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Outcomes for Policy Change, Analysis and Recommendations of Language Rich Europe
External evaluation

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March 2013

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1. Introduction

In November 2012 the Language Rich Europe (LRE) network commissioned an independent external evaluation of the outcomes and recommendations of the network. The evaluation has put a key focus on the sustainability of the LRE network outputs as well as on the level of achievement of the initiative's general, specific and operational objectives.

This Final Report presents the objectives and methodology for this evaluation, together withits findings and recommendations. The remainder of the report is structured as follows: in section two we present the context and objectives of the evaluation as well as evaluation rationale and the evaluation references; section three briefly introduces the methodology employed for this assignment; sections four and five present the analysis of the evaluation's findings; section six outlines the evaluation's conclusions and section seven the recommendations derived from it. The Terms of Reference for the assignment can be found in Annex 1. Annex 2 provides a list of persons interviewed for the production of this report. Annex 3 and 4 offers technical annexes related to the profiles of the interviewees and the reference against which they were selected. Annex 5 includes the Statement and Annex 6 the Inception report of the evaluation. Annex 7 provides the methodological tools used in the evaluation.

2. Context and objectives of the evaluation

Language Rich Europe 511780-LLP-2010-UK-KA2NW is a three year network to promote languages policies funded under the transversal Programme Key Activity 2 Languages within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme in the 2010 Programme Call. Its 24 partners are drawn from the fields of education, business, public services and the media. It aims at better understanding of good practices in language teaching and learning for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue, enhanced cooperation and commitment to improving language policies and practices, increased awareness of the European Union and the Council of Europe recommendations and how countries perform against them and a sustainable European benchmarking tool to evaluate policies and practices. The LRE network is coordinated by the British Council, London, UK.

2.1 Evaluation Rationale

The following definition of evaluation is used for the elaboration of this report:
According to the Communication on evaluation[1],

> **Evaluation** is "judgement of interventions according to their results, impacts and needs they aim to satisfy".

The approach towards carrying out external evaluation during the lifetime of the project has specific tasks that can be further articulated in the following elaboration of the aims of evaluation: evaluation is to determine the significance or worth of something by careful appraisal and study. Beside this and more importantly, it is a **developmental process** that illuminates or enlightens the specific processes and practice of its stakeholders and contributes to collective learning.

The evaluation rationale is based on two over-all objectives as to why evaluations are carried out, namely accountability and improvement. While they do not exclude each other, they do call for a different distribution of time and resources during their execution. Accountability relates to an "inspectorial" exercise, which seeks justification for an activity undertaken and for the impact it has produced. The evaluation provides a "measure" for judgement on the activity. Improvement as a main objective means to provide the actors with a thorough review of the achievements against the potential of an activity. An evaluation exercise principally aims at providing recommendations for future continuation or follows up of certain activities or programmes. The result of the evaluation is rather a "torch" which allows for illumination and development.

The accountability dimension is often requested by project management and network consortia in order to demonstrate the extent of the progress of the project and the

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[1]The Communication on Evaluation (SEC (2000)
1051):http://europa.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/keydocuments_en.htm

attainment of the project objectives. It is, however the conviction of evaluators that the improvement dimension is even more important.

Thus, the evaluation approach (taken here) had to balance an emphasis on the "forward-looking" function of evaluation (i.e. what lessons could be learnt for future implementation and which outcomes are potentially useful), with a backward looking function (which sought to provide accountability for funds spent).

These two over-all objectives are implicit in most Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference for this evaluation have formulated the main tasks as follows:

> "The main purpose of the external evaluation is to examine long-term project sustainabili lessons learnt and provide constructive recommendations for follow-up actions." (ToR)

2.2 Reference Bases

An important aspect of presenting the evaluation rationale is a statement about the basis of the methodology for measuring results for evaluation. These can be grouped in several major categories.

External criteria (the objectives of the Action) are set in accordance with Policy Strategic Documents or political priorities. They are a major point of reference to bear in mind when assessing the results at the end of the activities. These are strategic political documents developed by EU institutions related to the policy of multilingualism in the past 10 years and documents developed within the framework of the Council of Europe (CoE). Among these the following should be specifically mentioned:
- Communication from the Commission *Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes.* COM (2012) 669 final and Accompanying *Language competences for employability, mobility and growth.* SWD(2012) 372 final;
- The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020") and Resolutions and Conclusions of the EP and Council resolutions
- Key documents developed by the Council of Europe and in particular related to the promotion and support for minority and regional languages in Europe; guiding documents related to plurilingual and intercultural education, the right to quality and equity in education and the integration of children from migrant backgrounds.
- Surveys on languages in support of the development of language learning policies across Europe, e.g. the European Survey on Language Competences as a major initiative by the European Commission; the periodic surveys on "Europeans and their languages" carried out by the Public Opinion Analysis sector of the European Commission that provide a picture of language knowledge, language learning, and attitudes to language and translation in the EU; the Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe covering aspects of foreign language teaching, including early

teaching of languages in primary education or language teaching in vocational education, teachers' training and content and language integrated learning.

National language policies with their specific priorities relevant to the domestic context also constitute an important reference point that are to be taken into account in order to achieve a better understanding of the reality of multilingualism in the partner countries. The network has drawn upon that and has incorporated a significant component related to presenting the domestic and regional contexts. It includes reference to national language policy documents, to priorities set and to the philosophy of the construction and implementation of the policy of multilingualism.

The documents related to the LLP Call under which the LRE network was funded are basic reference documents used in the evaluation process. They include the strategic priorities of the networks under the Key Action 2 Languages, the explanation of the specific actions and the activities eligible for funding, the reference to good practices in the domain of KA2 Networks identified in studies, compendia, success stories, etc.

The scope of the LRE network is wide and far-reaching in terms of partners involved, types of institutions collaborating and domains covered and there is not yet an objective norm with which the project can be compared. The evaluation reports within the network provide an assessment of the progress made by the network, which becomes an important reference document for the sustainability evaluation. The judgement of the internal capacities and development of the institutions, organisations and people involved is crucial to allow for thorough findings on the performance of the network. These references include, on the one hand, the independent experts' evaluation at selection (Evaluation Report based on the assessment of external experts) and progress report stage (Comments and Recommendations from an independent expert) and on the other, the partners' assessment of how much awareness raising and learning from each other has occurred through the network activities.

2.3 Evaluation objectives and questions

The main focus of the evaluation is the short and long term sustainability of the network activities and outcomes. The Project description specifies the purpose and methods of the external independent evaluation as follows:

> "The project will hire an independent consultancy specialised in the evaluation of EU projects. They will conduct 30 interviews with the selection of high level EU policy-makers and stakeholders and the selection of national partners. The questions will be designed to address the project's institutional, financial and policy sustainability."(WP Quality assurance)

The Terms of Reference confirm and further specify the evaluation purpose as:

> *"The main purpose of the external evaluation is to examine long-term project sustainability. And, to document lessons learnt and provide constructive recommendations for follow-up actions."*

The evaluation uses the following definition of sustainability:

> "A project is sustainable when it continues to deliver benefits to the project beneficiaries and/or other constituencies for an extended period after the Commission's financial assistance has been terminated."[2]

The importance of sustainability has been emphasised by the Commission in the Action under the current Lifelong Learning Programme. Issues relating to sustainability have therefore received more attention from project assessors in the selection process and throughout the life cycle of the projects, particularly in the monitoring context. In this sense the external evaluation has been asked to focus specifically on the issues related to achieving more sustainability and thus to reinforce the potential of the network for delivering benefits after the end of the network's funded period. The evaluation methodology and activities have been planned and implemented with a focus on sustainability.

The tailored evaluation framework used to guide the evaluation assignment was based on a series of evaluation questions under the key criteria of *relevance*, *efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.* This framework was formulated taking into account the objectives of the evaluation, the reference bases and the information available. The research methods employed comprised documentation review (including analysis of programme data); observation of events, conferences and partners meetings, surveys and interviews with network team members and other stakeholders; surveys and interviews with beneficiaries and policy decision makers, participation in wider sustainability discussions and analysis of the collected data.

The evaluation includes aspects of standard external evaluation tasks of an EU-funded project (analysis of actual activities, relevance, availability of products/outputs, added value and usability with reference to the original application) in the documentation review and the phase of familiarization with the project background. This was envisaged as a starting point of the evaluation in which the focus was on the project achievements and the delivery of major project outputs with reference to the grant agreement. The evaluation thrust, however, focuses mainly on the evaluation of the potential of the network's long-term sustainability. Therefore the evaluation framework to be used was based on a series of evaluation questions under the key criteria of *dissemination, exploitation, utility, impact and potential for sustainability both of outcomes and of the partnership*.

