



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Education and Culture

Lifelong Learning: Education and Training policies

**Multilingualism policy**

EXP LG 5/2006/EN Annex FIN

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

Country: **POLAND**

### INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

### 1. LIFE-LONG LANGUAGE LEARNING

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

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

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

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

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

*implement the Conclusions of the Luxembourg Presidency concerning Content and Language Integrated Learning, including raising awareness of the benefits of this approach, exchanging information and scientific evidence on good CLIL practice and specific CLIL training for teachers.*

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

**Since 2004 the following actions have been implemented:**

- ✓ **Lowering the age of obligatory language education - as of 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2006 local communities have been able to implement language education in their schools in the first grade, meaning at the age level of 7, on the voluntary basis with the use of Ministry's funds. It is a pilot phase of a bigger project mentioned in the suggestions underlying future National Strategy on Foreign Language Teaching to introduce obligatory language education at the first stage of primary education, which is the first three grades from the age of 7 to 9. Nowadays, the starting point for obligatory language education is 10. Additionally, it is also planned to lower the age of the obligatory education of the second foreign language from 13 to 10. Obligatory language education from the age of 7 is planned to be introduced in 2008. However, regardless the additional funds which has been provided for the first time this year in grades I-III of primary school - education stage I - foreign language lessons may be provided within the time framework which is at the disposal of a Headmaster. Foreign language education, as a non-compulsory subject, may be introduced by a Headmaster of a given school upon a consultation with two councils: pedagogical (consisting of teachers employed in a given school) and parents' council. If foreign language is introduced as a non-compulsory subject it becomes compulsory for pupils, however marks for this subject do not have any effect on the average mark or the promotion to the next grade. The National Curriculum Framework of General Education, which has to be implemented in each grade of each education stage, constitutes the teaching basis at all stages of education. A foreign language teacher may – in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 5 February 2004 on the certification and withdrawal of certification of pre-primary education programmes, teaching curricula and textbooks fit for use in school education (J. L. No 25, item 20) – implement a foreign language teaching curriculum, chosen from among curricula which were approved and registered by the Ministry of National Education, or develop his/her own curriculum on the basis of the National Curriculum.**
- ✓ **At the same time legal provisions provide a possibility to teach a foreign language not only in grades I – III of a primary school but also during pre-school education. In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 21 May 2001 on framework statutes of public kindergartens and schools (J. L. No 61, item 624), additional activities may be provided in a kindergarten, upon a request of parents (legal guardians). Time spent on such additional activities, in particular lessons of music, foreign language; religion as well as revalidation activities should be adjusted to children developmental abilities and should last: with children between 3-4 years of age – about 15 minutes, with children between 5-6 years of age – about 30 minutes. Usually such activities are paid by parents.**
- ✓ **In-service teacher training has been provided in order to cater for the needs resulting from the process of lowering the age of obligatory language education – for several years now different activities have been supported, especially network project called 'Young Learners' run by National In-service Teacher Training Centre, to provide teachers with qualifications to teach at lower levels.**
- ✓ **The results of European Union's projects have been disseminated – National Agency for Socrates Programme has run various carefully planned activities in order to popularise**

the **Primeros Pasos** project targeting teachers of French at primary education. The activities included publications, conferences, workshops and presentations.

- ✓ **European Language Portfolio** for the age groups of 7 – 9 and 10 – 15 have been produced and teachers have been trained by National In-service Teacher Training Centre to use them and implement them in schools.
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ **There is still a slight shortage of teachers for teaching languages at primary level but according to the data from the Ministry the problem will have disappeared by 2008 thanks to initiative for getting language qualifications by teachers who already teach at the level I – III.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
- ✓ **The language courses for teachers of grades I – III are offered for free in order to prepare them for acknowledged exams like Cambridge First Certificate.**
  - ✓ **The training offer for already qualified teachers how to teach young learners is under preparation.**
  - ✓ **The syllabus for methodology course giving qualifications to already functioning teachers has been developed and adopted.**
  - ✓ **Special academic courses for future teachers have been ordered by the Ministry at some universities.**

