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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2010
WORK PROGRAMME**

**WORKING GROUP
“LANGUAGES”**

**PROGRESS REPORT
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

This second progress report describes the activities undertaken and the results achieved in the period August 2003-November 2004 by the European Commission expert group on languages established in the context of the “Education and training 2010” work programme.

It follows the report published in the Autumn of 2003¹, which contributed, together with the reports of the other working groups, to the preparation of the Joint interim report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe².

“Improving foreign language learning” is one of the specific objectives of the Detailed work programme³ 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 and to increase the number and improve the quality of jobs available. In addition, language learning promotes mutual understanding and greater tolerance of other cultures.

The recent enlargement of the European Union and the European Commission Action Plan 2004-2006 for language learning and linguistic diversity have highlighted the importance of languages in a wider and more diversified area of continental development and progress, where the growing internal mobility and the ever more intense exchanges within the region and with the outside world have made foreign languages a key competence for every citizen.

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.”

¹ See http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#language.

² See "Education and Training 2010" - The success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms, http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/jir_council_final.pdf.

³ See http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/doc/official/keydoc/2002/progobj_en.pdf.

1.2. Organisation of activities

In spite of repeated cancellations of meetings due to scarcity of interpreters and meeting rooms, which seriously hampered the organisation of the group's activities, the rate of attendance at the five meetings organised in this second phase of work⁴ remained very satisfactory (83%).

The coordinators of Group A, "Education of teachers and trainers", and Group B, "Key Competences", were invited to take part in meetings of the languages working group, which was also systematically updated on the progress of the "Education and training 2010" work programme.

The working group continued to perform well, and the new members were rapidly integrated. Approximately one third of the participants in 2004 were new, having been recently designated (Poland, Slovakia) or being temporary or definitive replacements (Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany – Federal Government, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain). The gender balance remained good.

The participation of representatives of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe allowed the positive co-operation already established in the first phase of work to continue.

Several participating countries (Hungary, Norway, Slovenia, Lithuania, Cyprus and Slovakia) have recently asked for the Council of Europe's assistance in preparing country profiles, which will enable them to develop more consistent language policies, as recommended by the group in its first report.

The Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR)⁵ is also rapidly gaining acceptance all over the European Union, thus, hopefully, contributing to a convergence of curricular approaches and to more transparent evaluation and assessment systems, as suggested in another policy recommendation of the group.

The participation of representatives of the European Unit of Eurydice also proved useful, allowing the experts to benefit from Eurydice's experience in the collection of data in this field.

Most of the experts attended the conference on "Improving language education – Common concerns, sharing solutions" organised by the Dutch presidency in The Hague on 14-16 October 2004 along with other practitioners and policy makers. Three main themes were discussed:

- Reviewing national language education policies,

⁴ 12 September and 4-5 December 2003; 17-18 February, 21-22 June and 8 November 2004.

⁵ *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment*. For the complete text in several languages, see [http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=\\$t/208-1-0-1/documents_intro/common_framework.html](http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=$t/208-1-0-1/documents_intro/common_framework.html).

- Stimulating and maintaining the professionalism of language teachers and
- Assessing and certifying foreign language skills.

1.3. Problems in the implementation of policy recommendations

In this phase of the group's activity, centred on the implementation of their policy recommendations, some intrinsic limitations of the open method of co-ordination began to show.

The mandate of the working group – and as a consequence the profiles of designated experts – had ensured an accurate analysis of the current situation and of the possible solutions in the first year of activity, culminating in the formulation of policy recommendations.

Translating these recommendations into practice and monitoring the progress made in their implementation imply, however, a much more active involvement of policymakers, in a field where responsibilities are shared at national, regional and local level.

Several experts therefore suggested that more compelling ways should be found for disseminating the conclusions of the working group and promoting their implementation by national authorities, in particular taking into account the inevitably synthetic nature of the Joint interim report.

2. PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS THE OBJECTIVE OF “IMPROVING FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING”

As in the first phase of work, there was a continued effort to integrate the initiatives taken at European level and the exchange of experiences and examples of good practice from the participating countries around which the “Education and training 2010” process is organised.

2.1. The Action Plan for language learning and linguistic diversity

The Action plan on language learning and linguistic diversity was presented to the group in September 2003, in its first formal presentation, and the experts were regularly updated on its implementation, to ensure appropriate orientation and dissemination at national level. In particular, the experts were consulted about the possible content of studies commissioned from external specialists and invited to disseminate information about the calls for tender to possible interested parties.

In this second phase of activity, the group was involved in the preparation of the study on the development of a common European profile for language teacher education (finalised November 2004), the study on language learning for learners with special education needs (finalised December 2004), the feasibility study on the creation of a European agency for linguistic diversity and language learning (expected to be delivered in February 2005), the study on effective ways for promoting language learning⁶ (expected to be finished

⁶ See <http://www.eurointeractions.com>.

end August 2005) and the inventory of the European language certification systems.⁷

Most of these studies involve a collection of examples of good practice, which will complement the substantial database already established by the expert group.

The group was also informed about the development of other projects and activities, such as the European Network for the Promotion of the Language Learning among all Undergraduates – ENLU (see <http://www.fu-berlin.de/enlu/>), the external evaluation of the impact of the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes on their linguistic objectives and the congress organised by the recently established European Association for Language Testing and Assessment – EALTA on May 14-16 in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia (see <http://www.ealta.eu.org/>).

2.2. The implementation of the detailed work programme

2.2.1. Exchange of good practice

The collection of examples of good practice concerned in this period the use of information and communication technologies in language learning (7 examples), language learning in adult education (15 examples), in vocational training (11 examples) and for learners with special education needs (11 examples).

The examples collected on ICT and adult education, however, were not judged sufficient to formulate policy recommendations, while the field of special education needs was also covered by the study undertaken by David Marsh (University of Jyväskylä, Finland).

It was strongly recommended that the database of examples of good practice collected be put in a standard format and access to it opened to other users.

2.2.2. The European indicator of linguistic competence

The group was consulted on the development of the European indicator of linguistic competence. Experts emphasised the importance of ideally testing at least two foreign languages per learner, and of testing productive as well as receptive skills, to avoid giving the impression that only receptive skills, or skills in only one language are sufficient. The optimal age/ ISCED level for administering the tests continued to be the subject of debate. The importance of recording the exposure of testees to the languages tested outside formal education through an additional background questionnaire was also underlined.

⁷ See http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/key/studies_en.html.

