

# Recommendation R (2022) 1 of the Committee of Ministers on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture

## An introductory webinar

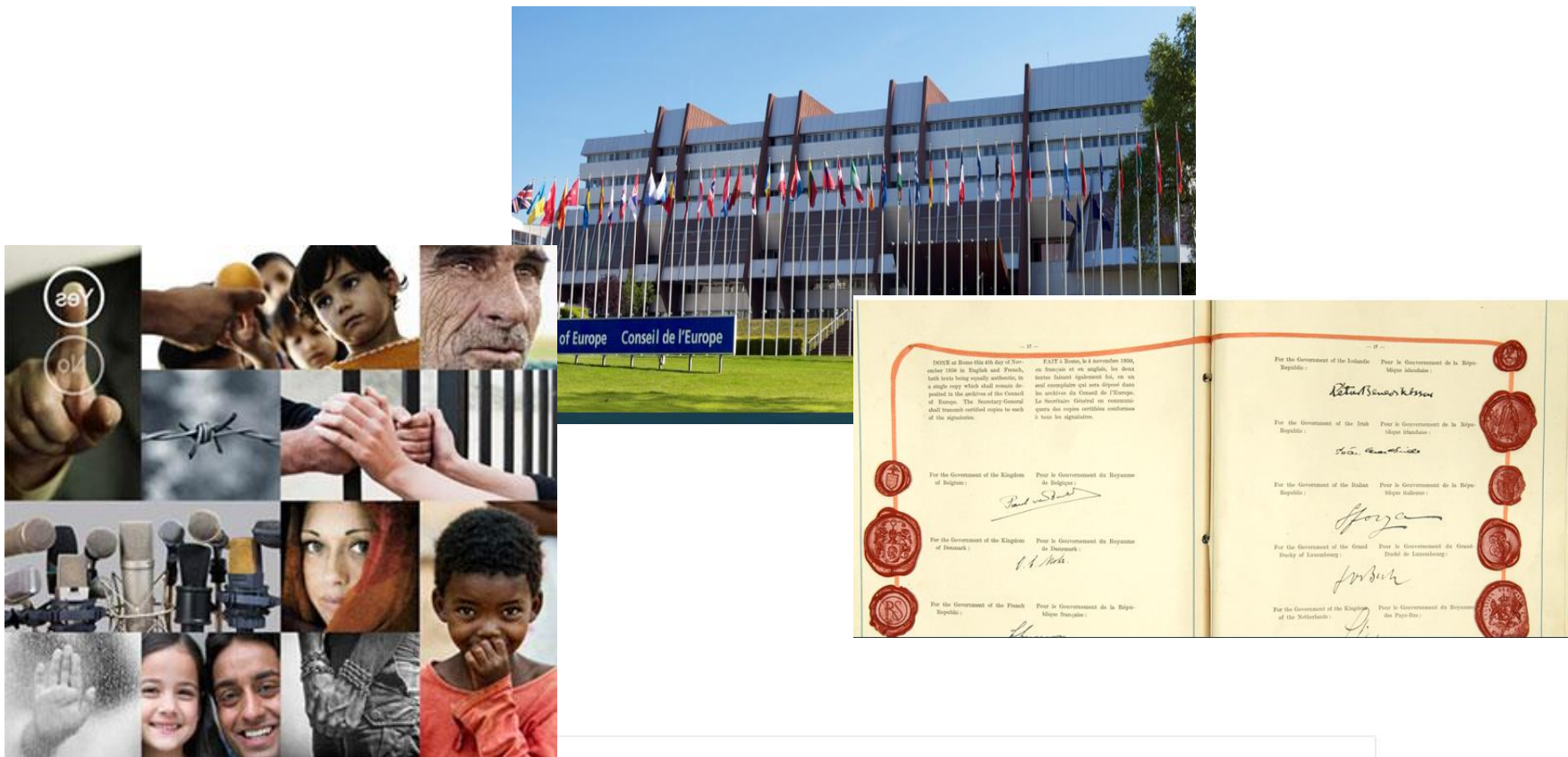
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the Council of Europe (ECML)**

