europeans whose mother tongue occupies a dominant position in the world should learn a personal adoptive language in order to avoid remaining isolated in monolingualism. Immigrants’ personal adoptive language would normally be the language of the country in which they have chosen to live. However, non-EU immigrants’ own languages should also be included among the languages which EU citizens would be invited to learn. To ensure that this linguistic diversity is maintained, countries should set up an organisation which promotes knowledge of each other’s languages and culture.

The Group’s findings fuelled the discussion at the first-ever Ministerial Conference on multilingualism, held on 15 February, and represent a valuable contribution to the Commission’s work on multilingualism policy.

The report is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages_en.html)

#### **4.3. Report of the Business Forum**

An important factor in examining the contribution of multilingualism to growth and jobs was the setting up in 2007 of an advisory group with distinguished representatives from large and small companies around Europe, chaired by Viscount Etienne Davignon, well-known businessman and former politician. The group was called the European Business Forum for Multilingualism and its aim was to identify how companies can make operational use of language management when seeking to maximise their economic performance. The Business Forum also focused on employability and worker mobility, and on raising awareness of the benefits of multilingualism. The Forum produced a set of recommendations for the European Commission’s policies in this field.

Its report concluded that there is indeed a strong case for multilingualism in European companies, regardless of size and line of business. Europe is not using its multilingual resources optimally and the Business Forum would like to see this change urgently. Otherwise, according to its report, *‘Europe is running the risk of losing the war of competences, as emerging economies mainly in Asia and Latin America rapidly acquire language skills and other skills necessary for competing successfully on tomorrow’s markets.’* Even nationally operating SMEs increasingly

have to address integration issues as a result of international mobility leading to a more and more multilingual and multicultural workforce. However, most companies are looking at global markets and not only their sales but also their supply chains across borders.

The report sees multilingualism as *'a hidden resource which needs to be unlocked'*. It wants to do away with the complacency concerning English as the only necessary language for international business. According to the Business Forum, it is time to classify English as a basic skill and look at other languages with the aim of acquiring a competitive edge. Many companies feel the need to strengthen their language resources in the main European languages like German and French and in Russian. Large companies, especially, are increasingly looking for new opportunities outside Europe and thus needing Spanish and Portuguese for Latin America, for example, or Mandarin for China. A differentiated approach is recommended. While recruiting native speakers bringing proficiency in the languages of the main business partners can be a very good solution for certain tasks, it can be just as useful to acquire basic language skills, including cultural skills, for the purpose of building long-lasting and profitable relationships.

*'The challenge is to integrate multilingualism firmly in all strategies aiming at developing human capital for the future.'* That is one of the key statements in the report. Large companies mainly need to reorient their strategies for recruitment and development of human resources, taking language skills into account to a much larger extent than today.

However, SMEs will need support and assistance to become more multilingual. The Business Forum emphasises the crucial role of networks and strategic partnerships in this context and urges trade organisations and chambers of commerce to take more action.

Among the practical recommendations from the Business Forum are the following.

Companies can create a language-friendly multilingual environment in the workplace by acknowledging and cherishing all the language skills possessed by members of staff and by looking at new and creative ways of using them. They can open up more exchanges with business partners or recruit trainees and temporary staff speaking different languages. They should look closely at European and regional funding possibilities for mobility programmes, language training and other means to enhance companies' language resources. The business sector would benefit from close cooperation with local universities and business schools. Companies need to be specific about languages as part of the skills needed for future employment.

It is worth while investigating the availability of Internet-based tools to help with machine translation for information purposes, for instance when browsing public procurement sites in different countries. Technology can help companies improve their language skills in many ways. It is possible to find flexible and time saving Internet courses that are adapted to individual companies' needs, resources and constraints. When it comes to external communication, companies need to develop proficiency in translating and localising messages for target audiences in different countries. Especially for small companies, good multilingual communication via Internet can make the difference between success and failure.

The report of the Business Forum can be downloaded from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages_en.html)

## 5. RESULTS OF THE ONLINE CONSULTATION

### Context

Greater mobility within the Union's borders, migration from third countries and globalisation have all brought an increasing number of languages into the everyday lives of citizens and companies. The European Commission is committed to promoting language learning and linguistic diversity, in accordance with the European Union's founding principles. Between 14 September and 15 November 2007, it carried out a public consultation to solicit citizens' views and expectations in relation to language policy. The findings of this survey, which forms part of a broad consultation process, have served as a basis for the new Commission Communication which this document accompanies.

### Methodology

The questionnaire covered six different areas, all closely linked to the ways and the extent to which languages are used and promoted within the EU, from learning provision, through social, cultural and economic aspects, to the functioning of the EU institutions. The sixteen questions either called for comments or offered multiple choice answers. Some were a mixture of both.

This document presents the main findings of the consultation. While it was possible to compile statistics for all the closed questions, the responses to the open questions were analysed at length and clustered around recurrent themes to establish trends and correlations. These free comments also offered an insight into the reasons behind respondents' choice of the various options.

### Participation

The consultation was open to all interested parties, inside or outside the Union. The number of finalised responses received came to 2 419, in all official languages of the EU.