2.2.3. *Other indicators*

In its first year of activity, the working group on languages considered three possible indicators in addition to the European indicator of linguistic competence. However, it was decided for the time being to concentrate on this indicator, which was explicitly requested by the Barcelona European Council in 2002.

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, includes 37 sets of data concerning the context, organisation, participation, teachers 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. Some salient data are as follows:

Eurydice’s key data 2005

- The teaching of one or more foreign languages is now compulsory in the primary schools of almost all countries covered by the survey, involving approximately 50% of primary school pupils.
- The curricula of the great majority of countries give all pupils the possibility to learn two or more foreign languages in the course of their compulsory education
- In addition, schools of many Member States can autonomously decide to offer more foreign languages as compulsory or optional subjects. In most countries, however, less than 50% of pupils of lower secondary education avail themselves of this possibility (with great variations between countries).
- In mainstream secondary education, between 10% and 15% of total teaching time is devoted to foreign languages as a compulsory subject in most countries
- Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) exists in most countries, but only a minority of pupils currently benefit from this promising methodology
- In spite of the wide choice of foreign languages theoretically on offer in some countries, only five languages (English, French, German, Spanish and Russian) account for 95% of the languages taught in the majority of countries in secondary education
- The dominant role of English as the most widely taught foreign language is further increasing, in particular in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe

- In thirteen countries the study of English is now compulsory, but even where it is not the percentage of pupils learning English is close to 90%
- German (especially in Northern and Central Europe) and French (mainly in Southern Europe) vie for second place
- Foreign languages are mainly taught by generalist teachers at primary level and by specialist teachers in secondary schools
- Only Luxembourg and Scotland explicitly recommend that a stay in a country where the language they study is spoken be included in the curriculum of future language teachers
- 8% of 15 year old pupils declare that they speak at home a language which is not the language of instruction used at school.
- Almost all countries have adopted measures of linguistic support for pupils coming from migrant families

2.3. Main developments in participating countries in the field of languages

Progress towards improved language learning was reported in most countries. In some cases this was achieved through a continuation of the efforts already in place; in others, new measures were introduced. Here is a non exhaustive summary of these developments.

In **Austria** a broad discussion on the European Action Plan on Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity was initiated. As a consequence of this, Austrian priority areas were defined and an Austrian Action plan was published and distributed all over Austria (ÖSZ, ed: Förderung des Sprachenlernens und der Sprachenvielfalt: Aktionsplan 2004 – 2006 der EK, Prioritäten und Umsetzung in Österreich, Graz 2004⁸).

In the context of this work a National Language Committee was established in December 2003 consisting of some 30 partner institutions (ministries, parents, employers, universities and other stakeholders) in order to focus on language policy questions and create synergies when implementing measures. In October 2004 a national conference was held to discuss the first ideas of the new generation of integrated European educational programmes (2007–2013), languages being one of the main themes.

In **Belgium (Dutch-speaking community)**, several developments supported improved language learning:

- A working group was established within the Ministry of Education to define all aspects of a global foreign language policy.

⁸ See http://www.sprachen.ac.at/download/fokus_1.pdf.

- A group was established within the Inspectorate to deal with the issue of continuity in foreign language teaching.
- In Dutch-medium primary schools outside Brussels and in the linguistic borders near Brussels, the teaching of French as a second language has been made compulsory from year 5 (age 10) onwards and this since the start of the school year 2004-2005.
- Since the school year 2004-2005 language awareness lessons and initiation into various languages can be offered from nursery school onwards in all Dutch-medium schools, provided that French as a second language be also part of that package of language awareness or initiation into languages.

Two conferences on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 programme have been organised in the **Czech Republic** in November 2003 and in November 2004.

The Action Plan was translated into Czech and disseminated to relevant people and institutions.

A European Language Portfolio for adults has been developed and was validated in 2004, in addition to the three ELPs already validated for children up to 11, pupils aged 11-15, and upper secondary school pupils.

The new Education Act of 24th September 2004 reformed the educational policy in the Czech Republic. The resulting Framework Educational Programme introduced two foreign languages in the nine-year compulsory education, one of which starting already at primary level. In lower secondary school it is strongly recommended to introduce another foreign language (i.e. a school should offer it as one of optional compulsory subjects). The aims and objectives of both foreign languages are defined in accord with the Common European Framework of Reference. There is a wide choice both for first and second foreign language (English, German, Italian, French, Spanish and Russian), but English must be one of the two.

There have been numerous activities aimed at promoting Czech language and teaching Czech to foreigners, the most significant one being the development of new specifications – Reference levels – closely developed along the levels of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Apart from the existing Threshold level (Czech as a foreign language) model, three **reference levels** (A1, A2 and B2) have been finalised at the end of 2004 and will be very soon submitted to the Council of Europe for approval.

The number of schools providing CLIL has increased to 18. Schools providing CLIL represent 32% of all six-year general secondary schools / *gymnázia*, but only 5,17% of all (i.e. four-, six- and eight-year) general secondary schools / *gymnázia*.

Estonia has developed a new strategy for languages, incorporating both Estonian and foreign languages, which will be implemented starting from the end of 2005.

A proposal to set up a language resource centre for teaching French was made by an expert group in **Finland**. A plan to promote teaching the second national language (Swedish or Finnish) was accepted at the Finnish National Board of Education. Both plans are now being considered in the ministry of Education for further action. The teaching of one foreign language and the second national language being already common practice, the third and fourth foreign language can be chosen at most schools.

In 2003 the Finnish Matriculation Examination Board set up a group of experts to plan new test types for the language exams based on the new core curriculum and the scales of the CEF, which will be put into use in 2005.

France and **Germany** have stepped up their cooperation in the field of foreign languages, setting the target of increasing by 50% the number of people learning German in France and French in Germany in ten years time. A number of common structural measures were decided by the German and French authorities in November 2004.

Awareness-raising activities will be launched in January 2005, and starting from the academic year 2005-2006 pupils will receive a jointly developed certification of language competences.

Linguistic stays of up to two months in the partner country will be offered to all students interested, while tenth and eleventh year students will be able to spend a year in a school of the partner country and have it validated on their return. ABIBAC (Abitur, or Allgemeine Hochschulreife, plus Baccalauréat), the common secondary school diploma recognised in both countries introduced by the agreement of May 1994, will be generalised by 2007-2008.⁹

The Action plan was the object of a dissemination effort at Länder level in **Germany**.

The diversity of languages taught in **Greece** was increased, with pilot projects for the introduction of German in selected primary schools and Italian in secondary schools.