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[2] Handbook on Sustainability (2006). Directorate-General for Education and Culture. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture

The list of evaluation questions was included in the Inception report. There were consultations on it with members of the network management team and the Exploitation WP leader. Some of the questions were included as topics for the discussion at the sustainability panel held at the partners 'meeting after the London conference on 6th December 2012. Below is the list of questions under the general headings of relevance, utility, dissemination and exploitation and sustainability. They were further elaborated in two versions of the questionnaire (more detailed and a brief one – Annex 5).

Relevance

- To what extent are the objectives of the network in line with the needs of the addressees/beneficiaries of its activities and/or the policy and practical problems the network is meant to address?

Utility

- To what extent do the results and impacts of the network's activities correspond to the needs in the identified areas?
- To what extent have the activities of the network resulted in any unintended/unplanned results and impacts (both desirable and undesirable)?

Sustainability

- To what extent can any positive changes resulting from the network be expected to last after its end?
- How do the effects of the intervention compare with the wider needs in promoting and preserving linguistic diversity and facilitating effective communication between all European citizens?

Dissemination and exploitation

- To what extent are the dissemination and exploitation activities visible in the targeted domains and among the key stakeholders?
- To what extent are dissemination and exploitation activities producing relevant results and ensuring that such results reach the right target audiences in a format and at a time which enables them to benefit from them?

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In this section we present the approach taken in the evaluation. Our approach involved the application of the standard evaluation model, which is the basis for all evaluations carried out for DG EAC and the EACEA[3]. The evaluation has drawn upon strategic documents related to the policy of multilingualism, the priorities of the LLP and the specific objectives and priorities of the network within the general priority of developing and promoting policies supporting language learning and linguistic diversity. The model was customized to the requirements of the Terms of Reference for the evaluation (ToR) and to the specific circumstances of LRE network. Intervention logic was developed which featured a hierarchy of objectives as well as a set of intended effects (outputs, results and impacts) that could be expected to flow from activities undertaken in pursuit of those objectives.

3.1 Evaluation stages

The methodology for this evaluation envisaged eight stages, namely:

• **inception** (Inception report);
• **in-depth document review** (application documents, internal reports, key network documents, Progress report provided by the prject management and obtained through the basecamp network community);
• **production of data collection tools** (questionnaires and topic guides for the evaluation surveys and interviews);
• **preliminary consultation with the project management** (members of the Network Steering committee) and **participation in a sustainability panel discussion** (wide representation of all network partners – around 40 participants);
• **interviews** (with network project managemers in the partner countries, local network partners in the countries, stakeholders representing different domains, membwer of the network Steering Committee, network WP leaders -60 interviews were undertaken in total),
• **final interviews with key stakeholders** (European Commission, Council of Europe, EUNIC)
•**thematic content analysis** (analysing transcripts, identifying themes, gathering together examples emerging from the data)
• **final reporting** phase and;
• **quality assurance**, which was ongoing throughout the life of the project.

3.2 Scope, strengths and limitations of the methodology

In the context of this evaluation we used a range of evidence sources to ensure we were able to provide robust answers to the key evaluation questions. Three main types of information source were used in the evaluation:

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[3] ….

- **Primary documentary information and network data;** these included, in particular: the network application, annual reports, progress and final reports submitted by the network, internal reports in particular the workshop and launch events reports, the recommendations drawn from them and the Recommendations at European level; a significant part constitutes the research tools and outcomes – LRE questionnaires, profiles, essays and the Publication itself;
- **Secondary information in the form of** reports, studies, research; these included, in particular other projects and language surveys at European level, e.g. SurveyLang, The Civil Platform on Multilingualism, Eurobarometer surveys, etc.;
- **Primary qualitative evidence from the interviews**; interviews were undertaken with those involved in managing the programme, beneficiaries of different strands of the network and other stakeholders (such as decision makers); they were interviewed by phone or face-to-face.

This section presents in more detail the approach to the evaluation in the key evaluation stages and justifies the selection of methodological techniques with reference to their strengths, scope and limitations and their contribution to the overall evaluation.

3.2.1 Document review on LRE implementation

Desk-based research had the advantage of obtaining a large amount of information related to the implementation and the deliverable production by the LRE network. However, the documents that could be analysed provided only partial information in relation to the evaluation framework –long-term sustainability- and did not enable the evaluator to respond to all evaluation questions.

3.2.2 Interviews

The interviews have provided a valuable evidence base of data but the extent to which interviewees have views concerning sustainability could be limited. First, it cannot be assumed that they have focused on this issue. Secondly, the interviews were ongoing while the sustainability strategy and dissemination and exploitation plan were being implemented. Depending on the time of the interview, it was expected that some of the answers could not be sufficiently informed, e.g. some interviews were conducted before the Final conference and before the publications in the relevant languages. The thematic content analysis began during the period when the first data was collected. The process continued and was modified throughout the study.

The time schedule and the ToR did not provide for going back to already conducted interviews to check developments and aspects of improvement and changes of opinion. However, these attitudes and opinions can be expected to demonstrate a certain level of stability for the purposes of analysis. The evaluation has therefore tried to address these limitations by:

- cross referencing evidence mostly from the two sustainability discussions (discussions on sustainability were included as items on the agenda at two partners' meeting – following the London Conference on 5th December 2012 and after the Final Conference in Brussels on the 5th March 2013); an important reference point were all the presentations at these two major network public events;

- diversification of the interviewee group (for more details see Annex 3)

- planning a certain number of interviews to be held after the national and regional workshops.

In addition to being a standalone tool for collecting data, the interviews have also been used in close relation to the documentary research, the observation of network events, reference to administrative records and management reports and gathering informal feedback from events participants.

Questionnaire

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire in two versions – a brief one and a more comprehensive one containing a more detailed conception of sustainability factors and potential. While a number of questions were listed, the interviewer could – depending on the way the conversation progressed – decide which question to ask first and/or which item(s) to give more attention to. The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the main concepts and factors related to sustainability, i.e. dissemination, exploitation, visibility of the outcomes, usability of the main products. These were operationalized in terms of scaling up effects, mainstreaming and multiplication and in terms of identification of the factors that enable or inhibit this taking place. How could sustainability be improved in the last 4 months of the network activities and in the future has been a main focus to be explored through the interviews. This was related to the formulating recommendations as a result of the network evaluation during the lifetime of the network to enable better realization of the sustainability action plan.

Types of interviews

The ToR specifies two types of interviews to be conducted: telephone (30) and face-to-face interviews (30). This indicator was developed bearing in mind that the evaluator had to attend the two major conferences and a series of workshops. The interviews were held as follows:

Face-to-face	By phone

29
Conducted as follows:
  • 10 at Conferences
  • 7 at workshops
  • 12in the partner country
	31
	
	For the period between
	December 15 – March 28

Telephone interviews

In order to identify candidates for the telephone interviews, a list of 40 persons representing stakeholders, partner organizations, network management as well as people related to the policy decision making levels outside the network partnership was drawn up based on the participants in workshops, conferences and LRE launches. The contact persons for the partner countries were consulted or their advice sought in identifying and contacting the potential interviewees. Arrangements were made during the Conferences and workshops for follow-up telephone interviews, since it was not possible to have the interviews in the coffee and lunch breaks.

Respondents were asked whether they and/or their company wished to be mentioned in the report. Some respondents did not want this, and others wanted to be consulted about the exact way they were to be quoted. As a result it has been decided to include quotations from the interviews but without explicitly mentioning the author or the country of the respondent.

All interviews by phone were recorded for personal use by the evaluator, as wished by the interviewees. They have duration between 20 minutes to more than an hour amounting to about 19 hours of recoded minutes.

Face-to-face interviews

The Conference and workshop time was used for conducting some of the key interviews with stakeholders and partners whose engagement in an interview by phone was deemed difficult to arrange. For example, face-to-face interviews were conducted with representatives of the European Commission and the Council of Europe, organizations and associations working at European level, keynote speakers and plenary speakers or moderators. Face-to-face interviews were also conducted during four workshops in London, Madrid and Sofia (2) and on a special visit to Athens, which the evaluator has identified as a good case representing a positive development committing new partners in research and dissemination.

3.2.3 Profile of the interviewees

The ToR explicitly identifies the main method to be used in the evaluation exercise – interviews, conducted face-to-face and by phone.

