

# LANGUAGE RICH EUROPE

**MULTILINGUALISM FOR STABLE  
AND PROSPEROUS SOCIETIES**

ANNUAL REPORT 1: LAUNCH REPORTS



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# CONTENTS

AUSTRIA	2
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	3
BULGARIA	4
ESTONIA	5
FRANCE	6
GERMANY	8
GREECE	9
HUNGARY	10
ITALY	11
LITHUANIA	12
NETHERLANDS	14
POLAND	15
PORTUGAL	16
ROMANIA	18
SPAIN	19
SWITZERLAND	21
UKRAINE	23
UK	24
UK – WALES	26

# AUSTRIA

19 June 2012

Attendees: 60

## Speakers

- Michael Girardi, Head of Integration department, Ministry of the Interior
- Michael Stürzenbecher, Mitglied des Ausschuss für Integration der Stadt Wien
- Martin Gilbert, Director, British Council Austria
- Aneta Quraishy, Senior Project Manager Language Rich Europe, British Council Germany
- Professor Guus Extra, professor emeritus in language and minorities, Tilburg University
- Eser Akbaba, ORF
- Natasha Gulam, winner of the 'Sag's multil' public speaking competition and law student
- Hans Staud, Entrepreneur, Staud's Feinkost
- Chair: Dr Michael Wimmer, EDUCULT

## Report (Participants Evren Celik and Veronika Holzer)

The Language Rich Europe conference on multilingualism held at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna on 19 June 2012 was an event with a particular emphasis on the importance of language teaching in social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. Since languages play such a major role in today's society, it was wonderful to see that experts such as Professor Guus Extra, amongst others, try not only to raise social awareness of multilingualism and to harmonise language policies and practices across Europe, but also to illustrate the significance of language in our world of internationalism and globalisation. It was not only interesting and very valuable to hear the results of the latest research on the topic conducted by Professor Extra, but also to learn about first hand personal experiences by speakers with migration backgrounds, such as Eser Akbaba and Natasha Gulam, which were especially inspiring. The entire conference was very well balanced, since the scientific research data illustrated the global significance of multilingualism, whereas the personal experiences of Akbaba and Gulam - that is, the 'issue' of developing a distinct 'self', the role of parents, socialisation, and integration - highlighted that multilingualism affects everyone. For these reasons, we would like to end with a quotation by Frank Harris, summing up the essence of the topic: 'Each new language is like an open window that shows a new view of the world and expands your attitude towards life.'

## Participant Feedback: Anonymous

Compared to most other European countries participating in the LRE project, Austria's number of regional migration languages (recognised, protected and promoted) is relatively small. However, there is high awareness of multilingualism. Many examples, such as the medical or social sector (both offer services in many migrant languages) show how Austria is continuously trying to integrate

multilingualism in daily life. It is, of course, essential to learn the language of the host country. Nevertheless it is similarly important (for both the individual and the host country society) to retain your mother tongue - the language of your origin. Professor Extra's suggestion that people within the host country should strive to learn the language of immigrants too, made me think and I realised how common this is in other countries.

*I remember two of my friends in California arguing 'How come you live in California and you do not speak Spanish - you cannot be serious?'*

A very impressive example in this context was Mr. Staud: He is a very successful business man. One element of his success is that he actively tries to speak/learn the languages of his non-native employees.

The Language Rich Europe launch in Austria was very interesting and informative. The different opinions and stories of other participants made me reflect about my own mind-set.

## Quotations collected by participant Marlis Monsberger

'In Austria we are not in heaven but we have senior attention on this topic which is good'

'It is easier to be convinced than to be convincing'

,'Wien bekennt sich zur Vielsprachigkeit'  
(Vienna is committed to multilingualism)

'If the mind-set is not open to multilingualism - how can you make policies...'

,'Mit mehreren Sprachen gehen mehrere Welten auf'  
(With more languages, more worlds open up)

,'Wenn du eine Sprache sprichst bist du ein Mensch, wenn du mehrere Sprachen sprichst bist du mehrere Menschen und offener' (When you speak one language you are one person, when you speak more languages you can be more than one person and become more open.)

'Coming from an international background is a privilege'

,'Nur wenn man die Muttersprache gut spricht, kann man auch gut Deutsch lernen' (It is only when you speak your mother tongue well, that you can also learn German well).

,'Integration bedeutet Sprache und Kultur der neuen Heimat aufzunehmen ohne seine Wurzeln zu leugnen' (Integration means adopting the language and culture of your new home without denying your roots).

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

15 October 2012

*Attendees: 20*

*Speakers and panellists*

- Larisa Halilovic, Director, British Council Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Samir Avdibegovic, Project Manager, British Council Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Imela Sehovic, University of Sarajevo.
- Selma Maslek, University of Sarajevo
- Erol Mujanovic, Independent Consultant and Economic Advisor
- Professor Merima Osmankadic, Head of the Department of Languages, University of Sarajevo

*Report (Maja Hadzimehic, Project Assistant, British Council Bosnia and Herzegovina)*

Monday morning on 15 October 2012 in Sarajevo started with heavy rain and traffic jams. Thankfully these issues did not stop those who were genuinely interested in how rich Europe is with languages in joining the discussion. It also didn't stop the media making this a highlight of the day.

Television reporters were among the first to come and they started doing interviews with key participants from the moment they registered at the welcome desk.

The audience included academia, business sector representatives, international organisation stakeholders, EU integration office officials, and independent language professionals.

We opened the event with a few words on the importance of multilingualism in the local and global context in relation to mobility, employability and labour market overall from country director Larisa Halilovic and after that we started with presentation of the LRE results.

This was followed by a debate. On the panel we had our local partner representatives, Professors Jamin Dzindo and Amela Sehovic from the Faculty of Philosophy, Samir Avdibegovic and Aneta Quraishy from the British Council, as well as Erol Mujanovic, an independent economy and labour market expert.

The discussion started with language-related insights and experiences from the business world. The rest of the discussion focused more on implementing standardisation in language teaching, testing and continual professional development. It was interesting to note that unlike the discussions in some other countries which focused on student motivation in language learning, the discussion in Bosnia and Herzegovina focused on the teaching side. Overall, everyone agreed that teaching methodology needs to be improved and standardised at country level.

The event prompted about 15 individual radio or television interviews, on national television, top radio stations and web portals. It was also streamed live as video on EFM Student Radio web portal. Overall media coverage was impressive and it contributed greatly to impact the launch had.

*Example of articles*

Radio Sarajevo (in Bosnian) [www.radiosarajevo.ba/novost/92185/jezicka-raznolikost-nasa-potencijalna-prednost](http://www.radiosarajevo.ba/novost/92185/jezicka-raznolikost-nasa-potencijalna-prednost)

Burch University (in English) [www.ibu.edu.ba/index.php?id=1663](http://www.ibu.edu.ba/index.php?id=1663)

# BULGARIA

## 26 September 2012

*Attendees: 73 at launch*

### *Speakers*

- Peter Ashton, Director English Language Services, British Council Bulgaria
- Evgeniya Kostadinova, Director 'General Education Programme and Content', Ministry of Education, Youth and Science
- Professor Mário Filipe, Adviser for language (Portuguese) at Camões, Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua and Assistant Professor at University Aberta
- Eilidh MacDonald, Language Rich Europe Project Co-ordinator, British Council Germany
- Associate Professor Galina Russeva-Sokolova, Vice-Dean, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University
- Anne Wiseman, Business Development Manager English EU, British Council
- Irina Nedeva, Senior Editor, Bulgarian National Public Radio

### *Report (Tzvetanka Panova, Project Manager, British Council Bulgaria)*

The Bulgarian launch of the draft Language Rich Europe Report for Bulgaria was held at the Hotel Sheraton, Hall Sredec, Sofia.

The event was well attended and attracted a number of representatives, for example from EUNIC Bulgaria, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science (MoEYS), NGOs, lecturers from universities, School Directors and teachers from all over Bulgaria, Bulgarian Academy of Science, Sofia Development Agency, business.

After welcome words by Peter Ashton (British Council Bulgaria) and Anne Wiseman (British Council), Evgeniya Kostadinova (Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, Bulgaria) outlined the past and current language policies and practices of MoEYS and described the main promising next steps that MoEYS included in the new bill for school education for further development the language policy in Bulgaria.

Eilidh MacDonald (British Council Germany) presented the project in general. Professor Mário Filipe (Camões, Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua) then presented the methodology and key findings from the research carried out by the project. Associate Professor Galina Russeva-Sokolova presented the findings for Bulgaria. Some of the main points included:

- There is an increasing demand from parents for their children to start learning foreign languages from early age.
- There is consensus in society that languages are important for career development, intercultural relations and education.
- One of the findings creating concern is that the requirement for teaching the mother tongue to students with a minority background states there must be more than ten students. This automatically leads to this service not being provided.
- We have many language medium schools spread all over the country, which teach subjects in the foreign language the school specialises in (CLIL approach).
- Businesses are not interested in investment in the language training of their employees. High unemployment ensures a good number of multilingual specialists that businesses can choose from.

This was followed by a discussion that was mainly on the methodology and key findings of the project in general.

### *Media Coverage*

On 26 September 2012 Tzvetanka Panova (British Council Bulgaria) was live on Bulgarian National Radio in two programmes and National Radio Blagoevgrad, covering the LRE project in general and the main findings for Bulgaria.

There are a number of online publications that cover the main findings of the projects in Bulgaria.

# ESTONIA

26 September 2012

*Attendees: 37*

*Speakers*

- Ursula Roosmaa, Director, British Council Estonia
- Vilma Bačkiūtė, Project Manager, British Council Lithuania

*Report (Ursula Roosmaa,  
Director British Council Estonia)*

Anything to do with language policy in Estonia has been for decades and is always going to be political. There is a common perception that Estonians know foreign languages well because of our historic background. Reality can be quite different, and this is what the LRE project set out to research into. The push for English to the detriment of German, Russian, Finnish and French has lately been seen as a real threat by policy makers and businesses.

