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Education begins with language

Thematic report from a programme of seminars with peer learning to support the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

(2019-2020)

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Thematic report from a programme of seminars with peer learning to support the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

(2019-2020)

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Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Context	3
2.1	Key figures on language teaching and learning in Europe	3
2.2	Raising the bar for language teaching and learning.....	5
3.0	Reaching adequate competence levels	8
3.1	Raising the bar for foreign language learning.....	8
3.2	Mastering the language of schooling	10
3.3	Valuing linguistic diversity.....	13
4.0	Promoting language awareness in schools	17
4.1	Adopting multilingual and whole school approaches	17
4.2	Strengthening language awareness in vocational education and training (VET).....	19
5.0	Supporting teachers, trainers and school leaders	24
5.1	Developing teacher education.....	24
5.2	Supporting teacher mobility and school partnerships	27
6.0	Conclusions	29
6.1	Key recommendations	29
6.2	COVID-19 and the future of language learning.....	31

1.0 Introduction

Mastering multiple languages is key to enhancing the life and work of all individuals. In addition to promoting mobility, lifelong and innovative learning, and removing barriers to social inclusion, improving language learning was identified by the EU as a key enabler to achieving the EU's vision for a European Education Area by 2025 in which “*learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders*”.¹ The Council's 2019 **Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages** supports this vision and sets the ambitious goal of ensuring that, by the time young people leave upper secondary education, they can speak at least three languages. In addition to this, by introducing the concepts of ‘literacy’ and ‘language awareness’, the Recommendation aims to change the mindset of policymakers and teachers, inspiring them to adopt comprehensive language education policies, as well as innovative and inclusive language teaching methods.

The messages included in this Recommendation build on the work of national experts from all Member States, collaborating with the European Commission on how to improve language learning. The Commission organised a **series of thematic panels on languages, literacy and multilingual classrooms** over the course of 2016 and 2017, which led to the publication of two key reports:

- Rethinking Language Education and Linguistic Diversity in Schools;²
- Migrants in European Schools – Learning and Maintaining Languages.³

Most recently, in order to support the implementation of the Recommendation and to facilitate peer learning, the Commission organised a **series of implementation seminars on language learning**. Seminars were held in Paris (France) and Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany) in October and December 2019, involving a wide range of experts, stakeholders and interested parties from around the EU. A third seminar, scheduled to take place in la Valletta (Malta) in March 2020, was cancelled due to an outbreak of COVID-19. The seminars presented an opportunity for participants to share knowledge and experience and to debate issues and challenges related to the teaching and learning of languages, in the context of the Recommendation. Participants also had the opportunity to visit schools in order to observe language teaching in situ and to talk to the teachers themselves. The focus of the Paris seminar was on multilingual classrooms and the teaching and learning of foreign languages. The focus of the Frankfurt seminar was on literacy and the language of schooling. The cancelled meeting in la Valletta was aimed at examining language learning in vocational education and training.

¹ European Commission (2017), Strengthening European identity through education and culture, European Commission, Strasbourg, p. 11. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/betapolitical/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf

² Day, L. and Meierkord, A. (2017), Rethinking Language Education and Linguistic Diversity in Schools, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/de1c9041-25a7-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

³ Staring, F., Day, L. and Meierkord, A. (2017), Migrants in European Schools: Learning and Maintaining Languages, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c0683c22-25a8-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1>

This report takes stock of the key learning points from the presentations, discussions and school visits that took place in Paris and Frankfurt, as well as from the inputs collected as part of the preparations for the cancelled seminar in la Valletta. It also presents good practices and key recommendations, in order to promote the further implementation of the Recommendation.

The report is structured as follows:

- This chapter provides an introduction to the report.
- Chapter two sets out the political context and key figures on language learning in Europe which underpinned the adoption of the Council Recommendation.
- Chapter three considers key lessons and examples of good practice to support pupils to reach adequate competence levels in multiple foreign languages, the language of schooling and their home languages.
- Chapter four presents key lessons and examples of good practice on promoting language awareness in schools, including in vocational education and training.
- Chapter five includes key lessons and examples of good practice to support teachers, trainers and school leaders to adopt innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies, and to strengthen international school partnerships.
- Chapter six summarises the report and presents six key recommendations to further strengthen the implementation of the Council Recommendation.

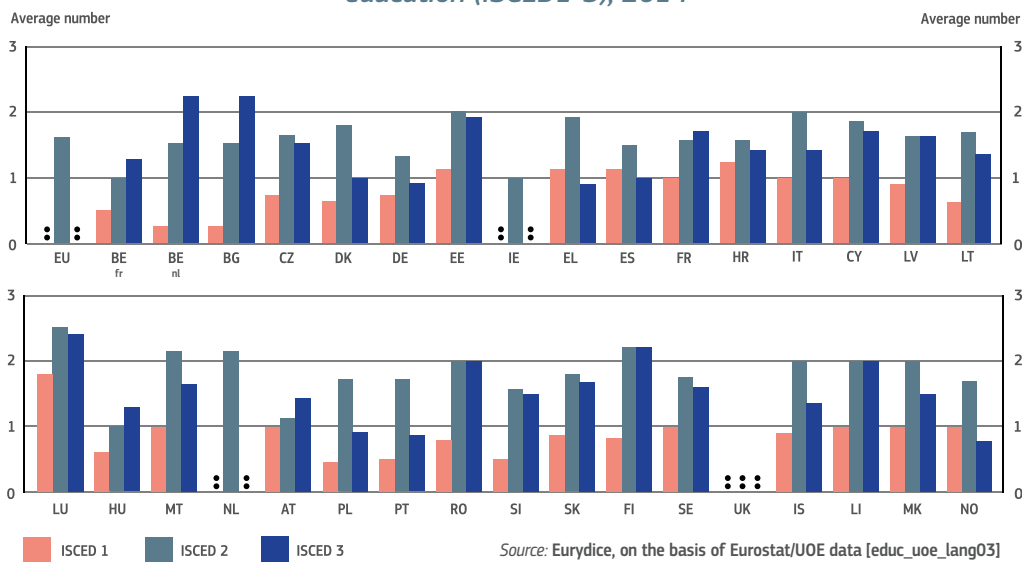
2.0 Context

On 17 November 2017, EU leaders held an informal meeting in Gothenburg, expressing their intention to strengthen EU collaboration in the area of education and culture.⁴ Through its communication, *strengthening European identity through education and culture*,⁵ the European Commission provided input to the meeting, setting out its vision for **the development of a European Education Area by 2025** in which “learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders”.⁶ In addition to promoting mobility and the mutual recognition of secondary school diplomas, **mastering multiple languages** was identified as a key enabler to achieve the EU’s vision for a European Education Area. Speaking multiple languages and reaching a sufficient proficiency level in at least one of them, in addition to the language(s) of schooling, is a key condition to being able to study or work abroad. It also opens up new perspectives and affords the opportunity to fully explore and understand the cultural richness that each individual country within the European Education Area has to offer.

2.1 Key figures on language teaching and learning in Europe

Foreign language learning at school is very common in the EU. Eurydice’s 2017 report,⁷ which brings together key data on the teaching of languages at school in Europe (Figure 1), tells us that the average number of foreign languages learnt per student is usually highest in lower secondary education (ISCED 2), drops in upper secondary education (ISCED 3) and starts at primary school (ISCED 1) between the age of 6 and 8.

Figure 1 – Average number of foreign languages learnt per student in primary and secondary education (ISCED1-3), 2014



⁴ European Council (2017), Leaders Agenda Note on Education and Culture. Available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31544/en_leaders-agenda-note-on-education-and-culture.pdf

⁵ European Commission (2017), *Strengthening European identity through education and culture*, European Commission, Strasbourg. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf

⁶ Ibid., p. 11.

⁷ EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), *Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe*, European Union, Luxembourg, p. 69. Available at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/key-data-teaching-languages-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017-edition_en

Eurostat provides more figures on the differences between primary and secondary school language learning.⁸ At EU level, 83.8% of primary school pupils were learning at least one foreign language in 2014. This is an increase compared with 2005, when only 67.3% were doing so. At lower secondary school level, 98.6% of all school pupils in the EU studied at least one foreign language in 2014, which is an increase compared with 2005, when this was only 46.7%. A further 59.7% of pupils at this level studied at least two foreign languages. At upper secondary school level, language learning drops to an average of 85.8% of all learners studying at least one foreign language. And only 48.0% of all learners study two or more foreign languages, which is more than 10% less compared with lower secondary education. English is by far the most popular language at lower secondary level, studied by 97.3% of all pupils, followed by French (33.8%) and German (23.1%).

These statistics indicate an overall positive trend for early access to language learning, but EU education systems do not seem to be able to deliver the desired outcomes:

- **Overall language proficiency levels are low** and large differences exist between EU Member States. According to a 2012 European survey on language competence carried out in 14 Member States,⁹ only 42% of all 15-year-olds reached the level of ‘independent user’.¹⁰ In the 2018 Flash Eurobarometer, which surveyed all Member States, one third of all 15-30-year-olds declared themselves unable to study in a language other than the one they used at school.¹¹
- These low levels of language proficiency are confirmed by the EU’s overall poor performance in the OECD’s latest Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), published on 3 December 2018.¹² One of the three tested domains in PISA 2018 was **reading literacy**. PISA defines reading literacy as “*understanding, using, evaluating, reflecting on and engaging with texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate in society*”.¹³ Such an understanding of reading literacy goes beyond extracting information, and includes critical thinking, constructing knowledge and making well-founded judgements across a variety of textual media. The PISA results show that more than one in five 15-year-olds in the EU cannot complete simple tasks in the three tested domains of reading (21.7%), maths (22.4%) and science (21.6%). These results are important for the EU, as they feed into the strategic framework for EU cooperation in education and training, in which EU Member States set the ambition to reduce the number of underachieving pupils in the EU to below 15% by 2020. Another important result is that pupils with a migrant background or who speak a different language at home than at school scored worse in PISA. A more nuanced analysis of bi-/plurilingual learners and their needs is needed, including solutions as to how schools and education policies can better support these pupils.

