The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR)
and the development of language policies: challenges and responsibilities

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM

STRASBOURG, 6 – 8 FEBRUARY 2007

INTRODUCTION TO THE FORUM

The Forum is organised by

the Language Policy Division, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

in co-operation with France and the Netherlands

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1. The aims and the objectives of the Forum

1.1. Introduction

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* was developed by a Council of Europe international working party set up by the Language Policy Division with a view to promoting transparency and coherence in language learning and teaching in Europe. After a pilot scheme, the Framework was officially published in 2001, the European Year of Languages and has since been translated into 36 languages.

The success of the CEFR has considerably exceeded expectations and its huge impact on language learning, teaching and assessment continues to increase. There is now a wide acceptance and use of its principles and approach within Europe and indeed beyond. Along with the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, the CEFR has been a key instrument in the Language Policy Division's work to promote plurilingualism. These generic instruments are complemented by more context-specific tools such as the European Language Portfolio, and Reference Level Descriptions for national and regional languages (on the basis of the CEFR).

Six years after the launch of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* it is appropriate to hold an in-depth discussion on current and future developments concerning its use and influence, and on the role of the various stakeholders.

It now seems opportune to reaffirm the principles and purposes of the CEFR and to reflect more closely on how it and related Council of Europe instruments can be used to greatest effect. It is particularly important to examine what forms of assistance and guidance may be most helpful in ensuring that the CEFR is used appropriately and effectively in the spirit of its underlying principles.

The overall aim of the Forum is therefore to examine ways of making fuller use of the CEFR in the promotion of plurilingualism. In this context it is important to recall and clarify Council of Europe policy and to examine what may need to be done, and by whom, to support the use of the Framework. The Forum will offer member states an opportunity to:

- review the situation concerning the use of the CEFR and its relationship to other Council of Europe instruments;

- confirm the policy and principles underpinning the development of the CEFR and relate these to the actual use of it;

- examine the possible roles and responsibilities of the different partners with regard to appropriate and effective use;

- decide on how best to share experience of and expertise on such use in the future;

- identify further work both to respond to users' expectations and to fill possible 'gaps' within the spirit of the dynamic development of the CEFR;

- make proposals on how the Council of Europe might best support member states in meeting their current and future needs in using the CEFR.

These issues, as well as others that may come to light during the Forum, will be at the centre of discussions and should make it possible to define further initiatives to exploit the full potential of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and clarify the responsibilities of the various stakeholders regarding the use and sharing of this reference tool. The Forum will serve to highlight the key role of language education policy as an integral part of social policy designed to promote an inclusive democratic society that values linguistic and

cultural diversity, and promotes equal opportunities for quality lifelong language learning for all. The discussions should also produce elements to be considered in the preparation of a possible future Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on the use of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

The education authorities of the states parties to the European Cultural Convention have been invited to nominate three to five delegates with responsibilities in one of the sectors corresponding to the three main topics to be addressed by the Forum: i) assessment; ii) curricula and school manuals; iii) teacher training. In addition, as the European Language Portfolio (ELP) is an application of the CEFR, the Forum directly concerns all persons responsible for the ELP at national level. Representatives of NGOs, in particular those having participatory status with the Council of Europe, have also been invited. A number of non-member states, including those having observer status with the Council of Europe, will also be represented.

1.2. A new situation in Europe – new needs, new challenges, new responsibilities for language education policies

The wide dissemination of the CEFR and the speed with which it has come into common use in the member states have accompanied profound changes in the context in which languages are taught and learned in Europe:

- A growing awareness at local, regional and national level, and in the various European bodies, of the importance of language skills has resulted in the acquisition of language competences being accorded a very high priority in education policy. The place given to modern languages in the European Union's 2010 Education and Training Programme and the forthcoming European Indicator of Language Competence for young Europeans, based on the CEFR, are two illustrations of this.

- The desire of many education authorities and institutions to introduce explicit standards to increase the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching places the notion of competence at the heart of the debate. This often leads to modern languages being offered as an example or model for other disciplines.

- The growing mobility of citizens, especially of workers and students, and the development of exchanges throughout Europe make it necessary to improve the transparency of language qualifications.

- The growing personal and professional trans-border contacts and the clear value of international co-operation give new importance to the development of linguistic and intercultural understanding between citizens.

- The rapid changes that have taken place in the social fabric of society in the member states have added a special focus on linguistic and intercultural skills as a key means of contributing to social cohesion and intercultural understanding – which are among the priorities set by the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe at their 3rd Summit.

