



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Education and Culture

Lifelong Learning: Education and Training policies

**Multilingualism policy**

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## Follow-up of the Action Plan on language learning and linguistic diversity National Report Template

Country: **England**

### INTRODUCTION

The Action Plan for language learning and linguistic diversity invited Member States to take actions on various issues. This document lists these points for action. It follows the same order as the chapters of the Action Plan: *1.Lifelong language learning; 2.Better language teaching; 3.Building a language-friendly environment*. Chapter four invites you to outline the global national strategy on languages and, if Member States so wish, to provide information on other language initiatives which do not fit into the framework of the Action Plan and/or plans for multilingualism.

Some actions recommended by the more recent Communication on Multilingualism are also included in the relevant chapters. They are shadowed in grey and are optional. Although the time allowed for these actions is shorter, Member States have the possibility to report on their initial work on them.

The national report should be written by filling in this template. Each point is followed by some key questions which guide Member States in presenting their work in progress. It is not compulsory to answer each point. If some of them were not a priority at national level it should be mentioned and the point(s) skipped.

Once completed, the national report should be posted on CIRCA: [http://forum.europa.eu.int/Members/irc/eac/languages/library?l=/actionsplans20042006/follow-up\\_national&vm=detailed&sb=Title](http://forum.europa.eu.int/Members/irc/eac/languages/library?l=/actionsplans20042006/follow-up_national&vm=detailed&sb=Title)

For more information, please post a message on the CIRCA language newsgroup ([http://forum.europa.eu.int/Members/irc/eac/languages/newsgroups?n=europa.eac.languages.bulletin\\_board](http://forum.europa.eu.int/Members/irc/eac/languages/newsgroups?n=europa.eac.languages.bulletin_board)) or contact Patrizia Baralli or Luca Tomasi (see contact details at the end of the document).

### 1. LIFE-LONG LANGUAGE LEARNING

#### 1.1. 'Mother tongue plus two other languages': making an early start

*It is a priority for Member States to ensure that language learning in kindergarten and primary school is effective, for it is here that key attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language learning are laid. The European Council in Barcelona called for "further action ... to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age.*

*In implementing this commitment, most Member States will be called upon to make significant additional investments. In implementing their commitment to teach at least two foreign languages from a very early*

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*age, Member States should consider whether adjustments are necessary to primary school curricula, and whether provision for the training and deployment of additional specialist teaching staff and other teaching and learning resources in primary and pre-primary schools is adequate.*

*Member States are invited to review their current arrangements for early language learning in the light of best practice from across Europe; and*

*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.*

a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

**The cornerstone of our National Languages Strategy is, that by 2010, every pupil throughout Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11) will have the opportunity to study foreign languages. Latest research indicates that 56% of all primary schools are either delivering, or planning to deliver, this non-statutory entitlement. CILT, the National Centre for Languages – a key delivery agent– has trained a national group of trainers to provide training to teachers on aspects of primary language learning.**

**In the financial years 2005-08, the Government will have invested £60 millions to support the introduction of primary language learning programmes, including initial teacher training, and in-service training for teachers and non-teaching staff to deliver those programmes.**

**We have also launched a national recognition scheme – the Languages Ladder – as an alternative qualification route, complementing existing routes. The scheme is designed to endorse achievement in language skills at all levels of competence for all ages in a wide range of languages. It can be used to endorse individual skill competence, newly acquired languages skills and existing mother tongue skills.**

b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

**An initial obstacle to the implementation of the Government's primary language learning commitment was the lack of experienced teaching and non-teaching staff at primary school level. We have invested in the training of new primary teachers with a language specialism, and provided upskilling opportunities for existing primary teachers and non-teaching staff.**

**To support primary pedagogy, the Government has also published a Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, which provides a planning and reference tool for those leading programmes, and has commissioned the revision of the Key Stage 2 Schemes of Work.**

c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

**Local Authorities have been specifically funded by the Government to enable them to work towards meeting the Government's end of decade commitment. DfES are working closely with those authorities which are not as advanced in their planning as others in order to improve on their progress and support them. Specific funding to train new primary teachers with a language specialism will continue for the foreseeable future, enabling workforce capacity to build to a level whereby it is sustainable and will ensure that language learning has a permanent place in the primary curriculum, whether that be as a subject in its own right or taught as part of cross curricular activity in a CLIL type fashion.**