## **1.2. Language learning in secondary education and training**

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

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ **The late 90's education reform made one foreign language obligatory at the level of lower secondary (age of 13-15) and two foreign languages obligatory at the level of upper secondary (16-18). However, the system would not function effectively without latest various and numerous in-service training activities on national, regional and local level in order to guide teachers and schools to implement fully the underlying philosophy of the structural change. Namely, foreign language teaching in schools has become one of the priority tasks implemented within the framework of the activities connected with the reforms of educational system. In the era of Poland's integration with EU it is essential that young generation may fully benefit from the cultural and scientific heritage of Europe as well as may bring to Europe everything what is valuable in Polish science, culture and history. Schools face a very important task, which result from the introduction of foreign language teaching, i.e. developing pupils' interest, openness and tolerance towards other cultures and at the same time deepening their own identity. It has become one of the school responsibilities to ensure that through foreign language learning pupils will acquire effective language communication skills, which will enable them to start and maintain contacts with foreigners as well as to know the culture and daily life in a particular language area. What is also important here is the possibility for pupils to continue their language education from previous stage at**

this level, which means that language education at this level may be based on continuation syllabuses and it does not have to be starting from the scratch.

- ✓ **European Language Portfolio has been produced for the level 16+ to promote plurilingualism and the teachers have been trained on national, regional and local levels to implement it in schools.**
  - ✓ **National network in-service teacher training schemes were implemented under the names of Hola and Europrof to raise the number of qualified teachers of Spanish and Formatore for Italian.**
  - ✓ **As of the end of school year 2004/2005 the new external examination system was introduced in which a foreign language is an obligatory subject to be taken by pupils.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ **Since it is possible to teach languages at lower stages on optional basis and because of wide spread tradition of private tutoring, the problem of mixed ability groups appears very strongly at the stage of secondary education.**
  - ✓ **Sometimes the problem of continuity appears between lower and upper secondary levels. Upper secondary level offers both continuation courses or beginners' courses but sometimes it is not possible for pupils to have a continuation course depending on the configuration of two obligatory languages offered to them in the class to which they have been assigned.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
- ✓ **Schools are free to organise language education on cross-class and cross-levels basis, meaning that language class groups are formed according to the pupils' needs and choices.**

### **1.3. Language learning in Higher Education**

*“Higher Education institutions play a key role in promoting societal and individual multilingualism. Proposals that each university implement a coherent language policy clarifying its role in promoting language learning and linguistic diversity, both amongst its learning community and in the wider locality, are to be welcomed. All students should study abroad, preferably in a foreign language, for at least one term, and should gain an accepted language qualification as part of their degree course”*

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ **In Poland Universities boast a high degree of independence in forming their own education policy. However, in recent years it has been noted that most of the Polish universities have undertaken activities aiming at creating coherent language education policy. On practical level it means that in most of them language education is coordinated by one department which provides courses for all students. Usually such a department creates the system of courses based on Council of Europe's framework of reference for language proficiency. The system is usually coherent in reference to different languages which are offered. It must be noted that the variety of choice of languages in offer can be very high in some of the universities, especially in those which have a long education tradition.**
  - ✓ **Erasmus programme has been used extensively to enrich language offer.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ **Erasmus grants are too small for Polish students for whom it is usually very difficult to get additional funds from parents or other sources.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

- ✓ **Polish National Agency aims at awarding higher and higher grants but at the same time it means that availability of grants decreases. The higher the grants, the lower number of them.**

#### **1.4. Adult language learning**

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

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

#### **1.5. Language learners with special needs**

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
  - ✓ **Foreign languages are also taught in special schools. In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 12 February 2002 with further amendments, it is compulsory to learn one foreign language in special primary school (from II stage of education) and in special lower secondary school. There is an exception to this Regulation as regards pupils with moderate or severe mental disabilities as well as deaf and hard of hearing pupils, blind and visually impaired as well as autistic pupils – having at the same time moderate or severe mental disabilities. Two foreign languages are compulsory in specialised upper secondary schools, however deaf or hard hearing pupils may be exempted from the obligation to learn second foreign language pursuant to the provisions of Article 9 of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 8 September 2004.**
  - ✓ **New Matura which is an upper secondary external school leaving exam implemented in 2005 takes into consideration the needs and requirements of pupils with dysgraphia and dyslexia.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
  - ✓ **There is a substantial lack of teachers who are qualified to teach languages to pupils with special needs. However, as far as the problems of dysgraphia, dyslexia and ADHD are concerned, language teachers have been provided with variety of possibilities of training so far.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
  - ✓ **The National Strategy on Language Teaching which is just being developed will tackle the problem.**