- The reaffirmation of the need to recognise the value of the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe requires a re-examination of the role and place of the various languages as well as of teaching objectives and the means of making plurilingualism accessible to every European.

Member states, European organisations, public and private international bodies, local and national institutions, and language professionals clearly consider that the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* is a significant instrument in addressing these challenges.

The rapid adoption of the *Common European Framework of Reference* is in itself a determining factor in the situation outlined above and raises crucial questions regarding the use of this instrument and the sharing of responsibility between the Council of Europe and its different partners:

- How can the reference value of this Framework at international level be enhanced and preserved, given the very wide variety of uses to which it is put and conditions in which it is implemented, while enabling all stakeholders to assume their particular responsibilities in this field?

- What can be done to promote those central concepts of the CEFR which often seem to be given insufficient consideration although they are essential to the coherent use of this instrument and offer powerful responses to a number of the challenges being faced, such as linguistic diversity and the notion of plurilingual competence?

- How can the best use be made of the potential of the CEFR and what responses can be made to the new needs generated by its different uses?

1.3. The structure of the conference

The Forum seeks a balance between input, discussion and feedback from participants.

Tuesday, 6 February

Opening session

The opening presentations will set the scene by placing the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* in the wider context of the policies and priorities of the Council of Europe. The specific contribution of the CEFR to the language education policy of the Council of Europe and developments at European level in general will be underlined. Its role in the national language education policy of Luxembourg will be presented. Participants will then be informed about new perspectives in the multilingualism policy of the European Union.

Exploring the potential of the CEFR and the needs related to its effective use

This phase will begin with a presentation of the potential of the CEFR and some of the many possible ways of making use of this instrument. First, three case studies will be presented, illustrating how the CEFR is used in the Netherlands and in Catalonia, and then how it is being implemented in a practical way through the European Language Portfolio in Europe. The much discussed issue of the Common Reference Levels of language proficiency, their origin and function will be the subject of the next presentation.

As an introduction to the group work that follows, the results of a recent survey on the use of the CEFR at national level in the Council of Europe member states will be presented. The starting point and the focus of the group discussions (first of the Forum's two group-work sessions) will be the needs related to the effective use of the CEFR within the domains of assessment, curriculum development and teacher training as identified through the survey. Additional material for discussion will be provided by further case-study presentations delivered in the groups on the use of the CEFR in assessment (France, the Netherlands and Finland); curriculum development (Aoste Valley and France); teacher education (the Netherlands and Poland). The expected outcome of this first group-work session is a structured list of needs identified by the Forum participants in relation to the effective use of the CEFR in these domains.

Wednesday, 7 February

Presenting European initiatives in the field of language education

After reports from the groups in plenary, this session starts with a presentation of the preparatory work concerning the European Indicator of Language Competence, which will be based on the CEFR. The Council of Europe's work on policies for plurilingualism and linguistic diversity and projects for their implementation are presented next. Their impact on the developments within the new and constantly changing situation in the area of education in Europe is addressed in the concluding presentation of this session.

Addressing the needs and defining the responsibilities related to the effective use of the CEFR

The focus of the second session of discussions in groups will be on ways to address the needs identified in the first group work session and on the possible distribution of responsibilities. A further aim of the discussions will be to identify elements for a possible future Council of Europe Recommendation on the use of the CEFR. An additional stimulus will then be provided by presentations on the use of the CECR in France, one of the hosting countries of the Forum, followed by Japan, Canada and the USA, and by a panel discussion on the promotion of policies for plurilingualism through the national and regional Language Education Policy Profiles carried out by the Language Policy Division in response to a request for assistance from member states.

Thursday, 8 February

Closing session

Having explored the potential of the CEFR, identified the needs related to its appropriate and effective use and recommended how responsibilities might be shared, the aim of the closing session is to clarify, and where necessary to redefine, the function and the use of the CEFR as a tool for supporting linguistic diversity and promoting the plurilingualism of citizens living in the multilingual societies of contemporary Europe. An analysis of some possible contextualisations of the Framework in the new educational area in Europe will be followed by a panel discussion on a number of specific issues that have arisen. The Forum will conclude with a summary of the issues and findings, followed by the formal closing at the end of the morning.

2. The Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR)

2.1. Introduction to the CEFR

The CEFR includes a descriptive scheme of language use and learning and scales of proficiency for the different parameters of this scheme.