The range of stakeholders at the LRE launch in Estonia (held at Tartu University Narva College's newly opened building) included participants from all levels of the Estonian education system, from primary teachers to university lecturers, researchers, BA and MA students, would-be teachers, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, Narva Mayor and officials from the Narva municipality, media, education and business questionnaire data providers in Narva.

An overall introduction to the LRE project and the main international results were covered in a detailed presentation by Vilma Bačkiūtė. This was followed by a presentation prepared by the Estonian project partner Kersti Sõstar from Foundation Innove and delivered by Ursula Roosmaa, Director British Council Estonia and the LRE Project Manager in Estonia.

The overall opinion was that the LRE report presents an interesting and thought-provoking picture of the foreign languages situation in Europe. It was noted that especially in regard to the situation in the business sector, it was a good representation of reality. Although it was generally agreed that the report gave a true picture, some participants thought that it idealised the current situation. A few of those who had been involved in the research questioned the validity of the data and the methodology used.

The findings on languages in education did not surprise the Estonian audience, as just a few weeks ago the results of the European Survey on Language Competencies had been released and Estonia did really well for both English and German competencies looked at in this survey.

The picture the LRE project findings revealed is very different when we talk about public services and businesses. Here Estonia scores moderately. Despite the variety of languages learned and taught in Estonia, cities (public services), and business in their language strategies do not pay sufficient attention to the language skills of their staff.

One thing that came out from the LRE research regarding Estonia is that policy makers pay a lot of attention to the status, development and usage of the Estonian language, which is a priority in the country. The overall multi- and plurilingualism policy is still being developed.

The presentations were followed by a lively debate with questions around:

- education (how can we halt the inexorable advance of English to the detriment of other foreign languages that have been traditionally taught in Estonia)
- the advantages and disadvantages of early and late immersion
- the status of Russian, as well as the considerable decline in the Russian language skills of native Estonian speakers
- CLIL
- training of qualified teachers

The next steps will be to cover some of the emerging issues in a series of workshops.

## *Press Coverage*

Picture Gallery on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151151482974360.465991.147717344359&type=1](http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151151482974360.465991.147717344359&type=1)

Main Estonian national television news programme: <http://rus.err.ee/estonia/54388f54-628f-4027-820e-5cd811300b0c>

Newspaper article in Narvskaja Gazeta [www.gazeta.ee/?p=27302](http://www.gazeta.ee/?p=27302)  
[www.narva.ut.ee/1164111](http://www.narva.ut.ee/1164111)

# FRANCE

## 25 September 2012

*Attendees: 68*

### *Speakers*

- Chris Hickey, Director British Council France
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Aneta Quraishy, Senior Project Manager Language Rich Europe, British Council Germany
- Christian Tremblay, President, Observatoire Européen du Plurilinguisme
- Heinz Wismann, philologist and philosopher
- Quentin Dickinson, Director of European Affairs, Radio France
- Bernard Salengro, National Secretary, CF-CGC
- Jean-Loup Cuisiniez, CFDT Axa
- Professor Claude Truchot, sociolinguist, professor emeritus, University of Strasbourg
- Kenza Cherkaoui-Messin, sociolinguist

### *Report (Sally Goodman, Head Science and Society, British Council France)*

The event was held at the British Council office in Paris, with attendees including representatives of Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Culture, representatives from business and trade unions, teachers, journalists, academics, and students.

The first part of the event was a presentation of the LRE results by the regional team, followed by a presentation of the results for France by Christian Tremblay of the Observatoire Europeene du Plurilinguisme.

This was followed by a discussion by two keynote speakers, the philosopher Heinz Wismann and the journalist Quentin Dickinson, on the theme of multilingualism and the influence it has on their personal and professional lives.

The rest of the event took the form of two round-table discussions: the first looking at how languages are managed in the business context and the second looking at how language-learning at school influences multilingualism in wider society. Both discussions were chaired by Yvan Amar, a radio journalist at Radio France.

Speakers in the first round table included Bernard Salengro and Jean-Loup Cuisiniez, trade unionists in industry, Professor Claude Truchot, sociolinguist and emeritus professor at the University of Strasbourg and Kenza Cherkaoui-Messin, a sociolinguist specialising in languages in the business sector.

Speakers in the second round table included Francis Goullier, a foreign languages inspector from the French Education ministry, Suzy Halimi, honorary rector of the University Sorbonne nouvelle – Paris 3, and Calin Rus, Timisoara Intercultural Institute, Romania. Xavier North, General Delegate for the French Language and Languages of France at the Ministry of Culture, concluded the workshop with closing comments.

There was general agreement that the report provided a useful snapshot of multilingualism in the French context but could not be considered to be totally representative given the relatively small data sampling size. There was recognition that some of the questions were difficult to apply to the French legislative context, specifically concerning signature of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which is not possible under French law. In addition, it was also recognised that the concept of migrant and minority languages was difficult to apply to the French context as some of these languages can also be considered to be taught foreign languages (for example, Portuguese).

Overall there was the feeling that the results gave an accurate picture of the multilingual policy but that in practice the situation can be quite different. This is particularly true in the education sector.

In his closing comments, Xavier North expressed his appreciation of the LRE project. He was particularly impressed by the fact that the project was carried out on a large scale despite methodological and practical difficulties. Two risks could be avoided: 1 – using an international ranking while comparing countries, although language policies at national level are context specific; 2 – giving a similar status to national languages, regional/minority languages, migrant languages and foreign languages, ignoring that all these languages are involved in power struggles. As a large scale project, the LRE results provide us with invaluable information on languages in the European context as it addresses policy and practice, even if this information is not exhaustive.

In the round table on business, the main issue discussed was the difficulty for employees who were obliged to use English-language tools (software; documents; internal appraisal systems) and the impact that this can have on staff morale and performance and on business efficiency. Considering that French employees have the right to work in French in France, the role of the national language as a key element of multilingual policies was underlined. There was also discussion on the general lack of awareness of employees' language skills and the added value that these skills could bring to business. It was recommended to develop a language strategy for companies which combines both internal cohesion and international communication needs.



In the round-table on education, there was general consensus that the diversity of languages in the population was not appreciated in the school setting and therefore undervalued, making it difficult for pupils to relate language learning in school to a broader social context. There was also discussion around the lack of convergence between languages taught and spoken by pupils and very little attempt to encourage a multilingual dimension to the broader educative experience. There were suggestions that language activities such as foreign exchange visits should have more recognition and be properly credited. In the report of the 'Comité stratégique des langues' chaired by Suzy Halimi (present) suggestions included: launching a media campaign on language learning; increasing opportunities to be in contact with languages both in society and in the school environment in order to stimulate pupils' motivation; rethinking language learning by introducing it in pre-primary education; teaching two foreign languages from age 11 (6ème class); making teaching content and approaches more efficient.

There was general agreement that the invisibility of language diversity in society has a negative influence on the respect for languages and language learning in the educational context.

The main conclusion was that there is a significant difference between public policy and practice in the area of multilingualism in France, particularly in the education system. Public spaces and administration are not generally geared up to provide multilingual services and the lack of visibility of linguistic diversity in the public and private sectors can have a detrimental effect on the value put on languages and language learning.

# GERMANY

31 October 2012

Attendees: 50

## Speakers

- Stefan Forester, Head of Communication, European Commission, Berlin
- Heike Uhlig, Head of Language, Goethe-Institut, Munich
- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Simon Ingram-Hill, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Professor Ingrid Gogolin, University of Hamburg, LiMA – Linguistic Diversity Management in Metropolitan Areas, Project Co-ordinator
- Dr Joana Duarte, University of Hamburg, LiMA – Linguistic Diversity Management in Metropolitan Areas, Project Co-ordinator
- Jürgen Trabant – professor of European Multilingualism, Jacobs University Bremen
- Elisabeth Krone – Head of Language Services, ARTE TV, Strasbourg
- Ronald Martyn Pickup – Bayer Business Services GmbH, Competence Training & Development, Berlin
- Sabine Schnorr, Rosetta Stone GmbH, Frankfurt am Main

## Report (Michael Croasdale, Project Manager, British Council Germany)

The Language Rich Europe launch in Germany took place at the Representation of the European Commission in Germany. The range of stakeholders who attended included: media, educators, teachers of languages and social sciences, academics, researchers, publishers, interpreters, cultural attaches, national cultural institutes, HR training managers, associations for migration and integration of minorities and MPs.

Opening speeches delivered by Stefan Forester (Head of Communication, European Commission, Berlin) and Heike Uhlig (Head of Language, Goethe-Institut, Munich) on the theme of the *importance of multilingualism* set the scene for the project presentations and panel discussion that followed.

Aneta Quraishy (Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager) presented the background to the project. Simon Ingram-Hill (Language Rich Europe Director) followed with a presentation of the cross-national results.

Professor Ingrid Gogolin and Dr Joana Duarte (University of Hamburg, LiMA – Linguistic Diversity Management in Metropolitan Areas, Project Coordinators) gave their presentation of the profile for Germany. Details highlighted here included the federal decentralisation of educational, social and cultural policy across the 16 German states, which together with further autonomy at a regional and local level, make it difficult if not impossible to identify any nationwide common policy or practices. Migration to Germany in recent years has led to an increase and a diversification of the number of languages represented in the community, and while examples of multilingual good practice in response to this are apparent, these are typically very localised and contained by a specific geographical or social context.

The audience of 50 stakeholders drawn from a broad cross section of decision makers and practitioners engaged actively with the presentations with challenging questions on the methodology, validity and follow-up to the research. In particular there were several questions why a profile for Germany based on specified states and cities could not be produced given that this was managed for countries some of which have just as a complex reality as Germany. Interest in the cross-national findings is clearly very high.