*In secondary education or training young people complete the acquisition of the essential core of skills that will serve them throughout a lifetime of language learning. Member States agree that pupils should master at least two foreign languages, with the emphasis on effective communicative ability: active skills rather than passive knowledge. 'Native speaker' fluency is not the objective, but appropriate levels of skill in reading, listening, writing and speaking in two foreign languages are required, together with intercultural competencies and the ability to learn languages whether with a teacher or alone.*

*Member States should provide adequate information to parents about the choice of their child's first foreign language, and the flexibility of school curricula to permit the teaching of a wider range of languages.*

a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

Language learning continues to be a compulsory element of the Key Stage 3 curriculum (ages 11-14). Schools must first offer one or more of the official working languages of the European Union. Once that offer has been made, schools may offer any other modern foreign language.

Building on the positive impact of the Key Stage 3 Framework of Objectives and Guidance for Modern Foreign Languages in 2003, and to further raise standards at this important key stage, the Government is funding a national training programme for teachers which will begin in January 2007. The programme will incorporate a blended learning model of professional development combining e-learning and face-to-face training.

Following the changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum (ages 14-16) from September 2004, languages ceased to be a compulsory subject and instead became a statutory entitlement. In essence this means that schools must provide access for all students at Key Stage 4 to a minimum of one course in a modern foreign language that leads to a qualification approved under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Since January 2006 the Government's expectation of take-up has been expressed in terms of "benchmarks" for each school, with between 50% and 90% of pupils expected to continue with a language in Key Stage 4.

The newly-introduced national recognition scheme – the languages ladder – provides an alternative and more flexible accreditation route to traditional GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education – the national examination usually taken at age 16), and allows students to have individual language skills recognised at a time and a pace best suited to them. The external qualification, Asset Languages – offered by a leading UK awarding body – which recognises achievement using the national recognition scheme, counts towards a school's achievement and attainment tables.

The intention behind the introduction of the "entitlement" curriculum was increased flexibility and in particular the introduction of vocational options for language learners. Since then local pilot schemes have been funded and it is intended to include a language option in the new specialised (vocational) diplomas

b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

Even prior to the changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum, there had been a noticeable decline in those being entered for languages at GCSE level. To remind schools of their statutory obligation, whilst still recognising the flexibility that the changes offered schools, the Government wrote to all secondary schools last January informing them that from September 2006 they would be expected to ensure that between 50-90% of their Key Stage 4 cohort would be studying a language leading to a recognised qualification. Changes have been made to the Self Evaluation Form, so that Ofsted (the department responsible for school inspection) can monitor a school's progress in meeting this expectation.

c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

In addition to the introduction of the benchmarking expectation, the Department for Education and Skills has supported a range of initiatives in relation to –

- Advocacy for languages – materials and resources, meetings and publicity making the case to young people, Head Teachers and parents
- Curricular developments - CLIL projects, linkage to other areas of the curriculum such as Sport, vocational options, intensive language courses
- Assessment – in particular the introduction of the Languages Ladder/ Asset Languages schemes which allows for the rewarding of partial competence in a wide range of languages. By July 2006 10000 learners had taken an Asset qualification

## 1.2. Language learning in Higher Education

*“Higher Education institutions play a key role in promoting societal and individual multilingualism. Proposals that each university implement a coherent language policy clarifying its role in promoting*

*language learning and linguistic diversity, both amongst its learning community and in the wider locality, are to be welcomed. All students should study abroad, preferably in a foreign language, for at least one term, and should gain an accepted language qualification as part of their degree course”*

*Member States are invited to review training programmes at universities to ensure that they equip students in the language professions with the right skills for rapidly changing working conditions.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

**Work has been taken forward to promote the take up of languages in HE either as part of degree course or as an extra-curricular+ activity. There is some evidence (AULC survey, LSE 2006) that demand for language study outside of a degree course is growing, and students recognise the need within a global economy to have language skills, and awareness of other cultures.**