# Webinar overview

- **Setting the scene: the Council of Europe in brief**
  - **Rationale for this new Recommendation**
    - **Key features**
  - **Ensuring ownership – the role of the member States**
    - **Structure and function of the different elements**
- **Getting started: practical tips for promotion and implementation**
  - **Future webinars in this series**

# The Council of Europe

# Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law





## THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

Decision-making body

- comprises the foreign ministers of all the member States, or their ambassadors
- adopts legal instruments (recommendations, conventions) and approves the Organisation's budget
- supervises the execution of the judgements delivered by the European Court of Human Rights
- meets annually at ministerial level and several times a month (ambassadors)

# The structure of Council of Europe Recommendations to member States

- **Preamble**
  - Says why the recommendation is important
  - Points to precedents
- **Specific recommendations**
  - Brief, asks countries to implement the policies outlined in the Appendix
- **Appendix**
  - The core part
  - Recommends what public authorities and others should do
- **Explanatory memorandum (optional)**
  - Provides context
  - Argues and justifies the recommendations in the appendix
  - Provides examples, including CoE instruments and material

# Rationale for the Recommendation



## The rationale: what's in a name? (1)

- Recommendation on the **importance of plurilingual and intercultural education...**
- It addresses two specific developments of concern to the Council of Europe:
  - “... a tendency on the part of public authorities and civil society to think that proficiency in one additional language is enough **as long as that language is English**”
  - “... the populist notion that proficiency in minority or migrant languages, widespread in today’s increasingly diverse societies, **is harmful to societal cohesion**”

## The rationale: what's in a name? (2)

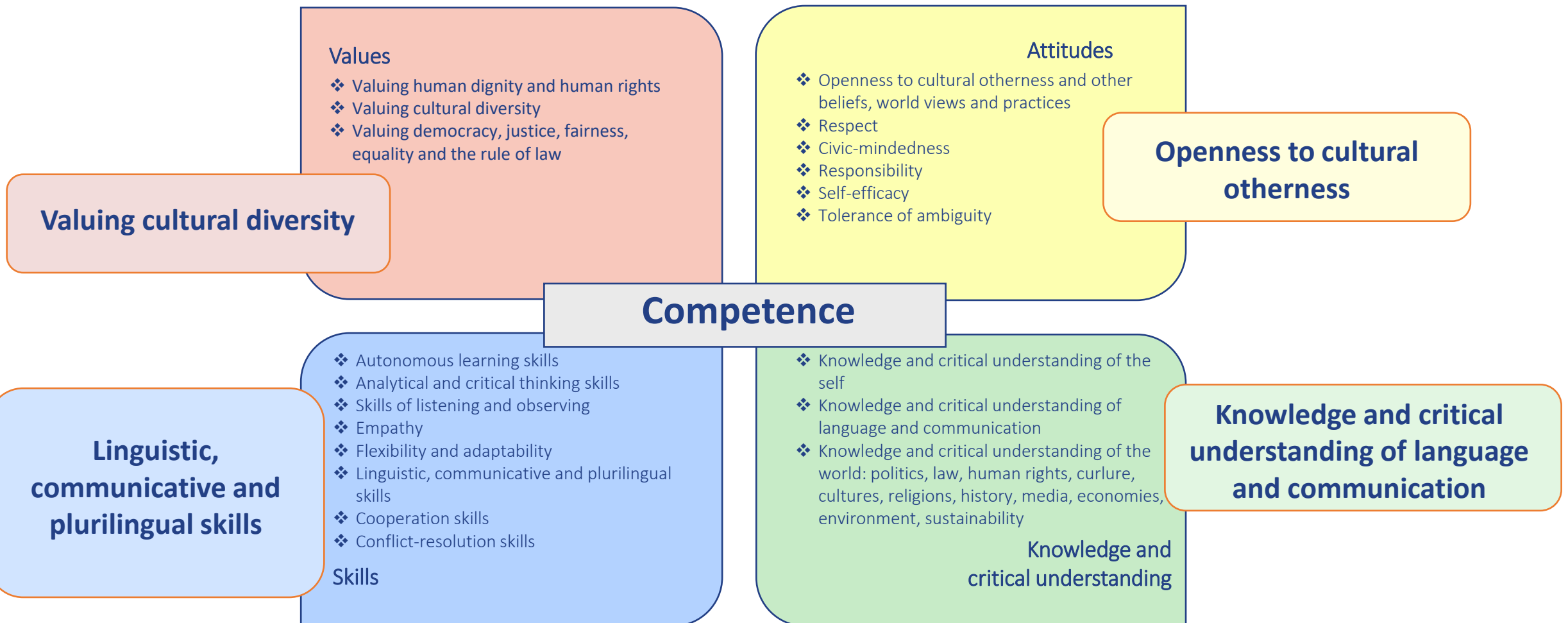
Recommendation R (2022)<sup>1</sup> *on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education* **for democratic culture**