The panel discussion with its four speakers – Jürgen Trabant (professor of European Multilingualism, Jacobs University Bremen), Elisabeth Krone (Head of Language Services, ARTE TV, Strasbourg), Ronald Martyn Pickup (Bayer Business Services GmbH, Competence Training & Development, Berlin), Sabine Schnorr (Rosetta Stone GmbH, Frankfurt am Main) – offered further opportunity for debate through interesting stakeholder perspectives on the topic for discussion *Multilingualism in Germany – as good as it gets? Opportunities and Obstacles for the Future*. Discussion centred around the following:

- greater access to languages from an earlier age
- more innovation in language learning and teaching – incorporate technology and latest methodology and enable more blended learning
- diversity in languages in broadcasting – more subtitling, less dubbing
- greater promotion of the value of multilingualism – increase public interest and understanding of the benefits of language learning

Feedback from speakers and participants after the event was very positive, with a strong interest to engage in the network opportunities offered by the project.

# GREECE

21 June 2012

*Attendees: 60*

## *Speakers*

- Dr Matthias Makowski, Director Goethe-Institut Athens
- Tony Buckby, Director British Council Greece
- Eusebi Ayensa Prat, President EUNIC Greece
- Miltos Pavlou, Panel Chair
- Eilidh MacDonald, Language Rich Europe Project Co-ordinator, British Council Germany
- Dr Kutlay Yağmur, Associate Professor of Multilingualism, Tilburgh University
- Dr Sara Hannam, Oxford Brookes/SEERC
- Professor Bessie Dendrinis, RCEL, University of Athens

## *Report (Zoi Tatsioka, South-East European Research Centre)*

The Language Rich Europe launch took place in Athens, Greece on 21 June 2012 in the Goethe-Institut. The talks were interesting and stimulating and the audience contributed to the conversation with constructive questions and comments. Simultaneous interpreting from Greek, English and German facilitated interactions throughout the event.

First, we were welcomed by Dr Matthias Makowski, Director of Goethe-Institut in Athens, with Tony Buckby, Director British Council Greece introducing the project and stressing the significance of partnership in multinational projects. We were also greeted by Eusebi Ayensa Pat, President of EUNIC Greece.

Eilidh MacDonald, from the British Council Language Rich Europe team, provided an overview of the project, explained its objectives and stressed the need of Europeans to speak more foreign languages as expressed in the European Barometer findings. Moreover, she emphasised the importance of the project for businesses and the role of multilingualism in boosting the economy.

Dr Kutlay Yağmur, University of Tilburg, provided some key findings and stressed the importance of the project in order to identify the best practices in the EU and to motivate countries and regions to improve or implement better language practices. He also talked about the challenge of the project to develop a common yardstick for 24 countries and regions with unique historical characteristics and societal conditions. Some of the points made when presenting the results were the need to improve immigrant language provision especially in pre-primary education and the fact that the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages has not been ratified in many countries, including Greece.

Dr Sara Hannam, formally of the South-East European Research Centre (now Oxford-Brookes University) focused on the findings of Greece. She stressed the fact that the research was conducted in a very challenging time for Greece which resulted in great difficulty in the collection of data. Some of the most important findings are mentioned below:

- Greek is the official language of the country. Immigrant languages are not recognised and the only recognised minority language is Turkish in the Thrace region.
- With regard to foreign language learning, there is considerable investment from the state and the private sector.
- English is the *de facto* first option in foreign language learning in primary and secondary education. In secondary education in particular examination taking is emphasised. However, this emphasis on the English language can have a significant effect on the concept of multilingualism.
- Turkish is offered in a large number of primary schools in the Thrace region but reduces significantly in secondary education.
- Regarding media, subtitles are used on television to motivate language learning and as an act of respect to the original language. There is some provision for sign language, but there is room for improvement. Numerous new language communities are represented in newspapers and magazines, which reveals important information about the population of Greece. This, however, is not reflected in official spaces and documents.
- Regarding public services and spaces, the service user needs to be conversant and literate in Greek. Dr Hannam emphasised the difficulty in collecting data for this domain and argued that the effect of the economic crisis should not be underestimated.
- In the case of the business sector, languages play a very important role in business life; however, little reward is offered to the employees who are speakers of foreign languages.

In her conclusion, Dr Hannam mentioned that the rich linguistic history of Greece and present reality need to be reflected via policy and protection mechanisms and celebrated. Finally, she stressed the importance of the project in order to raise awareness and make multilingualism a priority in the wider society.

The final talk was given by Professor Bessie Dendrinis from the Research Centre for English Language Teaching, Testing and Assessment, University of Athens. She stressed the importance of deliberate and implicit language policies. She mentioned that a certificate of language competence in Greece is not essential for anyone who wants to work in Greece, while job applicants for public services are awarded significant credit points for their certified competence in foreign languages. Professor Dendrinis referred to the increasing support for Greek as a second language (GSL) in primary and secondary education in both mainstream and after-school support classes. Finally, she mentioned the need for a coherent language education policy and referred to the positive steps that the University of Athens is taking in this direction.

# HUNGARY

15 June 2012

*Attendees: 40*

## *Speakers*

- Simon Ingram-Hill, Director British Council Hungary (future Language Rich Europe Director)
- Miklós Soltész, State Secretary for Social, Family and Youth affairs
- HE Jonathan Knott, British Ambassador to Hungary
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Eilidh MacDonald, Language Rich Europe Project Co-ordinator, British Council Germany
- Dr Habil Csilla Bartha, Senior Research Fellow, Research Centre for Multilingualism

## *Report (Simon Ingram-Hill, Director British Council Hungary)*

On Friday 15 June we presented the findings of the Language Rich Europe research in the morning and ran the first national workshop on sign language in the afternoon. Though the Banking Hall in the British Embassy was not full, numbers held throughout the day and very active participants included government, public and private sectors, researchers and academics, NGOs and heads of cultural institutions. Translation from and to sign language (as well as English/Hungarian) was provided for the whole duration of the event.

The Hungarian government endorsed the significance of the launch in an opening speech by Miklós Soltész, State Secretary for Social, Family and Youth Affairs at the mega-ministry of Human Resources, which covers everything from Education, Health and Culture to Sport and Youth. State Secretary Soltész made the point that nations live through their languages, and Hungarians were justly proud of the uniqueness of theirs. But he also emphasised the importance of fighting for the preservation of minority languages, and the special significance of Hungarian policy recognising sign language for the deaf as an official minority language.

Jonathan Knott, UK Ambassador to Hungary, picked up on this recognition of sign language pointing out that in policy terms Hungary is trendsetting in the European context. The Ambassador also made a strong reference to the UK's own lack of national capability in languages and that, despite languages being described as important, in practice and provision there have been many fault lines; thus anticipating the launch of the findings of the LRE report for the UK. His speech therefore was much appreciated for referring to UK's own failings and leaving it to others to set out the Hungary stall.

Eilidh MacDonald, Project Coordinator and Project Director Martin Hope then followed with their overview of the project and comparative country results. The Hungary results were presented by Dr Csilla Bartha and a panel discussion followed. Some points worth mentioning here:

- English is not a 'danger' to other European languages.
- Hungarian is a majority language in Hungary but a minority language in neighbouring countries.
- Hungarian sign language – should it be 'integrated' into the curriculum or should it be 'segregated' taught in special schools for the deaf?
- Multilingualism is not just about foreign languages but requires support for its regional and minority languages, too.
- The UK has a high reputation for teaching sign language at school level.
- It is difficult but necessary to preserve the identity of minority languages such as Romani and crucially important to teach Roma children and adults foreign languages (Director of Research Studies for the Roma and adviser to the Minister of Economy).
- There are seven sign languages in Hungary alone.
- If you want to be well qualified and be mobile for employment purposes then foreign languages should be made compulsory throughout the EU.
- The LRE project has helped researchers and others to build up contacts and networks between countries and across communities.

# ITALY

8 June 2012

Attendees: 150

## Speakers

- Susanne Hohn, Director Goethe-Institut Italy
- Silvia Minardi, LEND Director and REAL Director
- Christine Melia, Director, British Council Italy
- Diana Saccardo, General Department for International Affairs of the Italian Ministry of Education
- Massimo Vedovelli, Rector, Università per Stranieri di Siena (Siena University for Foreigners) and member of Italian Rectors Conference
- Professor Tullio De Mauro, Università 'La Sapienza', Rome (by video)
- Giancarlo Zucchetto, Head of Italian Department for Interpreting and Conferences, European Parliament
- Antonella Sorace, professor in Developmental Linguistics, University of Edinburgh and Director of 'Bilingualism Matters'
- Monica Barni, professor in Modern Languages Didactics, Università per Stranieri di Siena
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Eilidh MacDonald, Project Co-ordinator Language Rich Europe, British Council Germany

*Report (written by Monica Barni, Università per Stranieri di Siena, translated by Isabella Pallone, British Council Italy)*

The Language Rich Europe launch event was held in Rome at the Goethe-Institut on 8 June 2012. The attendees were mainly state school teachers and representatives of the ministry of education, people working with languages, researchers and students. The event was titled 'Is Italy really a multilingual country?' – a question which generated the debate on the great gap between Italy's actual linguistic profile and its current language policy.

The main issues discussed were the following:

- Italy is a multilingual country with all its range of dialects, minority languages and new languages introduced by communities of migrants in the last decades. But on the other hand, institutions and academics have always stressed the importance of having one national language – Italian – setting the country as an almost monolingual nation.
- Languages are not a priority in the government's agenda on education and Italians do not learn many languages throughout their life.
- School education offers the English language only, with the exception of lower secondary schools. As a result, Italy is far from meeting the European language policy requirements, according to which at least three languages should be learned in order to be competitive and connected with the world's different cultures.
- A lack of language skills among Italians mean that translators and interpreters play an important role in many fields.
- Bilingualism is beneficial for children's development and their future. Children exposed to different languages become more aware of different cultures, other people and other points of view. But they also tend to be better than monolinguals at 'multitasking' and focusing attention, they often are more precocious readers, and generally find it easier to learn other languages.
- Recommendations: school teachers should receive specific training in order to teach languages and should be encouraged to study/work abroad. This would improve students' skills and, consequently, the country's international relations.