⁸ See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/database>

⁹ Special Eurobarometer 386 (2012), Europeans and Their Languages. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386_en.pdf

¹⁰ According to the Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). See: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

¹¹ Flash Eurobarometer 466 (2018), The European Education Area – Briefing Note, Directorate-General for Communication. Available at: http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2186_466_ENG

¹² See <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa-2018-results.htm>

¹³ See <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/5c07e4f1-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/5c07e4f1-en>

- Compared with general education, **language learning in vocational education and training (VET) is low**. At EU level, the total proportion of VET students in upper secondary education who were learning at least two languages was 34.5% in 2014. This is nearly 20 percentage points fewer than their counterparts in general education.¹⁴ In Spain, Portugal, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Greece, less than 10% of VET learners in upper secondary education are learning two or more foreign languages. At the other end of the spectrum are Belgium (Flanders), Estonia, Poland and Slovakia, where 50-74% of VET learners are learning two or more foreign languages. In Finland and Bulgaria, this figure exceeds 75%. The PISA results cited above also show a performance gap in reading between general and vocational education students.

2.2 Raising the bar for language teaching and learning

To improve the language proficiency level in the EU, the European Council, at its meeting of 14 December 2017, called upon the Commission, the Council and the EU Member States to develop initiatives that would support the improvement of the teaching and learning of languages.¹⁵ This political desire to improve language levels is shared by young people. In the aforementioned 2018 Flash Eurobarometer,¹⁶ 84% of young people said that they want to improve a foreign language they have learned already, and 77% said they want to learn a new language. Following the Commission's proposal in May 2018, the Council of the EU, on 22 May 2019, adopted a **Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages**.¹⁷

The key components of the Council Recommendation can be summarised as follows:

- (1) First, the Recommendation encourages Member States to apply comprehensive approaches to improve the teaching and learning of languages at national, regional or school level to help all students **reach adequate competence levels**, based on the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).¹⁸ It sets out the ambitious objective that all young Europeans finishing upper secondary education should have a good knowledge of at least two languages in addition to the language of schooling.
- (2) Second, the Recommendation underlines the importance of **promoting language awareness in schools**, at all levels, including vocational education and training. 'Language aware schools' take into account all languages that are part of the learner's linguistic capital and ensure that language learning – both foreign languages and the language of schooling – is embedded in all curricula and school subjects.
- (3) Finally, the Recommendation asks Member States to **support teachers, trainers and school leaders** to develop language awareness. This can be achieved in particular by offering language teachers more opportunities to learn and study abroad, and through increased school partnerships.

¹⁴ See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/database>

¹⁵ Council of EU (2017), European Council meeting (14 December 2017) – Conclusions. Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/32204/14-final-conclusions-rev1-en.pdf#>

¹⁶ Special Eurobarometer 386 (2012), Europeans and Their Languages. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386_en.pdf

¹⁷ Council of the EU (2019), Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605\(02\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605(02)&from=EN)

¹⁸ See <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

In the Council Recommendation, the Commission also states its intention to **strengthen its cooperation with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)** to support the development of innovative language teaching and learning methods, and to increase awareness of the importance of language learning for modern societies. In 2015, the Commission and the ECML signed a cooperation agreement on ‘Innovative Methodologies and Assessment in Language Learning’, which has been renewed every year since then.¹⁹ As part of this cooperation agreement, the ECML and the Commission work closely together on two initiatives, through which training workshops are delivered to language professionals in EU and ECML Member States:

- Through the project **Supporting Multilingual Classrooms**, the ECML and the Commission provide training workshops to language teachers to ensure all schools in today’s multilingual and multicultural Europe are language-aware, valuing and drawing on the rich linguistic repertoires of their learners.²⁰
- The **RELING initiative (Relating Language Curricula, Tests and Examinations to the CEFR)** train language professionals on how to relate language curricula, tests and examinations to the CEFR.²¹

Interview with Ms Sarah Breslin, Executive Director of the European Centre for Modern Languages (Graz, Austria)



How was the Council Recommendation on the teaching and learning of foreign languages received by the ECML?

“The Council Recommendation was warmly welcomed by the ECML and the wider Council of Europe because it embraces the Council’s broad view of language education that moves beyond traditional foreign languages and includes regional/minority languages, the languages of schooling and languages of migration.”

“Our view of quality language education is one that is lifelong, inclusive and values all languages present in the classroom and considers all those working in education as having a role to play in realising this aim.”

How have ECML Member States received the Council Recommendation? Do you think it has had an impact on national language policy developments?

“From what I see, the Council Recommendation has been very well received. [...] It is difficult to talk about impact so soon after its publication, but what I can tell you is that in our exchanges with representatives from our Member States who are often working at policy level, this Recommendation is frequently referred to and is being taken into account in national developments.”

¹⁹ See <https://www.ecml.at/CooperationECECML/tabid/1461/Default.aspx>

²⁰ See <https://www.ecml.at/TrainingConsultancy/Multilingualclassrooms/tabid/1816/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

²¹ See <https://relang.ecml.at/>

How important is it for pupils to master the language of schooling?

“The ECML considers the language of schooling as key because without highly developed competences, learners cannot realise their academic potential. [...] Mastery of everyday communication does not equate to mastery of academic language.”

“We often think about the language of schooling as only being a concern for learners from a migrant background, and it’s true that a focus on the language of schooling came about in recognition of the increased number of learners in schools whose first language is different from the language of schooling, but research clearly shows that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds also struggle, particularly when it comes to the specific discourses used in different school subjects.”

“We have been working in this area for over 10 years now and have a dedicated thematic portal for the language of schooling.”²²

When it comes to the teaching and learning of languages, what is the biggest challenge facing school systems today?

“Within school systems, one of the main challenges is simply the limited number of languages on offer which can be due to timetable constraints, a shortage of teachers but also to a mistaken belief (from parents, school staff and pupils themselves) that English is enough. At societal level, we need to get the message out there that Europe is language-rich and that we will all benefit from knowing more languages, beginning perhaps, with the languages of our neighbours. This is why we ran a project on ‘Creating Learning Environments where Languages can Flourish’,²³ because this challenge cannot be left to language teachers alone.”

“We need to become better at sharing the benefits of having multiple languages to the wider community – the personal, professional, cognitive, health and societal benefits.”

²² See <https://www.ecml.at/Thematicareas/Languagesofschooling/tabid/2968/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

²³ See <https://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2016-2019/Learningenvironmentswhereforeignlanguagesflourish/tabid/1865/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

3.0 Reaching adequate competence levels

At the basis of the Council Recommendation's first strand of recommendations on reaching adequate competence levels is the Commission's vision that *"by 2025, all young Europeans finishing upper secondary education have a good knowledge of two languages, in addition to their mother tongue(s)"*.²⁴ This vision is reflected in the Recommendation in three ways:

(1) First, it recommends Member States to **raise the bar for language learning in general**. All upper secondary school graduates should master the language of schooling and another European language at a level which allows them to use these languages effectively for social, learning and professional purposes. All graduates should also be able to fluently interact in any third language.

(2) Second, the Recommendation underlines the importance of fully **mastering the language of schooling** as a basis for learning and educational achievement, especially for learners from migrant, minority or disadvantaged backgrounds. It therefore recommends that teachers of all subjects should be supported to be able to support the acquisition of the language of schooling.

(3) Finally, by recognising the increased linguistic diversity in European classrooms as a result of recent waves of migration and increased mobility within the EU, the Recommendation stresses the importance of **valuing linguistic diversity**. It asks EU Member States to consider promoting the assessment, validation and development of languages which are not necessarily part of the curriculum, but that are an intrinsic part of an increasing share of learners' linguistic repertoires (for example, in the case of pupils with a migrant, minority or bilingual background).