> The evaluator will conduct 60 interviews with decision makers from different countries and sectors (30 by phone and 30 face to face) to evaluate the impact of the project. (ToR)
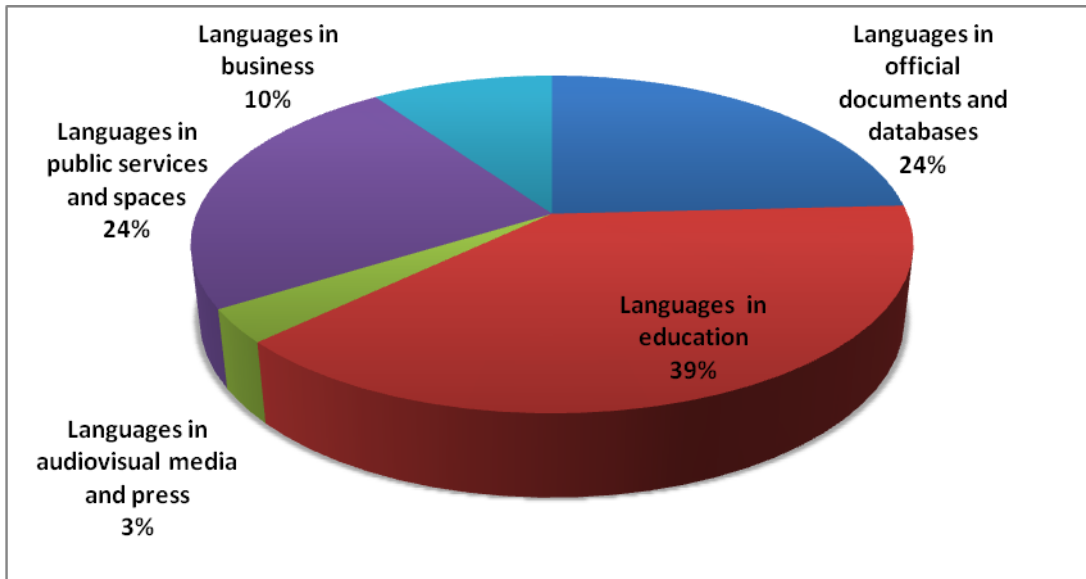
This meant that
- the benefits for the participants in the network were to be evaluated as an important sustainability factor (their commitment to continue work in the LRE area);
- it was important to collect their views on the main factors for sustainability that can effectively inform the management and lead to improvement of the sustainability plan.
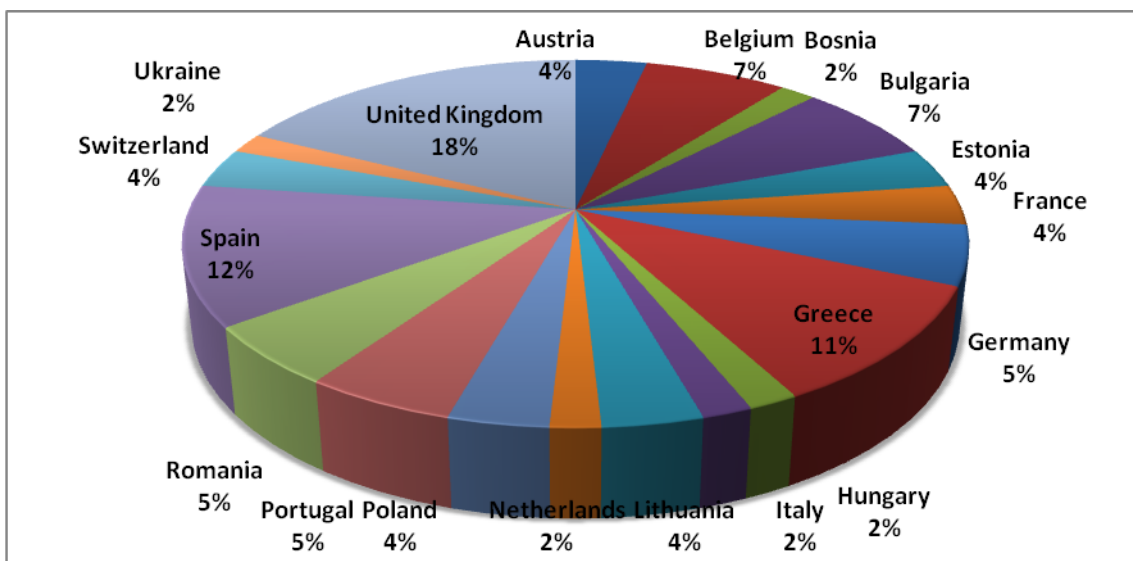
More than 60 interviews were conducted since some of the face-to-face interviews record more than one person. They are like small discussion groups. In this section we present the profiles of the interviewed network members and stakeholders.

There is a clear correspondence between the number of the interviewees by country and the overall number of attendees in the two conferences. There is a clear match between the number of the interviewees by domain and role and the overall number of attendees in the two conferences. The range of conducted interviews that included an important proportion of practitioners and specialists in addition to the expected group of policy makers and educationalists/researchers provides the broadest possible collection of different views in order to make a deeper and fuller evaluation. The main challenge was selecting the sample of the interviews in order to be representative by combing three different factors – country, language domain and role. However, as this correspondence was successfully achieved, the results are more reliable and overcome the limitation of this method of data collection and analysis. (For more details and graphic presentation of the correlation please refer to Annex 3 and 4)

Profile of the interviewees by surveyed language domain

Pie chart: Languages in business 10%, Languages in official documents and databases 24%, Languages in education 39%, Languages in audiovisual media and press 3%, Languages in public services and spaces 24%

Profile of the interviewees by country

Pie chart: Austria 4%, Belgium 7%, Bosnia 2%, Bulgaria 7%, Estonia 4%, France 4%, Germany 5%, Greece 11%, Hungary 2%, Italy 2%, Lithuania 4%, Netherlands 2%, Poland 4%, Portugal 5%, Romania 5%, Spain 12%, Switzerland 4%, Ukraine 2%, United Kingdom 18%

In practice, the methodology applied in the evaluation presented a number of strengths:
• Thorough analysis of documentation and materials available
• Attained indicator of the number of interviews – more than 60
• Almost 95% response rate for the interview invitations
• Wide coverage of different stakeholders in the interviews.

The time-frame for the present evaluation was its main constraint. Given the very limited time-frame set for the assignment the evaluator faced a challenge to undertake all evaluation stages included in the above explained methodology within less than three months.

4. Findings: What was done in the network?
(Network deliverables)

The evaluation asked question both related to the network products or **what was done** in the network and questions about the process of the implementation or **how it was achieved**.

4.1 Overview of deliverables production process

The first element of the analysis is an assessment of the **process** of the deliverables production, which is followed by an overview of the results the network has generated.

The objective of the LRE network was to create a sustainable interdisciplinary network of 960 decision makers from 14 Member States and 2 regions who will through workshops, conferences and online discussions, share good practice in language teaching and learning for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue and cooperate on improving language policies and practices. To inform their work the LRE network set the innovative task of comparing countries' performance against all EU and CoE policy recommendations covering the full spectrum of languages. The network actually went beyond the application by holding events and conducting research in Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the Basque country, which mean 24 countries/ regions surveyed overall. For reference, the EC application was made up of 14 of 14 Member states, 2 regions and Switzerland.

The methodological preparation of these goals was the collection of research data, compilation of country essays presenting the main aspects and dimensions of the partner countries context and country profiles that constitute an integral part of the publication of the survey data. Two work packages were designed to attain this objective:

- WP2 - Development of standard-setting framework aiming at the development of the framework of standards.
- WP3 - Development of the Index of Language Policies and Practices in Europe with three main deliverables: collection of research data, Country essays and country profiles renamed in the Progress report Development of Language Rich Europe framework for language policies and practices.

The process of delivering the outputs of these WPs included setting up a framework and data collection presenting each countries'/regions' performance in reference to European policy guidelines and areas of priority. For the implementation of these ambitious tasks a **network of research institutions** and organizations was created, and a **network of practitioners, experts** and researchers was invited to produce country essays, peer review them and thus inform the elaboration of the country profiles. The local network teams were organized in two main configurations: research teams in charge of conducting the LRE survey

and dissemination teams in charge of the organization of the launch events and the workshops and in bringing together stakeholders from various domain. It should be noted that the critical role in the network coordination has been played by the **British Council** and its country project managers coordinating the work of the local research and dissemination partners. Some interviewees expressed the opinion that *"The BC supported financially a lot of the project together with the EU; If it was not for the BC we would not have this project, it would have been mission impossible." (researcher).*

The role of the British Council was also pre-eminent in bringing together representatives of the EU institutions, organizations working at European level as active contributors to the network activities, the local cultural institutes in cooperation with EUNIC as well as key stakeholders at national and regional level.