# LITHUANIA

June 2012

*Attendees: 25 (media launch), 180 (public launch)*

Including: media, educators, teachers of languages and social sciences, academics, researchers, MPs

## Speakers

- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Dr Julija Moskvina, Institute of Labour and Social Research, Lithuania
- Professor Boguslavas Gruževskis, Institute of Labour and Social Research, Lithuania
- Dr Irena Smetonienė, Vilnius University, Lithuania
- Chair: Vilma Bačkiūtė, Language Rich Europe Project manager, British Council Lithuania

## Report (Vilma Bačkiūtė, Project Manager, British Council Lithuania)

The very first launch in Kaunas was hosted by Vytautas Magnus University, where a selected audience (the research respondents and media) were invited. Presentations by the project team were followed by challenging questions on the methodology, validity and follow-up of the research.

The second venture took place at the Parliament and was hosted by the Lithuanian Association of Language Teachers (LKPA) as part of the Association's 6th International Conference 'Languages, Culture, and Globalisation' on 4 June 2012. The conference audience was 180 educators and all the presentations were filmed and live streamed to the MPs' offices. It was also broadcast on television – Seimas tiesiogiai.

The most beneficial results of the launches so far are the new partnerships which have been built. Firstly, two high quality magazines – Valstybė and IQ magazine group – became interested in the Language Rich Europe results and plan to publish articles on multilingualism issues in their autumn issues. Secondly, LRE has been invited to present at the INTEGRA Project conference on 15 June 2012.

The findings on languages in education were presented by Dr Irena Smetonienė (Vilnius University). The LRE results did not surprise the Lithuanian audience. Lithuania looks moderate in offering the four most commonly used foreign languages (English, German, French, and Russian) and supporting four languages of national minorities (Polish, Russian, Hebrew, and Belarusian) throughout education.

Although the Lithuanian law supports and promotes plurilingualism (individual multilingualism), the efficient implementation of the European Strategy for Multilingualism is a challenge which lacks institutional coordination and cooperation as well as well-defined distribution of responsibilities.

Dr Julija Moskvina (Institute of Labour and Social Research) focused on the other sectors – public services and business – where Lithuania scores moderately (again!). Despite the variety of languages used in Lithuania, cities (in terms of public services) and companies (in terms of language strategies) pay insufficient attention to recognising and promoting multilingualism.

Lithuania particularly cares about the status and usage of the Lithuanian language as its state language. Lithuanians constitute the absolute majority of residents of Lithuania (83.9% in 2011) and the population in Lithuania is becoming more and more homogeneous even in the context of increasing mobility in the EU. Lithuania has 4.8% immigrants (as the percentage of the national population). Most of the newcomers are citizens of the Republic of Lithuania returning to live in their homeland.

Professor Boguslavas Gruževskis (Institute of Labour and Social Research) offered a wider perspective looking at languages as a target for individuals for being competitive in the labour market and general welfare.

The panel discussion included the international project team members: Lyubov Naydonova (Institute of Social and Political Psychology, Ukraine), Liliana Szczuka-Dorna (Poznan University of Technology, Poland), Irina Sukhinina (British Council Ukraine) and Aneta Quraishy (British Council Germany).

Anna Holmén (Belgium) represented the Directorate General for Translation at the European Commission and her presentation introduced the EU multilingualism in practice. Dr Ina Dagytė (Kaunas University of Technology) looked closer at the Lithuanian identity through the SWOT analysis and discussed what role the language has for our national identity.

Probably the most challenging contribution during the launch was by Loreta Senkutė, LiJOT president, who presented students' opinion and recommendations on multilingualism issues and language education in Lithuania. Their recommendations include:

- Developing a unique language strategy for all language groups in education – the state language, national minority and foreign languages
- Investing more of coordinated effort in forming public understanding of the value of languages and multilingualism
- Expanding the variety of foreign languages offered in education
- Using more innovative methods in language teaching

The second day of the conference continued at Mykolas Romeris University and provided more time for discussing the LRE findings into the context of teaching practices. The topics included: the Impact of Globalisation on Languages and Culture, Language Policy in Lithuania and Abroad, Languages and Intercultural Communication, and Teaching Mother Tongue.

You can read the abridged version of the LRE report in Lithuanian online.

For more photos from our launches, please visit our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.479860615363000.124413.193799183969146&type=1](https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.479860615363000.124413.193799183969146&type=1)

## Media Coverage

### Radio

Olga Majkova interviewed Boguslavas Gruževskis and Julija Moskvina for 'Ruskoje radio Baltija' (broadcast at 16.30 on 4 June).

### Television

TV Seimas tiesiogiai (broadcast of the conference on 4 June).

### Press

*Note: articles in preparation*

For the magazine Voruta by Evelina Kislych

For the magazine IQ by Viktorija Vitkauskaitė

### Digital reach

*Note: audience estimated using [www.123worth.com](http://www.123worth.com)*

[www.voruta.lt/uz-protinga-daugiakalbyste-2](http://www.voruta.lt/uz-protinga-daugiakalbyste-2)

– 350 daily unique visitors

[www.lkpa.uki.vu.lt/index.php?cid=375&more=1&lang=en](http://www.lkpa.uki.vu.lt/index.php?cid=375&more=1&lang=en)

– 8,427 daily unique visitors

[www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5\\_show?p\\_r=2443&p\\_d=125452&p\\_k=1](http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_show?p_r=2443&p_d=125452&p_k=1)

– 6,136 daily unique visitors

<http://portalas.emokykla.lt/naujienos/Puslapiai/Naujiena6811.aspx>

– 2,132 daily unique visitors

[www.mruni.eu/lt/universitetas/fakultetai/humanitariniu\\_mokslu\\_institutas/detail.php?id=119408](http://www.mruni.eu/lt/universitetas/fakultetai/humanitariniu_mokslu_institutas/detail.php?id=119408)

– 5,980 daily unique visitors

<http://hmf.vdu.lt/euopos-kalbu-lobynas>

– 6,188 daily unique visitors

<http://alkas.lt/2012/06/03/seime-konferencija-%E2%80%9Ekalbos-kultura-ir-globalizacija-tiesiogine-transliacija>

– 5,148 daily unique visitors

[www.upc.smm.lt/asociacijos/kalbos.php](http://www.upc.smm.lt/asociacijos/kalbos.php)

– 3,172 daily unique visitors

[www.glaustai.lt/nuoroda/ziniasklaidai-986012](http://www.glaustai.lt/nuoroda/ziniasklaidai-986012)

– 25 daily unique visitors

[www.voruta.lt/uz-protinga-daugiakalbyste](http://www.voruta.lt/uz-protinga-daugiakalbyste)

– 350 daily unique visitors

[www.kaunoaleja.lt/?action=news&news\\_id=31057](http://www.kaunoaleja.lt/?action=news&news_id=31057)

– 800 daily unique visitors

[www.viko.lt/lt/events\\_calendar/event/6-oji-tarptautine-Lietuvos-kalbu-pedagogu-asociacijos-konferencija-Kalbos-kultura-ir-globalizacija](http://www.viko.lt/lt/events_calendar/event/6-oji-tarptautine-Lietuvos-kalbu-pedagogu-asociacijos-konferencija-Kalbos-kultura-ir-globalizacija)

– 714 daily unique visitors

[www.kauko.lt/kolegija.php?id=66&nr=2739](http://www.kauko.lt/kolegija.php?id=66&nr=2739)

– 550 daily unique visitors

[www.real-association.eu/news/6th-international-conference-languages-culture-and-globalisation-lkpa](http://www.real-association.eu/news/6th-international-conference-languages-culture-and-globalisation-lkpa)

# NETHERLANDS

31 May 2012

*Attendees: 60*

## *Speakers*

- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director
- Professor Guus Extra, professor emeritus in language and minorities, Tilburg University
- Dr Saskia Benedictus-van den Berg, Research assistant, Mercator Research Centre/Fryske Akademy
- Dr Jacomine Nortier, professor at the department of Language Studies, University of Utrecht
- Professor Gerard Westhoff, professor emeritus didactics modern foreign languages, University of Utrecht and independent educational adviser
- Dr Tsjerk Bottema, Senior policy adviser languages and media, Province of Fryslân

## *Report (Saskia Benedictus-van der Berg, Research Assistant at Fryske Akademy)*

On 31 May 2012 the results of the Language Rich Europe project for the Netherlands and Friesland were presented in the Geldmuseum in Utrecht. The research showed that in a period of increased language variation, the Dutch government puts more and more emphasis on the importance of the Dutch language. There is not much room for immigrant languages, especially. In the province of Friesland, Frisian is an official language and is therefore especially present in the educational domains. There are no formal educational provisions for the other regional languages in the Netherlands.

Despite the fact that the Netherlands could be more multilingual, there are also some positive examples. The city of Utrecht, for example, presents itself as the 'multilingual hotspot', and in Friesland there is an increase in trilingual primary schools where children are not only taught in Frisian and Dutch, but also in English.

In Utrecht presentations were given by Martin Hope (Director, British Council Benelux), Professor Guus Extra (Tilburg University) and Dr Saskia Benedictus (Mercator Research Centre/Fryske Akademy). After the presentations a panel of experts discussed with the public about different statements. The panel members were: Martin Hope, Dr Jacomine Nortier (University of Utrecht), Professor Gerard Westhoff (University of Utrecht and independent educational adviser) and Tsjerk Bottema (Province of Friesland).

One of the issues discussed was the exact meaning of the term 'multilingualism'. Within the Language Rich Europe project, multilingualism is about both individual and societal multilingualism. Societal multilingualism refers to the presence of several languages in the society, regardless if it is about national, foreign, regional, immigrant or minority languages.