3.1 Raising the bar for foreign language learning

In most EU Member States, the importance and benefits of learning foreign languages is recognised. The cognitive benefits of language learning range from increased executive control, metacognitive awareness and intelligence to delaying dementia.²⁵ As such, **many Member States have adopted comprehensive language learning strategies which make the learning of two foreign languages compulsory** and promote innovative ways of language teaching and learning. Rather than making two foreign languages compulsory for all students, some national curricula seek to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn two or more foreign languages. For example, in Belgium (French Community), Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Sweden, Liechtenstein and Norway, learning two foreign languages is not an obligation for all students before leaving full-time compulsory education; however, all students are entitled to learn two languages during this phase.²⁶

²⁴ European Commission (2017), Strengthening European identity through education and culture, European Commission, Strasbourg, p. 13. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/betapolitical/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf

²⁵ More on the cognitive benefits of language learning can be found here: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cognitivebenefits-language-learning/resources/Notes_from_the_First_Meeting_of_the_Advisory_Committee.pdf

²⁶ EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe – Highlights, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/3b929832-3f61-11e7-a08e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search-monde>, Ministry of National Education, Paris. Available at: https://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/Racine/33/4/propositions_meilleure_maitrise_langues_vivantes_998334.pdf

In **France**, the government has adopted a comprehensive action plan to improve children's language skills from elementary all the way up to upper secondary education.²⁷ The action plan is based on the recommendations included in a report written by Chantal Manes-Borisseau and Alex Taylor,²⁸ which was commissioned by the Ministry of National Education in 2018. The main components of the action plan are that, at elementary school, all pupils (from the age of 3) should be exposed to their first foreign language through songs and games. At primary school, pupils should have shorter and more frequent exposure to foreign languages (at least 20 minutes per day). At lower secondary level, all pupils should study at least two modern foreign languages (one of which is English), and at upper secondary level it is possible to add a third foreign language. In addition to this, pupils can test their level of English at the end of grade 9 through a free language test, and at the end of upper secondary education all students will now receive an official certificate listing their proficiency in all the languages studied as part of their compulsory education. At lower secondary level, teachers can also teach certain subjects in a foreign language.

*Mr Daniel Auverlot, Rector of the Academy of Créteil, at the first implementation seminar in Paris on 14-15 October 2019, underlined the **impact of mastering foreign languages on pupils' future professional opportunities**. Mr Auverlot said that if students want to succeed in today's labour market, they need a solid knowledge of English in addition to other foreign languages. The Academy is responsible for the teacher training and management of schools in some of the most deprived areas of greater Paris, and therefore sees it as its mission to raise the language levels of all its students. To achieve this, the Academy wants to increase the mobility of pupils, as this helps to improve pupils' language skills, as well as their autonomy and self-confidence.*



Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), or the teaching of a subject in a foreign language, is an essential part of the language,²⁹ strategy in **Italy**. In 2003, the Ministry of Education adopted a large-scale education reform, as part of which a competence- and action-oriented approach to language learning was proposed.³⁰ In addition to introducing English as a first compulsory foreign language at primary school level and making the learning of two foreign languages compulsory at lower secondary level, a number of regulations were adopted with regards to the introduction of CLIL.³¹ In 2010, CLIL was introduced in upper secondary schools, and in 2014/2015 into VET schools. It is set to be rolled out across all educational levels in the future. To ensure CLIL teachers have the required level of C1 language proficiency, the Ministry also developed a range of training programmes on CLIL methods for primary, secondary and VET schools.

²⁷ See <https://www.education.gouv.fr/les-langues-vivantes-etrangees-et-regionales-11249>

²⁸ Taylor, A. and Manes-Borisseau, C. (2018), Propositions pour une meilleure maîtrise des langues vivantes étrangères. Oser dire le nouveau monde, Ministry of National Education, Paris. Available at: https://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/Racine/33/4/propositions_meilleure_maitrise_langues_vivantes_998334.pdf

²⁹ Scott, D. and Beadle, S. (2014), Improving the effectiveness of language learning: CLIL and computer assisted language learning, European Commission, Brussels. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/content/improving-effectiveness-language-learning-clil-and-computer-assisted-language-learning_en

³⁰ See <https://archivio.pubblica.istruzione.it/normativa/2004/legge53.shtml>

³¹ See <https://www.miur.gov.it/normativa1>

Key lessons on foreign language learning:

- **Start as early as possible:** some EU Member States have started lowering the age at which children are exposed to foreign languages and are gradually increasing the number of languages offered in compulsory education. This is a positive trend as evidence indicates that, after a certain age, children's 'sensitive period' for languages wears off due to brain maturation and reduced neuroplasticity.³²
- **Promote and support teachers to use inclusive, innovative and multilingual pedagogies:** EU Member States are more widely promoting and supporting teachers to adopt innovative language pedagogies in their classrooms. In addition to CLIL, online language learning tools are also effective as they can provide non-judgmental and student-centred learning experiences. EUROCALL (the European Association of Computer-Assisted Language Learning) offers a platform for researchers, practitioners and developers to create and disseminate innovative research and practice on CALL.³³ The NESET research network recently also prepared a report for the Commission, which includes a wide range of innovative language education practices to inspire educators and policymakers.³⁴
- **Increase 'real exposure' through mobility:** learner mobility, whether physical or virtual, is recognised by almost all EU countries as perhaps the most effective way to support pupils to become fully fluent in a foreign language.

3.2 Mastering the language of schooling

In 1922, the Austrian-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein said that *"the limits of our language define the limits of our world"*.³⁵ Indeed, it is through language that we perceive the world, and it is through the language of schooling that our pupils have access to subject knowledge. Ensuring that all students – not only those with a migrant background – fully master or develop 'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP)³⁶ in the language of schooling is therefore crucial from an equity and social inclusion point of view. Full mastery of the language of schooling is essential for educational achievement, further studies and further progress in life, as it encompasses the ability to understand and express complex linguistic concepts and ideas in oral and written forms as well as metalinguistic competence, or the ability to understand and express nuanced linguistic differences.

³² The term 'sensitive period' refers to 'periods in development in which experience has unusually strong effects on brain and behaviour'. See: White, E. J., Hutka, S. A., Williams, L. J. and Moreno, S. (2013), Learning, neural plasticity and sensitive periods: implications for language acquisition, music training and transfer across the lifespan. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2013.00090>

³³ See <http://www.eurocall-languages.org/>

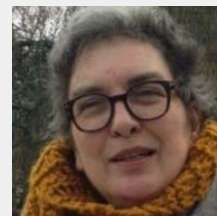
³⁴ European Commission (2020), The Future of Language Education in Europe: Case studies of Innovative Practices, le Pichon-Vorstman, E., Siarova, H. and Szónyi, E, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <https://nesetweb.eu/en/resources/library/the-future-of-language-education-in-europe-case-studies-of-innovative-practices/>

³⁵ Wittgenstein, L. (1922), Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. Available at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/5740/5740-pdf.pdf>

³⁶ In 1979, Professor Jim Cummins coined the terms BICS and CALP to distinguish between 'basic interpersonal communicative skills' (BICS) and 'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP). See: Cummins, J. (2008), BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction, in Street, B. V., and Hornberger, N. (eds.), Encyclopaedia of Language and Education, Volume 2: Literacy, Springer, New York, p. 71-83.

Since support to master the language of schooling is particularly important for pupils who speak a different language at home than at school, many EU countries provide **additional language classes** in the language of schooling to newly arrived migrant pupils. With the exception of Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Romania and Slovakia, all EU Member States offer some form of additional language support.³⁷ In 2018, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in **Germany** (KMK) adopted a 10-point Recommendation on the Language of Schooling.³⁸ This includes a specific focus on supporting pupils whose first language is not German. In the state of Hesse, one of the most diverse states in Germany, more than 50% of children in the first year of primary school have a migration background, and this rises to more than 70% among new-borns. To support these pupils in mastering German as the language of schooling and to help them to succeed at school, Hesse's support system is based on the principle that 'every lesson is a German lesson' (*jede Stunde ist eine Deutschstunde*). In addition to this, pupils receive intensive German classes, either as preparatory courses before compulsory school age, over the summer holidays, or as part the school curriculum.

*Ms Angelika Frank is a German teacher at the Elisabethenschule in Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany), a grammar school with approximately 850 students from 43 different nationalities. She explained that **non-German speaking students are supported to acquire the language of schooling as follows:** "First, our students join intensive German classes for a minimum duration of one year. The main focus is on learning German, but students are also expected to gradually join regular subject lessons (first two, then four and a maximum of six subjects). During the subject lessons, teachers pay strong attention to developing pupils' language skills. Finally, once students have fully joined the 'regular' class, they still receive extra lessons in German as a second language to support them to succeed."*



In **Malta**, the National Literacy Strategy for All (2014-2019)³⁹ fits within the country's broader 'Integration=Belonging' action plan for the integration of people with a migrant background.⁴⁰ Although the strategy targets all individuals residing in Malta, there is a specific focus on third country adults, young people and children. The strategy provides a framework to ensure that all children are empowered to succeed at school, work and life through the acquisition of literacy skills. In this context, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) recently set up the 'I Belong Programme', aimed at supporting learners with a migrant background to learn Maltese and English.⁴¹ In addition to supporting pupils to master English and Maltese, the programme includes so-called 'cultural orientation' modules to support pupils' wider social integration.

³⁷ EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe, European Union, Luxembourg, p. 69. Available at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/key-data-teaching-languages-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017-edition_en

³⁸ See https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/PresseUndAktuelles/2019/2019-12-06_Bildungssprache/2019-368-KMK-Bildungssprache-Empfehlung.pdf

³⁹ See <https://education.gov.mt/en/Documents/Literacy/ENGLISH.pdf>

⁴⁰ See <https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/migrant%20integration-EN.pdf>

⁴¹ See <https://integration.gov.mt/en/ibelong/Pages/IbelongProgramme.aspx>; see also https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/11_n.vassallo_a2_literacy_multilingual_competences_-_national_examples_malta.pdf

Many other EU countries, however, have developed policies to support the language of schooling without necessarily specifically targeting pupils with a migrant background.

In **Estonia**, language and literacy skills are embedded in the current national educational strategy. Communicative competence is seen as a general competence to be developed across all subjects, and student-teachers receive subject-specific literacy courses as part of their initial teacher education (ITE). Estonia's new Education Strategy 2021-2035⁴² will propose even more comprehensive language policies across all levels of education: formal, non-formal and informal education. There will be a strong focus on increasing the skills and opportunities of *all* children – not only pupils with a migrant background – by ensuring that they develop literacy skills in Estonian as the language of schooling.