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

**Higher Education Institutions in the UK are independent, autonomous bodies, and for reasons of academic freedom, Ministers are unable to set conditions on what their curricula includes. They are therefore free to determine what courses they run, and how to teach and examine them. The demand from students for language degrees has fallen and some universities have had to close language departments as a result, and merge them with other faculties. Students (other than specialist linguists) are also reluctant to study abroad even for a short time, due to lack of linguistic skills, and financial constraints.**

- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

**The Government recognised the strategic importance of certain subjects for which demand was falling, and asked the HEFCE for advice on this issue. Their report identified five areas which were of strategic importance, but due to falling demand, were vulnerable to closures which could leave some regions without provision in these subjects. Foreign languages and area studies were one of the subjects classified as both strategic and vulnerable.**

**A working group, the Higher Education Implementation Group, was set up to take forward the recommendations in the report on modern languages by Hilary Footitt “National Languages Strategy for HE”. Since Autumn 2005, the group has held a languages leaders event, worked with Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), CILT, and others to provide an agreed data-set to track trends in languages take up, and most recently a sub-group successfully developed a bid for funding of a range of language related projects from the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund, with £4.5 million now available for these projects over the next 4 years. In addition, HEFCE in partnership with the AHRC and ESRC invited bids from institutions and consortia for funding to support centres of excellence. The overall aim of this new initiative is to create a world class cadre of researchers who can enhance the UK's understanding of the Arab world, China and Japan, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Successful bids were announced in June 2006, with the launch of five new collaborative centres as part of the £25 million Language Based Area Studies initiative.**

### **1.3. Adult language learning**

*Every adult should be encouraged to carry on learning foreign languages, and facilities should be made readily available to make this possible. Workers should have the opportunity to improve the language skills relevant to their working life. Cultural activities involving foreign music, literature or films, holidays abroad, town-twinning activities, voluntary service abroad can be promoted as opportunities for learning about other cultures and languages”*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

**One of the aims of the Government’s National Languages Strategy was to increase the numbers studying languages in Further Education, stimulating demand for language learning and encouraging employers to play their part in supporting language learning. In England, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has responsibility for implementing these elements of the Strategy, and has developed a ‘vision’ in support of that implementation:**

- To ensure that the business need for language skills is reflected in available provision;
- To identify how languages can inform and enhance the range of provision which aligns with or has the potential to contribute to delivery of LSC priorities and targets;
- To ensure that high quality language provision is planned and integrated across the broader delivery framework including personal and community development learning (PDCL);
- To encourage innovative approaches to delivery of language provision; and
- To support progression and learner achievement through the planning process and regional and local funding.

The statements above have been translated into action. In particular:

- Between the academic years 2002/03 and 2004/05 the numbers of learners studying foreign languages in Further Education institutions, funded by the LSC, has increased from 185,000 to 255,000;
- For learners aged 16-18, the numbers were up from 30,000 to 36,000; for those aged 19+, the numbers were up from 155,000 to 218,000; and
- In the academic year 2004/05, two-thirds of the language courses were classified as 'other FE provision'; one third of the courses led to qualifications recognised by the national Qualifications Framework.

b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

Several factors have affected the numbers studying languages in Further Education including:

- The reprioritisation of public funding for adult learning;
- Increases in tuition fees and removal of discretionary fee remission, with some learners being asked to pay fees for the first time;
- Difficulties by colleges in their attempt to shift language courses from LSC funding to funding by learners themselves or employers;
- The change to the status of languages at Key Stage 4 has had some impact on the demand for post-16 courses; and
- The LSC have evidence that small class sizes and poor retention and achievement rates have led to reductions in the number of evening classes for languages.

c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

In the academic year 2006/07, it is planned to pilot a 'virtual' skills academy for foreign languages, based in the West Midlands, to facilitate bespoke language training for 14-65 year olds and provide a link between education and employers.