The survey was publicised by means of notices on various web pages of the Europa site, references in the press and in public speeches, and direct publicity sent to a large number of individuals, organisations and networks that had formerly expressed their interest in European policies. As no information was gathered on how the participants learnt about the consultation, it is difficult to estimate the proportion of respondents who were either 'spontaneous' visitors to the Europa site or readers of the European press compared with the proportion of those who had been contacted directly. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that contributions came from individuals and organisations interested in European policies in general and in the place and roles attributed to languages in the EU in particular. Despite the relatively high number of participants, the outcomes of this consultation should therefore by no means be interpreted as those of a public opinion poll, but rather as the views of

citizens who have opted to enter into a dialogue with the European Commission about the way they would like to see the European Union in the future.

### An outstanding response rate

The 2 419 finalised contributions to the survey on multilingualism represent an outstanding participation rate for public consultations on European policies, which on average receive between 200 and 500 responses.

Another striking feature of the participation is the prevalence of individual respondents over people responding on behalf of their organisations. There is not one EU, EFTA or candidate country missing from the broad range of countries represented by the respondents; moreover, a significant number of contributions were received from other continents.

The consultation was available in 22 official EU languages, but altogether the participants represented 57 mother tongues, including numerous regional and minority languages and some spoken in countries outside the EU.

This high rate of participation, across such a vast geographical area and mainly by private individuals, clearly shows that the way languages are taught, treated and spoken in Europe is an issue particularly close to people's hearts.

Moreover, the significant proportion of respondents whose mother tongue is not one of the EU official languages provides evidence that multilingualism in the Europe of today is a reality whose complexity goes far beyond the management of 23 operational languages. It sets out a context calling for answers at levels other than the merely functional one, covering a much wider spectrum of languages than those enjoying official status.

### In a nutshell: what do respondents to the consultation think about languages?

More than 96% of the respondents agree that the linguistic diversity of the EU calls for special attention from European politicians and that language skills are important for both their everyday and their professional life.

According to respondents, the most important factors for successful language learning are an early start and direct experience of the country of the target language.

Most people think that the linguistic diversity of the EU is an asset to be safeguarded and wish to see it placed in a context going beyond economic and functional aspects, which recognises the identities and cultures represented in languages.

Advocates of the cause of regional and minority languages think more respect could be shown to these languages especially in education and public services and would like to see the EU adopting a more protective role in this respect.

Most respondents would like to see the media promoting an intercultural society model, valuing linguistic and cultural identity, and focusing on tolerance, not confrontation.

The vast majority of respondents share the view that it is easier to do business abroad if you know the local language and that, therefore, companies have an interest in investing in the development of the language skills of their staff.

The majority share the view that migrants should preserve their language of origin and treat their linguistic and cultural identity as a necessary basis for integrating into a linguistic and cultural community different from their own.

Most people find that the costs related to working in 23 official languages are justified or should even be increased.

More information is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/consult/report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/consult/report_en.pdf).

## ANNEX

### 1.1. FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2005 COMMUNICATION ON MULTILINGUALISM

Nr.	Action	State	Output	Who
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#### I. A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY: language learning and research

1.	Implement, in cooperation with Member States, the European Indicator of Language Competence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	COM(2007) 184 final, COM(2005) 596 final	EC
2.	Promote discussion and produce a recommendation on ways of bringing language teacher education up-to-date		See section 3.5 of this document. Mainstreamed in work on quality of teacher education: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#training">http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#training</a>	EC
3.	Publish a study on best practice in early language learning in 2006	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm</a>	EC
4.	Provide support through the LLP for studies on the state of multilingualism in higher education and the creation of chairs in fields of study related to multilingualism and interculturalism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html</a>	EC
5.	Continue to support the teaching and learning of languages through cooperation programmes in the field of education, training, youth, citizenship and culture		<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc411_fr.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc411_fr.htm</a> <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc247_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc247_en.htm</a> <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/valor/index_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/valor/index_en.html</a>	EC

6.	Investigate ways of supporting language diversity networks through the LLP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Minority languages were given priority. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html</a>	EC
7.	Reinforce research and technological development activities on language-related IT, with a specific focus on new technologies for machine translation, and study the ways in which the EU could encourage further cooperation in new translation and interpretation technologies		See section 2.6 of this document. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2070/5927">http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2070/5927</a>	EC
A.	Establish national plans to give structure, coherence and direction to actions to promote multilingualism, including increasing the use and presence of a variety of languages in daily life		In 2007, an independent consultant to the Commission, Professor Jean-Claude Beacco (New Sorbonne University, Paris), carried out an analysis of the national reports and additional information provided by the Working Group on Languages. His report outlines the main trends in language teaching in Europe and highlights good practice, some of which was included in the Commission Report.  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html</a>	MS
B.	Review current arrangements for foreign language teacher training in the light of the findings of the study 'European Profile for Language Teacher Education'		See the Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 'Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity'. COM(2007) 554 final/2 and related national reports.  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html</a>	MS
C.	Review current arrangements for early language learning in the light of best practice from across Europe		See the Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 'Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity'. COM(2007) 554 final/2 and related national reports  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html</a>	MS