*The Erasmus+ funded Listiac project, **Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in all Classrooms**,⁴³ seeks to encourage (future) teachers to adopt linguistically sensitive beliefs, attitudes and teaching practices in mainstream classrooms. It does so by developing and experimenting with a theoretically informed reflection tool aimed at pre-service and in-service teachers. The overall objective of the project is to make subject teachers realise that supporting pupils to develop the language of schooling is important to give all students – not only those with a migrant background, but all students with learning difficulties – equal opportunities to succeed at school.*

In 2014, **Sweden** launched the Literacy Boost Programme⁴⁴ in response to poor results in PISA, PIRLS,⁴⁵ and school inspection reports. For pupils, the programme wants to ensure that they not only acquire disciplinary literacy, but also critical literacy and digital literacy. For pupils with a migrant background (which now constitute more than 20% of the student population in Sweden), the importance of maintaining high expectations, scaffolding instead of simplifying, and offering study support in pupils' home language are measures to ensure that these pupils develop literacy in Swedish as the language of schooling at the same pace as their native peers. For teachers, in addition to guidebooks and tools to encourage individual learning, the initiative includes a collaborative learning programme. Through this programme, language and subject teachers from different schools can come together to exchange experiences and good practices on how to support students to acquire literacy and the language of schooling during their lessons and are guided by an experienced colleague during these training seminars. So far, more than 25% of all teachers in Sweden (i.e. around 60,000 teachers) have taken part in the programme.

⁴² See <https://www.hm.ee/en/activities/strategic-planning-2021-2035>

⁴³ See <http://listiac.org/>

⁴⁴ See <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/kurser-och-utbildningar/laslyftet-i-skolan>

⁴⁵ PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy) is an international assessment of reading (comprehension) of fourth grade secondary school pupils, conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). See: <https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/>

Key lessons on the language of schooling:

- **The language of schooling is a highly complex and foundational skill for learning:** it has a variety of complex formal registers and grammatical structures which structure thought and expression, which are crucial for learning in formal educational settings. As the English linguist Michael Halliday once said: “*when children learn language, they are not simply engaging in one kind of learning among many; rather they are learning the foundation of learning itself*”.⁴⁶
- **Support *all* students to acquire the language of schooling:** not only pupils who speak a different language at home than at school, but *all* pupils who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or have some form of learning difficulty need additional support to master the language of schooling.
- **Every teacher is a language teacher:** given the complexity of the language of schooling and its importance for pupils to succeed at school, *all* teachers have a role to play in supporting their pupils to master the language of schooling. It is important to continue raising awareness among subject teachers of their role in developing the language of schooling through linguistically sensitive teaching.

3.3 Valuing linguistic diversity

Although early acquisition of the language of schooling is important for school success, it has to be seen in conjunction with supporting pupils’ **overall literacy development**. Functional literacy as the most basic foundational skill is crucial for cognitive progress across the curriculum and transcends the linguistic borders between different languages.⁴⁷ If pupils speak a different language at home than at school, literacy development in their home language will have an impact on their development of the language of schooling. Since classrooms in Europe have become increasingly multilingual – around 9% of all pupils speak a different language at home than at school⁴⁸ – it has become increasingly important for schools to adopt inclusive and multilingual classroom policies and practices which value and support the development of pupils’ *entire* linguistic repertoire(s). Such policies see linguistic diversity as an asset rather than a barrier to teaching and learning. For pupils with a migrant or refugee background, some of whom have had little exposure to school in their country of origin and therefore have a limited cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in their home language, support to develop literacy in their home language is even more important.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Halliday, M. (1993), Towards a language-based theory of learning in: *Language and Education* 5, p. 93.

⁴⁷ Council of Europe (2015), *The Language Dimension in all Subjects – A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg. Available at: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Handbook-Scol_final_EN.pdf

⁴⁸ Flash Eurobarometer 466 (2018), *The European Education Area – Briefing Note*. Available at: http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2186_466_ENG

⁴⁹ Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Le Pichon Vorstman, E. and Siarova, H. (2017), *Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned*, European Union, Luxembourg.

Many EU countries, however, still adopt an **'exclusive L2 submersive model'**. In such models there is an exclusive focus on the language of schooling and no recognition or even suppression of pupils' home language(s). Professor Piet Van Avermaet, linguist at Ghent University and head of the Centre for Diversity and Learning (Belgium), explains that such beliefs are based on *"binary views of monolingualism and multi- or bilingualism"*,⁵⁰ or the belief that either the language of schooling or home languages should be suppressed/promoted. Their coexistence in educational settings would not be possible. The decision to focus exclusively on the language of schooling based on such beliefs, however, has an impact on teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism and their classroom practices.

*The **'BET YOU' project**,⁵¹ which gathered the opinions of 775 teachers from 48 secondary schools in Flanders (Belgium), shows that teachers in Flanders primarily have 'monolingual beliefs'. For example, 77.3% believe that pupils should not be allowed to use their home language at school, and 78.2% believe that the most important cause of academic failure is insufficient proficiency in the language of schooling. Understanding teachers' beliefs on diversity is an important starting point to develop teachers' competences for teaching in multilingual classrooms.*

In addition to supporting overall literacy, valuing linguistic diversity is a matter of **social justice and inclusion**. As mentioned by the Canadian linguist Professor Jim Cummins: *"to reject a child's language in the school is to reject the child"*.⁵² If children are asked, implicitly or explicitly, by their school, their teachers or – even worse – their parents to leave their home language(s) at the school gate, then they are forced to leave behind a central part of their identity, which will have a detrimental impact on their self-confidence, motivation and active participation at school and educational achievement.

*At the second implementation seminar in Frankfurt on 17-18 December 2019, Professor David Little argued that **"asking children to leave their home language at the school gate is cruel, foolish and doomed to failure!"** It is cruel, as the home language is crucial to one's identity; it is foolish, as the home language is one's primary cognitive tool; it is doomed to failure, as it is impossible to suppress home languages in the never-ending but unspoken stream of pupils' consciousness.*



⁵⁰ Van Avermaet, P. (2018), Introduction: The Multilingual Edge of Education, in *The Multilingual Edge of Education*, ed. Van Avermaet, P., Slembrouck, S., Van Gorp, K., Sierens, S. and Maryns, K., Palgrave Macmillan London, p. 1-6. Available at: <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137548559>

⁵¹ Pulinx, R., Van Avermaet, P. and Agirdag, O. (2015), Silencing Linguistic Diversity: The extent, the determinants and the consequences of the monolingual belief of the Flemish teachers, in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 20 (5), p. 542-556. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2015.1102860>

⁵² Cummins, J. (2001), Bilingual Children's Mother Tongue: Why is it important for education?, in *Srpgoforum* 19, p. 19. Available at: https://www.lavplu.eu/central/bibliografie/cummins_eng.pdf

In **Bulgaria**, there is a growing awareness of the importance of mother tongue education. The Ministry and Education and Science notes that (translated from Bulgarian): “*Mother tongue knowledge is of paramount importance today in the context of intense globalisation in all areas of social, economic and cultural life*”.⁵³ Since 1991, Roma children in Bulgaria have the right to education in their own language,⁵⁴ and the most recent legislation on mother tongue education was passed in 2017.⁵⁵ Roma adults with a high school degree have been trained to teach Romani using a bilingual approach, and textbooks in Romani language for students have been published, as well as guides for teachers.

In **Ireland**, Scoil Bhríde primary school shows how a school can manage linguistic diversity in practice through adopting an inclusive language policy. The school’s policy is based on three principles: (1) pupils can use their home language during pair or group work in the classroom; (2) learners are allowed to use their home languages to scaffold their learning of English and Irish; and (3) pupils are encouraged to explain concepts in their home language to enrich the curriculum and learning for all other pupils.

The approach of Scoil Bhríde primary school and its **positive impact on pupils’ educational outcomes and well-being** was recently evaluated.⁵⁶ The evaluation found that, by allowing pupils to use their home language at school and supporting them to develop literacy in their home language, pupils acquire English as the language of schooling more quickly, have increased motivation to learn other languages and have earlier emergence of language awareness (as early as the age of 6). Minority-language pupils also understand subject knowledge more easily as they can make cross-linguistic semantic references and their parents – many of whom do not speak the language of schooling – can get more systematically involved in helping them with their homework. Another important impact is that allowing pupils to use and develop their home language at school promotes their overall well-being and self-esteem and encourages them to undertake autonomous learning activities. Autonomy also plays an important role in the development of ‘executive function’ skills, i.e. a set of cognitive skills, which enables children to be focused and ignore distractions. Evidence shows that multilingualism has a positive impact on the development of executive function skills, as well as working memory.⁵⁷

*Ms Marie Rosetti is a French and English teacher at the Fernand Léger upper secondary school in Paris (France) and says: “**I think it is crucial for our students to master their home language**, for many different reasons: to better understand and apply grammar, to develop their personal expression and to improve their critical thinking. Helping students to master their home languages can also help them to more quickly learn other subjects.”*



⁵³ See https://www.mon.bg/upload/2789/romski_5_8kl.pdf

⁵⁴ See https://www.mon.bg/upload/2789/romski_5_8kl.pdf

⁵⁵ See <https://www.mon.bg/bg/2221>

⁵⁶ Little, D. and Deirdre, K. (2019), *Engaging with Linguistic Diversity: A Study of Educational Inclusion in an Irish Primary School*, Bloomsbury Academic.