The study of a second foreign language, which traditionally started at the beginning of the secondary education, has been brought forward to the end of primary school. A new system for the certification of foreign language competences for adults was introduced.

Within the framework of the World – Language programme, the Year of Intensive Language Learning was launched in **Hungary** in September 2004. Secondary schools can choose to insert an extra year into their teaching programme, almost entirely devoted to foreign languages (at least 11 lessons per week) and computer studies. Almost half of all Hungarian secondary schools opted to start such a class.

⁹ See <http://eduscol.education.fr/D0201/default.htm>.

Several conferences were organised to promote and improve foreign language learning and teaching. The “ICT in foreign language teaching” conference was organised in March 2004 and attended by 300 teachers. “Teaching foreign languages in lower primary” was organised in May 2004 and attended by 250 teachers.

Competitions also proved useful to promote language learning. 22 000 secondary school students took part in the World – Language foreign languages competition in the 2003/2004 school year. In 2004, the “Chatangoljunk” public speaking competition attracted more than 200 teams.

A professional conference was organised to inform the public about the Education and training 2010 work programme and the work done in the expert groups.

A review of the language policy of **Ireland** was launched in 2003.

A collection of examples of good practice, resulting from a study launched in 2002, was published in 2004 in **Italy**. Language Portfolios were developed for pupils in primary, lower and upper secondary education through pilot projects in several regions.

The study of a second Community language has been made compulsory for all pupils in secondary school (in addition to English which is compulsory from primary school), even if some problems persist concerning the hours available for language teaching.

A study assessing the language situation was launched in 2003 in **Lithuania**.

Preparations are ongoing for a conference on Content and language integrated learning, to be organised by the **Luxembourg** presidency on 10-11 March 2005.

In **Malta**, a national audit of the various subjects including languages was launched in 2003. For the moment it has concerned the two official languages, Maltese and English. The policy recommendations of the languages working group were discussed at length with Language Education Officers. A new language policy statement is being developed.

The Netherlands launched several projects in the field of languages: a) a study describing the national state of the art regarding modern languages and assessing its strengths and weaknesses (issued in May 2004); b) an international survey on the policy and practice of language testing (ready early 2005); c) an international study to develop a theoretical framework for linking test items to the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for languages (August 2004); and d) a Lingua 2 project to develop an item bank for testing linguistic competencies on the basis of the scales of the CEFR.

Norway will introduce new curricula for primary and secondary education in 2006. The Parliament approved the proposal to make two foreign languages compulsory for all pupils, with the second foreign language to be taught in a practical way. An Action Plan for the period 2005-2009 was adopted and a

permanent centre for the promotion of language learning will be set up in the Spring of 2005.

In **Poland** it was decided that all future teachers of non-linguistic subjects should have level B2 in a foreign language, in view of the possible adoption of content and language integrated learning methodologies.

Four conferences for policy makers, inspectors and university trainers were organised in **Romania** by the Ministry of Education and the Socrates National Agency on the strategic objectives of the Education and Training 2010 work programme. In this context, foreign languages workshops were organised to promote the implementation at national level of the Commission Action Plan 2004-2006 for language learning and linguistic diversity.

With the reorganisation of curricula (1999-2004) now completed, there is now an integrated programme for all foreign languages; modern Greek and Portuguese have been introduced and curricula for minority languages have been adapted in view of introducing CLIL. The study of a second foreign language is now compulsory for all pupils from third grade to age 16, including the lower cycle of the technologically oriented high school.

The promotion of the Romanian language version of the European Portfolio of Languages (validated by the Council of Europe) has offered several opportunities for dissemination activities with the participation of advisors, inspectors, people working in language centres and trainers, culminating in a national seminar organised in Bucharest in November 2004.

Increased attention is given to early language learning and bilingual education (Romanian plus English, German, French, Spanish and Italian).

A new “Education and Training 2010” Coordination Committee with 24 members was established **in Slovenia** in order to implement the key objectives set by the EU more effectively.

The preparation of the Country Profile, with the help of the Council of Europe, has enabled a general picture of the linguistic panorama and of the measures needed to improve foreign language learning to be developed.

Three seminars in the field of European Language Portfolio were organised by the Slovenian experts for the Slovenian teachers in Italy (region of Friomrska-Nabrezine, Trieste) using the Slovene validated portfolio for ages 11-15.

A round table in order to finalise the Education Policy Profile (with 5 foreign experts and the representative of the Council of Europe, Mr Joe Sheils) was held in Ljubljana on 30 November 2004. A follow-up workshop of the central workshop “Janua Linguarum” of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz was organised for 50 teachers in Slovenia.

The National Examination Centre published the book *Constructing School-leaving Examinations at a National Level - Meeting European Standards*¹⁰, by Charles Alderson and Karmen Pizorn, and the adaptation of the Gimnazija (Grammar School) programme “European classes, Curricular Framework for Innovative FLT” was launched.

In **Sweden** the ongoing revision of the syllabuses for upper secondary education includes the task to reflect on how foreign language learning (especially concerning languages other than English, which is mandatory for all) can be made a more attractive option to all students, including those in vocational training. Changes in the syllabuses should be made if considered necessary to achieve this.

A commission is preparing a study on the rights and possibilities to use sign language in society. The work includes interpretation to and from sign language as well as equal opportunities for the deaf and for people with impaired hearing.

The implementation of the National Strategy for Languages continues in the **United Kingdom** (England). Important strands in the Strategy include the development of the national recognition scheme (“Language Ladder”) for assessment, which is now being piloted, initiatives involving ICT, and the promotion of networking in the field of language education and training.

The scales and the descriptive scheme of the CEFR were used in the development of new curricula in **Malta, Finland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia**, of the joint certification to be released in the framework of the **Franco-German** co-operation and of new language teaching materials in **Greece**.

3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The experts discussed the implementation of their policy recommendations in the participating countries in three subgroups in the meeting of 17-18 February 2004. A questionnaire was also distributed in April to map the implementation of recommendations, the progress made, any obstacles identified and the possible solutions.

Here is a synthesis of the trends observed:

The increased efforts to promote the awareness of the importance of linguistic diversity and the take up of diversified language courses on offer should in particular aim at explaining the reasons why diversity is important, focusing on concrete needs and benefits in relation to specific geographic areas, target populations or age groups.

Several countries reported significant improvements concerning the mainstreaming of provisions for regional, minority, migrant and neighbouring languages. Some

¹⁰ Ljubljana, British Council and Drzavni izpitni center (ISBN 961-6322-37-0).

education and training systems had difficulties, however, in responding to the rapid demographic changes linked to migration movements.