Professor Gerard Westhoff introduced the term 'first aid-language' which is first aid for meeting people. He meant that in a time of globalisation it is useful to have a lingua franca to be able to communicate. Besides this, you also need to speak the languages from the countries and regions nearby, which, in the Netherlands, are German, French, and (in some cases) Frisian. English is much further away.

The focus of the discussions was mainly on the economic value of multilingualism. One of the attendees called this the 'Dutch approach' and indicated that this was just one of the aspects of multilingualism. It is also important to look at multilingualism and identity.

Other issues that were discussed included:

- the importance of databases on language diversity for the development of language policy. In the Netherlands the province of Friesland is the only province where this kind of data is collected.
- the difference between cities like New York and Melbourne on the one hand and cities like Amsterdam and Berlin on the other. The former two cities are proud of their diversity and see it as a characteristic of the city, while for the other two cities this is not the case. In the Netherlands diversity is always connected with deprivation and special needs.
- the challenge of raising interest and enthusiasm for multilingualism. Policymakers often say that there is no money for multilingualism.
- language policy in the Netherlands is either about Dutch or about Frisian.
- the importance of Germany as trade partner for the Netherlands and the added value of doing business in German (or Dutch) and not having to use English.

## *Press Coverage:*

[www.omropfryslan.nl/njjs/te-min-omtinken-ymmigrantetaal](http://www.omropfryslan.nl/njjs/te-min-omtinken-ymmigrantetaal)

[www.eblt.nl/nederlan-taalt-net-nei-taal](http://www.eblt.nl/nederlan-taalt-net-nei-taal)

Leeuwarder Courant – <http://languagerichblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/leeuwarder-courant.pdf>

Friesch Dagblad – <http://languagerichblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/friesch-dagblad.pdf>

For more photos of the event, please see the British Council Netherlands Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilNetherlands](http://www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilNetherlands)



# POLAND

## 25 May 2012

*Attendees: 400 at launch; 45 at workshop*

### *Speakers*

- Andy Williams, Director British Council Poland
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director
- Liliana Szczuka-Dorna, Head of Department of Modern Languages at Poznan University of Technology
- Jacek Czechowicz, Head of PASE – The Polish Association for Quality in Teaching Foreign Languages

### *Report (Alicja Grymek, Director British Council Krakow)*

In Poland we had to face the challenge of launching our initial draft of research publication during a period where people's minds were dominated by the upcoming EURO 2012. We decided to join forces in promoting multilingualism by organising the launch and first workshop during the PASE Languages Congress and the Get Ready for Euro Languages Week Campaign. It seemed to be the right place to start the debate on multilingualism and ensuring that languages and cultural exchange continue to be promoted and supported in Poland.

On Friday 25 May we launched the results of our work at the beautiful venue of the Warsaw University of Technology to almost 400 people who represented the community of those interested in raising awareness for developing language competency across Poland and Europe.

During the opening of the Conference Martin Hope and Liliana Szczuka-Dorna, representing FIJED, our partner in Poland, highlighted the key objectives and findings of the Language Rich Europe project both on European and Polish level.

We had a special guest, Professor Jerzy Buzek, who addressed us virtually with the message underlining the importance of knowing and learning languages. He said that in today's open, multicultural and multilingual world one cannot escape the need to learn languages.

We then followed the launch with the first workshop for about 45 people representing the media, business, education and public sectors. This was our first meeting of the newly formed network of the key stakeholders for the project. A lively debate in Warsaw was moderated by Grzegorz Spiewak, one of the Polish experts in teaching foreign languages and we were happy to have people representing the Ministry of Education and Local Authorities, as well as academics, teachers, practitioners, business and media representatives. The presentation of draft LRE results were welcomed with interest from the audience on the methodology, and the plans for the future, especially the implementation of the recommendations.

During the first meeting we discussed different issues on the LRE domains:

- Education in nurseries: lack of syllabuses and programmes
- Education in primary and secondary schools: teaching two modern languages (mainly English and German) can be modified to teaching a range of modern languages
- Education in all schools: teaching Polish to minority groups and foreigners
- Education in higher institutions: more emphasis should be put on standardised programmes of teaching modern languages during language courses
- Media and business: what can be done to promote multilingualism in business as well as in television and radio
- Policy of local authorities on the promotion of modern languages in the cities, including: flyers, promoting materials, public transport maps, and tickets.

Topics were presented and many ideas were discussed. They formed some feedback for next workshops.

Please also have a look at another blog post about the same event, written by Andy Williams, our British Council Poland Director: <http://andynowwhat.wordpress.com/2012/05/25/language-rich-europe>

### *Media Coverage*

<http://wiadomosci.nf.pl/News/33616/Business-english-gora/kursy-jezykowe-angielski>

[www.ekonomia24.pl/artykul/883984.html](http://www.ekonomia24.pl/artykul/883984.html)

[www.kongres.pase.pl/index.php/pl/program](http://www.kongres.pase.pl/index.php/pl/program)

Polish National television channel 3

### **TVP Info**

<http://youtu.be/EstN8VmKEe8>

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=I06XNTPaTD0S](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I06XNTPaTD0S)

Polish Daily Newspaper Rzeczpospolita

# PORTUGAL

21 June 2012

*Attendees: 40*

## *Speakers*

- Luiz Sá Pessoa – Head of the European Commission Office in Portugal
- Professor Mário Filipe – Adviser for language (Portuguese) at Camões, Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua and Assistant Professor at University Aberta
- Gill Caldicott – Director, British Council Portugal
- Professor Maria Helena Mira Mateus – Director, ILTEC – Instituto de Linguística Teórica e Computacional
- Martin Hope – Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Aneta Quraishy – Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Professor Lachlan Mackenzie – Researcher, ILTEC – Instituto de Linguística Teórica e Computacional
- Carlos Ceia – Universidade Nova de Lisboa
- Ricardo Salomão – Universida de Aberta

## *Report (Fátima Dias, Project Manager, British Council Portugal)*

At the Language Rich Europe launch, held at the European Commission Office in Lisbon, the project was presented as multidimensional. Aiming to promote policies and language practices in all areas of society, to encourage inclusion and social cohesion and encourage the authorities to support the languages of all citizens, the project covers national languages and foreign languages but also the regional and minority languages as languages of immigrants. The project studies the use of these languages in various social contexts: in schools and all other sectors of education, services and public spaces, in the media and in different types of businesses (supermarkets, construction companies, hotels and banks). What emerges is a picture of multilingualism of our European societies but also the plurilingualism of individuals that make up these companies that are juggling several languages in their day-to-day activities: the language they speak at home, the languages they learn at school, the language they use at work. The idea was to learn to what extent this reflects the multilingual Europe policy and the Three Language Formula underlying the European Consensus and the extent to which countries – and in this case Portugal – have already taken steps to ensure that future generations will become polyglots.

## *Highlights from the presentation of the Portuguese results*

For some domains, research was limited in each country to three cities (in Portugal: Lisbon, Porto and Miranda do Douro), and 20 companies. The results are to be seen simply as a starting point for discussion and the creation of an international network of people who can reflect and discuss together on how we take the greatest advantage of the linguistic richness of Europe for the benefit of each and all.

### **Education**

The teachers of the first stage of basic education, especially those working in multilingual areas, are aware of plurilingualism of children in their care and are trained to work in this context. However, immigrant languages are not treated as an object of study, although the Ukrainian and Chinese communities have organised independent courses in their respective languages.

In the second stage of basic education (from the third cycle), it is compulsory to study two foreign languages. Portugal thus meets the Three Language Formula and is in a minority of countries and regions that were covered by LRE and are in accordance with the European recommendation. The government recently submitted a proposal to the effect that English is to be always one of the two compulsory languages.

Portugal is one of the countries where it is less likely that teachers receive grants to spend time in a country of the target language. Another difference between Portugal and other countries and regions is the limited use of Content and Language Integrated Learning.

In higher education, Portuguese is often the language of instruction. However, the internationalisation of education due to the Bologna Process has led to certain colleges offering courses taught in English. In general, the Portuguese universities are aware of the value of language competence, providing training in Portuguese for non-native speakers who wish to be accepted into their curricula and a variety of languages that can be chosen voluntarily by students.

### **Media**

In Portugal, the television content and films in cinemas are shown in original language with subtitles in Portuguese – with the exception of some productions aimed at children, which are dubbed. Some television programs contain a window with an interpreter to communicate in Portuguese Sign Language. There are kiosks in newspapers and magazines available in foreign languages, primarily to meet the needs of tourists, but there are also publications for immigrants, such as the Russian-language newspaper Slovo.

### Public services and spaces

A national institution that develops activities related to the integration of immigrants and intercultural dialogue offers interpretation services in over 60 languages. The written materials produced by the two municipalities investigated (Lisbon and Porto) is typically published only in Portuguese, although the immigration and integration and legal services, education and tourism and transport are multilingual in terms of oral communication, much less so in terms of written communication. The municipality of Miranda do Douro offers many services written in Mirandese, Spanish, and Portuguese.

### Business

Even though the EU institutions have been promoting multilingualism consistently as a factor of competitiveness in Europe, as well as mobility and employability, multilingualism does not occupy a prominent place in the concerns of Portuguese companies who filled out a questionnaire. The 20 companies surveyed in Portugal reflected a general trend favouring the use of Portuguese, but also a recognition of the importance of business English for interacting with customers and foreign companies. But other languages tend not to have preponderance, except for companies with specific interests in particular countries. The promotion of language skills in the national language, English as a lingua franca or other languages is not usually a priority. Multilingualism does not occupy a prominent place in the concerns of Portuguese companies who filled out a questionnaire.