The comprehensive descriptive scheme is a tool for reflecting on what is involved not only in language use, but also in language learning and teaching. The CEFR provides a common basis and a common language for the elaboration of syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, textbooks, teacher-training programmes, and for relating examinations to one another. It allows the different partners involved in planning and delivering language provision and in assessing language progress and proficiency, to co-ordinate and situate their efforts.

The description is based on an action-oriented approach to language learning and use. It provides six ascending levels of proficiency with specific outcomes – a compendium of descriptors of language proficiency (proficiency implying not only the knowledge of a language, but also the degree of skill in using it). These descriptors were developed scientifically and take the form of a descriptor bank that can be added to, updated and edited to meet present and future needs.

It is in effect a common reference tool across languages (the CEFR is non-language specific) and is widely used in developing coherence in provision across different languages. It is also used in policy making as a means of ensuring coherence and transparency through the different sectors or stages in language education. Many countries have used the opportunity of the appearance of the Framework to stimulate curriculum and examination reforms in different educational sectors.

A number of projects are currently describing the proficiency levels for national or regional languages using the CEFR approach.

The CEFR is available on www.coe.int/lang

2.2. Synopsis

Chapter 1 defines the aims, objectives and functions of the proposed Framework in the light of the overall language policy of the Council of Europe and in particular the promotion of plurilingualism in response to European linguistic and cultural diversity. It then sets out the criteria which the Framework should satisfy

Chapter 2 explains the approach adopted. The descriptive scheme is based on an analysis of language use in terms of the strategies used by learners to activate general and communicative competences in order to carry out the activities and processes involved in the production and reception of texts and the construction of discourse dealing with particular themes, which enable them to fulfill the tasks facing them under the given conditions and constraints in the situations which arise in the various domains of social existence. The words underlined designate the parameters for the description of language use and the user/learner's ability to use language.

Chapter 3 introduces the common reference levels. Progress in language learning with regard to the parameters of the descriptive scheme can be calibrated in terms of a flexible series of levels of attainment defined by appropriate descriptors. This apparatus should be rich enough to accommodate the full range of learner needs

and thus the objectives pursued by different providers, or required of candidates for language qualifications.

Chapter 4   establishes in some (but not exhaustive or definitive) detail the categories (scaled where possible) needed for the description of language use and the language user/learner according to the parameters identified, covering in turn: the domains and situations providing the context for language use; the themes, tasks and purposes of communication; communicative activities, strategies and processes; and text; especially in relation to activities and media

Chapter 5   categorises in detail the user/learner's general and communicative competences, scaled where possible.

Chapter 6   considers the processes of language learning and teaching, dealing with the relation between acquisition and learning and with the nature and development of plurilingual competence, as well as with methodological options of a general or more specific kind, in relation to the categories set out in Chapters 3 & 4.

Chapter 7   examines in greater detail the role of tasks in language learning and teaching

Chapter 8   is concerned with the implications of linguistic diversification for curriculum design and considers such issues as: plurilingualism and pluriculturalism; differentiated learning objectives; principles of curriculum design; curricular scenarios; life-long language learning; modularity and partial competences.

Chapter 9   discusses the various purposes of assessment and corresponding assessment types, in the light of the need to reconcile the competing criteria of comprehensiveness, precision and operational feasibility.

2.3. Language Use/Learning and Language User/Learner – the Descriptive Scheme of the CEFR

a.   Any form of language use/learning could be described as follows:

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under various constraints to engage in language activities involving language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activating those strategies which seem most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modifications of their competences.

b.   Language use/learning = performing tasks related to texts in specific situations

c.   Ability to use/learn language is based on the following competences:

  o   General competences of a language user/learner
    ▪   Knowledge (savoir)
    ▪   Skills and know-how (savoir-faire)
    ▪   Existential competence (savoir-être)
    ▪   Ability to learn (savoir-apprendre)
  o   Communicative language competences of a language user/learner
    ▪   Linguistic
    ▪   Pragmatic
    ▪   Sociolinguistic

d. Based on these competences the language user/learner applies skills and strategies suitable for performing tasks that require the following language activities:

- o Reception
- o Production
- o Interaction
- o Mediation

e. These activities happen in certain domains, e.g.:

- o Personal
- o Public
- o Occupational
- o Educational

f. Language use/learning may be further determined by such parameters as:

- o Situational context
- o Text type and theme
- o Conditions and constraints

## 2.4. The Common Reference Levels of language proficiency

The common reference levels were drawn up on the basis of the results of a Swiss National Science Research Council project which took place between 1993 and 1996. This project was undertaken for the Council of Europe with a view to developing scales of proficiency for the different parameters of the descriptive scheme in the CEFR.