The growing popularity of early language learning is certainly beneficial, but also raises concerns, drawing attention to the need to properly train teachers of this age group and to adequately promote linguistic diversity. Portfolios and “ladders” of language competences, as well as joint teams of teachers and assessments of the pupils’ skills at the start of each new cycle, proved useful instruments for facilitating a seamless passage from primary to secondary schools.

The rigidity of systems and curricula, the scarcity of appropriate materials and of trained teachers, and concerns about the possible effects on learning of the first language of instruction were identified as limiting factors for a widespread adoption of Content and language integrated learning or “theme based language education” – a methodology that should be extended to all categories of students and, again, not be limited to the main *lingua franca*.

The Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is increasingly adopted as the standard for curricular reforms and for national certification systems. At the same time, there is a growing awareness in Member States of the difficulty of effectively linking curricula and examinations to the CEFR scales. To help language examiners in ‘Relating language examinations to the CEFR’, the Council of Europe has developed a Manual, which is currently being piloted in approximately 20 member States; videos and CD-ROMs to accompany the Manual are currently being produced to illustrate the 6 levels of the CEFR, both for receptive and productive skills. In addition, to help curriculum developers, the Council of Europe is developing ‘Reference Level Descriptions’ for specific national and regional languages to illustrate the six levels in linguistic detail using a common approach.

Industrial relations issues, remuneration and training were among the obstacles mentioned to the adoption of mentoring for teachers of foreign languages.

More flexibility in the administrative systems was identified as a key requirement for implementing the recommendation concerning dual or multiple recognition of language teaching qualifications.

The group also discussed the definition of “communication in foreign languages” proposed for inclusion in the framework of key competences developed by working group B. The debate centred on the opportunity of proposing a European benchmark for this basic skill, given the great differences existing in the linguistic situations of participating countries. A new formulation was proposed to take into account the complex nature of the process of acquiring foreign language skills, its inherent intercultural dimension, the possibility of developing partial competences and the importance of metalinguistic skills; the communicative approach was stressed and a reference to the instruments developed in this field by the Council of Europe was added.

4. PERSPECTIVES FOR FURTHER WORK

If there is a growing 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.

Common concerns expressed by the experts included the training of teachers (of non-linguistic subjects) for content and language integrated learning, the training of primary school teachers, the development of appropriate materials for early language learning and for content and language integrated learning.

A frame of reference for a European profile for language teacher education has recently been developed as part of a study carried out on behalf of the Commission by a multinational team led by Southampton University. It contains useful recommendations and deserves wide discussion and debate; it could be applied also for the education of CLIL and primary teachers. The dissemination of the results of this study will also prove useful for the promotion of exchanges of prospective and in service teachers of languages and for the increase of dual recognition of language teaching qualifications.

The participants emphasised several priority themes for the next phase of work.

Austria and several other countries underlined once again the importance of awareness raising. Emphasis was put on the need to raise the awareness of the benefits of foreign languages (Ireland), to raise the awareness of families on the importance of languages other than English (Dutch-speaking Belgium), and to raise the awareness of the public at large, better exploiting results of work done (Czech Republic).

France suggested that a campaign should promote awareness of the “mother tongue plus two” principle, showing also its economic value, while the United Kingdom felt that a clear statement of the importance of this principle, understandable to non specialists, would prove useful.

Ireland, Poland and the United Kingdom proposed CLIL as a priority area for further evaluation. France underlined the importance of teacher training in this connection, while the Netherlands proposed that efforts be aimed at promoting CLIL in languages other than English. Romania and Hungary pointed out the issue of the lack of materials for CLIL and wondered if the European Union could provide support.

To make sure that language learning really concerns all citizens, French- and Dutch-speaking Belgium drew attention on the need to promote language learning in vocational training. Austria and the United Kingdom emphasised the importance of promoting language teaching for learners with special education needs, also through the collection of examples of good practice.

France, Romania and the United Kingdom considered continuity of methodology and language choice in the transition from primary to secondary school a key issue.

The United Kingdom proposed that the importance of non-European languages merited further discussion. Knowledge of these languages was important both in terms of business and trade and in terms of promoting linguistic diversity and social cohesion.

Malta and Portugal proposed organising a peer review, based on the presentation and discussion of the national language policies of participating countries.

The group underlined the need to give more visibility and a higher profile to the policy recommendations. As a first step, it was proposed at least to translate them and to publish them on the Internet in several languages.

Study visits will be organised in 2005 to examine these priority themes more in depth. Proposals were received from Hungary and France, while other countries are considering the opportunity of organising other visits.

It was decided to carry on the collection of examples of good practice. The themes chosen for the next phase of work are mobility of language teachers and the development of materials for language teaching – in particular in connection with less widely taught languages, CLIL, learners with special education needs or other target groups which are not catered for by commercial producers of such materials.

The analysis and evaluation of the examples of good practice should be made more rigorous, and the database should be opened to other users.

The possibility of continuing these activities will of course depend on the availability of resources. If the current difficulty to obtain interpreters and meeting space should persist, other arrangements will have to be found.



Brussels, November 2004
It D(2004)

Working group on languages

ANNEX: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This document is based on the analysis of the answers given to the questionnaire on the implementation of the policy recommendations made by our consultant, Professor Hugo Baetens-Beardsmore, and on the conclusions of the three working groups organised during the meeting of February 2004¹¹. Its purpose is to take stock of the progress made in translating those recommendations into practice, to assess their viability by identifying common obstacles and possible solutions, and to examine how action at European and national level could support the ongoing efforts of Member States.

The recommendations are analysed one by one.

“1. National, regional and local authorities should make a substantial and sustained effort to **promote an awareness of the capital importance of **linguistic diversity**”**

- (1) A key aspect of language learning is of course **awareness** and **motivation**. Ensuring that the formal education and training systems and the society at large provide adequate language learning opportunities is not enough. EU citizens must be aware of these opportunities and persuaded that it is in their best interest to seize them. **Pupils, students, their families, teachers and guidance operators** should be **fully conscious of the potential of language learning** in the European Union.
- (2) Creating and maintaining a **motivation to learn** foreign languages is a complex task, which goes well beyond the limits of education and training systems. It has to do with the complex dynamics of languages in society, which in turn depend on political, economic and other developments. Awareness and motivation, however, also have to do with the way these intricate dynamics are perceived. Popular beliefs about languages and language learning do not always reflect the realities of today's world.