Some of the promising initiatives and pilot projects taking place in Portugal were:

- A prominent contribution with regard to awareness of linguistic minorities was the project Linguistic Diversity in Portuguese Schools (2003-2007), funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and conducted by the Institute of Theoretical and Computational Linguistics (ILTEC) in collaboration with several schools. The result includes not only the achievement of bilingual education in selected schools (still ongoing), but also the development of materials and recommendations to the Ministry of Education as well as various publications.
- The British Council is working in partnership with the Ministry of Education on a four-year pilot project to introduce bilingual education from the first year onwards in eight public schools. About five hours per week are taught in English, and the British Council provides training and support.
- The projects REFLECT, PROTOCOL II and ECLAT have defined a language and culture audit scheme for SMEs, providing real data about the needs and trends of companies in the area of language and cultural skills and promoting the development of language planning.

The debate was lively with questions around:

- how the Portuguese state funds Portuguese language teaching abroad (through Camões, Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, IP)
- the way universities are developing their own language centres, making sure they provide language training in several languages (26 different ones in one university in Lisbon) and covering languages for special purposes
- the fact that English is provided at some schools from 3 years of age onwards;
- the fact that there are no state funded mobility programmes for teachers of languages
- the status of the minority language – Mirandese
- the current policy whereby a minimum number of students is necessary to open a new language class at secondary level, which leads to German, French and other languages being less and less taught.

### Overall conclusions

LRE seen as a very positive and relevant project for:

- its focus on so many countries, Europe wide
- its methodology which has allowed for comparative results, for a transnational perspective, for sharing of good practices, for easy comparison with European guidelines
- the creation of a network of experts that can take the results further;
- raising awareness about the relevance of multilingualism and language learning.

# ROMANIA

## 28 June 2012

*Attendees: 75*

### *Speakers*

- Martin Harris, British Ambassador to Romania
- Dr Nigel Townson, Director British Council Romania
- Dr Terence Lamb, University of Sheffield
- Vilma Bačkiūtė, Project Manager, British Council Lithuania
- Dr Stefan Colibaba, EuroEd Foundation and University of Iasi
- Dr Kutlay Yağmur, Associate professor of multilingualism, Tilburg University
- Calin Rus, Intercultural Institute Timisoara
- Ruxandra Popovici, Project Manager, British Council Romania

### *Report (Ruxandra Popovici, Project Manager, British Council Romania)*

The launch took place at the Village and Ethnographic Museum in Bucharest. Attendees included 75 participants representing 36 governmental and independent organisation and institutions from: education, culture, public domain, business and media; Council of Europe, and UNESCO.

The event included plenary sessions that alternated with video sessions of interviews. After each session the discussion was opened to the audience and the event culminated in a round-up feedback session.

All participants showed a high interest in the survey methodology and the cross-national results. There were vivid comments and agreement over the results for Romania. Without exception, all participants expressed their wish to become part of the LRE network.

The main issues discussed included:

- LRE project overview, LRE findings in the cross-national perspective
- Developing plurilingualism in schools
- Interculturalism and linguistic diversity
- Perspectives on pluri- and multilingualism
- Language Rich Romania: Context and findings, Perspectives on the future

Key findings:

- National, minority and foreign languages seem to be well promoted, especially in the education system.
- Businesses researched appear to use foreign languages adequately, but do not invest significantly in language skills for employees.
- High motivation to learn foreign languages; however the practice of CLIL is not wide-spread
- A more consistent offer from universities regarding Romanian as a foreign language. This would be useful for foreign students that want to study in Romania
- Urgent attention should be given to the immigrant population and language issues that are related to them, for example, access to education. Long term immigration is most likely to increase and policies to meet their needs should be discussed and implemented.

### *Evaluation*

- Positive feedback on the event: organisation and content. Without exception all participants expressed their wish to become 'champions' of LRE.
- Eighteen ideas for recommendations and action plans already from the participants
- 'This has been the highest standard professional event I have attended in recent years.'
- 'The results of the survey are invaluable and I do not think there has been any attempt so far at the state or NGO level to explore this extremely powerful issue of our time. Real innovation. Well done.'

### *Media coverage*

Two interviews for the media

Article in 'Cariere' (Careers) magazine and 'Dilema Veche' – cultural magazine

Interview with British Council Director, British Council project manager and guests – for Radio Cultural

# SPAIN

7 and 12 June 2012

*Attendees: 30 (Bilbao), 50 (Madrid), 70 (Barcelona)*

## *Speakers*

### **Barcelona launch (7 June 2012):**

- Professor Guus Extra, professor emeritus in language and minorities, Tilburg University
- James McGrath, British Council Barcelona Bonanova Teaching Centre Manager
- David Sorrentino, Language Rich Europe Communications Manager, British Council
- Professor Xavier Vila, professor of Department of Catalan at the University of Barcelona
- Miguel Àngel Pradilla, professor of the Department of Catalan Philology, University Rovira i Virgili

### **Madrid launch (7 June 2012):**

- Juan Pedro de Basterrecha, Director of Fundraising and Sales, Instituto Cervantes
- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Professor Marta Genís, Director of Studies, Applied Languages Department, Universidad de Nebrija

### **Bilbao launch (12 June 2012):**

- Silvia Berny, Director British Council Bilbao
- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Iván Igartua, Director of Research, Department of Culture, Basque Government
- Olatz Olaso, Representative EMUN

## *Barcelona report (Kirsi Suutarinen, Communications Consultant LRE)*

The Catalonia launch for Language Rich Europe took place on 7 June 2012 in the beautiful Arts Santa Monica building in Barcelona. The atmosphere was as lively and the conversations so vivid that we had to cut it off well after the scheduled time had passed. However, we managed to cover many interesting topics related to our research.

First we were welcomed by James McGrath, British Council Barcelona Bonanova teaching centre manager and a few words from the representative of our LRE sponsors Oxford University Press – Alicia Monge. Our Communications Manager David Sorrentino then introduced the project and spoke about the importance of languages for a stable and prosperous Europe.

Professor Guus Extra from the Netherlands' Tilburg University's Centre for Studies of the Multicultural Society, Babylon provided an overview of the project and best practice in language learning worldwide. He specifically mentioned a few places outside Europe: Melbourne, Australia, as well as Canada. He also stressed the fact that although this is not a comprehensive study and we are missing some countries altogether, this is nevertheless a very good beginning and provides a lot of material for discussion. The points raised during the workshops later in the autumn will be taken into account when the project enters its third stage.

Professor Xavier Vila, professor of Department of Catalan at the University of Barcelona concentrated on the findings of Catalonia. Although this study is not ranking countries but concentrates on best practice, when asked about it, Vila said that Catalonia was doing quite well, all in all. When analysing the results, it's good to keep in mind though that the terminology is often very national: English is also an immigrant language. Which language is more/less important? What is the status of that language?

Some important points which Professor Xavier Vila discussed with relation to Catalonia are listed below:

- The status of Catalan in Catalonia is akin to that of a national language.
- Foreign language provision at pre-primary level is offered by seven countries/regions (among them Catalonia and Spain). English, French and German are the most common languages offered.
- In primary education all but two countries/regions offer extra support for newcomers in learning the national language. Catalonia offers significant extra support for newcomers, especially for Catalan (and Aranese Occitan in Val d'Aran).
- In secondary education, additional support in the national language is provided in 21 countries/regions. Catalonia offers significant extra support for newcomers, especially in connexion with Catalan (and Aranese Occitan in Val d'Aran).
- In further education, and more specifically, in Vocational and Education Training (VET) centres, Catalonian centres offer considerable support for both Catalan and Castilian.
- In all universities researched, instruction in Catalan and Castilian is provided, and Catalan is widely used. Other languages can also be used.
- In Catalonia, Castilian predominates on television while Catalan and Castilian are used in similar degrees on the radio. Catalonia provides television broadcasting in a rich variety of foreign, regional/minority, and immigrant languages.
- Most of the press is in Castilian and Catalan. Apart from those, overall, newspapers in English are the most common, followed by German, French, Russian and Italian. Arabic and Turkish newspapers also figure prominently.

- There is also room for improvement, particularly in the business sector. In all of the businesses researched in Europe, 70% do not keep a record of staff language skills, and very few take advantage of EU programmes for language learning. Catalonia follows the European trends here. In addition, a relatively small percentage have reward or promotion schemes for language learning, with 11% reporting that it is widespread for business English and only 5% for the national language and other languages. Catalonia follows the European trends.

### *Madrid Report (Aneta Quraishy, Senior Project Manager, Language Rich Europe)*

Taking place at the European Commission building in Madrid *Lenguas Riqueza del Europa (Language Rich Europe)* launched in Spain. Key good news stories for Spain, where research focused on the three autonomous communities, Madrid, Valencia and Sevilla, lay in particular within the education domain. In the field of Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Spain came out very well positioned in comparison to the other participating 18 countries. Spanish bilingual schools (important to note that these are predominately English/Spanish) are beginning to serve as a model for other countries. You can listen to an interview on Radio Nacional España 5, Radio Exterior in the programme *Otros Acentos*. ([www.rtve.es/alacarta/audios/otros-acentos/otros-acentos-espana-saca-buena-nota-integracion-lenguas-extranjeras-propias-educacion-primaria-08-06-12/1431120](http://www.rtve.es/alacarta/audios/otros-acentos/otros-acentos-espana-saca-buena-nota-integracion-lenguas-extranjeras-propias-educacion-primaria-08-06-12/1431120))

Below are some key messages in Spanish and English:

- Spain has a leading position amongst the countries involved in this research in integrating language and content in English in Primary Education. Thus, the Spanish system could serve as a model for other countries in the future. In addition, Spain is also a pioneer in linking the languages offered to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The research highlights the support provided within the Spanish Education System to language learning at all levels of education from primary to university education, as well as the support to immigrant students. Also highly valued within the research are initiatives such as the implementation of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan for Citizenship and the Education Aims Plan for 2010-2020 which advocate multilingualism and language learning, the modernisation and internationalisation of universities and a model of inclusive, diverse and intercultural education. The support given to Official and Regional languages also appears as a positive initiative.
- Areas for improvement include the fact that although European recommendations state that two foreign languages should be taught as compulsory, Spain only makes one language obligatory throughout its schooling system. This is however the reality in many European countries and UK children aged 14+ are not obliged to learn any foreign language, for example.