The project began with a detailed analysis of 41 scales of language proficiency in the international public domain or obtainable through Council of Europe contacts in 1993. There was no particular level as a starting point.

The 'can do' descriptors were selected from the internationally available scales based on the categories of description used in the CEFR. They were in turn scaled through a combination of intuitive, qualitative and quantitative methods.

In the intuitive phase, this material was edited, new descriptors were formulated and the set discussed by experts. Next, a variety of qualitative methods were used to check that teachers could relate to the descriptive categories selected and that descriptors actually described the categories they were intended to describe. Finally, the best descriptors were scaled using quantitative methods (Rasch model).

The scales comprise six ascending proficiency levels couched in terms of outcomes. The number of levels was determined in order to be adequate to show progression in different sectors, whilst allowing for reasonably consistent distinctions to be made. However, a 'hypertext' branching approach is proposed to define finer levels and categories to suit local needs and yet still relate back to a common system.

A	*B*	*C*
Basic User	*Independent User*	*Proficient User*

A1	*A2*	*B1*	*B2*	*C1*	*C2*
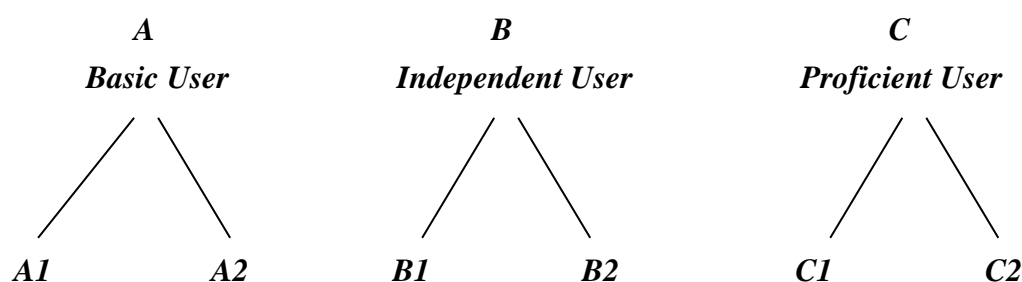
3. Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR): *Manual*

Preliminary Pilot Version[1]

The Manual, currently being piloted in preliminary draft form, is a response by the Council of Europe to the need for guidance to assist examination providers to relate their examinations to the CEFR. It is a contribution to the cooperative endeavour of improving the transparency of and comparability between language qualifications in Europe. It is intended as a continuation of the work of the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division in developing planning tools which provide reference points and common objectives as the basis for a coherent and transparent structure for effective teaching/learning and assessment relevant to the needs of learners as well as society, and that can facilitate personal mobility.

3.1. The aims of the Manual

The primary aim of the Manual is to help the providers of examinations to develop, apply and report transparent, practical procedures in a cumulative process of continuing improvement in order to situate their examination(s) in relation to the Common European Framework (CEFR).

The approach developed offers guidance to users to:

- describe the examination coverage, administration and analysis procedures;
- relate results reported from the examination to the "Common Reference Levels of language proficiency" of the CEFR;
- provide supporting evidence that reports the procedures followed to do so.

Following the best traditions of Council of Europe action in developing language education, however, the Manual has wider aims to actively promote and facilitate co-operation among relevant institutions and experts in member countries. The Manual aims to:

- contribute to competence building in the area of linking assessments to the CEFR;
- encourage increased transparency on the part of examination providers;
- encourage the development of both formal and informal national and international networks of institutions and experts.

Relating an examination or test to the CEFR is a complex endeavour. The existence of such a relation is not a simple observable fact, but is an assertion for which the examination provider needs to provide both theoretical and empirical evidence. The procedures by which such evidence is put forward can be summarised by the expression "validation of the claim."

3.2. The approach adopted

The Manual presents four inter-related sets of procedures that users are advised to follow in order to design a linking scheme in terms of self-contained, manageable activities. The activities carried out in all four sets of procedures contribute to the validation process.

> **Familiarisation:** a selection of activities designed to ensure that participants in the linking process have a detailed knowledge of the CEFR. This familiarisation stage is necessary at the start of both the Specification and the Standardisation procedures.