¹¹ For the policy recommendations, cfr. EXP LG/16/2003 – EXP LG/17/2003; for the questionnaire, cfr. EXP LG/5/2004.

- (3) The principle of learning two languages in addition to one's mother tongue **(MT+2)** needs to be **more widely publicized** to gain acceptance beyond the limited circle of practitioners. For this recommendation to be effective, moreover, **awareness-raising campaigns should be tailored to the needs and interests** of the different target groups, demonstrating the benefits of language diversity for each geographic area, age group and/or sector of population. This is clearly an area where action at national, regional and local level is needed.
- (4) Many countries [Austria, Finland, Germany (Länder), France, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Sweden] mentioned a **lack of motivation for learning languages other than English**. This major problem is not new, but it seems to be only partially addressed in national language policies.
- (5) **All countries claim to support linguistic diversity**, though some efforts are more substantial and sustained than others. The most coherent overall policy initiatives appear to be taking place in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, Sweden. With the Czech Republic, Romania and Spain, these countries show a strong commitment.
- (6) More restricted support for diversity appears present in Dutch- and French-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands and Poland. Certain countries [Ireland, Norway, Slovenia and UK (England)] are still in the preparatory stages of promoting greater linguistic diversity in education.
- (7) Several countries have interesting initiatives worth highlighting: France (geographical distribution of possibilities for continuity between primary and secondary on linguistic diversity), Ireland (non-European languages also promoted), Romania (promotion of intercultural artistic activities), Sweden (generous support for diversity), UK (England) (a national strategy and 8 year implementation plan and non-European languages being offered).
- (8) Concerning **the obstacles** to the implementation of this policy recommendation, some countries [the Czech Republic, Denmark, Norway, Malta, the Netherlands and Spain] gave little or no information or claim there are no obstacles
- (9) Even when there is enough motivation for learning a wide range of languages, a major obstacle is the **lack of teachers** qualified to teach these languages, particularly in primary education [Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany (Länder), Lithuania and Sweden].
- (10) **Geographical dispersion** hampers the development of linguistic diversity on offer in Finland and Sweden. **Lack of finance** for linguistic diversity in education was mentioned by French-speaking Belgium, Finland, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Sweden and UK (England).
- (11) Among the other obstacles mentioned, Lithuania referred to a **lack of teaching materials**, Ireland, Slovenia, UK (England) to a **lack of a coherent, integrated policy**, French-speaking Belgium and Cyprus to **timetable constraints** and Luxembourg to the need of **integrating immigrants**.
- (12) Concerning the **initiatives to overcome these obstacles**, some countries [Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain] gave little or no information.

- (13) **Awareness-raising** and promotion campaigns were mentioned by Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Finland, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Italy and Sweden.
- (14) Some countries designated **specific authorities** responsible for solving problems: Dutch-speaking Belgium (ministry think-tank), Sweden (special commissioner), UK (England) (National director for languages). Bulgaria, Finland, Germany (Länder), Lithuania and Romania offer **pre- and in-service training**. New **materials** are being produced in Romania.
- (15) Other initiatives tend to be focussed on **country-specific issues**. Luxembourg, for instance, introduced specially adapted programmes for immigrants and for those in professional and vocational education.

“2. The competent authorities should ensure that mainstream education and training policies include provision for teaching **regional, minority, migrant and neighbouring languages**”

- (16) Acting on the demand side is important, but of course is not enough. On the contrary, frustrated demand can destroy motivation, further reinforcing the idea that foreign languages are reserved to a small naturally talented or economically privileged elite. Parallel to the awareness-raising effort, the **offer should therefore be strengthened and enlarged**, diversifying it both in terms of languages and of target groups.
- (17) Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and UK (England) reported **increased efforts** at mainstreaming regional, minority, migrant and neighbouring languages, or added to the variety of languages already offered.
- (18) A few countries seem to offer **minimal provision**; Dutch-speaking Belgium (for minority languages), French-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, Ireland.
- (19) **No information** was forthcoming from Denmark.
- (20) In spite of the above claims, many problems were highlighted, indicating that more thought needs to be given to the implementation of this particular policy recommendation.
- (21) **No response** to the question concerning the obstacles to implementation of this recommendation was given by several countries, usually those that have long had a policy with reference to regional, minority, migrant or neighbouring languages: Bulgaria, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. Denmark gave minimal information about the lack of obligation to offer migrant languages.
- (22) Several countries [Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Sweden] referred to the **lack of motivation** for take-up of these languages, possibly reflecting former social and attitudinal dispositions towards the status of such languages, past neglect, lack of prioritisation, or issues of national integration policy.

- (23) Dutch-speaking Belgium, Hungary and Sweden mentioned **financial obstacles** to provision of an adequate support to these languages. **Lack of trained teachers** was mentioned by Austria, Dutch-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany (Länder), and Sweden.
- (24) **Lack of materials** for the languages concerned was mentioned by Dutch-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, Sweden, UK (England). **Lack of official accreditation** was an obstacle referred to by Sweden, while French-speaking Belgium referred to **timetable constraints**.
- (25) In Hungary, mainstreaming minority or regional languages appears to be a problem, while in Romania minority languages (particularly Rom) are a constant preoccupation with attempts to address the issues involved.
- (26) Italy, Luxembourg and Lithuania identified the need to **integrate immigrants**. **In-service training** of teachers was also seen as a priority in Lithuania.
- (27) Responses concerning the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles were not always easy to interpret. Countries that already have a long-standing policy on this issue, or which are increasing availability, may not feel the question relevant. Some respondents appear to mention policy measures being undertaken to remove the obstacles referred to, while others seem to be expressing a personal opinion as to what might be desirable.
- (28) French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain and Sweden supplied **no responses** to this question.
- (29) Lithuania (concerning migrants), Malta, Slovenia and UK (England) appear to be **addressing the issues** but have not all yet opted for specific policy measures.
- (30) Austria and Hungary mentioned the need for **awareness raising** about the benefits of handling these languages. Dutch-speaking Belgium and Finland mentioned the need for **teacher training** targeted towards these languages, but it is not always clear whether this is likely to occur.
- (31) Dutch-speaking Belgium, Finland, Lithuania and UK (England) mentioned **materials provision** and designing **tests for accreditation**. Denmark and Lithuania mentioned **curriculum revision** and clearer **objectives**.

“3. Each country should have a set of carefully formulated and clearly stated **objectives** for language teaching at the various stages of the education system, going from stimulation of mutual respect and language awareness to acquisition of specific linguistic skills. The starting age for learning languages and the methodologies to be adopted should be decided in the light of these objectives.”