D.	Implement the Conclusions of the Luxembourg Presidency concerning Content and Language Integrated Learning, including raising awareness of the benefits of this approach, exchanging information and scientific evidence on good CLIL practice and specific CLIL training for teachers		See the Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 'Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity'. COM(2007) 554 final/2 and related national reports  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html</a>	MS
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## II. MULTILINGUAL ECONOMY

8.	Publish a study on the impact on the European economy of shortages of language skills in 2006	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm</a>	EC
9.	Publish on the web an inventory of the language certification systems available in the EU in 2006	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/doc126_en.htm</a>	EC
10.	Lunch a study on the potential for greater use of sub-titles in film and television programmes to promote language learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/overview/evaluation/studies/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/overview/evaluation/studies/index_en.htm</a>	EC
11.	Publish the inter-institutional, multilingual database IATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://iate.europa.eu">http://iate.europa.eu</a> <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2294/16#what">http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2294/16#what</a>	EC
12.	Organise a conference on translator training in universities, in 2006	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/universities/master_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/universities/master_en.htm</a>	EC

13.	Launch under <i>i2010</i> a flagship initiative on digital libraries making multimedia sources easier and more interesting to use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/index_en.htm</a>	EC
14.	Bring together and coordinate the work of European research teams in the fields of human language technologies, machine translation, and the creation of language resources such as dictionaries and thesauri, and set technical challenges specific to the European context (such as the focus on the quality of multilingual applications and machine translation systems)		See section 2.6 of this document.  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2070/5927">http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2070/5927</a>	EC
E.	Review training programmes at universities to ensure that they equip students in the language professions with the right skills for rapidly changing working conditions		See the Report on the implementation of the Action Plan ‘Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity’. COM(2007) 554 final/2 and related national reports  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/policy/report_en.html</a>	MS

### III. MULTILINGUALISM IN THE COMMISSION’S RELATIONS WITH CITIZENS

15.	Ensure, through an internal network, that all EC departments apply the multilingualism policy in a coherent way		The status of multilingualism has risen and the internal network has been transformed into an Interservice Group on Multilingualism.	EC
16.	Continue to foster multilingualism on the Europa portal and in EU publications. All the Publications Office websites, EUR-Lex, EU-Bookshop and TED (Tenders Electronic Daily where procurement notices are published), are fully		<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/publications/">http://ec.europa.eu/publications/</a>  <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/index_fr.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/index_fr.htm</a>	EC

	multilingual.			
17.	Launch a languages portal on Europa providing information about multilingualism in the EU and accommodating new portals dedicated to language learners and language teachers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://europa.eu/languages/en/home">http://europa.eu/languages/en/home</a> <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/index_en.htm</a>	EC
18.	Give a greater role to translation field offices in the Member States in promoting multilingualism, particularly by customising EC messages for local target audiences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/field_offices/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/field_offices/index_en.htm</a>	EC
19.	Organise high-level seminars on multilingualism in the Member States, targeted at journalists and other opinion multipliers		<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/bookshelf/brochure_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/bookshelf/brochure_en.pdf</a>	EC
20.	Continue to offer universities grants and teaching assistance in the field of conference interpreting, help develop distance learning tools and fund student grants and training visits		<a href="http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6333/aiuto-alle-universita">http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6333/aiuto-alle-universita</a> <a href="http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6344/bourse-d-etudes">http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6344/bourse-d-etudes</a>	EC
21.	Continue to develop cost-effective multilingual conferencing and communication tools under the Commission's project on the inter-operable delivery of pan-European e-government services to public administrations, businesses and citizens		<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/chapter/3">http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/chapter/3</a>	EC
22.	Support the European Master's in Conference Interpreting and the European Master's in Conference Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_5374/international-cooperation">http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_5374/international-cooperation</a> <a href="http://www.emcinterpreting.org/">http://www.emcinterpreting.org/</a>	EC

23.	Continue to play a full part in the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publication, a body which discusses new job and skills requirements		<a href="http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6354/dg-interpretation-and-iamladp-ndash-the-international-annual-meeting-on-language-arrangements-documentation-and-publications?qs=id%3Dc_5666">http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6354/dg-interpretation-and-iamladp-ndash-the-international-annual-meeting-on-language-arrangements-documentation-and-publications?qs=id%3Dc_5666</a>	EC
24.	Continue to provide universities with a model curriculum of a Master's degree in translation and supply visiting translators to help train students in translation		<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/universities/master_curriculum_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/external_relations/universities/master_curriculum_en.pdf</a>	EC
25.	Organise an international translation competition between schools in Member States, to promote language knowledge and the language professions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Translation School Contest <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/translation/contest/2007/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/translation/contest/2007/index_en.htm</a>	EC

#### IV. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

26.	Set up a High Level Group on Multilingualism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/multireport_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/multireport_en.pdf</a>	EC
27.	Organise a Ministerial Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15 February 2008	EC
28.	Present a further communication proposing a comprehensive approach to multilingualism in the EU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17 September 2008	EC