- Juan Pedro de Basterrechea, Instituto Cervantes, stressed how important it is not to make sweeping judgements with the study that is after all based only on three Spanish cities and rather that the study should be used to highlight interesting points, and serve as a way of raising awareness of the importance of multilingualism and language learning. We need to also look to the two regional profiles created of Catalonia and the Basque Country.
- Professor Marta Genís, Universidad Antonio Nebrija, pointed out that in the business domain, there is still room for improvement for Spanish companies where language learning is not given as much support as it should. She further highlighted that despite the benefits of subtitling, Spain continues to opt for dubbing both on television and in the cinema.

### *Press Coverage*

75 mentions in total, including

ABC de Sevilla: Los niños de Primaria impulsan el bilingüismo: [www.abcdesevilla.es/20120607/espana/rc-ninos-primaria-impulsan-bilinguismo-201206072019.html](http://www.abcdesevilla.es/20120607/espana/rc-ninos-primaria-impulsan-bilinguismo-201206072019.html)

El perfil multilingüe vasco es alto en primaria y secundaria, pero debe “fortalecerse” en servicios públicos y empresas: [www.europapress.es/euskadi/noticia-perfil-multilingue-vasco-alto-primaria-secundaria-debe-fortalecerse-servicios-publicos-empresas-20120612185809.html](http://www.europapress.es/euskadi/noticia-perfil-multilingue-vasco-alto-primaria-secundaria-debe-fortalecerse-servicios-publicos-empresas-20120612185809.html)

España es el único país europeo con aprendizaje a edad temprana para todo tipo de idiomas: [www.aprendemas.com/Noticias/html/N10375\\_F08062012.html](http://www.aprendemas.com/Noticias/html/N10375_F08062012.html)

# SWITZERLAND

23 May 2012

*Attendees: 70*

## *Speakers*

- David Sorrentino, Language Rich Europe Communications Manager, British Council
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Director, British Council
- Professor Raphael Berthele, Université de Fribourg
- Professor Bruno Moretti, Université de Berne
- Christian Levrat, Conseiller national, President of Swiss Social Democrat Party
- Simon Denoth, Referent da la direcziun RTR, Rumantsch TV
- Jessica Gygax, Forum du bilinguism, Bienne (Chair)

## *Report (Caroline Morrissey, Director British Council Switzerland)*

Anything to do with language policy in Switzerland, a country with four national languages, is always going to be political. So, with the British Council being seen to take the lead, and with the UK's reputation in this country for not teaching and learning foreign languages well, we had to tread carefully. At the Language Rich Europe launch in 2010, we spoke not one word of English but ran the event in French and German throughout – and got some good feedback for taking Swiss national languages seriously, as well as avoiding potential criticism about English language imperialism. For us in Switzerland, it is important to make a clear distinction between this programme, which is about multilingualism, and the work we do in promoting English. English is hugely important in Switzerland, but is also seen as a threat to Swiss cohesion.

There is a common perception that Switzerland is a multilingual nation. Reality can be quite different, with the four language areas existing well side by side and with little cross-border integration. The push for English, to the detriment of French in German-speaking cantons and German in French-speaking cantons, is seen as a real threat to unity and to cultural diversity.

So when the time came round last week to launch the results, we decided to do it multilingually. We did not have simultaneous translation as most of the audience would have a passive understanding of at least one other national language, even if they did not want to speak it. The event was hosted by the Italian Department of the University of Bern, we had presentations in German, accompanied by French language PowerPoint slides (and vice-versa), an introduction by one of our speakers in Rumantsch and Martin Hope doing his presentation in French and Italian.

So, what were the highlights?

There were some top level speakers, including the President of the Swiss Social Democrat party, National Councillor Christian Levrat (French-speaker from a bilingual canton) and a representative of Rumantsch TV, fluent in all four Swiss national languages.

The debate was lively with questions around:

- the media (how to integrate representatives from all Swiss language groups in live national television debates for example, plus an accusation that the Swiss media is too heavily biased towards German)
- education (how can Switzerland halt the inexorable advance of English to the detriment of Swiss national languages)
- the advantages and disadvantages of early and late immersion
- Swiss German being hard to access for French speakers as they learn standard German, versus the argument of Swiss German native speakers that Swiss German is their mother tongue, their culture
- the status of Italian, a 'wallflower' language – there is no reason why cantons should not choose Italian as the second language to be taught in schools, rather than German and French
- Language competence: According to Christian Levrat, MP, 'these days many young politicians only possess passive language competence in another Swiss national language; older politicians were able to communicate well in more than one.'

The first trawl of press coverage showed 97 articles and radio/television mentions, mostly picking up on the fact that Switzerland comes out very well in terms of multilingual language policies. Much of the Swiss French-language press, including radio, state that English is a real threat to Switzerland's linguistic diversity. The NZZ, Switzerland's German-language broadsheet writes, however, in a thoughtful article, that the perceived threat by English to Switzerland's linguistic and cultural cohesion is a fearsome but imaginary creature, a 'hob-goblin'.

So what does LRE do for Switzerland? I have picked out four areas that seem important to me; there are many more:

- Switzerland comes out top in many areas, such as policies to extend and improve multilingualism
- Immigrant languages seem to be well supported in the big cities
- In vocational training, Switzerland does not make language studies compulsory so apprentices are losing out
- Italian and Rumantsch are losing territory and are under-represented in official life and in education

The next steps will be to cover some of the emerging issues in a series of workshops. These will cover multilingualism and business; education and migration.

The Language Rich Europe results for Switzerland are now available in draft form in German, French and Italian. Language Rich Europe in Switzerland is partnered by the University Of Fribourg, Institute of Multilingualism.

## Press Coverage

Number of press clippings – 98, including printed press, television and radio. For example:

Neue Zürcher Zeitung: *Englisch als Gespenst*  
[www.nzz.ch/aktuell/schweiz/englisch-als-gespenst-1.17018375](http://www.nzz.ch/aktuell/schweiz/englisch-als-gespenst-1.17018375)

Freiburger Nachrichten *Sprachliche Minderheiten blieben lebendig*

Le Temps – *Succès multilingue*

Die Botschaft – *Schweizer sind noch immer Europas beste Sprachkünstler*

Blick (distribution 1.5 million) – *Die Schweizer sind noch immer Europas Sprachkünstler*

Corriere del Ticino (distribution: 36,274) – *La Svizzera fra i Paesi piu plurilingui d'Europa*

Schweizer Fernsehen – [www.tagesschau.sf.tv/Nachrichten/Archiv/2012/05/23/Vermischtes/Die-Schweizer-Europas-Sprachkuenstler](http://www.tagesschau.sf.tv/Nachrichten/Archiv/2012/05/23/Vermischtes/Die-Schweizer-Europas-Sprachkuenstler)

Etudiants.ch – [www.etudiants.ch/cms/news-comment-parle-l-Europe-2012-05-23](http://www.etudiants.ch/cms/news-comment-parle-l-Europe-2012-05-23)

swissinfo.ch – [www.swissinfo.ch/ger/news/newsticker/international/Die\\_Schweizer\\_sind\\_noch\\_immer\\_Europas\\_Sprachkuenstler.html?cid=32750316](http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/news/newsticker/international/Die_Schweizer_sind_noch_immer_Europas_Sprachkuenstler.html?cid=32750316)

[www.swissinfo.ch/fre/nouvelles\\_agence/international/Langlais\\_menace\\_de\\_plus\\_en\\_plus\\_les\\_langues\\_officielles\\_de\\_Suisse.html?cid=32751490](http://www.swissinfo.ch/fre/nouvelles_agence/international/Langlais_menace_de_plus_en_plus_les_langues_officielles_de_Suisse.html?cid=32751490)

[www.swissinfo.ch/eng/culture/English\\_challenges\\_multilingual\\_Switzerland\\_.html?cid=32806320](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/culture/English_challenges_multilingual_Switzerland_.html?cid=32806320)



# UKRAINE

## 9 November 2012

*Attendees: 104*

### *Speakers*

- Vasyl Kremin, President of the National Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of Ukraine
- Mykola Slyusarevsky, Director of the Institute of Social and Political Psychology
- Martin Dowle, Director British Council Ukraine
- Eilidh MacDonald, Project Co-ordinator Language Rich Europe, British Council Germany
- Professor Guus Extra, professor emeritus in language and minorities, Tilburg University
- Lyubov Naydonova, Institute of Social and Political Psychology
- Vilma Bačkiūtė, Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania
- Iryna Brunova-Kalishetska and Yulia Tyschenko, Crimea Policy Dialogue Project
- Professor Stepko M.F, Institute of Higher Education
- Professor Vasyutynsky V.O., Institute of Social and Political Psychology
- Professor Masenko L.T., Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

### *Report (Irina Sukhinina, Project Manager, British Council Ukraine)*

The launch was held in the Conference Hall of the Institute of Social and Political Psychology. Attendees included representatives of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, universities, Junior Academy of Sciences, researchers, the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports, City Administrations, the National Council on Radio and television journalists.

The programme was divided into two parts: before lunch, the launch of the LRE publication, and after lunch – a round table. During the launch, the project overview was presented, as well as a cross-national analysis of language policies and practices in Europe and the research results for Ukraine.

During the round table, the country profiles of Wales and Lithuania were discussed, and the partner project *Crimea Policy Dialogue Project* presented the model of multilingual education in Crimea. Participants also had the opportunity to hear about the language policy in higher education, the cross-country situation with national and regional languages in Ukraine, and also to look into the development of language policy in Ukraine in the course of its 20 years existence. Each session concluded with questions and discussion. However, because of a quite packed programme, participants wanted to have more time for discussion.

Generally the audience accepted the LRE report with high interest and agreement. For many people it was particularly interesting to see the similarities in language policy of other European countries and Ukraine (many trends in Lithuania and Ukraine are quite similar, for example). It was generally agreed that this was a good base for further research in the language policy and practice areas.