Two specific concerns which relate to one **MAJOR** concern:  
“the backsliding of democracy” (2021, report of the Secretary General)

All exacerbated as a result of:

- the Covid pandemic
- the war in Ukraine

# Reference framework of competences for democratic culture



# Key features

- **First holistic recommendation on language education**
- **Broad scope: all languages, all educational sectors, wide range of stakeholders**
- **Ambitious but realistic**
  - **Recognises contextual differences**
  - **Offers support for implementation through the Explanatory Memorandum**
  - **Encourages and values every small step taken**

# Ensuring ownership from member States: the development process

- **June 2020:** creation of ad-hoc working group (Secretariat and experts) endorsed by Education Steering Committee
- **February 2021 – October 2021:** drafting group established. Iterations of texts sent to Education Steering Committee for feedback; standing item at statutory meetings (also of the ECML)
- **February 2022:** final adoption by the Committee of Ministers following further discussions with the GR-C
- **Extremely rich dialogue with extensive feedback at different levels on, for example, the political message, the clarity of the text, the choice and range of definitions, the terminology used, the organisation of the “Measures” section in the Explanatory Memorandum**
- **An example of successful, multilateral cooperation which helped foster ownership from the member States**

# The three official parts of the Recommendation



# 1. Preamble

## Situates the Recommendation in the context of

- the Council of Europe's foundational values, aims and policies
- relevant international and European conventions
- previous Recommendations and Resolutions that address issues in education in general, language education in particular, and education for democratic citizenship
- **related aims of the European Union**, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the United Nations
- other official declarations, conclusions, policy documents, guidelines and framework
- **the central role played by language and plurilingual and intercultural competences in maintaining and preserving democratic societies**

## 2. Specific recommendations

*Recommends that the governments of member States:*

- implement the measures
- encourage and facilitate support **across the education spectrum**
- encourage cooperation between **educational and cultural institutions, civil society and businesses**
- promote public debate
- translate and disseminate the Recommendation
- regularly review the implementation of the Recommendation (CDEDU)

## 3. Appendix

- Summarises the purpose of the Recommendation
- Explains its scope
- Defines key terms
- Sets out **the principles** that underpin plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture
- Elaborates **the measures** to be undertaken by those responsible for national, regional and institutional policy in all educational sectors, with important focus on initial and further education of teachers
- **Recognises that although full implementation of the Recommendation is the work of many years, much can be achieved by adjusting policy and practice at institutional and classroom level**
- Identifies partners with whom cooperation should be sought

# Getting started: awareness raising

# Promotion and dissemination: a joint responsibility

## Member States

- **Publicising** text as a news item on Ministry websites; in official newsletters
- **Sharing information** as widely as possible and asking other stakeholders to publicise it too
- **Translating** the Recommendation – example of Norway

## ECML

- News item
- Creation of **a dedicated website** – where translations will be uploaded

### Putting language education on the political agenda: A new Council of Europe Recommendation on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture

At a meeting of the Ministers' Deputies on 2 February 2022, the new Recommendation to member states on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture was adopted.

This recommendation addresses two developments of concern to the Council of Europe: a tendency on the part of public authorities and civil society to think that proficiency in one additional language is enough; and the notion that proficiency in minority or migrant languages, widespread in today's increasingly diverse societies, is harmful to societal cohesion.

To counter such developments, the Recommendation emphasises the cognitive, linguistic and social benefits of learning several languages, demonstrating the ways in which plurilingual and intercultural competences contribute to educational success, to societal integration and to understanding, assessing and formulating the arguments and opinions that are essential to democracy.

