

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR MULTILINGUALISM

We are a leading European social and academic platform making it possible to share of ideas, policies, research, and good practices with stakeholders across Europe and beyond.

OUR IDENTITY

- We are a European **civil society** (the space that exists as an intermediary between governmental organisations and the private sector)
- We are a **platform** (our political agenda being to promote languages spoken in Europe)
- We work to ensure that, in today's globalised world, **multilingualism** is protected and promoted in Europe and beyond, that it is treated as an asset and a commitment of the European Union.

PROFILE OF OUR ORGANISATION

- We are structured as **an umbrella organisation** for institutions, which have been endorsed as full members:
 - Twenty (22) of these are academic/university centres, researching and supporting bi-/multilingualism in society and in education forming our CURUM constituency – one of these being a community of organisations with over 30 branches across Europe, Asia and North America.
 - Four (4) of them are European and international networks for the teaching, learning and testing of languages (ALTE, EDiLiC , ICC-Languages, FIPLV) with hundreds of members each
 - Four (4) are European networks for the promotion and support of European national, regional and minority languages (EFNIL, FUEN , NPLD , Sprachenrat Saar)
 - Two are European associations related to the arts (LAF and EARights)
- We have also **signed partnerships** with the following institutions:
 - CCERBAL at the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI) of the University of Ottawa
 - ECML and are an active member of their Professional Network Forum (PNF)
 - CRACKER (a federation of European projects and organisations working on technologies for a multilingual Europe)
 - LLLP (The Lifelong Learning Platform) a European Civil Society Platform for Education

OUTREACH

- We are committed to actions which result to greater linguistic justice and language equality, driving for change in attitudes towards languages and the monolingual ethos of communication in society and in its institutions – especially education.
- Currently our members and partners **represent more than 200 institutions** that are concerned with covering all issues concerned with language rights, language education and the use of languages in society. Our members **reach out to thousands of beneficiaries**.

OUR FUNCTION

- We are a leading **European social and academic platform** making it possible to share of ideas, policies, research, and good practices with stakeholders across Europe.
- We also collectively advocate actions which aim to ensure that **all languages spoken in Europe** – national, regional, minority and migrant languages – are understood as essential communication and cultural resources, as core aspects of people's personal and social identity, and as instruments through which we pass on knowledge but also construct it.
- As an **NGO**, we function independently of the European Commission, by which we were launched in 2009 and mandated. As of 2016, we operate under Danish law – as our Secretariat is in Copenhagen – but we are enrolled in the Commission's Transparency Registry.

OUR MISSION

- Our mission is to carry out and to disseminate research and practices based on the view that multilingualism is an asset for European economic, social, cultural development, as well as a facilitator for intellectual growth, social, and personal development.

“MULTILINGUALISM IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION”

- We research and take action to promote:
 - Individual multi-/plurilingualism
 - Social multilingualism
 - Institutional multilingualism

CONCEPTS AND VIEWS UNDERLYING OUR WORK

- We recognise the importance of both:
 - **Multilingualism** – the view of individual languages as real entities that co-exist autonomously, *parallel* to one another in societies, communities and individuals.
 - **Plurilingualism** – the view of languages as interconnected with one another, forming speakers' semiotic repertoires and used resources for productive communication.
- We understand that:
 - Languages are the products of human agency, developed over time in relation to geographic, socio-political, and cultural forces, and have a materiality for their speakers who have strong loyalties to and treasure their 'own' language, with which they closely identify and do not want to see 'weakened' or to experience their language rights violated.
 - It is important to understand the boundaries between different languages as permeable, and that the complexity of the linguistic repertoires we have developed in today's multilingual world is real – meaning that it is essential to take advantage of it and to practice in a plurilingual manner – rather than to learn an 'international' language perfectly and use it in all domains, causing the displacement of other languages and the right of thousands of people to be educated and to use languages they feel most comfortable in.

ECSPM'S ENGAGEMENT

ACTIONS, PROJECTS, EVENTS



BESSIE DENDRINOS, ECSPM PRESIDENT

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- We regularly participate in the European Education Summit to understand, discuss and recommend multilingualism policy priorities proposed by the European Commission.
 - In 2018 we inaugurated the **Cluster of University Research Units for Multilingualism** (CURUM) and have since been expanding this alliance, which is the first of its kind in Europe. The CURUM is a communal space for research, the results of which can contribute to the development of a European Education Area by 2025, taking forward the European Council's mandate, comprised of proposals including the improvement of the teaching/learning of languages to ensure Europeans' multilingual habitus and awareness raising regarding Europe's shared linguistic and cultural heritage.
 - Since 2016, we became members of the Professional Network Forum (PNF) of the Council of Europe's European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) which meets once a year at ECML's headquarters in Gratz so that its members exchange information and ideas with each other, support the work of and provide counsel to ECML concerning its activities. In 2026 we renewed and extended our collaboration.
 - In 2022, we became members of the **Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment** (CoARA), consenting to the Agreement on reforming research assessment – a venture supported by the European University Association, Science Europe, and by about 700 organisations from over 40 countries.