The work programme envisaged these two WPs to have been delivered by the end of the 11 months of the work implementation (respectively 4 and 7 months for the two WPs). The work programme design was rather ambitious to schedule this complicated process for 11 months. The initial plan did not seem to put that weight of significance on the collection of data. The research methodology applied for the collection of data was comprehensive and the envisaged time limits were too short for the survey. The size of the network partnership and the large scale objectives were a factor that predictably caused some delays. Some interviewees said that they had the impression that "*the project runs late and a lot of deadlines were not met" (member of a research team).*

More importantly, however, the cooperation of such a big network inevitably resulted in many discussions and debates. These were related to the innovative task set by the consortium - to provide a basis for comparable analysis and presentation of the language policy landscapes in Europe initially envisaged as a Language Policy Index. The **debates and discussions** with the active contribution of organizations working at European level and representatives of the Council of Europe can be considered a model of how common solutions can be identified in the diversity of contexts in the member states. It served as an "incubator" of coordination and active alignment of objectives that can be achieved within the network duration. In this sense although it effectively caused some modifications in the terminology and the ambition to set standards, it can be considered **a very positive and informative process** that led to taking into account the specific context in the partner countries and to broadening of the European perspectives related to the reality of multilingualism in the EU.

All this had an influence on the management aspect of the network. The complexity of the tasks and the necessity to accommodate the diversity of opinions in the development phase of the network caused a series of delays that were noted in the evaluation of the Progress report. Some deliverables were delayed in their production ranging from 2 to 7-8 months. The organization of the survey itself by the partners in the countries took longer than initially envisaged. The need to revise some of the work already completed and the process of translation and proofreading turned out to be a very complicated process in view of the Publication in its 19 language versions (originally 18 in the application and Italian was added).

This situation required more effective, regular and timely communication. In such a situation and in such large scale partnerships there is the danger of frustration for those who manage to meet demanding deadlines. More efficient communication should have been maintained when deadlines were expected to drift. More regular updating on the deadlines was needed especially in the finalization of the survey and the translation process. Some of the partners felt that the deadlines were very tight and that not all partners actually met them. More importantly such overlapping of delays can undermine the enthusiasm for the network. There was also the danger of squeezing some aspects of the network activities into the last months and weeks. Nevertheless their significance was not diminished and they were experienced as needed and particularly important event at the end of the project.

WP2 Development of standard setting and WP3 Development of Index of Language Policies and Practices in Europe were successfully finalized and the products developed are a major asset of the network, as noted by all interviewees. They are seen as useful in various aspects, as will be discussed later in this report. However, the delays and the difficulties the partnership had to overcome show clearly how difficult it is to coordinate effectively and efficiently a product development within the format of a network. In this respect the network should be commended for undertaking this major effort and for mobilizing all its resources for producing a Publication with a potential for sustainability in a much longer term.

WP4 Dissemination and WP5 Exploitation included two main lines of activities of exchange of ideas, awareness raising, stakeholders' consultations and a series of public events. These activities were organized at national level and at international level. Mobilisation of the national teams was of great importance for the organization of the national workshops. A major role was also laid on the two international conferences – London 2012 and Brussels March 2013. The two WPs started their implementation with a delay of 6-7 months. There was a crucial change of a partner in the third year of the network (UK based CILT was replaced by the Languages Company as a key partner in the exploitation and dissemination phase). The replacement did not cause any interruptions to the project implementation. The role of the WP Exploitation leader (The Languages Company) was critical to the successful workshop organization, reporting, and organization of the two major public events – the two conferences and in the summarizing of the Recommendations at European level. Before that, there was a change in the network coordinator when Simon Ingram Hill took over from the previous network Director Martin Hope, combined with a change in the network project management earlier in the network duration. These changes, although significant, did not affect negatively the network management due to the guidance of the Steering Committee.

The main dissemination activities (the national launches and the workshops) were well organized and particularly the launches attracted good number of stakeholders in most partner countries. Most of the workshops were on specific topics, which was very effective in attracting relevant stakeholders and forming new or enlarging the already existing local networks. (For an overview of the workshop topics see Annex 4) The workshops were running mostly in the autumn of 2012 but some partners were still organizing them around and after the Final conference in Brussels. The national workshops and launches resulted in the compilation of European Recommendations that were presented to the EU institutions

at the Final Conference in Brussels. National/ local recommendations have been complied as a result of partners meetings and have been published separately. Thus the network completed the circle of its activities providing visibility of its results at national and European level. The European Recommendations are a very focused and concise document that can be a good tool in the dissemination of the network results and in engaging stakeholders in dialogue and discussion of policy issues related to multilingualism. The Final Conference in Brussels was a good example of policy dialogue, although in the opinion of a number of participants "*more attention could have been devoted to the ways these recommendations can reach the policy makers*" and the "*ways they can be implemented*".

This overview of the implementation process shows that the partnership has delivered its main outputs. Some of them have limited significance within the network and as tools for the process of exchange of ideas among the partners. However, the Publication of the collected data, the country profiles and the Recommendations have a wider European short and long term impact with their innovative nature. The main Language Rich Publication has already been cited in many scholarly and popular journals and papers. The network website is a major factor for maintaining the network and for achieving wider dissemination of the results. Most of the interviewees identify the website as a critical factor for exploitation of the network deliverables and outcomes.

4.2 Overview of network deliverables

This section analyses the main outputs of the network – this is about products rather than process. It presents how they are assessed and what their significance and quality is according to the interviewed people. The period for holding the interviews coincided with the process of finalisation of some of the network outputs. Therefore, very few people could express their view on the Final Conference or the Publication in their respective language version or of the Recommendations. This was compensated for with observations and a series of informal discussions with some of the people who had been interviewed before the Final Conference in the breaks and at other occasions. These, however, were not recorded and consequently analysed and coded.

The Table below presents the main focus of the evaluation. More specifically, it notes that the evaluation aimed at identifying the outcome of the network as a whole and the way it is described and reflected upon by the interviewees.
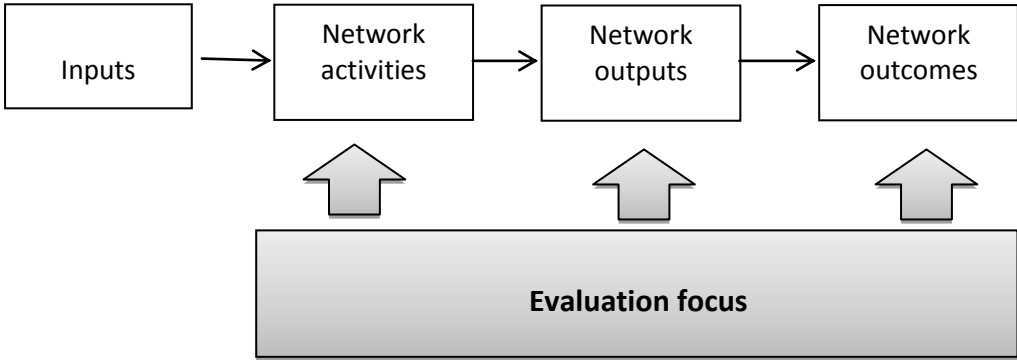
The evaluation did not aim at assessing the quality or availability of all network outputs as this was not included in the ToR. The outputs, for which opinion was sought during the interviews, can be classified as follows:

Apart from the interviews the evaluation used the following sources:
1. The core network documentation
2. The observation of some of the launch events and workshops
3 The workshops reports and the discussion of issues related to their organization and results at the network partner meetings

4.2.1 Network activities

The **network activities (outputs)** are the typical kind of events included in the format of KA2 networks. They were central for the network implementation in the network design and it is the conviction of most partners that they deserve this characteristic and had fulfilled their role.

The value of the activities is seen by most interviewees in **establishing or strengthening existing or new local partnerships**, engaging in discussions with new stakeholders on topics identified as priority for the specific country context.

"Establishing network of stakeholders interested in multilingualism which will lead to further activities and projects in multilingualism, e.g. Bulgarian Academy of Science and Sofia University, European Studies Department" (project manager)

"LRE was for us an opportunity to work closer with business at national but also invite representatives of the Chamber of commerce to the international conferences; these were relations existing before LRE but they were strengthened during LRE" (NGO representative, teacher)

"the project has been instrumental at the local level in supporting EUNIC cluster and the working group on multilingualism – example, in 2009 we started organizing the European Day of Language together for the first time and since then it has become a repeating event" (project manager)

"the activities have been useful but up to a point, especially the workshops and meeting people from other countries to share and exchange information and views on multilingualism; at national and local level we have established networks and cooperation with stakeholders" (head of research)

The workshops and the launch event were effectively used for **addressing national and local policy makers**, e.g. ministries, local authorities, chambers of commerce, representatives of NGOs working with minorities, migrants, etc.