## 1.6. Range of languages

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ **As of the end of school year 2004/2005 in the new external examination system the range of possible languages to be chosen by pupils increased to nine, meaning that pupils may chose from English, German, French, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Slovak and Swedish. Minority and regional languages may be optionally taken as well.**
  - ✓ **Various European Union's projects targeting least widely used and taught languages have been disseminated – Ministry of National Education and National Agency for Socrates Programme have run various activities in order to make these languages closer to possible target audience. The activities included publications, conferences, workshops and presentations. Language festivals organised by project leaders were also supported.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ **Although people in Poland learn more and more languages, general public tends to recognise mainly English as a tool for communication. The process of changing peoples' attitudes in this respect seems very difficult and time-consuming.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
- ✓ **Further awareness raising activities like language festivals, publications and workshops will be supported.**

## 2. BETTER LANGUAGE TEACHING

### 2.1. The language-friendly school

*It is important that schools and training institutions adopt a holistic approach to the teaching of language, which makes appropriate connections between the teaching of 'mother tongue', 'foreign' languages, the language of instruction, and the languages of migrant communities; such policies will help children to develop the full range of their communicative abilities. In this context, multilingual comprehension approaches can be of particular value because they encourage learners to become aware of similarities between languages, which is the basis for developing receptive multilingualism.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ **Appropriate connections between mother tongue and foreign languages are imbedded in Polish educational system. It must be noted that Polish educational reform of the late 90's introduced a coherent National Curriculum Framework based on competences. As far as competences required for a national language and foreign languages are concerned, they are interrelated with each other in order to provide pupils with modern tools of communication in integrated Europe.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?

- ✓ It is the reform mentioned above that made teachers in Poland plan their didactic activities in a team and not individually. However, it will still take some time for teachers to cooperate more closely in this respect.

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

- ✓ Further trainings for teachers will be continued.

## 2.2. Language teacher training

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ✓ Foreign language teachers, similarly to teachers of other subjects, are trained within the framework of two systems: (1) higher education, on the basis of the provisions of the Act of 27 July 2005, on Higher Education (J. L. No 164, item 1365), (2) education, on the basis of the provisions of the Act of 7 September 1991 on the Education System (J. L. of 2004 No 256, item 2572 with further amendments). Teachers are trained in public and non-public Higher Education Institutions within the framework of: Master's degree studies in modern languages, specialization in a given foreign language or applied linguistics within the scope of a given foreign language and Bachelor's degree studies in modern languages, specialization in a given foreign language or applied linguistics within the scope of a given foreign language.
- ✓ The system of initial teacher training in HEIs was changed on 1 October 2004. HEIs training teachers within the framework of Bachelor's degree studies provide initial teacher training in two specializations (main and additional) enabling graduates to acquire qualifications in two subjects (in different types of activities). It is also possible to provide dual specialization initial teacher training within the Master's degree studies.

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

- ✓ **The latest years saw further developments of the so called Foreign Language Colleges. Within the educational system foreign language teachers are trained in Initial Teacher Training Establishments, i.e. in Foreign Language Colleges. The rules concerning the operation of Foreign Language Colleges are laid down in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 August 1997 on the operation of Initial Teacher Training Establishments (J. L. No 104, item 664). Initial teacher training in a Foreign Language College is provided under the educational and teaching supervision of a HEL. Thanks to this system students of Foreign Language Colleges may obtain not only the diploma of the completion of the College but also a vocational title of Bachelor as well as may continue education within the complementary Master's degree studies.**
- ✓ **In recent years curricula of Foreign Language Colleges have been updated and in many cases they reflect the recommendations included in 'European Profile for Language Teacher Education'.**
- ✓ **Network in-service teacher training schemes on national level have been further developed and nowadays they target the teachers of English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.**
- ✓ **Possibility of mobility for teachers within EU grant schemes was further promoted and the number of individual mobilities has risen.**
- ✓ **Promotion of in-service teacher training and encouragement to take part in it is embedded in the promotion scheme for teachers. The advancement in teachers' career, which teachers' salaries depend on, is now fully linked not only to teachers' achievements but to their activities in in-service training as well.**