- (32) Responses to this question are also difficult to interpret, partly because the question is too broad to be satisfactorily handled in succinct terms. Several answers gave partial responses, several refer to initiatives currently under discussion and several appear to indicate satisfaction with the status quo. Practically no countries mentioned the stimulation of mutual respect and language

awareness initiatives. It becomes apparent, however, that positive actions have or are being undertaken with reference to the re-definition of objectives.

- (33) Austria, Dutch- and French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Länder), Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden claim that curricula already have **clearly stated objectives**.
- (34) Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain report **work in progress** on curricular reform (sometimes in certain sectors only) and **revision of objectives**.
- (35) Objectives taking into account the **Common European Framework** are mentioned in by Dutch-speaking Belgium (for adult education), Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany (Länder), Greece and the Netherlands.
- (36) **Earlier starting ages** for language learning have been noted (at times only by one year) in Dutch-speaking Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany (Länder), Italy, Lithuania and The Netherlands.
- (37) Concerning the **obstacles** to the implementation of this recommendation, Cyprus, Hungary, Romania, Spain and Sweden gave **no information**, while Germany (Länder), the Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia indicated that there were **no obstacles whatsoever**. Austria mentioned that putting the recommendation into practice is at times problematic, even though objectives might be well spelled out.
- (38) French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta and Norway mentioned teething problems connected with **adaptation** to new objectives, and the need for **teacher training** to meet the new objectives. The Czech Republic, Denmark, France and Italy referred to the adaptation of **test materials** to meet the revised objectives.
- (39) Other obstacles were more **country specific**, such as an absence of specific objectives in certain educational sectors (Dutch-speaking Belgium), lack of teaching and testing materials (French-speaking Belgium), or no integrated policy at all (Ireland), lack of appropriate pedagogic materials (Greece), low take-up in early education (Finland, United Kingdom – England), geographical dispersion (Norway).
- (40) Several countries [Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden] gave **no responses** to the question concerning the proposed **initiatives** to **overcome** these **obstacles**.
- (41) In countries where the implementation of objectives is part of work in progress [Greece, Ireland and United Kingdom (England)], outcomes and **initiatives** are **not yet available**.
- (42) **Teacher training** was considered significant by Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany (Länder), Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta and Norway. Providing appropriate **test materials** was mentioned by French-speaking Belgium, Finland, Denmark and France.

- (43) European initiatives with reference to **vocational education** were proposed by Dutch-speaking Belgium.

“4. To ensure **continuity** of linguistic choice and of methodology in the **transition** from primary to secondary school, national, regional and local authorities should remove the **structural obstacles** and enforce co-operation between teachers and schools”

- (44) Member States are exploring two possible solutions to the conflicting needs of increasing exposure without putting too much pressure on the curricula: lowering the starting age through early language learning and introducing or extending content and language integrated learning.
- (45) Continuity of provision, in terms of languages chosen and of methodologies used, has already been identified as a key factor of success of early language learning (see C. Blondin et al., *Foreign languages in primary and pre-school education*, 1998).
- (46) French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, Poland and Romania already guarantee continuity of linguistic choice as part of **standard policy in education** and therefore have not had to implement new initiatives.
- (47) **Strong initiatives** seem to have been implemented by countries that have supplied information on this activity as a priority [France, Germany (Länder), Hungary and Sweden].
- (48) **Work in progress** on identifying the obstacles and improving continuity, at times modest, at times more fundamental, is reflected in the reports of Austria, Dutch-speaking Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia and UK (England).
- (49) **Little progress** can be detected in a few countries, perhaps due to lack of reported information or because the current state of reflection on the issues concerned is not yet stabilised [Ireland, Malta, Norway and Spain]. **No response** was given by Cyprus.
- (50) Greece, Hungary and Norway provided **no answers** to the question on **obstacles to the implementation** of this recommendation.
- (51) Strong implementation initiatives recently introduced and a commitment to prioritising continuity meant that the two cases where **no obstacles** were cited appears highly justified, i.e. Luxembourg and Malta. The case of Malta (similar to Luxembourg) citing no obstacles is self-evident, given the specific bilingual programme in Maltese and English throughout the system, which obviously avoids continuity problems but does not take into account linguistic diversification.
- (52) A major problem cited by several countries was the impact of **English**, sometimes prioritised as first foreign language, **impeding** the **uptake** and **continuity** of provision **of other languages**. This meant that there was at times a conflict between continuity and diversity in cases where English is mandatory at some stage of schooling [Austria, Spain and Sweden].

- (53) A cumulative effect is the **lack of** availability of **teachers** competent to teach languages other than English, where demand is not meeting supply, cited as a problem at all levels of education [Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden]. Poland, on the other hand, cited a lack of available teachers of English.
- (54) Countries with highly **decentralised structures**, or where teachers have great **independence** in methodology and approaches [Austria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom (England)] may well have problems in ensuring continuity between different levels of the education system.
- (55) **Finance** was cited as a problem in one case [Germany (Länder)], though it is likely to be present in others.
- (56) Other obstacles were more **country specific**, even though they may be in the process of being addressed; French-speaking Belgium (mobility of pupils and freedom of school choice; lack of coordination between schools), Bulgaria (feeder schools not linked to secondary education), difficulties in coordination between primary and secondary schools (Cyprus), lack of adequate assessment measures (France), lack of lock-step materials (France), lack of commitment (Ireland), recruitment obstacles (Italy), recruitment in rural areas (Romania), low target levels and lack of co-operation in transition stages (Sweden).
- (57) The Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Spain provided **no response** to the question on the **proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles**.
- (58) **No proposals** were given by countries already highly committed to implementing changes or where there are no continuity problems [Germany (Länder), Luxembourg, Malta].
- (59) Highly **varied** proposals were made to overcome the obstacles in French-speaking Belgium (introduce European Portfolio), Austria, (implementation of educational standards), Bulgaria (structural changes), Cyprus (review and harmonisation of the entire system), Denmark, Slovenia, (transparent certification), Finland, (teacher-training and the encouragement of co-operation), the Netherlands (strong encouragement), Romania (specific teacher training), Sweden (flexible learning), and UK (England) (networking and support groups).

“5. National authorities should encourage a **generalisation of content and language integrated learning (CLIL)** by defining the standards of teacher qualification and supporting the preparation of appropriate teaching materials”

- (60) Cyprus and Denmark provided **no response** to the question on progress made in this field.
- (61) **Well-developed programmes** have long existed in certain countries and are **being expanded** or **fine-tuned** [Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, The Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany (Länder), Ireland (in Irish-medium schools only), Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain (in the autonomous regions) and Sweden].