"The network has inspired new cooperation; how we can work together and that has been very fruitful at national and local level we have established networks and cooperation with stakeholders" (NGO representative, civil society)

'there was a cohesive, productive and enthusiastic group working on multilingualism and how all languages fit together in our city.. " (project manager)

"Establishing strong relationship with Sofia Development agency that will help local authorities to introduce language policies in certain fields, like public services and further development and improvement of multilingualism environment" (project manager)

"Discussions with national stakeholders took place, also a media campaign - the project helped to involve various stakeholders to think about multilingualism and minority languages" (ministry person, chief expert)

The international conferences in London and Brussels are emblematic European events, gathering a large partnership and providing the basis for a **political discussion at European level**. The London conference with its workshops and interactive programme triggered discussions within the network while the Brussels conference provided an opportunity for presenting the network outputs (Recommendations and the Publication of the survey) to representatives of the European institutions – the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee. Visibility of the network results was given to the policy makers at the highest European level by presenting of the survey results and the views concerning the priorities and the new direction for multilingual policy

in the Recommendations. Among the participants of the Brussels with contribution in the plenary were: Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth; Miguel Angel Martínez, Vice-President of the European Parliament; Doris Pack, Member of the European Parliament, Head of Culture Committee; Kristina Cunningham, Head of Sector, Multilingualism policy, European Commission; Sjur Bergan, Head of Education Department, Council of Europe; Ádám Kósa, Member of the European Parliament, Member of Committee on Employment and Social Affairs; Staffan Nilsson, President of the European Economic and Social Committee.

The workshops covered a **wide range of topics** relevant to the local context that brought together stakeholders in the relevant field. The initial attendance indicators were not reached in all countries. This refers to the participants in the workshops. However, the participants demonstrated commitment and engagement in the discussions and contributed to their good results. (See Annex 4)

4.2.2 Network products

What we include under this category is a number of tangible outputs that were developed and successfully completed by the partnership: The Language Rich Publication of the Survey, published by Cambridge University Press, the National and European Recommendations, the Action plan and the Contact database of experts. A reference is made also about the website, as a tool with multiple functions within the network implementation.

The Publication *Language Rich Europe. Trends in policies and practices for multilingual Europe* is viewed definitely as a "*substantial*" **and crucial factor** for the success of the network, for achieving its objectives and effectively for the sustainability of the collaboration and cooperation within the network. The following reasons are most often mentioned:
- It has embedded the **comparative perspective** although very few interviewees acknowledge it can be used as an evaluating or self-evaluating tool. The application of a common methodology and questionnaires is positively interpreted in providing a basis for comparison. Most of the interviewees clearly express doubts of the use of the data for evaluation purposes and reservations of the need and possibility of evaluation in this field.

"the data in the project is presented in a very structured way and can be used to compare situations in different countries, although the validity is difficult to be determined" (teacher of EN, NGO)

"data is interesting when compared and there is potential for overview of the situation in Europe as a whole; it also shows the different culture of understanding multilingualism and the political priorities in this area" (researcher)

"We need better data and it should be mutually comparable (ask the same kind of questions about their language use); Using censuses does not make much sense, they are some general type of laws that measure and different countries can be compared" (researcher, working a lot at European level)

"multilingualism is a very context dependent area; there is different status of languages in different countries"(ministry person)

"There are interesting correlations between countries that quite far apart but that have struggled with similar linguistic landscapes; this gives you a broader perspective, European dimension" (researcher)

"One of the things that came up from the research is how differently multilingualism is understood across Europe." (university lecturer)

- The scope of the survey with 25 participating countries and regions is highlighted as a major **illuminating factor for the current state of multilingualism in Europe**. Although there are surveys presenting data related to language teaching and learning in Europe-wide context, the results of this survey are considered as presenting the micro-level policies and practices on multilingualism and plurilingualism.

"During survey, what we were looking at were not so much attitudes and not so much language achievements, we were looking more at the enabling factors for the language rich society. This complementarity would be very useful to draw some co-relations of Language Rich Europe results with Eurobarometer and Language Competences."(Steering Committee member)

"…years ago it was very difficult to get reliable data about Eastern European countries, e.g. Romania – how many languages are spoken there" (researcher)

"The project is interesting to see what the situation in the other countries is and analyze different approaches (for ex. early language learning or how to deal with immigrants that do not speak the language)"(university lecturer, bilingual education)

"the data gives a fairly accurate snapshot of what the situation is in Europe; it gives a very strong flavour" (peer reviewer of the report)

- A particularly significant aspect of the survey results is the presentation of the "*richness of languages presented in European society and the extent to which all of these languages are included in policies and practices for multilingualism and plurilingualism*". It is acknowledged that the publication provides **invaluable data related to languages of all types** (national, foreign, regional and minority languages, immigrant languages). This is a major factor for raising awareness of the reality of multilingualism in Europe irrespective of their inclusion in policy or administrative documents.

"the project raises awareness about non-European migrant language"(teacher)

"Multilingualism - people generally understand it as learning foreign languages. Multilingualism is on the other hand speaking a variety of languages and using languages differently, but also exploiting, using and valuing the languages within the country as well." (university lecturer)

- The combination of the quantitative survey with country essays is considered as a **positive combination of methods**. Quantitative data is considered valuable but it needs national or regional context for their presentation. There are a number of cases in which the regional or local context has been rendered as critical for the presentation of the data. This has in some cases particularly raised the significance of the qualitative presentation of the main issues related to multilingualism and in the case of Germany the quantitative approach was not considered applicable and their results were not included.

"data is valuable but it needs context" (researcher)

"data collection is absolutely necessary" (network research team)

"in order to do policy in this area and also scholarship we need more reliable data"

"the results of the survey are localised and generalisations can lead to misinterpretation" (project manager)

"… useful outcome but hard to use the data to make predictions… it shows trends or what topics should be taken further" (researcher)

"data is useful but more important is what comes from the report in the discussions" (workshop participant)

- A number of interviewees noted that the data can be linked to other surveys thus providing for cross-reference or triangulation of the survey results.

For example,
"the data related to the educational sector "can be effectively linked to other surveys at European level" (university lecturer)
"the LRE survey can be linked to other projects and surveys such as ELAN for business or LINEE, which will hap have a deeper global view" (researcher)

"we should try to correlate similar issues surveyed by LRE and SurveyLang for example"(PhD student)

"we can look at the consistency and sustainability of other projects like Languages in Europe: theory, policy, practice (LETPP) and the value of the research can be compared with the project on Languages in Urban Context: integration and diversity in Europe LUCIDE" (city authority)

"One of the issues could be a comparative analysis with the three researches (Language Rich Europe, Eurobarometer and Language Competences)" (project manager)

- The publication explores the reality of multilingualism in **6 clearly identified domains** and applies tailored methods. This is seen as particularly important for stimulating further research. The data related to the different domains is interpreted in different

ways. The three city component of the survey is interpreted more as a snapshot of the situation, from which it is difficult to make generalisations. However, this is an aspect that is very much appreciated as innovative and which should be further explored and developed. Therefore, significant parts of the Publication are interpreted as **case studies** that mirror the outcomes of macro-level language policy.

"the broader focus beyond education is very important; it has not been done much" (educationalist)

"we should study more the data in education, in society and in particular deeper research on the city – three cities are not enough", (university researcher, working with PhD students)

"we specially plan to focus more on the domain of business in the future; we have planned to organize a seminar on languages for jobs in September 2013" (ministry person)

"some of the survey findings do not correspond to full reality; in depicting linguistic reality we need to make the distinction of what is real and what is the aspiration"(PhD student)

"good correlation with SurveyLang and the CoE Language education profiles" (person working at European level)

- The **publication of the book in 19 languages** including Arabic and Turkish is interpreted as a major factor of sustainability, embedded in the network design. However, most of the interviewees firmly state that additional efforts are needed including very good coordination and management in the process of their distribution and dissemination. The delay of the publication in some languages did not allow for a wide enough dissemination campaign during the network duration and requires additional management commitment to follow up and further dissemination and exploitation of this major network product. However, thesse efforts are in place and there are concrete distribution plans. All the publications will e fully implemented by the end of Ma 2013.

"Thus the results of this large survey are communicated in a louder voice" (language service centre)

The *Language Rich Europe Review and Recommendations,* compiled on the basis of the national recommendations and presented at the Final Conference in Brussels to the European institutions, are identified as a substantial network product in the following aspects:
- It represents the **synthesis of a wide, intensive and context specific process of discussions** on issues, priorities and actions that need to be taken in the area of the policy of multilingualism. It actually represents a very wide **consultation process** in a very focused, informed and structured way. In its scope it ranks along with major consultations launched by the EC. For example, 2,419 contributions were analysed in the online Consultation on multilingualism launched in autumn 2007, inviting organisations and individuals to write their views and expectations concerning

language policy. In 2013, a total of 1.390 responses were received to the online consultation on Preparation of a new programme in the field of education and training post 2013. It is difficult to calculate the number of personal contributions in the network. It is important to say that all people who have taken part in the workshops and the launches were actually contributing and given the floor for recommendations and suggestions.