⁵⁷ Eneko, A., Carreiras, M. and Andoni Duñabeitia, J. (2019), *The impact of bilingualism on executive functions and working memory in young adults*, in PLOS ONE. Available at: 10.1371/journal.pone.0206770

Key lessons on valuing linguistic diversity:

- **Functional literacy transcends linguistic boundaries:** functional literacy is a basic foundational skill for learning, and a prerequisite for progress across the curriculum. As a core skill that transcends linguistic boundaries, it is important to develop it across all languages spoken by pupils.
- **Linguistic diversity supports learning, cognition and well-being:** allowing pupils to use their home language at school and supporting them to develop it supports the acquisition of the language of schooling, other subjects of the school curriculum and overall cognitive skills, such as executive function skills. Finally, allowing children to use and develop their home language(s) at school has a positive effect on their overall wellbeing, self-esteem and motivation to engage in the learning process, which are key factors for educational success.
- **Step away from ‘monolingual’ beliefs:** there is no need to make an ‘either/or’ decision between prioritising pupils’ development of the language of schooling, foreign languages or pupils’ home languages. Multilingual school policies can and should be developed, making the most of children’s general willingness to learn.

4.0 Promoting language awareness in schools

A second key component of the Council Recommendation focuses on promoting language awareness in all schools and vocational education and training institutions by integrating it *“in all levels of school organisation, teaching and practice: in literacy development, foreign language learning, in subject teaching, for acknowledging other language brought in by pupils, in communication with parents and with the wider school environment”*.⁵⁸ As such, the Recommendation asks EU Member States to increase their efforts on:

- **Adopting multilingual and whole school approaches** or embedding pupils’ literacy development of the language of schooling, foreign languages and their home languages across all subjects of the school curriculum, as well as involving parents and the wider school community in their learning process.
- **Strengthening language awareness in vocational education and training (VET)**, in particular by adopting policies which promote the development of literacy and multilingual competences in initial vocational education and training (iVET).

4.1 Adopting multilingual and whole school approaches

In his keynote speech at the first implementation seminar in Paris on 14-15 October 2019, Professor Van Avermaet argued for the adoption of a **‘multilingual social interaction model for learning’**.⁵⁹ Such a model goes beyond ‘traditional bilingual education’, in which different languages are temporally and spatially separated from each other and developed in separate lessons. It is a model in which the development of the language of schooling, foreign languages and pupils’ home languages form an integral part of each subject. At each stage of the learning process, pupils are encouraged to mobilise their entire linguistic repertoire, including their home language(s). Language learning happens in meaningful contexts and is seen as an essential part of stimulating social participation, building social networks and thereby involving the whole community – especially parents – in the learning process. Parental involvement is particularly important for educational success and reducing early school leaving.⁶⁰ As such, this model supports the involvement of parents of pupils with a migrant background – many of whom do not speak the language of schooling – and has the potential to reduce inequalities and foster pupils’ overall wellbeing, sense of belonging, self-confidence and identity.

⁵⁸ Council of the EU (2019), Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605\(02\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605(02)&from=EN)

⁵⁹ Van Avermaet, P. (2019), Beyond Binaries. How to Integrate Multilingualism and Language of Schooling in Education?, Implementation seminar with peer learning about language learning, Paris, 14-15 October. Abstract available at: https://mamp2019.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/keynote_piet-van-avermaet.pdf

⁶⁰ European Commission (2015), A whole school approach to tackling early school leaving – Policy messages, European Commission, Brussels. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/documentlibrary-docs/early-leaving-policy_en.pdf

In **Finland**, the National Core Curriculum states that the two principles which should guide school culture are cultural diversity and language awareness.⁶¹ This means that the school sees the use of multiple languages in the school environment as natural and positive to the learner's educational and cognitive development (cultural diversity) and that every teacher should be a language teacher (language awareness). A key challenge, however, is to convince subject teachers to be involved in language awareness. This is why the Finnish Ministry of Education, in 2016, decided to set up the Finnish Teacher Education Forum, led by the University of Helsinki.⁶² The initiative involves universities, education providers and Finnish municipalities and provides a framework for a wide variety of projects to promote language awareness in teacher education. Some schools in Finland also hire 'community ambassadors' to raise knowledge about cultural and language awareness issues. Finland also participated in an ECML-led initiative on the language(s) of schooling, through which a self-assessment toolkit was developed. The toolkit also includes examples of good practice and information for those involved in the schools' development process.⁶³

In **Croatia**, as part of the comprehensive 'School for Life' curricular reform,⁶⁴ which was rolled out across all primary and secondary schools in September 2019, language curricula have been reformed to reflect contemporary approaches in the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Language learning is now structured along three key competences. (1) 'Communicative Language Competence' implies the efficient use of students' language repertoire in accordance with the context and the purpose of a communicative situation. (2) 'Intercultural Communicative Competence' aims to encourage intercultural encounters in order to enable students to acquire intercultural skills and attitudes, and to develop awareness and attitudes about diversity as well as about their own and other cultures. (3) 'Autonomy in Language Acquisition' aims to enhance students' interest, positive attitudes and self-confidence in language learning, as well as creative expression, the development of critical thinking, media literacy and self-regulation.

⁶¹ The core curriculum functions as a guideline for local education providers to develop their own curricula on which tailored teaching and learning strategies should be developed. See <https://www.oph.fi/en/statistics-andpublications/publications/new-national-core-curriculum-basic-education-focus-school>

⁶² See <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/news/teaching-studying/finnish-teacher-education-reform>

⁶³ See <https://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2016-2019/roadmapforschools/tabid/2994/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

⁶⁴ See www.skolazavot.hr

Key lessons on promoting language awareness in schools:

- **Adopt a multilingual social interaction model for learning:** in such a model, the development of the language of schooling, foreign languages and pupils' home languages form an integral part of each subject at school. Parents as well as the wider community are involved in the pupils' learning process.
- **Involve all teachers in promoting language awareness:** adopting such a model firstly requires the buy-in of all teachers. Projects such as the 'Community Ambassadors' scheme in Finland can play a key role in raising awareness of the importance for teachers to develop pupils' cultural and linguistic awareness.
- **Involve parents and the wider community:** secondly, such a model offers a whole range of opportunities to involve parents – and the wider community – more closely in the learning process of their children. This is especially important for pupils with a migrant background and can help to reduce inequalities. The European Toolkit for Schools offers a range of inspiring examples to help schools adopt inclusive and 'whole school' approaches.⁶⁵

4.2 Strengthening language awareness in vocational education and training (VET)

A good knowledge of the language of schooling and foreign languages is as important for students in vocational education and training (VET) as it is for pupils in 'regular' education. The idea that it is less important for VET students to know multiple languages, or that they are less motivated or even 'skilled' to learn languages, is outdated. As early as in the 1960s the famous linguist Noam Chomsky put forward the idea that all human beings are born with a – what he calls – 'Language Acquisition Device' (LAD), or the innate ability to learn language.⁶⁶ Policymakers and practitioners should recognise that **learning new languages is not beyond anyone's ability**. Speaking multiple languages considerably improves the career prospects of VET students,⁶⁷ and it is also a prerequisite for long-term VET mobility, which can facilitate the exchange of ideas and good practices between skilled professionals, craftsmen and VET professionals and learners, and thereby boost innovation in the sector overall.

⁶⁵ See <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/toolkitsforschools.htm>

⁶⁶ Chomsky, N. (1965), *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, MIT Press, Harvard.

⁶⁷ European Commission (2014), *Languages Working Group Peer Learning Activity Report*, Helsinki 27-28 March 2014 and Graz 14 May 2014, European Commission, Brussels. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/experts-groups/2011-2013/languages/lang-peer_en.pdf

*In 2017, following up on its communication on ‘Investing in Europe’s Youth’,⁶⁸ the European Commission launched **ErasmusPRO** to support the long-term mobility of VET learners, recent graduates and staff (i.e. from 3 to 12 months). The objectives of the programme are to increase the attractiveness, quality and employability of VET learners, in particular by fostering their social, job-specific and language skills through mobility.⁶⁹ In 2018, as part of the Council’s European Framework on Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA),⁷⁰ EU Member States also committed to increasing their efforts to progressively promote the transnational mobility of apprentices, both at the workplace and in education and training institutions.*

Cedefop has been closely monitoring the development and implementation of VET policies related to the international mobility of apprentices. Based on 2020 data collected through its ReferNet network, it seems **“cross-country VET mobility in apprenticeships is still a niche phenomenon, especially long-term mobility”**.⁷¹ The factors which (may) have an impact on apprentices’ mobility are presented per country on Cedefop’s website,⁷² and a study on the long-term mobility of apprentices, to be concluded by the end of 2020, will also give more evidence on the matter.

In addition to promoting mobility, EU Member States are increasingly **embedding literacy and multilingualism as a key competence in VET policies and curricula**. As part of the Copenhagen process, which is an integral part of the Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) strategy to achieve the Europe 2020 benchmarks,⁷³ the European Ministers for vocational education and training and the European Commission committed to ensure key competences are adequately integrated in initial VET (iVET) curricula.⁷⁴

To monitor EU Member States’ progress towards achieving this strategic objective, Cedefop launched a **study on ‘Key competences in initial vocational education and training: digital, literacy and multilingual’**.⁷⁵ The study provides an in-depth analysis of how the three selected key competences have been integrated and promoted in iVET between 2011 and 2018.⁷⁶ The study identified 53 policies promoting literacy competence and 41 policies promoting multilingual competences in iVET (see Figure 2).