It sets out a holistic vision for language education, one which places language at the heart of all learning and which embraces all languages, and all educational sectors and players. Through its Explanatory Memorandum it guides member states towards the realisation of this vision by highlighting the range of rich resources developed by the Language Policy Programme and the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML).



Download in [English](#), [French](#), Norwegian (bokmål and nynorsk)

# Getting started: stimulating discussion

## ... from the **preamble**

- *Recognising the cognitive, linguistic and societal benefits of learning a range of languages and the disadvantages for learners who have access to only one additional language;*
- *Recognising that plurilingual and intercultural education **also** supports the educational and social inclusion of migrant and marginalised learners;*
- *Recognising that **the digital environment provides an unprecedented means for people to express themselves using different languages and opens new opportunities to enhance language learning** and to support and promote languages not taught in the curriculum, all of which underpins the culture of democracy that enables democratic institutions to function properly;*

## ... from the definitions

- “Plurilingual and intercultural education” is a holistic concept that has an impact on all areas of education policy and practice. Setting out to foster the development of **integrated linguistic repertoires** in which languages interrelate and interact, it takes explicit account of and seeks to bring into interaction with one another:
  - i. the languages and cultures that learners bring with them, including sign, minority and migrant languages and cultures;
  - ii. **the language/s of schooling, which vary in genre and terminology according to the different subjects taught** and differ in significant ways from the language of informal everyday communication;
  - iii. regional, minority and other languages and cultures that are part of the curriculum;
  - iv. foreign languages (modern and classical);
  - v. other languages and cultures that are not present in school and not part of the official curriculum.



## ... from the **principles**

### *Principle 1*

*Plurilingual and intercultural education is essential to education for democratic culture*

- *Education prepares the individual to be an active participant in democratic society by promoting his or her personal development, combining **social responsibility with growing self-awareness, self-confidence, independence of thought, and critical cultural and language awareness***

## ... from the measures

Policy and practice

Those responsible for national, regional and institutional policy in all educational sectors should:

- *review existing policies with a view to strengthening plurilingual and intercultural education and supporting linguistic and cultural diversity;*
- *ensure that curriculum guidelines and curriculums provide pupils and students with the opportunity to develop, ideally in at least two languages in addition to the language/s of schooling, the competences needed to engage in authentic and progressively complex oral and written communication, and that every effort is made to provide certification of those competences;*
- *reflect on traditional linguistic hierarchies and seek to diversify the range of languages offered;*

Support for implementation from the Council of Europe

## Exploiting the Explanatory Memorandum

### For developing or reviewing language policies

- *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*
- *Developing a school language policy*

### For supporting the language of schooling/language in subjects

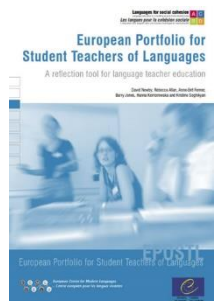
- *Language in other subjects (coe.int)*
- *A Roadmap for schools to support the language of schooling*

### For teacher education (initial and in-service)

- *A guide to teacher competences for languages in education*
- *European portfolio for student teachers of languages*
- *European portfolio for pre-primary educators*

### Other initiatives

- This **webinar** and subsequent **series of webinars**
- **Conference keynotes** in member States
- Using the Recommendation as **broad frame for the next ECML programme**



A webinar series that explores the implications of the Recommendation for the various sectors and dimensions of language education

# Using the Scope of the Recommendation to determine future webinars

- **All (language) education stakeholders**
  - Public authorities
  - Curriculum developers and textbook authors
  - Teachers
  - Teacher educators
  - Researchers
  - Professional associations
  - Parents
  - Civil society
- **All educational sectors**
  - Primary and post-primary schools
  - Vocational education
  - Higher education
  - Teacher education
  - Institutions and agencies concerned with non-formal and lifelong learning
- **Different dimensions of language learning, e.g.**
  - Language of schooling
  - Minority and migrant languages
  - CLIL/bilingual education
  - Learner autonomy
  - Digital literacy
  - Assessment literacy

# Closing remarks