- Inevitably the national perspective was more or less dominant in the course of the network activities. The launch events and the three workshops were locally organized although they provided in most cases a reference to Europe wide perspective for comparison. The Recommendations however, combine the national regional perspective with common issues at European level.

- They provide a document representing a **broader European perspective** that draws upon bottom-up process of identification of priorities. In this respect it might not address some issues rendered of primary importance at European level. This has been noted during some of the discussions at the two international conferences. In effect, it has served its role of triggering responses from policy makers at European level in a very similar manner to what happened at national level during the workshop discussions. Combined with the Local Recommendations it presents a "***snapshot*** *of the current issues that the reality of multilingualism faces"(conference participant*).

"we would like to concentrate on a few recommendations of the ten and see what can work best and translate it into concrete projects" (cultural practitioner)

The **Contact database and the Action plans** have been delivered within the network despite some delays. The evaluation showed that there are recommendations for their better use mostly related with sustainability issues. They are identified as instruments for sustainability and their assessment has a clear reference to their use in the future beyond the network duration. Less important seems here the results and the instrumental benefit that they were able to produce during and in the course of the network activities. In general they are not known by most of the interviewees and they do not feel confident in assessing their usability and role in the network implementation. Very good suggestions were made about how their work could be better organized during the sustainability discussions at the partners' meetings.

"clusters of researchers, experts and stakeholders working on specific topic should be formed" (member of a partner country team)

"Cluster in a non-geographical state are better; this will give an opportunity to pair in collaboration LT and PT, Ukraine and the Netherlands – countries far apart, from different regions; this is a way to reinforce the European view and not reinforce the national view" (researcher, working at European level)

The website is mentioned in almost all interviews. The interviews were held in the period when it was being developed and enriched with information on the launch and workshops an dthe network research findings. A lot of recommendations are given for its further improvement in relation for sustainability. (see also below 5. Findings: sustainability and Recommendation four).

"the website is a useful resource; I have pointed people to it and they find it useful" (university lecturer)

"A question is who could coordinate further activities and maintain/improve the website" (network team member)

The **outcomes of the network** are described as objectives in the design of the network. They are related to "facilitated exchange of good practice", "more European cooperation in developing language policies" and raised awareness of the EU and CoE recommendations and policy developments and elaborations.

The survey shows that the network outcomes are most described by the interviewees as:

- Acquiring a **European broader perspective** as an added value of the network as opposed to a too localized national or regional perspective based on information and discussion of the specific local contexts

- A capacity and opportunity for an informed interpretation of issues related to language policy and use of languages from a **comparative perspective**

- **Broadening of the concept of good practice** which is instrumental in the area of education and language policy in the EU context which can also be interpreted as delocalization of the concept of good practice and positioning it in the context of the broader European context.

5. Findings: What can be done in the future? (sustainability)

The assumption is that the network can be considered as sustainable if its outcomes continue after the end of three years' EU funding. The sustainability of project outcomes is generally anticipated as being very difficult to describe, since most are not tangible and are difficult to see. However, the extensive work done in interviewing LRE stakeholders, team members and workshops participants allows for conclusions related to the value and potential future usability of the outcomes.

5.1 Some broader themes

The content analysis of the interviews identified several **recurrent themes** that generally formed the framework within which the interviewees were expressing their opinions on the benefits of the network and its sustainability.

- *Country specific language policies and language context*

The interviews demonstrate that while assessing the sustainability of benefits for the LRE network, it is important to set the analysis within the context of country-specific circumstances. Key factors impacting on the sustainability of benefits vary between countries, such as the multilingual reality of the country and regions, , the national regulations of language offer in the state and private educational system, the specific policies related to integration of minorities and migrant population, their level of economic development and business relations with the rest of the world, etc.

- *European dimension*

Most of the interviewees talk about the benefit of the network as reinforcing a European dimension and they consider it a major factor for sustainability and potential for follow up activities in different configurations and ways. The network has a particular strength including organizations active at European level or member states organizations acting in other EU-member states (the members of EUNIC). The Final Conference as well brought the discussion in the EU institutions, which was noted in the interviews held during or after the conference.

- *Data Collection*

Collection of data is viewed as an area of primary importance and all interviewees talk about the data, their usability, the process of gathering it and the methodology. Most of the interviewees consider it as a major reference point for understanding the reality of multilingualism in other European countries and the extent to which it is embedded in their education and other policies.

- *Comparative potential*

The comparative perspective is clearly identified as the major strength of the network. All interviewees share the view that the network provided a basis for comparison in the area of language policy and the reality of multilingualism in the EU countries. Interviewees say that "the data in the project is presented in a very structured way and can be used to compare situations in different countries". Further comparative potential is added by the website and the availability of the data on it as well as the opportunities to explore it.

- *The sector approach*

The interviews demonstrate that the sector/ domain approach adopted in the LRE survey reveals specific dimensions of varied potential for sustainability of LRE benefits. The interviews show that a domain-centred approach is an important factor. While language teaching is of major concern for the educational system where language teaching is provided on compulsory and optional basis, it seems to be of less importance for the business sector in terms of direct investments and concern for developing language training programmes and activities. Domains such as media and the city environment were mentioned in some interviews. The main theme remains languages in education as a whole.

These aspects are considered as the main benefits of the network and they constitute the structure within which the understanding of the sustainability of the network is conceived. The sustainability is viewed as sustaining the flow of these benefits into the future.

Sustainability can be described by the maintenance, further development and/or dissemination of outputs and outcomes, rather than the simple continuation of activities, which might no longer be necessary. This maintenance of outputs/outcomes depends on local contexts in partner countries.

The interviewees describe the network as sustainable if some of the main network activities and outcomes **maintain and develop some of their diversity and intensity** after the end of the funding. Most of the interviewees express their view or expectation that this could or should happen. In other words, their judgment of the sustainability potential was informed along these lines. Some interviewees expressed doubts as to how probable they are, since most of the activities are rather expensive and require administrative support.

5.2 Problems and needs addressed by the network

The people interviewed talk about factors for sustainability again when they assess the potential for taking further some of its products and outcomes. It is said that the network responded to the need for co-operation at European level on the issues of language policies and multilingualism.

The needs that the network is set to respond to are formulated in the application as follows:

> "An informal consultation process conducted by the British Council across 18 countries supports these conclusions and points towards **the following needs** which the project will address:
> - Need to exchange good practice in enhancing intercultural dialogue and social inclusion through language learning and teaching
> - Need for greater European cooperation on improving language policies and practices
> - Lack of awareness of CoE and EU recommendations on language policies and practices for promoting language learning and linguistic diversity and MS performance against them." (quote from the Application form)

What do the interviews show about the needs it has succeeded in addressing?

5.2.1 European "policies" on multilingualism have developed over time. There has not been a comprehensive review of the extent to which they are carried out in the different practices of member states. Some key questions arise such as:
- Are they an aspiration or a reality?
- Do they need to be adapted in the face of change?
- Are they relevant for the times of crisis?
- What can be done to strengthen the key goal of unity through diversity?

Much has been achieved in this area – in particular widespread public acceptance of the significance of multilingualism and the development of tools and resources supporting language teaching and learning and measuring language proficiency levels. However, there is now a degree of uncertainty as we are currently faced with complex challenges. There is the anticipation and many people have expressed the fear that **policies of multilingualism are rather narrowed and at risk** in the difficult economic situation in Europe and the world.

A recurrent theme in the interviews is the need for **debating the current challenges for the policy of multilingualism and re-scoping its model** in view of the current economic and social realities, the massively increased mobility in Europe, the particular position of English and the new forms of communication.