### 1.5 Language learners with special needs

*Language learning is for everybody. Only a very small minority of people has physical, mental or other characteristics that make language learning impossible. Provision for learners with special needs of one kind or another is increasingly being made within mainstream schools and training institutions; however, such learners are still excluded from language lessons in some cases. Good practice in teaching languages to learners with special needs can be further developed and new methods and approaches need to be developed for the teaching of foreign languages to such learners*

a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

Language learning policy at all stages ensure that effective learning opportunities are provided for all pupils, e.g. the National Curriculum at key Stage 3 sets out 3 principles for inclusion, which include: setting suitable learning challenges; responding to pupils' diverse learning needs; and, overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils (which includes specific guidance for pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, and those who are learning English as an additional language).

HE providers receive extra funding to support all learners with special needs who can benefit from higher education. This enables them to provide suitable materials, one-to-one coaching, and advice and guidance.

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

#### **1.4. Range of languages**

*Promoting linguistic diversity means actively encouraging the teaching and learning of the widest possible range of languages in our schools, universities, adult education centres and enterprises. Taken as a whole, the range on offer should include the smaller European languages as well as all the larger ones, regional, minority and migrant languages as well as those with 'national' status, and the languages of our major trading partners throughout the world. The imminent enlargement of the European Union will bring with it a wealth of languages from several language families; it requires a special effort to ensure that the languages of the new Member States become more widely learned in other countries. Member States have considerable scope to take a lead in promoting the teaching and learning of a wider range of languages than at present.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

**Primary schools are able to offer language learning programmes for any language for which they have access to teaching expertise.**

**At Key Stage 3, the National Curriculum stipulates that schools must first offer courses in a working language of the European Union. In addition to this they may offer any other language courses that lead to an approved qualification. This is the same for language learning at Key Stage 4.**

**Educational institutions only tend to offer courses for which there is a recognised qualification.**

**The introduction of the national recognition scheme – the Languages Ladder – and the external Asset Languages qualification, has added to the number of qualification routes.**

**HE institutions already offer a wide range of language courses. It is a matter for them to decide what to offer in the light of local/regional need and demand from students and employers.**

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

**The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority consider all requests for additional qualifications.**

## **2. BETTER LANGUAGE TEACHING**

### **2.1. The language-friendly school**

*It is important that schools and training institutions adopt a holistic approach to the teaching of language, which makes appropriate connections between the teaching of 'mother tongue', 'foreign' languages, the language of instruction, and the languages of migrant communities; such policies will help children to*

*develop the full range of their communicative abilities. In this context, multilingual comprehension approaches can be of particular value because they encourage learners to become aware of similarities between languages, which is the basis for developing receptive multilingualism.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

Two of the five learning objectives of the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, published in October 2005, are: 'knowledge about language' and 'language learning strategies'. The Framework recognises that when learning a new language, children reinforce and reinterpret knowledge and understanding gained in learning their first language(s). They develop insights into the nature of language and its social and cultural value. Building on their experience of interaction with and in the new language, they begin to increase their understanding of how language works. They compare the new language with English or another language and reflect on similarities and differences. In addition, the Framework recognises that an important aim of language learning at Key Stage 2 is to familiarise children with strategies which they can apply to the learning of a new language.

At Key Stage 3, the National Curriculum offers guidance on how schools should cater for the needs of those pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The guidance recognises that these pupils have diverse needs in terms of support necessary in English language learning. A teacher's planning should take account of such factors as the pupil's age, length of time in the country, previous educational experience and skills in other languages. Teachers should plan learning opportunities to help such pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subject areas.

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), a ring fenced grant is allocated to local authorities on a needs based formula to cover some of the additional costs needed to meet the specific need of bilingual learners, as well as those from minority ethnic groups at risk of underachieving. Some schools are able to use this to employ EAL specialist teachers and/or teaching assistants to provide on-site advice and specialist provision. Others may have access to additional teaching support provided by the local authority.

As part of the Department's Aiming High strategy, there is great focus on raising awareness amongst mainstream staff of the needs of EAL students. Our primary and secondary EAL programmes, developed through the National Strategy have been designed to equip mainstream staff with the skills to address EAL needs. A toolkit of resource materials from the primary programme was launched this year to support schools in this respect.