- (62) In Malta (in specific subjects) and Luxembourg **the entire system** is geared towards CLIL/EMILE.
- (63) **Modest programmes**, usually of an experimental or pilot type have been mentioned by Dutch-speaking Belgium (Brussels region) and the United Kingdom (England).
- (64) **Work in progress** to stimulate CLIL/EMILE has been reported in Hungary and Norway.
- (65) Two countries provide **negative reports** connected with the promotion of CLIL/EMILE type programme: Finland (declining popularity in upper secondary schools), Slovenia (little support).
- (66) **Little interest** in stimulating these types of programmes is reported by Greece (private sector only), Ireland, while Poland mentioned that these programmes were not well-known.
- (67) **No obstacles** to the **implementation** of this recommendation were recorded for the special cases of Malta and Luxembourg, where bilingual education is standard throughout the system. **Integration of immigrants** into the trilingual system operating in Luxembourg was a specific problem.
- (68) **Major problems** were of a recurrent nature in many reports concerning serious implementation difficulties, even when programmes have a long tradition and are well developed, more so when initiatives with CLIL/EMILE are recent or in experimental stages of development. Many of the obstacles referred to are interconnected so that addressing the major problem of teacher availability often subsumes issues connected with training, materials provision and methodology.
- (69) **Lack of qualified teachers**, capable of teaching content matter in a second language, and at all levels of education, occurred in many reports: Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Spain.
- (70) **Lack of suitable training**, connected to the above, was specifically mentioned by Bulgaria, Italy and Romania. **Lack of materials** specifically designed to take into account the bilingual nature of programmes offered was cited by Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Finland and Poland.
- (71) **Assessment**, examinations and official **recognition** may put a brake on the development of these programmes since they do not fit into standard, established criteria [Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Finland and United Kingdom (England)].
- (72) **Legal obstacles** are a major problem where legislation imposes a given language as language of instruction, thereby impeding the use of other languages [Dutch-speaking Belgium, France, Greece and Slovenia].
- (73) A possible way round this obstacles is “theme-based education” approach adopted by Sweden and Greece, with a co-operation between teachers of languages and of other subjects.

- (74) **Lack of interest** in developing this type of provision, perhaps through lack of familiarity, was given in a few cases [Denmark, Ireland and Norway], and it can be assumed that other countries with minimal provision share this view.
- (75) **Finance** was also mentioned, given that it is assumed, on little evidence, that these programmes necessarily require more funding than regular monolingual education provision (cf. Grin report) [Germany (Länder), Romania and Spain].
- (76) **Diversifying languages** in CLIL/EMILE is a problem in the Netherlands. **Integrating immigrants** was a specific problem in Luxembourg.
- (77) **No responses** on the proposed **initiatives** to **overcome** these **obstacles** were provided mainly by countries with little experience or interest in developing CLIL/EMILE type programmes, where legal impediments hamper their development [Dutch-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ireland, Norway], or in the opposite case, where programmes were thriving and well-developed [Luxembourg, Malta and Bulgaria].
- (78) **Teacher training** for the specific needs of these programmes, including financial incentives, was suggested by Finland, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Spain and Sweden.
- (79) **Motivation** and **awareness raising** about the benefits of these programmes were mentioned as useful initiatives by Germany (Länder), Greece, Italy and Sweden.
- (80) **Modular variations** were proposed by Austria, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovenia as one means of overcoming certain constraints.
- (81) Germany (Länder) and Hungary proposed **better employment conditions**.
- (82) **Country specific** initiatives were proposed in some cases; providing a legal basis (Austria), materials and assessment tools (French-speaking Belgium), networking on CLIL (Italy), producing bilingual manuals (Luxembourg), content-free assessment tools (UK).
- (83) On occasion of the eight meeting of the working group, it was agreed that:
- the implementation of this recommendation would require **more flexibility** in the education and training systems (e.g. to allow for theme-based teaching), and the removal of unnecessary legal and administrative obstacles;
 - account should be taken of any possible effects on mother tongue learning;
 - languages other than English could be chosen as the medium for CLIL; and
 - the objective should be to extend the positive but so far limited experiences.
- (84) The conference on CLIL to be held in Luxembourg in the Spring of 2005 will provide an important opportunity for further debating this issue.

“6. National authorities should establish **transparent certification** systems based on the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**”

- (85) **Strong progress** seems to have been made in the majority of countries, indicating widespread acceptance of the Common European Framework of Reference. This category represents one of the most positive sets of responses on implementation strategies.
- (86) **Implementation** in general education, via calibration of the criteria proposed in the CEF with national practice, appears to have been carried out in the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany (Länder), Greece and the Netherlands.
- (87) **Introduction** of the criteria proposed in the CEF has been partially undertaken in certain sectors, is under trial, or is due to be introduced in the near future in several countries, reflecting the momentum of general acceptance across Europe: Austria (trial), Dutch-speaking Belgium (adult education), Hungary (introduced in 2005), Luxembourg (pilot project), Norway (introduced 2004), Poland (under review), Romania (under review), Slovenia (work in progress), Spain (work in progress), and UK (England) (via the National Language Strategy).
- (88) **Low acceptance** appears to prevail in French-speaking Belgium, Ireland, Malta and Sweden.
- (89) **Adaptation** of curricula, materials, methodology is being undertaken in the wake of the introduction of the CEF in Bulgaria, France, Germany (Länder), Greece, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden.
- (90) Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Lithuania and Norway mentioned **encouragement** of the introduction and use of the **European Language Portfolio**.
- (91) **No responses** concerning the **obstacles** to the implementation of this recommendation were given by Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Spain.
- (92) **No obstacles** were indicated by countries that have very little experience with the CEF or by those that had already strongly implemented it: Denmark (little experience), Germany (Länder) (priority commitment), Ireland (little knowledge), Poland (good experience but not widely implemented yet), Slovenia (little experience).
- (93) **Cultural obstacles** were mentioned by Malta, though with no explanation, and Cyprus (mistrust of local exams).
- (94) **Adaptation** and calibration to the specific national examination tradition appeared as a significant problem in many countries, requiring in-service training, particularly in countries where assessment was not centralised but delegated to the local or school level; Austria, French-speaking Belgium, Finland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.
- (95) **Extension** to different levels of education was mentioned as an obstacle by Dutch-speaking Belgium, Lithuania referred to a **lack of resources**.
- (96) Concerning the **proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles, no responses** were provided by Dutch-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Malta, Poland and Spain.