"The EU started very good work on multilingual strategy and it provoked a lot of enthusiasm in member states and professional networks but for a long time there has not been enough support and tools to measure progress" (ministry person)

"The policy that promote multilingualism is very good, but sometimes not very realistic" (university lecturer)

"The policy of mother language + two is nice, but Europe in general fails to implement it" (ministry official)

"it is not just policy but also the needs of the children and the choice the family makes" (working in the area of intercultural dialogue)

"The issue is quality language education" (educationalist)

"We need to assure that everybody benefits from the language policies (business, individuals, etc)" (NGO representative)

"Multilingualism has two sides; a lot of people are multilingual because are born in multilingual families, but they try to hide this and act as one of the nationalities; they have to be supported to keep their multilingualism and be proud of this because this is an asset"(media person)

5.2.2 In the situation in the EU with increased mobility and migration when social inclusion and intercultural dialogue are becoming a political priority, the network aimed to provide an **opportunity for discussion, exchange of ideas and analysis** of the extent to which it has been taken up at national and regional level in the EU. Its objective to explore all languages present in European society, their interrelations and change of position and role in different contexts is considered very relevant and needed. In this sense the network has contributed significantly by drawing a better language map of Europe and in raising awareness of the linguistic diversity. This has been achieved mostly through the large scale survey involving 25 countries and regions in Europe.

"More stakeholders realise that they need to enter the immigration discussions, but they still do not do it - because of political or other issues"(researcher working on migrant issues)

"the main issue are the migrant languages that come from outside Europe and make Europe language rich, they have to be supported for their values"(teacher)

"Migrant languages in the curriculum are also an issue in our country"(educationalist)

"In the country there is still not provision to use the languages of the migrants in the education system, and there is such demand in some communities"

"Main points: migrant languages and individual rights" (researcher)

"We need to look at the language coherence across the curriculum, and also language of schooling and migrant languages" (European expert)

"It is important that people going around in Europe should not lose their original language as it is a heritage language; It is already happening in USA and Canada, we should prevent this in Europe" (academic)

5.2.3 The network has responded to an urgent need for **data collection**. Although social inclusion and intercultural dialogue are political issues, it is not possible to develop a clear view without reliable data of what has happened in fact and also of potential new developments on the ground. The need for data is therefore considerable, in particular about the **realities of multilingualism in use** in key spheres such as those developed by LRE –

traditional areas in which there are mechanisms for collecting data such as education, but also media, business, city policies and public services and space.

This aspect is presented in the interviews along the following lines involving more than statistics about provision and offer of languages. Sometimes the number of languages taught at school (more than 20 in some countries) may disguise the fact that only one language predominates. Similarly the length of time devoted to language learning is important but may not correspond to the actual attainment of learners. We need to know what use citizens are actually making of different languages in life and work.

"The big outcome of the project is the data collected and compared; and has to be used further - in the focus of further decisions, also further analysis and further research; more data on regional level and in different communities can be collected" (Member of the Steering Committee)

"we need to promote the data collection as a source for decision making" (research network partner)

"The project results and the data will be important - as a documents and evidence - for further dialogues with stakeholders, ministries" (ministry person)

"the data is very useful, this survey should be repeated in regular intervals (for ex. 2 years) to see how the data changes and what the trends are" (university person)

"we need better data and it should be mutually comparable (ask the same kind of questions about language us"

"data collection is a huge problem; data collection systems are very different in Europe" (research partner)

5.2.4 A major factor for sustainability is a change of perspective – from national to European, a broader view on multilingualism embedding the differences of "*"our" multilingualisms*". Acquiring **a European broader perspective** has been concurrently noted as an outcome of the network.

"we need also to have "linguistic sustainability" - to think from a complex perspective and combine the both goals - to have the common language and to keep the other languages alive"(academic)

"stakeholders can look across the wall and see and understand the situation in 20 other European countries and regions" (researcher)

"During this meeting it came obvious what policy priorities are"(European expert)

"it seems there is too much emphasis on integration of migrants; EU national integration is also an issue"(official working at European level)

"there is a specific emphasis in the policy of multilingualism on the positive aspects; its focus and content is how we celebrate multilingualism in Europe; it seems in my opinion that not enough attention is paid to the 'negative' aspects, i.e. that language can be used for exclusion" (researcher, head of research)

Networks outcomes can persist in different way provided they respond to a perceived need by groups of experts, stakeholders, policy makers and language users that realise their right to education and quality of education. So sustainability can be anticipated in the process of bringing about change that is incremental in two main aspects:

- acquiring and broadening of more open EU perspective on multilingualism(s) and
- the need to engage in discussion and in collaboration with different stakeholders in the explored domains of languages in use.

5.3 The importance of a well-managed and implemented sustainability plan

5.3.1.The role of the network management is seen by interviewees as an important factor for sustaining some of the network activities and dissemination of its results. Three discussions on sustainability were organized by the LRE management: two at partners' meetings (London and Brussels) and one at the Steering Committee meeting in Berlin in January. Most of the Steering Committee members were interviewed after the discussion. The Steering committee discussed and supported the idea of developing a new, short-term project application under **Accompanying measures (AM)** that can further reinforce the sustainability of the network. Later the AM application was discussed with the partners and found active and enthusiastic support. It has been considered as a lever for attaining more dissemination of the tangible network product - the LRE publication as a valuable resource for comparative analyses, the case studies (country profiles), the Recommendations with their potential for broader application and use within a longer timeframe.

"sustainability was constantly on the agenda of the project" (Steering Committee member)

The interviews show that sustainability is a challenge, since networks are on the whole dependent on EU funding and network meetings expensive. There were a number of suggestions of how this can be achieved.

5.3.2 The interviews expect that some of the network activities/outputs are **maintained,** e.g. workshops are planned on similar topics after the end of the network funding, the survey results are used in academic environment, they trigger further discussion of the data in similar workshops format. The interviews also reveal commitment of some partners in maintaining these activities.

"To maintain the network is very important, to encourage people from different countries to organise events from time to time - both locally and internationally" (media person)

"A very good network in the country is formed, they are inspired and ready to work so we could expect good results in Poland" (European expert) Other countries are also mentioned as good examples – Bulgaria, Romania,

"The network would probably continue through national structures, not a new network" (Steering Committee member)

"The network has inspired new cooperation; how we can work together and that has been very fruitful at national and local level we have established networks and cooperation with stakeholders" (researcher)

5.3.3 There is also a strong feeling that what has been done in the framework of the network should be further **developed**, i.e. new data should incorporated, be uploaded on the website and the published data used as a basis for identification of new areas of data collection, stimulating new surveys of existing census data and encouraging further research in the area.

"database and publication are very important, although they can be further improved" (language policy expert)

"The partners need to identify potential further topics for discussion" (panel participant)

"one aspect that is not studied is the language of the Internet - this could be a further potential" (university person)

"for sustainability - we have to transfer the results through different other networks we participate in"

5.3.4 The interviewees put a particular emphasis on **dissemination**. It is clearly said that "*having a book on the shelf is not enough*". It needs mediating it to the right and interested audience, those who can benefit from it and contribute to its further development.

"For all the projects the big issue is the mediation to the user"(expert working at European level)

"the network results will be disseminated further amongst researchers; amongst society is difficult, languages are not an issue in the country" (NGO person)

"Results should be further disseminated through participation in events or further projects for dissemination" (researcher)

Other ideas and proposals include: reference to LRE data in courses in universities which do not belong to the initial consortium (outputs), more people use it than in the original consortium; the publication is well distributed reaching the right target audience for multiplying the exploitation potential. Some interviewees say that there has not been

enough time for wide dissemination and it happened in the last months of the network duration.

"some things can be easily done: improve the interactivity of the website and the language richness of the website, also make people aware that it exists and what could be the impact from using it" (workshop participant)

"it is a good and broad network. However, they come from language related sectors, It is hard to bring the information gathered into the larger circles out to the general public; this is one of the weaknesses of the LRE, it is too high level, more an academic discussion" (language practitioner)

"In my opinion the results of the survey are known by the partners and network of experts overall, however there is a big target audience, for instance companies, organizations, clusters, that work to boost the multilingualism and don't know anything about the project." (researcher)

"It is research what you are doing; it opens a new horizon, academic; we are though in the practical world" (media person)

In **conclusion**, it becomes clear that sustainability may not concern all the aspects of network. The network outcomes can persist in different forms even not bearing the specific features of network activities in the ambitious scale of LRE. Some activities or outputs may be maintained, while others may not be so necessary to maintain. The relevant activities that are to be pursued involve on-going cooperation, especially in research and the effort to bring out the results of the network out in circles outside the academia – business, media, local authorities and ministries and engage them in discussions on the importance of languages at policy level as well as at practical and day-to-day business. There is a clear view as to the outputs that should be maintained or developed after the end of the EU funding (i.e. up-dating of the survey if possible, developing an interactive website as an accessible repository of the survey data).

