

LANGUAGE RICH EUROPE



**MULTILINGUALISM FOR STABLE
AND PROSPEROUS SOCIETIES**

With the support of:



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



According to Eurobarometer, 83% of Europeans value knowing other languages yet 44% cannot hold a conversation in another language. With globalisation and increasing migration, multilingualism is critical to intercultural understanding and cohesion in society, job prospects for individuals and competitiveness in Europe.

What is Language Rich Europe?

Language Rich Europe will conduct an analysis of policies and practices on multilingualism across 20 European countries and compare the results against European recommendations. The results will be presented in the Language Rich Europe Index – A European Index on Multilingual Policies and Practices, available in over 20 languages and published in print form and on an interactive website.

With this analysis as a basis, Language Rich Europe will create a new and sustainable interdisciplinary network of over 1200 decision makers across Europe, who will be brought together to share knowledge and good practice in multilingualism.

Background

European Union Member States have responded to increased mobility and migration across Europe by prioritising social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. However, this is not always supported by policies and practices which promote linguistic diversity and language learning.

European institutions such as the European Commission, European Parliament and the Council of Europe have made recommendations for such policies and launched a number of initiatives to encourage citizens to learn languages at all stages of their lives. However, take up of these recommendations has been uneven, policy cooperation between countries has proved challenging, and knowledge sharing initiatives have been disjointed.

Language Rich Europe responds to the need for more consistent knowledge sharing and collaborative working between different sectors and countries across Europe by enabling a network to action plan at national and regional level to improve language policies and practices. These action plans will be synthesised into a report for the European Commission to support the review of its multilingualism policy.



What is new about the project?

An effective network is required to broaden the debate on languages beyond the education sector and influence policies.

By bringing together decision makers from diverse fields – education, business, public services, the media, and immigrant associations, Language Rich Europe will create the opportunity for collaborative working on a European level towards shared goals and encourage discussion of the relevance of languages across society.

Language Rich Europe will:

- Create the first comprehensive, user-friendly reference source comparing countries' performance against EU and Council of Europe standards and recommendations on language policies and practices, covering the full spectrum of languages and consolidating these into a coherent framework
- Use previous research and extend the scope to give a comprehensive overview across education, business, public services and the media
- Provide thought-provoking content for the network to engage with, leading to innovative solutions
- Allow European citizens to compare performance against individual indicators, domains and other countries, and track trends in language use using a web-based search engine
- Build on the innovative approach to evaluating migration policy used by the EC-funded MIPEX project
- Have the potential for continued, long-term impact as a permanent benchmarking tool



Countries and regions included in the index



What is the methodology behind the Index?

The Index comprises over 150 indicators based on recommendations from the European Commission and the Council of Europe and reflects the use of:

- National languages
- Foreign languages
- Regional languages
- Immigrant languages

It examines this information in the following areas:

- Education (Pre-primary, primary, secondary, adult)
- Public services and spaces
- Business
- The Media

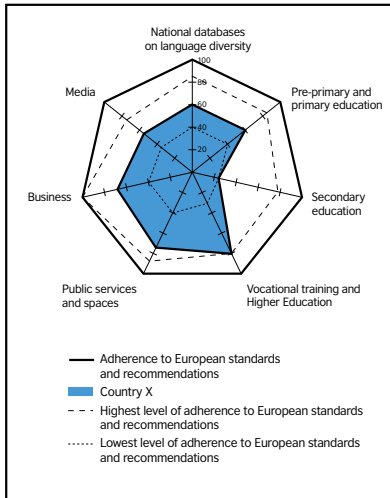
The data is collected by renowned national research partners and peer reviewed by independent national experts. It is then analysed by Babylon, the Centre for Studies of the Multicultural Society at Tilburg University to form the basis of the Language Rich Europe Index.

What will this research look like?