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[1] DGIV/EDU/LANG (2003) 5 rev.1; downloadable at: www.coe.int/lang

In terms of validation, these procedures are an indispensable starting point. An account of the activities taken and the results obtained is an essential component of the validation report.

Specification: a self-audit of the coverage of the examination (content and tasks types) profiled in relation to the categories presented in CEFR. As well as serving a reporting function, this exercise also has a certain awareness-raising function that may assist in further improving the quality of the examination concerned.

These procedures assure that the definition and production of the test have been undertaken carefully, following good practice.

Standardisation: suggested procedures to facilitate the implementation of a common understanding of the "Common Reference Levels" presented in CEFR.
These procedures assure that judgements taken in rating performances reflect the constructs described in the CEFR, and that decisions about task and item difficulty are taken in a principled manner on the basis of evidence from pre-testing as well as expert judgement.

Empirical Validation: the collection and analysis of test data and ratings from assessments in order to provide evidence that both the examination itself and the linking to the CEFR are sound. Suggestions and criteria are provided for adequate and credible validation appropriate for different contexts.

These procedures assure that the claims formulated through Specification and Standardisation ("test-under-construction") can indeed be confirmed when the examination is administered in practice ("test-in-action") and data on how persons belonging to the target population actually behave when the test is so administered becomes available.

Relating examinations to the CEFR can best be seen as a process of "building an argument" based on a theoretical rationale. As noted above, the central concept within this process is "validity".

Then before an examination can be linked to an external framework like the CEFR (external validity), it must demonstrate the validity of the construct, and the consistency and stability of the examination (internal validity).

The approach adopted in this process is an inclusive one. The recommended procedures encourage alignment of examinations to the CEFR with differing degrees of rigour appropriate to different testing contexts. The Manual aims to encourage the application of principles of best practice even in situations in which modest resources and expertise are available. First steps may be modest, but the aim is to help examination providers to work within a structure, so that later work can build on what has been done before, and a common structure may offer the possibility for institutions to more easily pool efforts in certain areas.

Not all examination providers may consider they can undertake studies in all of the areas outlined above. Some institutions in "low-stakes" contexts may decide to concentrate on Specification and Standardisation, and may not be able to take the process to its logical conclusion of full-scale Empirical Validation as outlined in internationally recognised codes and standards for testing and measurement. However, it is strongly recommended that even less well-resourced examination providers should select techniques from all areas. The linking of a qualification to the CEFR will be far stronger if the claims based on test specifications and their content are supported by both standardisation of judgements and empirical validation of test data. Every examination provider - even examination providers who have only limited

resources or countries that have decentralised traditions - should be able to demonstrate in one way or another through a selection of techniques both the internal quality and validity of their examination and its external validity: the validity of the claimed relationship to the CEFR.

Illustrative calibrated examples of oral and written performance as well as items for reading and listening are available for a number of languages, and others are in preparation (www.coe.int/lang).

4. Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs) for national and regional languages

Planning instruments produced within the Council of Europe have played a decisive role in the teaching of modern languages by promoting methodological innovations and new approaches to designing teaching programmes. From the 1970s onwards, experts worked out an operational model for describing abilities which specific groups of learners (tourists, business persons, migrants, etc) require for using a language for independent communication in a country in which this language is the everyday medium of communication. By thus identifying these groups' language needs they were able to pinpoint the skills and knowledge required for attaining this communication "threshold". In order to meet teaching and certification requirements, the threshold level concept was extended to cover specification of levels lying immediately below (*Waystage*) and above (*Vantage*).