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

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

### **2.3. Supply of language teachers**

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

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

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

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

- ✓ **The very successful network of teacher training colleges providing students with BA qualifications is further developed. Thanks to this network the shortage of teachers is not so much felt as before.**

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

- ✓ **Language students still tend to seek their career opportunities outside education sector. However, the situation is slowly changing for better.**

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

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

- ✓ One of the recent proposals on the part of the Ministry concerns the increase of teachers' salaries to make the profession more competitive.

## 2.4. Training teachers of other subjects

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
  - ✓ **Teacher training standards were specified for all levels of education in HEIs, i.e. higher vocational studies, complementary Master's degree studies, one-cycle five years Master's degree studies and post-graduates studies in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 7 September 2004 on Teacher Training (J. L. No 207, item 2110). These standards specify the minimum number of hours of initial teacher training subjects such as: psychology, pedagogy, teaching specific subjects (330 hours), as well as the obligation of pedagogical apprenticeship (minimum 150 hours). Moreover, they also introduce an obligation to provide foreign language courses within a specified scope, which enables students to acquire advanced language competences (level of language proficiency - B2 Common European Framework) - in case of higher vocational studies, and B2+ - including training to use specialist terminology within the scope of a given discipline of studies – in case of Master's degree studies) as well as a requirement concerning the provision of ICT courses preparing students to use ICT in the teaching a given subject or conducting other activities. These standards are particularly important in case of teachers teaching in bilingual schools (CLIL).**
  - ✓ **European Union's structural funds are used to provide non-language teachers with free language courses so that in future they could run their classes in a foreign language.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
  - ✓ **Teachers of other subjects in Poland in general have relatively low language competences, which results from the old system of initial teacher training. It means that the process of acquiring language competences by them will be time-consuming.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

## 2.5. Testing language skills

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ✓ As of 2005 the new external school leaving examination system was introduced. The results from this exam are used for recruitment for universities. Depending on what kind of future career the pupils plan, they can choose to take a standard exam or extended exam. The former refers to the level B1 and the latter to B2. Polish Central Examining Board which administers these exams takes part in the pilot phase of Relating exams to CEFR project run by Council of Europe.
  - ✓ The system is being created to introduce external language exam at the end of lower secondary stage as well.
  - ✓ This year the process of creating a full set of Polish versions of European Language Portfolio was finished.
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ Some of the teachers still think that using Portfolio complicates didactic process and is very much time-consuming.
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?
- ✓ Trainings concerning Portfolio are constantly organized and supported. Some of them have national character and are organized in cooperation with Graz Centre for Modern Languages and some of them have regional and local character.

### 3. BUILDING A LANGUAGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

#### 3.1. An inclusive approach to linguistic diversity

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

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

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ The provisions of the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities as well as the regional language introduce, with regard to specific groups of Polish citizens, a term of: “national minority”, “ethnic minority” and “a community using regional language”. On the basis of the provisions of this Act the status of a national minority covers groups of Polish citizens (provided that they fulfill specific conditions) of Belorussian, Czech, Lithuanian, German, Armenian, Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Jewish origin. The status of ethnic minority is granted to the following groups of Polish citizens (provided that they fulfill specific conditions) of Karaim, Lemko, Romany and Tatarian origin. The Kashubian language was granted a status of a regional language, on the basis of the provisions of the above-mentioned Act.
  - ✓ The issues connected with minority and regional language teaching in public education system are regulated by the provisions of Article 13 of the Act of 7 September 1991 on the Education System as well as the executive provisions to this Act, including, in particular, the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 3 December 2002 on the conditions and ways of implementing, by public schools and establishments, tasks enabling to maintain national, ethnic, language and religious identity of pupils belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups. At present the following languages are taught in Polish educational system: Belorussian, Lithuanian, German, Armenian, Slovak and Ukrainian (having the status of minority languages), Lemko (having the status of ethnic language) and Kaszubian – regional language.
  - ✓ In 2004 strategy for the development of German minority in Poland was developed.