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- We provided support to the ECML project on “Mediation in Teaching and Assessment” which produced a teaching guide for foreign language teachers who wish to develop their learners’ cross-linguistic mediation skills, as well as a database with cross-linguistic mediation tasks in multiple languages that can be accessed easily by teachers and is providing teacher training sessions across Europe.
 - We were a partner institution of the European Language Equality (ELE) project, which involved the development of a strategic agenda and roadmap to develop full digital language equality in Europe by 2030, based on a European Parliament resolution “Language equality in the digital age”. ELE research findings showed that there are still significant language barriers that hamper communication and the free flow of information across the EU. The ELE project is connection with the European Language Grid (ELG), which constitutes **one** Platform for all European Language Technologies: tools & services, language resources, organisations.

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- In 2023 ECSPM became members of CoARA [Multilingualism WG](#), along with representatives of 28 European universities, organisations and associations concerned with making multilingualism a positive indicator for the assessment of scientific research and publications, teaching and learning in universities.
 - In 2022, the ECSPM was invited to take part in a research project involving eight universities in Europe, Africa and S. America. The project was led by the University of Strasbourg. Functioning as the coordinating institution of Action 2 of the project entitled “Le multi-/plurilinguisme dynamique, terreau de l’excellence inclusive dans l’enseignement supérieur” (MUDExl), ECSPM carried out “A Case Study on Linguistic Mediation in Higher Education” (Étude de cas sur la médiation linguistique dans l’enseignement supérieur). The project started in January 2023 and was completed in June 2024.
 - For a brief report of the Case Study on mediation, please click [here](#).
 - Dissemination of the Case Study results continues. For a presentation of the investigation’s conclusions and implications, please click [here](#).

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- We have prepared the “**Declaration for Multilingualism in HE**”, which appears in 28 European languages (accessed [here](#)) and has been uploaded in English on the “change.org” platform as [a petition](#) to make HEIs multilingual spaces. Having reached more than 1.600 signatures, we continue to seek the support of academics from across Europe and beyond.



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RESEARCH DISSEMINATION AT ANNUAL SYMPOSIA 2017-2014

At our annual symposia, our invited speakers have included distinguished scholars from many European countries, but also from many other parts of the world including: Africa, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, New Zealand, Singapore, and the USA.



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- The slides that follow contain information about our annual events – our symposia and forums. Detailed information and presentations of speakers are on our website: [here](#)

Annual symposia 2017-2020

- **2017** “BEYOND LANGUAGE BARRIERS” hosted by the Hellenic Open University, in Greece, it addressed the following themes a) the social, aesthetic and linguistic literacies for the creative participation in European societies of displaced populations and people in adversity; b) the role of translation, technology and linguistic resources for the safeguarding of multilingualism in Europe.
- **2018** “PARADIGM SHIFT IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION” hosted by the Technical University of Darmstadt, in Germany, it to discuss how we can best change not only in the way languages are taught and learnt in formal educational settings, by resorting to a new language didactics paradigm, but also in the way that language teachers are prepared at universities and professional development centres.
- **2019** “MEDIATING CHALLENGES: Mediating images, languages & language pedagogy” hosted by the University of Reading, in England, it focused on mediation as a critical aspect of communication in multilingual and multicultural educational settings, and as a crucial competence involving vision, creativity and language skills.
- **2020** “LINGUISTIC & CULTURAL (SUPER)DIVERSITY AT WORK” hosted by the University of Tilburg, in the Netherlands, it dealt with the role of technology, digital resources and practices for multilingualism, and with concerns with linguistic justice, support to minority and regional languages, as well as speakers’ linguistic rights.

Annual symposia 2021-2023

- **2021** “MULTILINGUALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)” hosted by the University of Konstanz, in Germany, and the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA), it focused on the role of English in HE, linked to the internationalisation and commercialisation of European universities.
- **2022** “LANGUAGE(S) AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE IN EUROPEAN HE” hosted by the University for Foreigners in Siena, Italy, it focused on explicit and implicit policies of HE institutions, as well as multilingualism, academic literacies and the linguistic construction of academic knowledge in European universities.
- **2023** “THE SOCIAL ROLE OF HE: Developing the civil society’s awareness and impacting policies on the role of multilingualism in education” hosted by the University of Strasbourg, France and supported by the Education Department of Council of Europe, it focused on HE as producer of knowledge, and its important role in democratic societies through increasing access to quality education for all, on raising awareness about issues of social importance, on helping transform societies for sustainable development through technology transfer and practical application of knowledge and ideas, and on engaging with the community at local and transnational levels in pursuit of human and social development.