The elaboration of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* marked a further development in describing specifications of language-learning targets with the six level scale of the CEFR scale (A1 to C2). The CEFR descriptors had been created without reference to any specific language, which facilitates their relevance and across-the-board applicability. In order to support textbook authors and teachers in using the CEFR, work began on drafting specifications language by language.
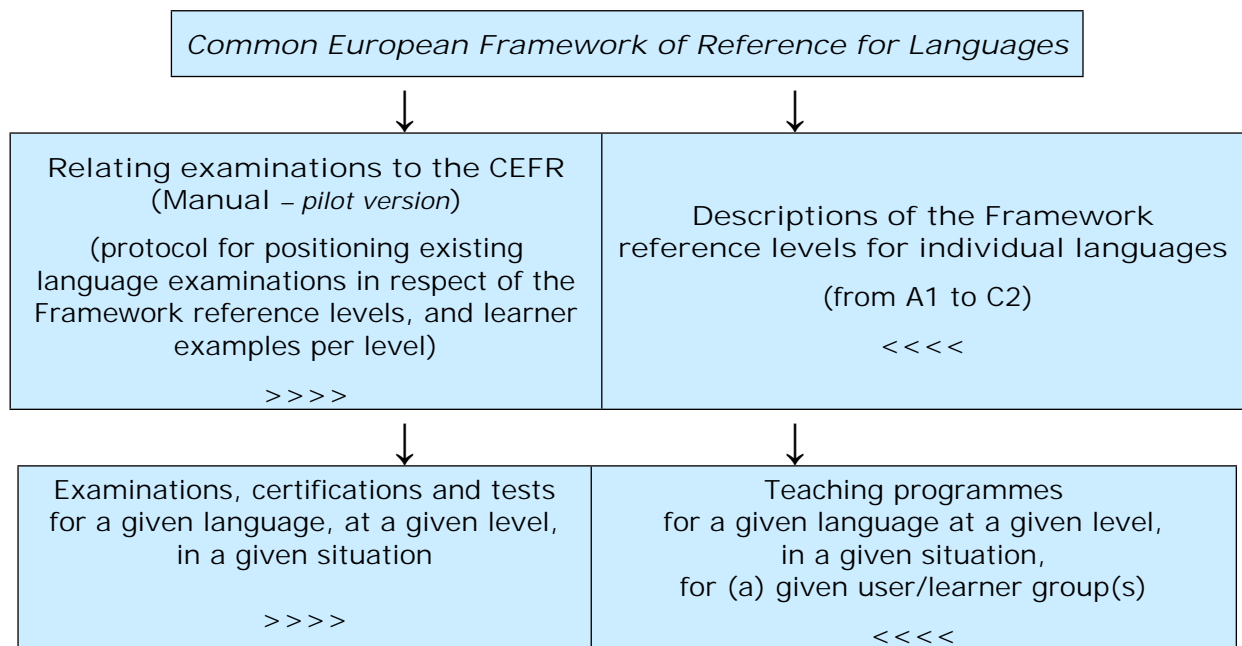
These transpositions of the CEFR into a given language are known as *Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs)* for national and regional languages. The Council of Europe is encouraging the elaboration of these instruments by national teams to complement the CEFR.

It is important that the description of each level for each language emanates from the same reference document: the CEFR. These language specific descriptions, together with the CEFR, the *Manual* (pilot version) for relating language examinations to the levels of the CEFR and the reference material providing illustrative samples are part of a coherent 'toolkit' for the development of language programmes that are consistent with one another, from one language to another and are also consistent with the common tools which already exist;

Their convergence alone can give them credibility and make it worthwhile to use them. It is unrealistic to imagine that the development of these reference descriptions, which select and distribute a certain verbal material by level of competence, can be based solely on "scientific" procedures: their audience will also depend on the consensus they are able to generate among the professionals concerned, especially as the *Framework* leaves decision makers the responsibility of specifying the morpho-syntactic material.

Similarly to and following on from the threshold level, these CEFR level descriptions by language are intended to provide extra legitimacy for languages which need to demonstrate that they can be taught and that their teaching can be defined in clear technical terms. The descriptions are applicable to all European languages, whatever their socio-linguistic status, in that they facilitate a definition of the competences to be attained in transparent, comparable terms, recalling that language knowledge is accessible to all in that any competence, at any level, is identifiable and certifiable by means of these very reference instruments.

Relationship between Council of Europe reference instruments for language teaching/learning

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	
↓	↓
Relating examinations to the CEFR (Manual – *pilot version*) (protocol for positioning existing language examinations in respect of the Framework reference levels, and learner examples per level) > > > >	Descriptions of the Framework reference levels for individual languages (from A1 to C2) < < < <
↓	↓
Examinations, certifications and tests for a given language, at a given level, in a given situation > > > >	Teaching programmes for a given language at a given level, in a given situation, for (a) given user/learner group(s) < < < <

For further information on the concept and history of RLDs and on current developments, please consult the section on Reference Level descriptions of the website www.coe.int/lang

5. The Forum in the context of Council of Europe priorities

The priorities of the Council of Europe were established by the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe at their Third Summit (Warsaw 2005). They confirmed the core objective of preserving and promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law. All activities must contribute to this fundamental objective. The Heads of State and Government committed themselves to developing those principles and, in propagating these values, they resolved to enhance the role of the Council of Europe as an effective mechanism for pan-European cooperation in all relevant fields.