- ✓ **The Ministry supports various campaigns promoting cultures of minorities like ‘All different – all equal’.**
- ✓ **As of 2005 pupils may take exams at the end of primary and lower secondary levels in minority language if this language is a language of instruction in their school.**
- ✓ **Thanks to governmental programme for Romany people, which started in 2004, the number of school drop-outs has decreased.**

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

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

### **3.2. Building language-friendly communities**

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

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

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

- ✓ **Local and regional initiatives concerning the promotion of learning languages in the context of the needs and lives of local communities are supported. They are either supported by relevant Ministries or ministerial agencies.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*of existing language learning resources and staff in schools and universities, libraries, local learning networks and adult education centres.*

- a) What concrete actions (if any) have been accomplished in this field since 2004?
- ✓ **European Day of Languages has become an indispensable part of school event calendar. It is the day when multilingualism and various cultures of Europe are promoted. Polish schools and educational circles have been taking an active part in the celebrations. The main goal has been arousing students' willingness to become acquainted with culture, history and lifestyles of other countries. Schools stage exhibitions, competitions, tournaments, make posters, guides, information brochures, stage performances, hold discussions, make various presentations, invite foreigners to meetings and try to outdo one another in ideas how to present a given country. The most valuable thing about this day, however, is the fact that preparations for it last a long time and students remember for a long time the success they have achieved. And this constitutes an incentive for further activities and common work and learning.**
  - ✓ **Since the participation in European Language Label contest is growing year by year and the awarded initiatives show huge variety as far as content, methodology, languages, target groups are concerned Polish authorities intensified dissemination activities in the form of publications, conferences and TV programmes.**
- b) What obstacles to the implementation of this recommendation have been identified?
- ✓ **People's awareness in Poland that learning foreign languages is necessary in the context of the labour market is already high. However, it does not mean that take-up of learning foreign languages is equally high. It is not a problem of supply, which is very high taking into consideration the number of private institutions teaching languages, but it is rather a problem of people's fears if they can cope and if they can be successful learners. Additionally, there is a problem of money and many learners cannot afford language education. However, because of the severe competition on the language market the prices of courses gradually and substantially fall and the offer becomes more and more diversified.**
- c) What are the proposed initiatives to overcome these obstacles?

#### **4. OVERALL NATIONAL LANGUAGE STRATEGY**

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

- a) How has the follow-up of the Action Plan been coordinated at national level?
- ✓ **Consultations, planning of activities and drafting documents were carried out by the Ministry of Education and the Foundation for the Development of Education System, which resulted in creating the foundations for future National Strategy on Language Teaching.**
  - ✓ **Polish Socrates National Agency with its Lingua component has contributed a lot in the area of making decision makers, decision takers and teacher trainers aware of the document and its implications and requirements in the Polish educational context.**
- b) Has it been included in national policy initiatives?
- ✓ **The announcement of Action Plan by European Commission was one of the incentives for Poland to participate in Council of Europe's Country Profile project in order to start the process of creating one coherent national policy.**
- c) Was there a coordination group / committee?
- ✓ **Yes, there was.**

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

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

✓ **The above mentioned Country Profile project is under realisation and it goes much more beyond the framework of Action Plan.**

*Member States are invited to establish national plans to give structure, coherence and direction to actions to promote multilingualism, including increasing the use and presence of a variety of languages in daily life<sup>7</sup>*

a) What initial steps have been taken on this issue?

✓ **The results of Country Report within Country Profile project are being analysed to form the conclusions and recommendations which will be included in the national strategy and plan.**

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

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

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