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

Although not an obstacle, one objective of the National Curriculum, which maintained schools have to follow, is to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. This is the basis for teaching the curriculum through the medium of English, thereby ensuring that pupils are able to read, write and speak English as appropriate to their age group and to pass the associated assessment tests in English.

- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

## 2.2. Language teacher training

*Language teachers have a crucial role to play in building a multilingual Europe. They, more than teachers of other subjects, are called upon to exemplify the European values of openness to others, tolerance of differences, and willingness to communicate. It is important that they have all had adequate experience of using the target language and understanding its associated culture. All teachers of a foreign language should have spent an extended period in a country where that language is spoken and have regular opportunities to update their training.*

*The skills and personal resources required to teach languages well are considerable. Initial training should equip language teachers with a basic 'toolkit' of practical skills and techniques, through training in the classroom; language teachers need the advice of trained mentors as well as regular opportunities to keep their language and teaching skills up to date, inter alia via e-learning and distance learning.*

*Language teachers may often feel isolated, unaware of developments elsewhere with the potential to improve their work; they may not have access to adequate professional support networks; it is therefore important to facilitate contacts and effective networks between them at a regional, national and European level.*

*In this field, Member States have a crucial role to play in ensuring that all teachers of a foreign language have:*

- *appropriate initial training including practical training in the pedagogy of foreign languages, and experience of living in a country whose language they teach, and*
- *regular paid access to in-service training.*

*Member States will recall that the Council Resolution of 14 February 2002 invited them to encourage future language teachers to take advantage of relevant European programmes to carry out part of their studies in a country or region of a country where the language which they will teach later is the official language.*

*Member States are invited to review their current arrangements for foreign language teacher training in the light of the findings of the study 'European Profile for Language Teacher Education';<sup>1</sup>*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
  - Primary MFL initial teacher training includes a 4 week placement abroad (at the moment in 5 countries: France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Portugal. In this and the next academic year we will fund a total of 1000 placements per year;**
  - Secondary PGCE follows degree course where a year abroad is standard practice;**
  - Many opportunities exist for primary and secondary teachers to maintain and refresh cultural and linguistic awareness, including EU-funded programmes, and those offered by the British Council, CILT – the national Centre for Languages and the Cultural Agencies.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
  - Some practising teachers find it difficult to take time off to take part in these initiatives, especially where they have family commitments, and due to the fact that languages is not the only subject they teach in school;**
  - Meeting the costs of supply cover is an issue for schools; and**
  - Teachers are put off by the bureaucratic hoops they have to go through to access EU funding.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
  - During the current financial year, we are piloting 2 programmes to encourage existing teachers to take advantage of Comenius funding, by subsidising supply cover by 50%. We will evaluate these pilots, with the British Council who manage the pilots, and decide whether such subsidy represents value for money and increases take up of such opportunities**

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<sup>1</sup> *European Profile for Language Teacher Education – A Frame of Reference*  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/doc/profile\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/doc/profile_en.pdf)

- We will continue to support primary initial teacher training placements with a languages specialism for the foreseeable future, and work with key partners, such as the British Council and CILT, the National Centre for Languages to explore professional development opportunities for existing language teachers at both primary and secondary level.
- We will continue to work with intermediaries, such as the British Council and CILT – the national Centre for languages. to make European programmes more accessible and regionally targeted

### 2.3. Supply of language teachers

*Some Member States face shortages of adequately-qualified language teachers; these may be general shortages or may relate to certain languages or certain types of education or training; these shortages need to be addressed and sustainable solutions found. More can be done to exchange teachers between Member States; such teachers may work as teachers of their mother tongue, teachers of another language or as teachers of another subject through their mother tongue. In linguistic border areas there is particular scope for initiatives targeting neighbouring languages in this field.*

*Member States have been recommended<sup>2</sup> to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the mobility of teachers and their progress needs to be monitored*

*In this field, Member States have a particular responsibility to remove any remaining administrative or legal barriers to the employment of teachers of a foreign language from other Member States.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