Particularly some minor inaccuracies were spotted in the Ukraine results, but the partner argued that the time span between the research itself and presentation was quite big and the situation in this area had changed, that is, a new law on languages was passed through parliament, new initiatives in education were introduced and had started to be implemented, and so on.

Main issues discussed included:

- Language policies and practices in European countries versus Ukraine
- Overview of the situation in Wales and Lithuania
- Initiative of the introduction of multilingual education in Crimea and prospects for other parts of Ukraine
- Language policy in higher education
- Developments in the language policy in Ukraine, confrontation of the national and regional (Russian) language, people's attitudes and preferences throughout Ukraine, necessary steps/further initiatives to improve

# UK

## 28 June 2012

*Attendees: 129 at launch; 65 at workshop*

### *Speakers*

- Professor Stuart Corbridge, LSE Pro-Director (Research and External Relations)
- Dr Lid King, Director, The Languages Company and Speak to the Future
- Baroness Jean Coussins, Chair All Party Parliamentary Group Modern Languages
- Michael Carrier, Head of English Language Innovation, British Council
- Amy Thompson, Chair, NALDIC and Treasurer Speak to the Future Campaign
- Nick Byrne, Director LSE Language Centre
- Martin Hope, Language Rich Europe Project Director, British Council
- Professor Guus Extra, professor emeritus in language and minorities, Tilburg University
- Bernardette Holmes, Director, Languages First, University of Cambridge Language Centre, & President, Association for Language Learning
- Richard Hardie, Chair, UBS & Vice President, Institute of Linguists
- Humair Naqvi, Head of Government and Education EMEA, Rosetta Stone
- Tony Travers, LSE London
- Lizzie Fane, Founder, Third Year Abroad

### *Report (Dr Lid King, Director, the Languages Company Languages Company)*

The UK launch of the draft Language Rich Europe Report for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was held at the London School of Economics' Wolfson Theatre. The event was well attended and attracted a number of sponsors, including Rosetta Stone, Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, as well as the Speak to the Future Campaign.

After a warm welcome by Baroness Coussins and Professor Corbridge, Professor Guus Extra presented the key findings from the research carried out by the project in general.

Lid King then presented the findings for the UK. In England, the report found a flourishing complementary sector, presenting opportunities for children to learn languages spoken in their communities. In addition, the report touches on the strategic and vulnerable position of languages at university and the lack of national capability in languages in England. The report also highlights promising initiatives like the National Languages Strategy and other research and projects.

During the morning session we also heard from the Speak to the Future campaign which tries to draw people with an interest in languages together in support of language learning and teaching.

This was followed by a lively panel discussion with a young entrepreneur, employer representatives and language experts. Throughout the morning, a dedicated audience tweeted proceedings and live tweets were taken up by the panel and discussed by the experts.

### *Afternoon workshop*

During the afternoon, a series of workshops were held, discussing issues such as:

- Nearly a million school age children have another language besides English, but we do not seem to value this 'linguistic capital'. Why is this and what is to be done?
- More learners abandon language learning at 14 in England than in any other of the countries surveyed; very few continue with a language after 16. What are the reasons for this and what are the solutions?
- How can we capitalise on the obvious enthusiasm for learning a language at an early age, when provision is still less than in most European countries?
- Business and employers generally need languages; many say as much, but very few actively promote them. This seems to have been the case for many years? What is wrong with the message about business languages?

To survey opinions, a quick polling system was used asking participants to give their opinion on a wide range of questions. A sample of the results are given below:

**In today's world a command of English is sufficient for international communication – do you agree?**

Yes: 9%  
No: 91%

### **Our Linguistic Capital**

**The many languages spoken in our country are not valued – agree?**

Yes: 61%  
No: 15%  
Not sure: 24%

### **Primary languages**

**Languages should be compulsory from:**

1) Age 5: 59%  
2) Age 7: 29%  
3) Age 9: 12%

### **Languages 14-19**

**If young people want to drop languages at 14 they should be allowed to:**

Yes: 25%  
No: 75%

**The single main way of combating drop-out rates post-14 would be:**

Make language study a legal requirement: 29%  
Make competence in languages a condition of entry to HE: 20%  
Develop exciting & engaging teaching approaches: 27%  
Campaign with learners and their parents: 7%  
Change the views of the media: 7%  
Offer better guidance for teachers & learners: 9%

### **Business and languages**

**Employers are generally:**

Enthusiastic about languages: 9%  
Indifferent to languages: 13%  
Confused about languages: 26%  
Neutral – they have other concerns: 51%

### **Our society (urban spaces, government & media)**

**Much of our society supports multilingualism:**

Yes: 31%  
No: 69%

**What impact does this have on individual language competence?**

None: 4%  
Some: 20%  
Increasing: 6%  
A great deal: 71%

### *Media Coverage*

The Linguist published a short article covering both LRE results and those of the European Survey on Language Competences (with assistance from David Sorrentino of the British Council). The London School of Economics highlighted the findings on its front news page: [www2.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/news/archives/2012/06/Language\\_report.aspx](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/news/archives/2012/06/Language_report.aspx)

There was contact with the Independent and Times Education Supplement, both of whom expressed interest, but no coverage came of it probably because of some major controversies in education policy making which currently occupy them. Even the Eurobarometer received limited coverage (examples include: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-18531751](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-18531751))

Baroness Coussins tabled a question about the LRE research in the House of Lords in the UK Parliament which secured an official response from the Government.

### *Twitter feed*

There was a Twitter campaign to engage the wider languages audience in the debate, using the hashtag #LREUK

# UK – WALES

9 October 2012

*Attendees: 15*

## *Speakers*

- Aneta Quraishy, Language Rich Europe Senior Project Manager, British Council Germany
- Simon Ford, Project Manager, British Council Wales
- Dr Lid King, Director, The Languages Company and Speak to the Future
- Professor Colin Williams, Cardiff University
- Professor Stephen Hagen, University of Wales, Newport
- Chair: Aled Eirug, British Council Wales Advisory Committee

## *Report (Simon Ford, Project Manager, British Council Wales)*

Professor Williams opened the session by giving an overview of key issues relating to bilingualism and multilingualism in Wales.

This included thoughts on trends worth noting, challenges being faced by the language agenda and questions for consideration by decision and policy makers.

Trends worth noting in relation to the Welsh-English bilingualism in a multicultural and multilingual context include the following:

- The increased status of Welsh in public life, education commerce and the media has long-term structural implications for the treatment of the Welsh language as a public good, rather than as a special minority interest.
- As a result of the 2011 Welsh Language Measure, the Welsh Government has taken ownership of the language policy field. This has several implications, such as a more rigorous and robust Welsh medium education policy within schools, teacher training, Welsh for adults and the Higher Education sector.
- The replacement of the Welsh Language Board by the Welsh Language Commissioner makes for a more robust regulatory regime.

Notable challenges to the language agenda in Wales include:

- The relationship between promotion and regulation of the Welsh language. While it may be obvious to citizens that they can turn to the Language Commissioner to lodge a complaint related to the use of Welsh, it is less clear where to turn for support within the Civil Service system for promoting the use of Welsh.
- There is a gulf which persists between the opportunity to use Welsh in a wide set of domains and settings and the actual use of the language when a choice is on offer.
- There is a persistent under-use of the actual richness and resource potential of a wide variety of new speakers of Welsh, whether they be second language learners as children or as adult learners.
- There is a continuing concern with the viability of Welsh language social networks. There will be much interest and some apprehension as to what the results of the 2011 Census, due to be released in 2013, will reveal.

Key questions that need to be addressed by stakeholders in Wales include the following:

- Following the abolition of the Welsh Language Board, where does systematic and purposeful language planning take place now and how is this monitored and evaluated?
- Is the curriculum on offer through the medium of Welsh as appealing and contemporary as it could be?
- How do we effectively diffuse into popular consciousness the research being done on aspects of bilingualism and multilingualism in Welsh institutes?
- How will legislative devolution influence the construction of a more specifically Welsh influenced jurisdiction?
- To what extent will efforts be made to expose and integrate 'new speakers' into Welsh medium networks and occupational opportunities?
- How do we further develop functional bilingualism for all who wish to benefit from this distinct aspect of Welsh life?

Professor Williams also questioned how Wales could contribute to and benefit from wider interest and networks on multilingualism in the UK and the rest of Europe.

The Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity (NDLP) is an important stakeholder, with its emphasis on European Language Strategies. It is the closest thing we have to a European Think Tank and lobbying agency to encourage EU decision-makers to take account of the interests of non-hegemonic languages, such as Basque, Irish, Welsh, Catalan and Frisian.

But how do the Regional Language and Immigrant Language networks and the British Council diffuse the information base contained in the Language Rich Europe report and how will the data, trends and interpretations be calibrated by reference to a series of real-world case studies of their application here in Wales?

How do informed individuals such as school teachers, head teachers, language and educational specialists, commercial operators and service providers get to benefit from the international lessons and perhaps act on some of the implications of this report?

Essentially the report presents an opportunity to have a more progressive debate and analysis of our heritage of language in the service of the people in Wales and across Europe.

Following the a presentation of the project methodology and analysis of the cross-national findings by Aneta Quraishy (British Council Germany) and Simon Ford (British Council Wales), Lid King (the Languages Company) offered a response to this overview of the language landscape in Wales by addressing the key findings of the research study in Wales and how these compared to the results from the UK.

Key findings from the research in Wales included the following:

- The linguistic capital of languages other than English or Welsh is largely ignored.
- There is some enthusiasm for 'foreign' languages in Primary education, but less provision than in other European countries.
- Fewer learners were entered for GCSE equivalent than in the rest of the UK. Very few continue with a language after 16.
- Employers do not actively promote languages.
- There are bilingual and multilingual possibilities in both cities and the media.
- Major advantages have been made in both provision and competence in Welsh at school.





The Language Rich Europe project is delivered by a consortium of over 30 partners



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