Legal problems were mentioned by Germany (Länder).

- (97) **Training** for how to use the new certification methods was recommended by Austria, Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania and Slovenia. **Monitoring** of progress on the introduction of the CEF was recommended by Hungary, Italy and Slovenia. France proposed **testing** at key points in educational progress, Norway proposed developing the **CEF for the 1st language**, and Cyprus, the UK (England) mentioned **marketing** and promotion. French-speaking Belgium proposed introducing the **European Portfolio**.

“7. The education authorities should introduce **mentoring systems** to assist language teachers at the beginning of their career”

- (98) **Mentoring exists** as standard practice in several countries [Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany (Länder), Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and UK (England)] and therefore no new initiatives were mentioned.
- (99) **Informal mentoring**, or **mentoring as part of initial training**, was mentioned in a few countries [Ireland, Italy, Malta and the Netherlands] where it does not exist as standard practice for new recruits. Mentoring is recommended but not compulsory in Dutch speaking Belgium, where mentor training is provided by the education organisers, while **no mentoring** seems to exist in French-speaking Belgium and in Greece.
- (100) **Pilot** work on mentoring is occurring in Lithuania and Norway, while **support** was mentioned by Cyprus.
- (101) As so many countries already have established mentoring systems, the question concerning obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation received few comments.
- (102) Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and Spain provided **no responses with reference to obstacles**.
- (103) Country-specific obstacles of a varied nature were mentioned by Dutch-speaking Belgium (school autonomy), French-speaking Belgium (individualistic tradition), Bulgaria (lack of staff), Cyprus (mentor training available), Germany (Länder) (financially unattractive positions), Ireland (teacher autonomy), Italy (no specific profile), Romania (rural areas), Slovenia (adjustments required) and Sweden (not fully implemented).
- (104) Given the lack of problems in the countries with established mentoring systems, and the lack of initiatives in certain others, few suggestions were made.
- (105) Austria, Dutch-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden and UK (England) did not reply to the question on possible ways for removing the obstacles, at times because no obstacles were present.

- (106) **Training** was suggested by French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia. **Extra finance** was proposed for Germany (Länder).

“8. The education authorities of participating countries should introduce or extend the schemes for **dual or multiple recognition** of language teaching qualifications”

- (107) **No responses** were received from certain countries where the question presumably has not been raised: Dutch-speaking Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland and Norway.
- (108) **Bilateral agreements** exist between certain partner countries, for specific languages or subject matters; these are usually fairly modest but positive initiatives [Bulgaria, France, Germany (Länder), Italy, Luxembourg, Poland and UK (England)].
- (109) **Work in progress** on the recognition of teaching qualifications for foreigners has been noted, indicating an opening of possibilities, by Denmark, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and UK (England).
- (110) **Training** for language and content matter has been modestly introduced in Lithuania.
- (111) **ECTS** (European Credit Transfer System) in teacher training, representing a wide-reaching initiative, was mentioned by Austria and French-speaking Belgium, though it may also be under consideration in those countries that signalled work in progress.
- (112) A **proposal in favour** of this was made in Cyprus, while dual recognition appears to be hampered in Spain by the competitive examinations necessary for entry to the teaching profession.
- (113) Concerning the **obstacles** to the implementation of this recommendation, a large number of countries [Dutch- and French-speaking Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany (Länder), Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Romania, Spain and Sweden] did not provide any answer.
- (114) Austria, France, Italy, and Poland mentioned **legal obstacles**, some of which were under modification. Slovenia referred to a **lack of priority awareness** and the United Kingdom (England) **complexity of organisation**. **Finance** was an obstacle for Lithuania and the Netherlands, a **possible rejection by the trade Unions** for Cyprus.
- (115) **No responses** on the proposed **initiatives** to **overcome** these **obstacles** were provided by the majority of countries [Austria, Dutch- and French-speaking Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany (Länder), Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania and Spain].
- (116) Italy, Romania and Sweden mentioned **awareness raising** of the significance of this issue.

- (117) Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania and UK (England) reported **work in progress** on the importance of the issue. The Czech Republic, Malta and Slovenia proposed the **removal of structural obstacles**.

Conclusion

- (118) From the replies given to the questionnaire, it is clear that the **role of languages in education policy** is being re-appraised in a number of countries, in several cases with a fundamental re-orientation of priorities. Several countries have clearly indicated a major integration of many of the proposals put forward in the policy recommendations, others are in the process of implementing some of the proposals, while a certain number of countries appear to be satisfied with the major orientations of their traditionally established practice.
- (119) In a large number of countries **curricula** have undergone some fundamental re-thinking, although there a clear link has not always been established with outcome expectations. There is little evidence of the relationship between contact time and type of contact with foreign languages and the levels of competence that can be realistically expected, though the widespread acceptance of the scales of the Common European Framework of Reference may overcome this handicap. CLIL/EMILE initiatives reflect a mixed response, certain countries giving strong stimulus, others being more reticent or hardly interested. A large number of obstacles opposes the further stimulation of these types of programmes.
- (120) Major problems also concern the availability and qualification of **teachers**, as was clearly indicated in a large number of responses to the questionnaire. The lack of trained personnel is seriously handicapping the promotion of linguistic diversity, the stimulation of CLIL/EMILE type programmes, an early start of second language learning in primary education, increased provision in vocational and professional education. Mentoring does not seem to be a major problem in most countries, whereas dual or multiple recognition of language teaching qualifications is not widespread and could be an area worth stimulating.
- (121) The role of awareness raising among parents and in society at large was mentioned in several responses, but few concrete steps were envisaged to remedy the problem. This appears to be a major area where further work is required for attaining two major goals of the policy recommendations, namely linguistic diversity and the promotion of two languages in addition to the mother tongue for the largest number of people. The issue of immigrant languages was only given marginal attention.
- (122) Member States' policies concerning **diversity** reflected very mixed responses, some countries taking strong initiatives, others, particularly those stimulating English, creating a potential handicap to the promotion of linguistic diversity. Problems of continuity across the range of educational programmes appear a major stumbling block to realising this objective. The overall picture is confused, since decision takers, for whatever reason, appear to have given inadequate thought to the long-term effects of their options and the potential for contradiction with other recommendations on this issue.
- (123) The area where the greatest progress was reported was **assessment**, particularly with reference to the Common European Framework of Reference. In spite of the

problems of calibration, adaptation and re-training, there is a widespread acceptance of this tool, which can ensure a greater transparency across Europe.