Vision and actions encouraging language learning in the EU

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Anna Solé Mena
European Commission
Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages – adopted in May 2019

Our goal: At the end of upper secondary school, young people should be able to...

1. Fully use the language of schooling
2. Confidently use another European language
3. Use a third language with a degree of fluency
Other elements of the Recommendation

1. Focus on learning outcomes
2. Start as early as possible
3. Language awareness
   - Take account of learners personal linguistic abilities
   - Value linguistic diversity, using it as a learning resource
   - Support literacy in the language(s) of schooling
4. Research and promotion of innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies – CLIL, digital tools, cooperation between language and subject teachers, innovative initial teacher education and continuous education
5. Mobility of learners and teachers
Latest data

• **Eurydice’s Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe** – March 2023

• **Eurobarometer** on languages – 21 May 2024

• **How 15-year-olds learn English** – OECD co-financed by EC – February 2024
Some conclusions on the Key data report

• **Good evolution**
  
  • early language learning
  
  • **learning of English as first foreign language** - At EU level, in lower secondary education, virtually all students (98.3%) learn English, French and German come second
  
  • **teacher mobility** - from 57.6% to 72.2% between 2013 and 2018

• **Need to progress further on**
  
  • learning the **second foreign language**
  
  • **59.2%** of students in lower secondary
  
  • **language awareness** in schools
2024 Eurobarometer “the Europeans and their languages”

• Re-run of the special Eurobarometer on Europeans and their languages of 2012 (2006, 2001)

• Comprehensive survey of the language knowledge of Europeans, covering languages, skills, use of languages (frequency and situation of use), attitudes towards languages (advantages of learning a language, most useful languages, barriers to learning).

• 26,523 respondents aged 15 and above and from diverse demographic backgrounds were surveyed face to face in their native languages
2024 Eurobarometer – some results

Most Europeans support the promotion of multilingualism

- Everyone in the EU should be able to speak at least one language in addition to their mother tongue: 86% agree, 11% disagree, 3% don't know.
- Regional and minority languages should be protected: 84% agree, 12% disagree, 4% don't know.
- Improving language skills should be a policy priority: 76% agree, 19% disagree, 5% don't know.
- Everyone in the EU should be able to speak more than one language in addition to their mother tongue: 69% agree, 28% disagree, 3% don't know.
2024 Eurobarometer – some results

3 out of 5 Europeans can have a conversation in at least one other language than their mother tongue, rising to 4 out of 5 among young people...

- All Europeans: 59% (↑3 since 2012)
- European youth (15-24 year olds): 79% (↑5)

At least one other language:
- 28% (↑1)

At least two:
- 39% (↑2)

At least three:
- 11% (↑1)
- 15% (↑3)
ALMOST HALF OF EUROPEANS CAN HAVE A CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, +5 since 2012.

- English: 47% (+5)
- French: 11% → 14% (-1)
- German: 10% → 12% (-2)
- Spanish: 7% → 13% (+3)
- Italian: 3% → 3%
2024 Eurobarometer – some results

... AND THERE ARE VERY LARGE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COUNTRIES

Europe map with percentages of an example metric for different countries.
2024 Eurobarometer – some results

- English (77%, +1) is the foreign language Europeans consider most useful for personal development, followed by German (14%, -3).

- The same holds for children in their future, as English (85%, -3), is perceived as most important, followed by Spanish (13%, =) and German (13%, -6).

- 31% of Europeans use their first foreign language daily, as opposed to 13% and 8% who use their second and third daily.

- In terms of media consumption, more Europeans (53%) prefer subtitled rather than dubbed films and programmes. This has changed considerably compared to 2012 (+11%).

- Europeans mainly learn a foreign language through their education (47%) followed by watching tv/listening to radio (20%).
The Erasmus+ programme should enhance the learning of languages. Multilingualism is a key principle in the implementation of the programme.
In KA1, **school itself** is at the center of the project (or the accreditation).

- The key purpose of the project is to improve the school.
- School’s partners from other countries are not predefined, nor limited in number.
- Objectives are defined first (during application), partners are decided later.

In Key Action 2, at the center of the project there is **an idea**.

- The purpose of the project is to make that idea a reality through contributions from the different partners.
- The members of the partnership share the same interest and vision, and are all listed in the application as its integral part.
The European Language Label

• Award to recognise quality and to support the sharing of results of excellent projects in the area of multilingualism

  • Erasmus+ projects

  • Other initiatives for to the teaching and learning of languages.
Online Language Support

• Provides the participants in mobility activities the opportunity to assess their knowledge of languages as well as to follow online language courses to improve their competences.
• A multilingual integrated online platform for schools, managed by the European Commission

• Languages – ESEP September theme  https://youtu.be/RUjzLGqgVTg

• European day of languages on 26 September