⁶⁸ European Commission (2016), Communication on Investing in Europe’s Youth. Available at: <https://eurlex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2016%3A940%3AFIN>

⁶⁹ See https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/three-key-actions/key-action-1/mobility-vet-staff_en

⁷⁰ Council of the EU (2018), Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0502%2801%29>

⁷¹ See <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet/thematicperspectives/international-mobility-apprentices>

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Council of the EU (2009), Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A52009XG0528%2801%29>

⁷⁴ Council of the EU (2015), Declaration of the European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training, and the European Commission on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGIS-SUM%3Aef0018>

⁷⁵ Cedefop (forthcoming), Key competences in iVET: digital, multilingual and literacy.

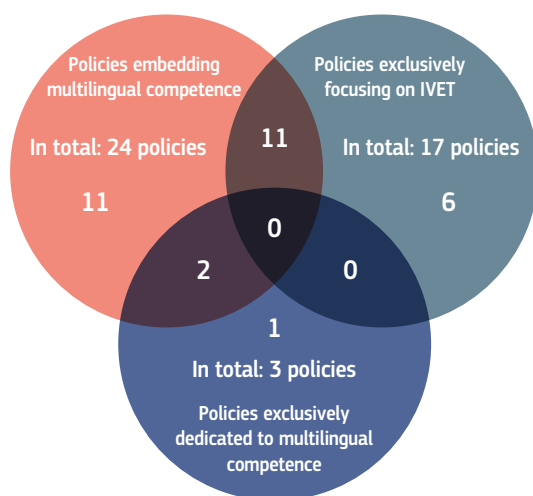
⁷⁶ The study looks at the EU28, 5 Candidate Countries, Iceland and Norway.

Half of the policies have a wider scope than iVET alone, and policies often tend to focus on more than one key competence. The policies are often also linked to broader societal objectives such as social inclusion, employability or lifelong learning; and they aim to promote or embed key competences in iVET, in particular through policies to embed literacy/multilingual in education and occupational standards, or in programme delivery. The main challenge is that policies often lack a specific focus on iVET, which limits their effectiveness.

Figure 2 – Policies promoting multilingual and literacy competence in iVET (2011-2018)

Policies promoting multilingual competence

In total: 41 policies

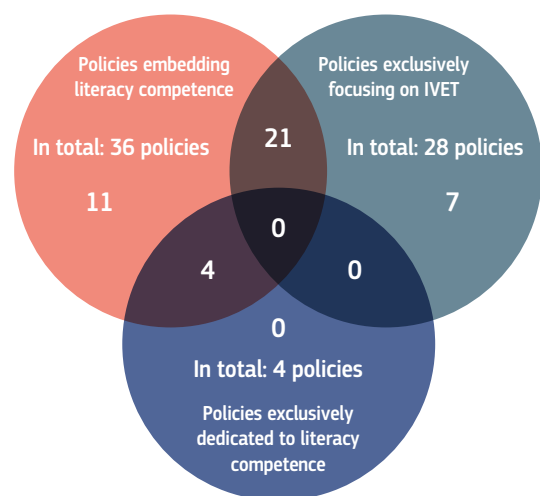


10 policies

no embedding objective, no explicit target iVET, not exclusively dedicated to multilingual competence

Policies promoting literacy competence

In total: 53 policies



10 policies

no embedding objective, no explicit target iVET, not exclusively dedicated to literacy

Source: Cedefop (forthcoming), Key competences in iVET: digital, multilingual and literacy.

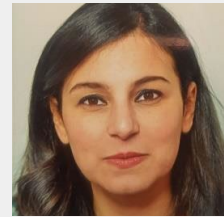
In **Belgium (Flemish Community)**, following the adoption of the Education Decree XXIII of 19 July 2013,⁷⁷ general and vocational schools can offer CLIL since 1 September 2014. In the participating iVET schools, CLIL is a success: students are more confident in speaking another language in the work context; teachers and trainers are enthusiastic and indicate that they have improved their own foreign language skills. However, the uptake of CLIL is lower in VET schools than in general schools, primarily because VET teachers and trainers struggle to obtain the required C1 language proficiency certificate and the CLIL regulation is more attuned to general education than vocational education and training.

In **Germany**, the Federal State of Hesse supports dual VET pupils to acquire German as the language of schooling as part of its wider response to the 10-point Recommendation on the Language of Schooling, covering all levels of education and training.⁷⁸ In addition to linguistically sensitive teaching in all subjects, VET pupils who do not speak German as their first language receive four additional German lessons per week. Teachers are also given specific training by the state on how to teach the language of schooling.

⁷⁷ See <https://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=14721>

⁷⁸ See https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/PresseUndAktuelles/2019/2019-12-06_Bildungssprache/2019-368-KMK-Bildungssprache-Empfehlung.pdf

*Ms Amira Boukraa teaches French and English in the vocational section of the Fernand Léger upper secondary school in Paris (France). She said: “the most difficult part of my job is to try to help VET students improve their level of English as a foreign language despite their different academic, cultural and even social backgrounds. This can be very challenging but, it allows us to **count on students to help and to learn from each other’s different strengths**. [...] For example, it can be very useful for students who do not speak French as their first language to rely on their knowledge of the grammar of their home language, and I therefore encourage them to speak it. The better they master a language the easier it can be for them to learn a new one!” In addition to mastering foreign languages, Ms Boukraa said that “mastering French is really important for VET students, as it enables them to comprehend what the school’s and the teacher’s expectations are.” Fernand Léger upper secondary school also has one dedicated one-year language class for pupils who have recently arrived in France (i.e. UP2A - Unité Pédagogique pour Elèves Allophones Arrivants).*



In **Greece**, since 2019–2020 the curriculum for cooks, hotel employees and electricians of the Hellenic Manpower Organisation (OAED’s) Experimental Apprenticeship Programme (PSEK) includes literacy and multilingual competences. The curriculum was updated to help students to develop relevant skills to work in the tourism sector, and to be competitive and meet labour market needs. The PSEK programme was initially developed by the Greek Ministry of Education in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Greek-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry and DEKKRA Akademie.⁷⁹

Malta’s College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST),⁸⁰ the only VET institute in Malta, offers preparatory courses in English as the language of schooling for international students who have not mastered the language. Another initiative is the ‘Bridging Nursing Course+’, which is for international students who have graduated in Nursing and Midwifery in a third country, but who wish to seek employment in Europe. Code switching and translanguaging⁸¹ is also part of the daily reality of pupils at the college since the school has pupils from 69 different nationalities. In subjects which require ‘higher order thinking’ in particular, pupils often problematise tasks in their own language first in order to understand what is being asked by the teacher. Afterwards, they use digital tools or their peers to translate their thoughts into English to receive feedback from their teachers. Languages are also integral to almost all courses offered by Malta’s Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS).⁸² The languages offered are French, Italian, German, Spanish and English.

⁷⁹ See https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/17_m.bartsoka_b2_literacy_multilingual_competences_-_national_examples_greece.pdf

⁸⁰ See <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/about-mcast/>

⁸¹ ‘Translanguaging’ is the use of different languages for communication and learning. See: Garcia, O. and Wei, L. (2014), *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*, Palgrave Macmillan.

⁸² See <https://its.edu.mt/>

*Dr Nadia Vassallo, Deputy Principal at MCAST, said that “**language learning is crucial for VET students**, not only because the ability to communicate in different languages enhances the probability of work mobility opportunities, but also because it reflects the need to be an effective employee in Malta. The country is experiencing a new reality whereby a high influx of immigrants are traveling to Malta for various reasons including either to achieve refugee status or to seek employment. Hence, current VET students will be working with and working for individuals who are speakers of different languages.”*

Finally, promoting language awareness in VET also creates a feedback loop and impacts on established notions of what is considered ‘successful’ in language teaching and learning. Due to its large work-based component, focusing on *learning by doing*, **VET contributes to making language teaching and learning more applied.**

In 2016, **Malta** adopted the ‘My Journey’ reform, which introduced more vocational and applied subjects in mainstream secondary education.⁸³ Today, all secondary schools have state-of-the-art workshops in 9 VET and applied subjects. By offering pupils more ‘applied’ subjects, the aim of the reform is not only to motivate students by making learning more relevant, but also to create spillover effects in other subjects, including languages. In fact, as part of the reform, applied syllabi for the core subjects of mathematics, English, Maltese and science were introduced, to make learning more applied and relevant for students.

Key lessons on promoting language awareness in vocational education and training (VET):

- **VET students can and should learn multiple languages:** language learning is not beyond anyone’s ability, and it considerably improves career prospects, also for VET students.
- **Develop VET-specific language policies:** although many EU Member States have policies in place to develop students’ multilingual and literacy competences in VET, their effectiveness is limited since they are often part of wider policies. These either focus on more than one key competence or are linked to broader societal objectives such as social inclusion, employability or lifelong learning.
- **Promote long-term VET mobility:** mobility has an impact on improving VET students and teachers’ social, job-specific and language skills. In addition to this, it facilitates the exchange of ideas and good practices between skilled professionals, craftsmen and VET professionals and learners, and thereby boosts innovation in the sector overall.