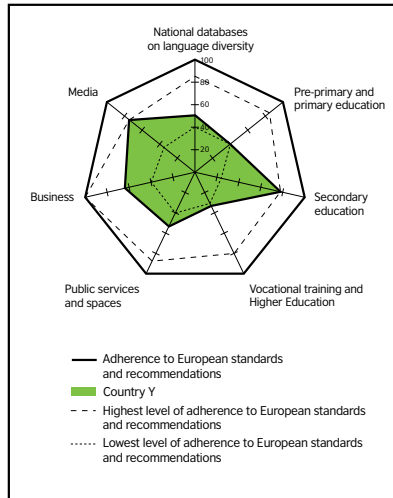
The results of the research will be compiled into a series of spider graphs comparing the effectiveness of policies and practices in certain areas with that of highest and lowest level of adherence to European recommendations. These graphs can be overlaid on one another to form a clear cross-country comparison highlighting best practice as well as areas needing improvement.

An example of what this could look like is shown opposite. This will be coupled with a complementary essay to describe and highlight the specific national context in each country.

**Spider Graph Example:
Initial Index Profile of Country X**

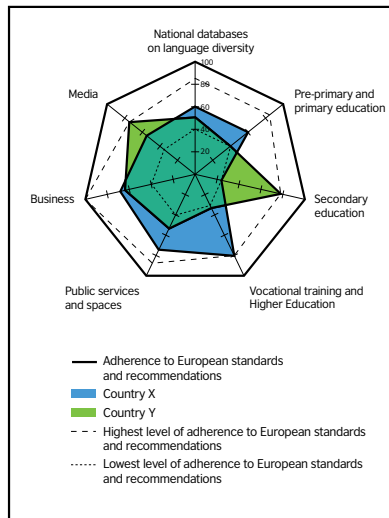


**Spider Graph Example:
Initial Index Profile of Country Y**



Resulting Spider Graph Example:
Countries use Index to:

- Share knowledge and best practice
- Develop an improved profile



How will these efforts bring positive change?

The Language Rich Europe Index and network will allow decision makers from education, business, public services and the media to:

- Gain increased awareness of European Union and Council of Europe recommendations and how countries perform against them
- Evaluate policies and practices using a sustainable European benchmarking tool
- Better understand good practices in language teaching and learning for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue
- Develop action plans at national and regional level to improve language policies and practices.
- Benefit from enhanced cooperation and commitment to improving language policies and practices

The benefits of the improved language policies and practices and the knowledge exchange will be felt by wider groups of end users – teachers and learners of languages, customers, employees, media consumers, migrants, and speakers of minority languages.

How can you get involved?

As part of the Language Rich Europe network you will be able to:

- Contribute data and examples of good practice for the comparative analysis
- Participate in the national launch events of the Index of Language Policies and Practices in Europe
- Share learning at national workshops, international conferences, through the website and our blog <http://languagerichblog.eu/>
- Contribute to and complement the EC civil society and business platforms on multilingualism
- Use the international contacts database to identify expertise from other countries
- Invite decision makers from other countries to share knowledge and provide consultancy
- Shape action plans to improve policies and practices

Steering group members



Juan Pedro de Basterrechea

Fundraising and Sales Director, Instituto Cervantes



Guus Extra

Professor of Language & Minorities, Faculty of Humanities, Babylon, Center for Studies of the Multicultural Society, Tilburg University



Mário Filipe

Vice-President of Instituto Camões



Martin Hope

Director Benelux and EU Office, British Council



Thomas Huddleston

Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Group



Tony Jones

Senior Adviser, English Language Innovation, British Council



Nick Joujou

Director of Business Development, CILT, National Centre for Languages



Ulla-Alexandra Matti

Co-ordinator, EUNIC in Brussels



Xavier North

Delegate-general for the French Language and languages of France, General delegation to the French language and languages of France



Nadine Ott

Senior Project Manager Language Rich Europe, British Council



Paweł Poszytek

President of the Managing Board, Institute for Quality in Education (IQE)



Joe Sheils

Former Head of the Department of Language Education and Policy, Council of Europe



Wolf von Siebert

Project Management, Language and Integration, Goethe Institute

This project is delivered by a consortium of over 30 partners and co-managed by a steering group



With the support of:



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

www.language-rich.eu

© British Council 2011 Design Department/Z254

The United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.
A registered charity: 209131 (England and Wales) SC037733 (Scotland).



LANGUAGE RICH EUROPE
MULTILINGUALISM FOR STABLE AND PROSPEROUS SOCIETIES