**For some time the Government has offered financial support for those trainees choosing languages as their specialism. From September 2006, primary MFL trainees will get a £6,000 bursary and be eligible for a £2,500 golden hello on completion of their first year of teaching; and secondary trainees will get a £9,000 bursary and £2,500 golden hello.**

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

**The Training and Development Agency for Schools has a remit to recruit teachers and conduct high profile marketing campaigns to attract graduates and people from other professions to choose teaching as their future profession**

See (a) above

### 2.4. Training teachers of other subjects

*Most pupils and trainees could study at least some of their curriculum through the medium of a foreign language. Many more members of the teaching profession should in future be able to teach their subject(s) through at least one foreign language; to this end, trainee teachers should study language(s) alongside their area of specialisation and undertake a part of their teaching studies abroad.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?

- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

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<sup>2</sup> by the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Mobility ... for Students, Persons Undergoing Training, Volunteers, Teachers and Trainers (2001/613/EC)

## 2.5. Testing language skills

*The Common Reference Scales of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Language<sup>3</sup> provide a good basis for schemes to describe individuals' language skills in an objective, practical, transparent and portable manner. Effective mechanisms are needed to regulate the use of these scales by examining bodies. Teachers and others involved in testing language skills need adequate training in the practical application of the Framework. European networks of relevant professionals could do much to help share good practice in this field.*

*The European Language Portfolio<sup>4</sup> can help people to value, and make the most of, all their language skills, howsoever acquired, and to carry on learning languages by themselves*

*In this respect, Member States were invited by the Council Resolution of 14 February 2002 to set up systems of validation of competence in language knowledge based on the Common European Framework of reference for languages developed by the Council of Europe, and to stimulate European cooperation in order to promote transparency of qualifications and quality assurance of language learning.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
  - Criterion referencing is a standard feature of assessment in England. This is reflected in the National Curriculum levels and in the National Language Standards which are calibrated against the National Qualification Frameworks and also relate to the Common European Framework (CEF). The Languages Ladder – the national recognition scheme - was specifically developed in relation to the CEF scales as was the European Language Portfolio for young learners and for adults.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
  - Understanding of, and access to, appropriate assessment and recording schemes**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
  - Further promotion of the Languages Ladder/Asset Languages qualifications and, through CILT – the National Centre of Languages, of the European Languages Portfolio**

## 3. BUILDING A LANGUAGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

### 3.1. An inclusive approach to linguistic diversity

*National and regional authorities are encouraged to give special attention to measures to assist those language communities whose number of native speakers is in decline from generation to generation, in line with the principles of the European Charter on Regional and Minority languages.*

*Member States are encouraged to give special attention to measures to assist language communities whose number of native speakers is in decline from generation to generation, in line with the principles of the European Charter on Regional and Minority languages.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural\\_Co-operation/education/Languages/Language\\_Policy/Common\\_Framework\\_of\\_Reference/default.asp](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/Languages/Language_Policy/Common_Framework_of_Reference/default.asp)

<sup>4</sup> [http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=\\$t/208-1-0-1/main\\_pages/welcome.html](http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=$t/208-1-0-1/main_pages/welcome.html)

### 3.2. Building language-friendly communities

*Every community in Europe can become more language-friendly by making better use of opportunities to hear and see other languages and cultures, thereby helping to improve language awareness and learning. It is in the interest of the Union to capitalise on the skills and experiences of its many bi- and tri-lingual citizens, and temporary residents such as Erasmus students; monolingual citizens have much to learn from them; public authorities can make better use of their skills in schools, adult education centres, cultural establishments and workplaces.*

*Tourism projects, cross-border projects and town twinning schemes can form the nuclei of local language learning schemes, enabling citizens to learn the language(s) of their neighbours or twin town(s), and offering an incentive to do so.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

### 3.3. Improving supply and take-up of language learning

*It is essential to improve the take-up of language learning opportunities by continuous activities to raise awareness of the benefits of language learning, and by bringing language resources closer to the people who need them. The Council of Europe's initiative the European Day of Languages<sup>5</sup> can be valuable in motivating people to learn foreign languages.*