Annual symposia 2024-2026

- **2024** “PLURILANGUAGING IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL SPACES” hosted by the University of Ghent, Belgium, the central notion of the symposium being *plurilinguaging*, understood as the enactment of plurilingualism that is defined and described in the CEFR CV (Council of Europe, 2020). The event brought together a group of distinguished academics, but also educators and other language professionals who shared, discussed, and presented their views and experiences, but also raised questions and pointed to those queries that need to be investigated.
- **2025** “ACTIONS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES” hosted and co-organised by the Multilingualism, Discourse, and Communication Research Center (MIRCo) of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM). It built on insights from the [EquiLing research project](#), as well as on the outcomes of previous ECSPM symposia, going beyond critical analysis of the management of multilingualism in lower and higher education which presently exacerbates social inequality.
- **2026** “Internationalisation of HE, Multilingualism and Translation” is hosted and co-organised by the Saarland Language Council, supported by Saarland University of Applied Sciences, the symposium is under the patronage of the Lord Mayor of Saarbrücken, and also sponsored by the University of Strasbourg. Taking place March 19-20, it focuses on internationalisation in HE, understood not as a threat but as a gateway to new possibilities for universities which are facing serious challenges in this day and age. It also focuses on translation of academic knowledge, deeply intertwined with the internationalisation of universities.

ANNUAL FORUMS

- **2024 forum:** “MULTILINGUALISM IN RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT IN HEIs” hosted and co-organised by the Centre for Multilingualism, University of Konstanz, Germany, in collaboration with the CoARA Multilingualism Work Group (WG) members. The forum brought together scholars working in language studies and multilingualism, academics and researchers from other fields of study, as well as technology and publishing professionals to discuss issues related to the generation of valid and reliable criteria for the assessment of multi-/plurilingual teaching, research, and academic publishing.
- **2025 forum:** “PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM ON LINGUISTIC MEDIATION” hosted and co-organised by the Faculty of Linguistics of the National Technical University of Ukraine (NTUK), known as “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”. The speakers were online, while the participants – university professors and language instructors, as well as a small number of postgraduate students from NTUK and other Ukrainian HEIs – were both onsite and online.
- **2026 forum:** “LANGUAGE(S) AND THE CULTURAL POLITICS & POLICIES FOR SCHOLARLY TRANSLATION” is hosted by the University of Strasbourg, France, 4-5 June. It is a follow up of the 2026 ECSPM Symposium on “Internationalisation in Higher Education, Multilingualism and Translation”, focusing the challenges of adapting knowledge, ideas, and perspectives across cultures and contexts, of transferring and sharing knowledge and research findings across borders, necessitating the translation of scientific constructs and research methodologies.

STRENGTHENING ECSPM'S CONSULTANCY ROLE

- The ECSPM has begun working more closely with the European Commission and specifically:
 - the **Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture** (EAC), which “aims to support and stimulate the development of competences, the learning mobility of individuals, mutual learning through increased cross border cooperation and involvement of stakeholders, as well as policy reform in Member States and partner countries around the world” and in particular with:
 - the Schools and Multilingualism Unit, responsible for the Erasmus+ Teacher Academies
 - the Higher Education Unit, supporting higher education initiatives
 - the **Directorate-General for Interpretation**, especially with:
 - the Sector for inter-institutional relations and Outreach
 - the Sector dealing with Resources and Corporate Services (Strategic Planning and Reporting, Internal Control and Language Technologies)
 - the Knowledge Centre on Interpretation and Translation

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- In view of ECSPM's collaboration with **CoARA** on the one hand, and with the European Commission on the other, three (3) new ECSPM Work Groups were formed to:
 1. Continue working on **institutionalising multilingualism in higher education**, as well as in research and publishing – the latter two in collaboration with the CoARA multilingualism WG.
 2. Continue to coordinate a consortium to resubmit a proposal for an Erasmus+ **European Teacher Academy**.
 3. Create the ECSPM **Knowledge Hub** dedicated to **Translation and Interpretation** to support the Knowledge Centre for Interpretation and Translation of the European Commission.

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- We are proud to announce the launch of an **Internship Initiative**, which aims at bridging the gap between postgraduate students and young researchers seeking valuable experience in the areas that ECSPM is active.
 - Our first intern was a student doing a Master's degree in “Sociolinguistics: Policy, Management and Education of Multilingualism” at the Université de Montpellier Paul-Valéry. She applied for a 60-hour observational internship in language policy in education development as part of her studies.
 - The MA student is Ms Lola Sergeant, who comes highly recommended by her supervisor, Eléonore Yasri-Labrique, Département de Sciences du Langage, Enseignante et chercheure en Sociolinguistique et Didactique des langues-cultures, Référente pédagogiques des stages de Master I – SOGEPEP, has a background in Law and Languages.
 - Her application was approved by the ECSPM Executive Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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