⁸³ See <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2018/December/05/pr182639.aspx>

5.0 Supporting teachers, trainers and school leaders

The third key component of the Council Recommendation focuses on supporting teachers, inspectors and school leaders to develop language awareness. To achieve this, the Council Recommendation proposes that EU Member States focus on:

- **Developing teacher education**, in particular around managing linguistic diversity, linguistically sensitive teaching, collaborative teaching and effectively using digital tools and adopting innovative, inclusive and multilingual teaching pedagogies.
- **Supporting teacher mobility and school partnerships**, either virtually or face-to-face, to further strengthen the competences of teachers and enrich the overall learning experience for pupils in schools.

5.1 Developing teacher education

The European Commission's Education and Training Monitor of 2019,⁸⁴ which monitors EU Member States' progress towards achieving the ET 2020 benchmarks, includes a specific focus on teachers, as they have the strongest impact on pupils' learning within the school environment. Looking at the main challenges faced by EU Member States to attract and retain the best teachers, the Monitor underlined the importance of **improving initial and continuing education**.⁸⁵ This is extremely important in increasing their overall motivation and helping them to innovate their teaching practices. For subject and language teachers alike, it is particularly important to be supported in adopting innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies, and learning how to manage linguistic diversity in the classroom.

At the second implementation seminar in Frankfurt on 17-18 December 2019, Professor Nathalie Auger presented a **four-step approach to put learners' linguistic capital into play**:

(1) Step 1 – Identifying the languages in the classroom: the first step is identifying all of the languages spoken by the pupils. In doing so, it is important to recognise that pupils, especially those with a migrant background, may have complex linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Visualising these backgrounds, for example through a 'language biography',⁸⁶ can be an effective way to capture this.

(2) Step 2 – Comparing languages: the second step is designing classroom activities which encourage pupils to actively compare different languages based on universal convergences. Such activities encourage pupils to build on past learning experiences (i.e. the languages they already know) to acquire new knowledge (i.e. the language of schooling or other subjects).

⁸⁴ European Commission (2019), Education and Training Monitor 2019 European Commission, Brussels. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/volume-1-2019-education-andtraining-monitor.pdf>

⁸⁵ More data on national policies on teacher careers across Europe can be found in the following Eurydice publication, which includes a comparative overview of 43 European education systems: EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2018), Teaching careers in Europe: Access, progression and support, European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/435e941e-1c3b-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁸⁶ See <https://maledive.ecml.at/Studymaterials/Individual/Visualisinglanguagerepertoires/tabid/3611/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

(3) Step 3 – Beyond comparing: the next step is allowing pupils to use their entire linguistic repertoire as a medium for learning. If pupils are allowed to ‘translate’ subject knowledge into languages other than the language of schooling, this can help their acquisition of subject knowledge. In a similar vein, allowing pupils to translate certain linguistic rules related to the language of schooling or to compare the language of schooling with other language(s) they already know, will help them acquire the language of schooling more quickly.

(4) Step 4 – Inclusion: finally, allowing pupils to use their entire linguistic repertoire in the classroom also supports inclusion. It offers opportunities to involve the parents of pupils with a migrant background more closely in the education of their children, which is known to have a big impact on educational success.

In addition to training, **collaboration between language and subject teachers** across all levels of education should be encouraged. This will ensure that the children’s development of literacy in the language of schooling, foreign language learning and acquisition of subject knowledge takes place in a structured and complementary way.

*The **CRADLE project**,⁸⁷ coordinated by the Athens branch of the German Goethe Institut and involving partners from Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark and Greece, developed a methodology for the tandem teaching of STEM subjects and foreign languages. The two major new design features of CRADLE are that: (1) it relies on primary school teachers who are not foreign language teachers, but are taught to use their foreign language knowledge; and (2) it is applied to cross-curricular projects that support the learning of entrepreneurial skills.*

⁸⁷ CRADLE stands for ‘Creating Actively Designed Language Learning Environments for Entrepreneurship Education’. More information on the project can be found here: <http://www.cradleproject.eu/>

In **Slovenia**, the Nova Gorica upper secondary school of economics and vocational school adopted a ‘Bilingual CLIL Team Teaching’ approach. The initiative started as a pilot project in February 2011 and was fully rolled out in 2012–2013. Through a bottom-up approach, whereby foreign language teachers and subject teachers collaboratively plan their lessons, students are taught by teams of two teachers: a subject and foreign language teacher. The CLIL lessons are offered in English and Italian.

*The **Certilingua Label of Excellence** encourages and recognises efforts of publicly funded schools supporting pupils to develop a high level of proficiency in at least two foreign languages and to act in a European, international and pluricultural world. The project began with EU funding in 2007, and today publicly funded schools from eight EU Member States can join the network through their country’s respective educational authorities, provided the schools meet certain criteria. Once a school has joined the network, students have the chance to obtain the Certilingua certificate and take part in different activities to improve their language skills.⁸⁸*

Key lessons on developing teacher education:

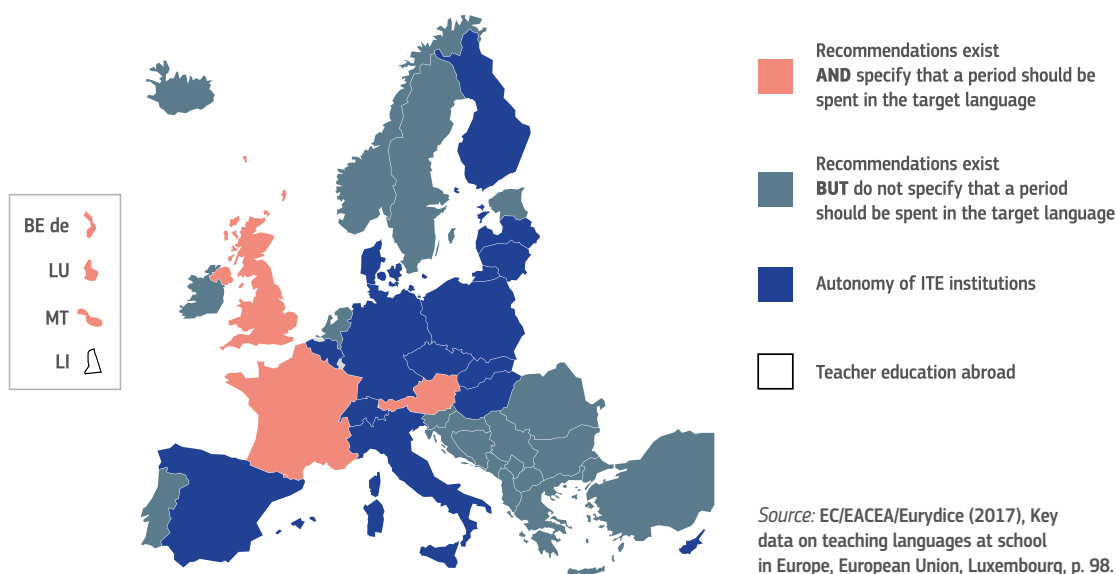
- **Develop training on diversity and multilingual classrooms:** teachers need training on effectively using innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies in the classroom, including digital technologies. This should help them to make the most of learners’ diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, thereby enriching the overall learning experience of every child in the classroom.
- **Promote collaborative teaching:** languages should be developed at all stages of education and across all subjects of the curriculum. To ensure this happens in a structured and complementary way, collaborative teaching initiatives such as in Slovenia’s Nova Gorica school should be explored further.

⁸⁸ The eight participating countries so far are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden. See: https://www.certilingua.net/?page_id=269

5.2 Supporting teacher mobility and school partnerships

If mobility is widely recognised as a key enabling factor helping school pupils to increase their foreign language skills, the same is true for foreign language teachers. **Spending a period in the target language country during initial teacher education (ITE)** seems to have a big impact on the linguistic skills of future language teachers. According to data from 2015/16, only two EU Member States specifically recommend that prospective foreign language teachers should spend a certain period in the target language country (see Figure 3). In France, it is recommended that foreign language teachers spend a period in the target language country, but the duration is not specified. In Austria, foreign language teachers are recommended to spend at least one semester abroad. This means that most training institutions are free to organise this type of training as they wish.

Figure 3 – Existence of central recommendations on ITE content and a period to be spent in the target language country for prospective foreign language teachers, 2015/16



According to the OECD's 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS),⁸⁹ which included a survey of lower secondary foreign language teachers, more than one in two (52%) went abroad as part of their teaching education. In addition to mobility during ITE, **in-service mobility opportunities** are also important for teachers to continue practising the language(s) they teach and for the exchange of good practices and experiences with other language teachers to update their teaching practices. The same TALIS survey shows that just under 60% of all foreign language teachers in lower secondary education had been abroad at least once for professional purposes. Further, more than 20% of all teachers surveyed went abroad with support from the EU's Erasmus+ programme (or former Socrates II programme), which is almost twice as high as the number of teachers going abroad with support from national or regional programmes. In Latvia, for example, more than 60% of teachers went abroad with support from the EU, compared with just over 20% who did so with support from a national or regional programme.

⁸⁹ See https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/talis-2013-results_9789264196261-en

The **opportunities offered by virtual mobility** should also not be forgotten, especially during these times of COVID-19 – we will come back to this question in the conclusion of this report. The Council Recommendation explicitly mentions eTwinning as an example of an online platform on which teachers can collaborate and exchange good practices.⁹⁰ Online collaboration between teachers can also provide the basis for the establishment of more structural school partnerships, both within and between countries, which can be used to develop face-to-face mobility programmes for teachers and pupils.