*European Union initiatives such as the European Languages Label<sup>6</sup> also have a key role in this by highlighting local, regional, or national projects that have found creative ways to improve the quality of language teaching.*

*The provision of language learning facilities and courses is the responsibility of local, regional and national authorities. Both within and outside formal systems there is still considerable unmet demand not only for language lessons but also for information and advice on language learning.*

*Appropriate structures are required to motivate people of all ages to learn languages, to offer guidance about how to start, and to provide easy access to a variety of different language learning activities. This is likely to require some investment in new provision, though there is also much to gain by making better use of existing language learning resources and staff in schools and universities, libraries, local learning networks and adult education centres.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
  - CILT – the National Centre for Languages has responsibility within the UK for organising the European Day of Languages (EDL), an annual high level event, and distributes EDL materials for schools;**
  - CILT – the National Centre for Languages hosts a website which provides information on resources to support language learning programmes, developmental opportunities for language practitioners from all sectors;**
  - CILT – the national Centre for languages also has coordinating responsibility within the UK for European Award for languages (also known as the European label). To date over 100 UK projects have received Awards, and to date an element of the European Day of Languages has been devoted to present recipients with this highly-regarded award;**
  - The Association for Language Learning, the UK's major subject association for teachers of foreign languages offers a range of courses and professional development**

<sup>5</sup> 26 September each year; see [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural\\_Co\\_operation/education/Languages/Language\\_Policy/European\\_Day\\_of\\_Languages/default.asp](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co_operation/education/Languages/Language_Policy/European_Day_of_Languages/default.asp)

<sup>6</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/language/label/index.cfm>

opportunities. In addition, it hosts the annual ‘Languages World’ event, which is the UK’s major event for teachers and professionals from all sectors. It’s a 2 day programme of talks, workshops and plenary sessions, plus the largest exhibition of resources and equipment for language teaching and learning;

- At FE level, the national Teaching and Learning Change Programme was established to transform the quality of teaching and learning through a range of subject specific activities aimed at inspiring teachers, lecturers and instructors through a programme to offer innovative teaching resources and new approaches to selected subjects. Subjects selected were those where the Government had evidence of poor performance based on inspection reports and other research. The Modern Foreign Languages activities, due to be launched in October 2006, are part of Phase 3 of this programme and seek to offer support in 4 areas: inspirational teaching and learning; e-learning; initial assessment for MFL; and, transition from level 2 (CEF B1) to 3 (CEF B2). The resources can be adapted to any language and are sensitive to cultural values and beliefs. They have been extensively trialled with providers and the Government are confident that they will play a considerable role in developing the quality of provision in this subject area.
- HE providers already open their short courses, continuing professional development and extra curricula courses to adults in their local communities, and languages remain very popular. Some employers have encouraged the take up of languages by offering taster sessions as part of “Learning at work” day, and for the “European Day of Languages”.

b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

**Perception by some people that learning languages is a talent/gift and not for them. Also that “everyone speaks English, so why bother.” Some funding for adult learning of languages has been reduced, meaning people have to pay a higher proportion of the cost of language courses on offer.**

c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

**Government are promoting language learning at HE. Ministers are encouraging more students to study abroad for part of their HE course, and to learn a language to enable them to do so. Through the second phase of the Prime Minister’s Initiative, looking to encourage greater student mobility outside Europe, with students studying part of their course in China or India for example.**

*Member States are invited to describe how the Action Plan fitted into their national language policies*

- a) How has the follow-up of the Action Plan been coordinated at national level?
- b) Has it been included in national policy initiatives?
- c) Was there a coordination group / committee?

*Member States may provide information on other relevant national initiatives for languages which do not fit into the framework of the Action Plan*

- a) Were there any language initiatives and priorities which were either planned or carried out and which did not fit into the framework of the Action Plan?

*Member States are invited to 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<sup>7</sup>*

- a) What initial steps have been taken on this issue?
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

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<sup>7</sup> These plans should be based upon Integrated Guideline N° 23 and form part of the national plans that Member States are producing in the context of the Lisbon Action Plan for growth and jobs. ([http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/integrated\\_guidelines\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/integrated_guidelines_en.pdf))