5.4 What are the achieved results that are most likely to continue after the network duration?

Most of the interviewers mention that in one way or another some of the established **networks** will definitely continue. For example, this is most likely for local and national networks that have managed to engage actively new or already existing partners and stakeholders in exchanging ideas and practices in their effort to raise awareness or find better solutions for multilingualism challenges. It has been clearly stated that there is positive inspiration related to the celebration of multilingualism at European level and applying guidelines and new tools for better language teaching and learning. The topics most

likely to continue to actively engage networks at local level are languages in business, migrant and minority languages, the multilingual classroom that is increasing becoming a reality in European schools as well as the relation between languages and social inclusion and inclusive citizenship. Interviews with project co-ordinators suggest that a number of partnerships will be sustained beyond the life of the project. In practice the 'sustainability' of the co-operation is likely to take different forms, formal or informal sustained collaboration between organisations, involving most or only part of the partners. There are concrete examples of partners and local networks that have expressed intentions and have made first steps in continuing working together on some specific topics (Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Spain, UK, etc.)

Network partners are very positive about the network results and outputs, but **the potential for some partner institutions to support the network beyond the network funding period is unclear**. The British Council invested significantly in the project together with the EU, effectively using most of its staff in the partner countries and it cannot be expected to continue for an a long time after the end of the funded period. The BC has committed to maintaining the website and allocating resources and staff to this task. EUNIC is in a process of developing a Positioning paper on multilingualism, which will definitely lead to new common initiatives and sustaining good practices developed within the framework of LRE. There are ideas about forming clusters of experts and LRE team members who can continue their working together on identified themes and domains. This perspective still is not clear enough in terms of organization, coordination and willingness of most of the partners to contribute.

It is most likely that in a significant number of cases the **outputs from the network will be still in use** (beyond the end of the funding) or referred to within the partner organisations. There is uncertainty about whether a significant step will be made in reaching wider circles outside academic and language teaching and researching institutions. Coordination and management efforts are seen as needed in order for the Publication to be well distributed reaching the right target audience. Additional investment of time and funds is seen as necessary.

The Steering committee and the partnership discussed whether it is feasible that partners commit themselves to further work and days supporting an on-going dissemination and exploitation of the results, the updating of the website and its updating and further improvement making it more interactive.

An **Accompanying measures** project proposal has been put forward to support mostly the potential for wider dissemination. A **new consortium** has been formed comprising EUNIC Global, Languages Company and British Council for the realization of the AM project with EUNIC

as a beneficiary and the leader of the WP on exploitation as coordinator. The partnership has expressed full support for this management decision and hopefully if successful it will streamline and reinforce considerably the sustainable and exploitation potential.

There is also a very clear line of activities of feeding in the results of the LRE network into other projects and networks, of pulling together ideas and concrete practical project work at European level, of building in synergies between networks and projects. This refers to running projects (Poliglotti4.eu, LUCIDE), networks (EU Civil Society Platform, European Language Monitor, MPEX) and in participating in new research consortia under the FP7 research programme (there are three interviews that mention this explicitly).

What tools can help to reinforce the sustainability of the network?

The **website** is the tool most often mentioned as instrumental for the sustainability of the network activities. It is considered as an information tool with access to the data collected and the publication in all language versions. Interviewees become very concrete when they make recommendation about the website and its interactivity.

"sustainability can be sought in overviewing and comparing the situation across countries and for that the website is very important; it should be sustained and more importantly further develop and updated".

Links with other projects and achieving some synergies with them is also considered a tool for sustainability. The Final Conference in Brussels devoted a panel on presentation of other projects among which the European Survey on Language Competences, Languages in Urban Contexts LUCIDE, European Language Monitor, Poliglotti4.eu and EU Civil Society Platform, the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe, most of which have similar aspirations and main focus at regional, national and European level. In cooperation with other project the LRE resources can be further used.

Further research has also been identified as a probable result and an instrument for sustaining the cooperation of the LRE network. It is not only limited to the university contexts where the data is considered a valuable and directly applicable research resource. The interviews demonstrate that there are plans for bigger research projects in which some of the aspirations of the network can be embedded, e.g. the research programmes of the EU and in particular FP7.

"The network of scholars will function in different configurations and for different purposes. Fruitful contacts will be mobilized and develop within new networks."

6. Conclusions

Our main conclusions relate to the evaluation questions that have shaped the structure of the report. They summarise the more detailed points covered in the Findings sections of the report.

Relevance

The objectives of the Language Rich Europe (LRE) network and its main outputs and products are relevant to existing initiatives to promote language policies and the policy of multilingualism. Indeed, LRE addresses current priorities and needs at national and regional level which specifically relate to the current financial situation in Europe and to the effects of increased mobility on the reality of the educational environment. School – like our society - is becoming multilingual and within that multilingual and "language rich" context all languages have their specific role. Our research and evaluation clearly demonstrate the need for broadening the perspective at European level by raising awareness of growing linguistic diversity as a key characteristic throughout Europe. It is important that policy makers and key players should understand and learn from the experience of other European countries and from the challenges they face. They also need to know more clearly about what has been achieved in policy terms by institutions at European level – the EU and the CoE.

This is a significant success of the LRE network. The view is repeatedly expressed that it serves as a platform for taking forward discussions and for providing a comparative basis for debating and formulating recommendations. The value of the main Publication of the LRE network adds significant value to this objective in an ambitious and innovative way. The evaluation shows that LRE outputs and publications have the potential to facilitate European collaboration, to encourage the exchange of good practices and to promote a bottom up approach to formulating policy objectives.

Stakeholders considered LRE outputs currently to be more relevant to the needs of educational and academic institutions than to the practical needs of promoting linguistic diversity in civil society and employment. The nature of the tools as well as the prevalent types of institutions involved situates the network predominantly in the educational and academic sector, and this gives a specific focus to the discussions and recommendations. The LRE outputs are also considered relevant for policy level. Despite this important steps have been made to broaden the range of stakeholders involved through the domains included in the survey and through the topics of the national workshops.

Usability and exploitation

The interviews revealed that the future use of the LRE network products will clearly be based on the European added value of facilitating European level collaboration and exchange of ideas and identifying the common issues faced by the policy of multilingualism. It is of particular importance that the results of the LRE survey are being published in 20 languages, including Arabic and Turkish, since this potentially allows for a much wider outreach of stakeholders at European, national and local levels. The evaluation revealed that there is a need to have a common framework of coordination for further dissemination of the Publication in its language versions in Europe in order to achieve the expected outreach to the right target groups. The interviews clearly identify the website as instrumental for this as well.

Whilst the LRE main Publication is considered to be relevant and a good resource, further developments are needed to secure its use in and outside academic circles in the near future. More time and support is needed so that users and stakeholders become more familiar with the LRE outputs after the network funding period. The achieved visibility of the LRE network activities and resources require further commitment of all partners at institutional and personal level to ensure it realizes its sustainability potential.

The evaluation revealed that overall the LRE is a good contribution to the area of policy of multilingualism. It clearly addressed a European need and is characterised as a **strategic network** with added value for cooperation, data collection and networking involving a diversity of stakeholders at local, national and European level. There are clear potential signs of sustainability in these areas, since the LRE network is assessed as a good beginning. The potential for sustainability is seen in formal and informal collaboration and developments that are visible and already happening within the framework of the LRE network. Key to future sustainability will be the maintenance of those links – through both national and international means – and the continuation of the bottom up process of debate which characterised Language Rich Europe.

7. Recommendations

Based on these conclusions we make the following recommendations in relation to the topics considered in the evaluation

Recommendation one: The LRE network is considered by most stakeholders to be a vital platform for strategic cooperation at European level. There are not many examples of networking at this level. To ensure that the LRE outcomes can be maintained and strengthened the coordinator and other partners should hold the network together, maintain the site and continue to distribute the publication.

Recommendation two: To bring the results closer to its users and enhance their visibility it is recommended that there is free access to the publication in all its language versions as well as to all other relevant data on the network website.

Recommendation three: The network website as a major tool for sustainability should be further developed, in particular this means increasing the interactivity of the data and the improving opportunities for data updating. This could be achieved through the proposed Accompanying Measures project or through securing other financial resources.

Recommendation four: It has been revealed that local and national networks created or strengthened during the LRE network activities are most likely to be sustained after the network funded period. It is recommended that partners continue to encourage national and local networks by organizing and supporting discussions and events. One example of good practice is the cooperation between the Cultural institutes in celebrating the European Day of Languages within the framework of EUNIC.

Recommendation five: The outcomes of the LRE network provide broad opportunities for cooperation with other projects and networks working in the same field at European level. It is recommended that synergies with other projects and networks and research work are identified as an important factor for sustainability and further use of the LRE outputs.

Recommendation six: It is recommended that new opportunities are sought for sustaining cooperation between partners at European level. New project ideas are to be encouraged. The application for Accompanying measure is a good beginning and a model of how the LRE network can form new partnerships and better employ the international expertise developed within the network.