In the project ‘Rediscover Your Historical Roots through the Present’, pupils from two primary schools (one in Serbia, one in Italy) met virtually through Skype to collaborate on educational activities related to better understanding the traces of Roman rule in both Serbia and Italy, and to practise their language skills. The project was awarded the European Language Label in 2019.⁹¹

Key lessons on supporting teacher mobility and school partnerships:

- **Strengthen opportunities for teacher mobility in initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD):** mobility has a big impact on the development of future language teachers’ linguistic skills, and on in-service teachers continuing to improve the languages they teach.
- **Explore the full potential of virtual mobility:** more environmentally sustainable, less costly and almost as effective as face-to-face mobility is virtual mobility to strengthen teachers’ language and teaching skills. Especially in these times of crisis as a result of COVID-19, EU Member States and schools should seriously consider strengthening virtual mobility for their teachers, and pupils.
- **Strengthen international school partnerships:** building on the success of existing EU, national and/or regional mobility schemes, or individual contact by teachers through virtual or face-to-face mobility experiences, schools should work on strengthening their international partnerships to develop the support and opportunities for mobilities they offer to their teachers, and pupils.

⁹⁰ See <https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/index.htm>

⁹¹ See <https://erasmusplus.rs/portfolio/riscoprire-le-proprie-radici-storiche-per-capire-meglio-il-presente/>

6.0 Conclusions

The linguistic diversity of the European Union and the ability of its citizens to speak multiple languages are defining features of our European continent. They are what bind us together as European citizens, are intrinsically linked to the cultural richness that each EU Member State has to offer and undoubtedly contribute to strengthening the EU's competitiveness and innovation at a global level. Multilingualism is also at the heart of the Commission's vision for the establishment of a European Education Area, that is: an area in which, by 2025, everyone can effortlessly study, work or do research in any country of the EU without being hampered by any barriers. One such barrier is the lack of language competences at a level suitable to use them effectively for social, learning and professional purposes. Evidence from PISA and other sources indicate that language proficiency levels, both in the language of schooling and foreign languages, remain low. There is a particular challenge in raising proficiency levels in the language of schooling for pupils with a migrant background or who speak a different home language, and the importance of strengthening language learning in vocational education and training is insufficiently recognised. Teachers and schools also struggle to support the development of the increasingly diverse and complex linguistic repertoires of their students, and to fully capitalise on all of the benefits this can bring to engaging the variety of actors involved in pupils' learning processes - in particular parents.

This is why the Council, with the adoption in May 2019 of its Recommendation on the teaching and learning of languages, called upon the Commission and EU Member States to strengthen their efforts on supporting the development of innovative policies and practices in language teaching and learning. Throughout the report, we have reflected upon the key components of the Council Recommendation through a range of examples and good practices from EU Member States, drawing key lessons on how their implementation could be further strengthened. It is possible to distil six key recommendations on this basis, which we go on to consider below.

6.1 Key recommendations

The first key component of the Council Recommendation centres around actions to **help all students to reach adequate competence levels**. The ultimate objective is that, by 2025, all young Europeans can speak at least two languages in addition to the language of schooling. To achieve this objective, we make the following recommendations:

- **Expose children as early as possible to multiple foreign languages and promote mobility.** Becoming proficient at speaking multiple languages is most effective when learning starts at a young age and studying two foreign languages is made compulsory at school. Immersion through mobility, both actual and virtual, is also one of the most effective ways to become fully fluent in a foreign language.
- **Discard 'monolingual' policies in favour of multilingual school policies, which support the development of the language of schooling, foreign languages and home languages.** Functional literacy transcends linguistic boundaries and is a basic foundational skill for learning. This is why literacy policies should target all pupils, not only pupils with a migrant background, as the cognitive and psycho-social benefits of language learning extend to all learners.

The second key component of the Council Recommendation focuses on actions to **promote language aware policies and practices in schools**, including vocational education and training institutions. Language-aware schools adopt inclusive and ‘whole school’ teaching and learning practices, which embed pupils’ literacy development across all subjects of the school curriculum. To achieve this objective, we make the following recommendations:

- **Promote the adoption of ‘whole school’ approaches for language learning.** Every teacher has a role to play in developing their pupils’ literacy in the language of schooling, foreign languages and home languages. Parents and the wider community also play a key role in this. Policies should therefore focus on how to bring together all actors involved in pupils’ learning process, and to make language learning part of a wider ‘social interaction model of learning’.
- **Promote specific language policies for vocational education and training (VET) and long-term VET mobility.** Language capability is often neglected in the context of VET. However, VET students *can* and *should* learn multiple languages. This not only gives them important additional employability skills, but it is also a prerequisite for long-term VET mobility. This can facilitate the exchange of ideas and good practices between skilled professionals, craft workers and VET professionals and learners, and thereby boost innovation in the sector overall.

The third key component of the Council Recommendation includes actions to **support teachers, trainers and school leaders** to develop language awareness and adopt inclusive, innovative and multilingual classroom practices. To achieve this objective, we make the following recommendations:

- **Develop teacher education, mobility and collaborative teaching.** Language and subject teachers need training on how to adopt inclusive and linguistically sensitive pedagogies and to manage diversity in the classroom. Strengthened opportunities for mobility in initial teacher education and for in-service teachers as well as collaborative teaching are effective ways to help teachers to upskill and become more language aware.
- **Support international school partnerships.** Strong school partnerships are key to continuously developing and innovating teacher education, as they provide a basis for the exchange of good practices and the development of mobility programmes. Teacher buy-in to the concept of language awareness is important and could be enhanced through exchange of practice with schools in different countries.

6.2 COVID-19 and the future of language learning

It is almost certain that our world, and hence our education systems, will never be the same again after the current COVID-19 crisis. The widespread closure of schools and education establishments has placed a significant strain on teachers and learners, and the social distancing measures that will be necessary once schools and learning institutions reopen will once more require careful thought and management.

One consequence of this pandemic is that learning has moved online, using a range of digital tools, and appears to be working well in terms of delivering content and supporting interaction between teachers and students. In the case of language teaching, the use of online resources has been considered an opportunity for better and more efficient learning outcomes long before this unexpected turn of events. In a 2014 report,⁹² developed by the European Commission and Member State language education experts, computer assisted language learning (CALL) is presented, along with content and language integrated learning (CLIL) as pathways towards enhanced language learning outcomes. According to the report, CALL enhances traditional foreign language teaching and learning (including assessment), making it quicker, easier, and more efficient. It also offers innovative ways of teaching and learning, which are expected to improve learners' limited competences more than traditional methods. However, the use of ICT and social media in language learning has always been reduced to a group of enthusiastic teachers, who feel comfortable with such tools, such as the eTwinning community.

In the wake of the 2020 school closures, many **more organisations involved in teaching and learning than before, have been creative in responding to this crisis.** The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), has, for example, created a dedicated COVID-19 website entitled 'The ECML treasure chest – support for learners, parents and teachers in times of Covid-19'.⁹³ The focus is on resources that lend themselves to distance learning, drawing on ECML project resources as well as other resources recommended by ECML experts. Furthermore, the ECML's ICT-REV project has developed an inventory of freely available online tools and open educational resources for language teachers and teacher trainers, as the use of digital tools and materials is increasingly used in language teaching to give learners access to information, promote interaction and strengthen their digital skills.⁹⁴ The ICT-REV expert team offers three webinars - one in English, one in French and one in German - on using digital tools in online language classes.

In terms of the future, after this pandemic is over, it may well be that online learning will consistently play a much larger role in language teaching and learning. Mobility, to support language immersion, may well be difficult to arrange in the coming months. However, online options and tools, such as spoken and interactive content accessed digitally, can also play a significant role in promoting language immersion.

⁹² Scott, D. and S. Beadle (2014), Improving the effectiveness of language learning: CLIL and computer assisted language learning, European Commission, Brussels. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/languages/library/studies/clil-call_en.pdf

⁹³ <https://www.ecml.at/treasurechest>

⁹⁴ See <https://ict-rev.ecml.at/>

Further information

An overview of the European Commission's School policy:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school_en

An overview of the European Commission's policies on Multilingual classrooms:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/multilingualism/multilingual-classrooms_en

Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, adopted in May 2019:
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2019.189.01.0015.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2019%3A189%3ATOC

Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, adopted in May 2018:
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2018.189.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2018:189:TOC

Communication on strengthening European identity through education and culture, presented in November 2017:
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf

Communication on school development and excellent teaching for a great start in life, presented in May 2017:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2017%3A248%3AFIN>

More about the European Commission's work on language learning

Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining languages, report published in March 2018:
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c0683c22-25a8-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1>

Rethinking language education and linguistic diversity in schools, report published in March 2018:
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/de1c9041-25a7-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1/>

Improving the effectiveness of language learning: CLIL and computer assisted language learning:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/content/improving-effectiveness-language-learning-clil-and-computer-assisted-language-learning_en

Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe, 2017 edition:
[//eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/key-data-teaching-languages-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017-edition_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/key-data-teaching-languages-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017-edition_en)

Other useful links

School Education Gateway:

<https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/index.htm>

e-Twinning platform:

<https://www.etwinning.net/nl/pub/index.htm>

European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML):

<https://www.ecml.at/>

Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture>

PISA 2018 results:

<https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa-2018-results.htm>

For further information on policies, programmes or events supported by the European Commission on the theme of multilingualism, please direct inquiries to the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.:

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