The Heads of State and Government also outlined an Action Plan laying down the principal tasks of the Council of Europe for the coming years. In a chapter on 'Building a more humane and inclusive Europe' they stated their conviction that social cohesion, as well as education and culture, are essential in enabling the effective implementation of Council of Europe core values in all our societies.

They acknowledged the role of education in promoting a democratic culture among our citizens and the need to improve the quality of education. They stated that the 'Council of Europe shall build on its work on language learning...'. The leaders also decided, *inter alia,* to pursue the objectives of fostering intercultural dialogue, the management of migration, and the protection of vulnerable groups, including Roma communities in Europe.

The Language Policy Division's medium term programme 'Language Policies for Democratic Citizenship and Social Inclusion' (2006 – 2009) provides a follow-up to the priorities established by the Heads of State and Government. Its current activities include the development of European standard setting and other instruments to promote social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, human rights and democratic citizenship through language education. The Division assists member states in the renewal of policies for these purposes and is involved in education policies for national/official and minority languages as well as foreign languages. It has recently launched a new project to develop policies and European reference standards for competence in the languages of school education, with a special focus on policies for disadvantaged and migrant children.

 Summary of main projects:

Framework of reference for European competence standards in the language of school education (language as a school subject and language across the curriculum – maths, sciences, history, etc.); special focus on the needs of pupils from socially disadvantaged or migrant backgrounds.

European curriculum framework for Romani in schools, in co-operation with the European Roma and Travellers Forum.

Linguistic integration of adult migrants: guidelines, reference tools (linked to the CEFR) and case studies to assist member states in developing their policies concerning language requirements for residence, work or citizenship.

Language Education Policy Profiles: expert assistance with developing national (or regional/city) language education policies for social inclusion; an integrated approach to policy planning for national/official languages, minority languages, and modern languages. The *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* provides a valuable basis for this process.

Language education and minorities: assistance with reviewing national education policies for minorities and advice to Council of Europe convention committees responsible for minority rights and minority or regional languages.

Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters: the development and piloting of two personal documents (for children and adolescents) for use in significant encounters with other cultures, religions, languages, traditions.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: the elaboration and piloting of guidance for relating assessment to the CEFR levels (Manual, illustrative samples of oral [DVD] and written [website] performance, listening and reading items [CD-ROM].

European Language Portfolio: policy development for the ELP and accreditation of portfolio models by the European Validation Committee on behalf of the Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe.

Further information is available at: www.coe.int/lang and www.coe.int/portfolio

The Division's policy development and European standard setting activities for the 48 states that have ratified the European Cultural Convention are complemented by implementation activities at the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) for the 33 states of the Enlarged Partial Agreement in Graz, Austria. The two units, which form the Department of Language Education and Policy, have distinct but complementary missions and working methods.

The Centre in Graz, in accordance with its Statutes, has as its mission the implementation of language policies and the promotion of innovative approaches to the learning and teaching of modern languages. The strategic objectives of the Centre are to focus on the practice of modern language teaching and the training of multipliers, with programme-related networks and research projects. It contains a documentation and information centre on language teaching. The Centre's current medium-term programme includes projects on the implementation of the European Language Portfolio and on training teachers to use the ELP.

The ECML is currently inviting proposals for projects to be included in its third medium-term programme 'Empowering Language Professionals' (2008 – 2011). There are four main thematic strands:

- o Evaluation
- o Continuity in language learning
- o Content and language education
- o Plurilingual education.

Proposals in the area of evaluation are expected to take account of the instruments developed by the Language Policy Division – the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and the *European Language Portfolio*. Proposals aimed at promoting plurilingual education should take account of the Division's *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*.

Further information is available at www.ecml.at/call

APPENDIX: *COUNCIL OF EUROPE REFERENCE TEXTS*

COUNCIL OF EUROPE – *www.coe.int*

➢ **Conventions** [www.conventions.coe.int]

- o *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, *1950* (STCE 005)
- o *European Cultural Convention, 1959* (STCE 018)
- o *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities 1995* (STCE 157)
- o *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*

➢ **Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States** [www.coe.int/T/CM]

- o Recommendation (82) 18 concerning modern languages, 1982
- o Recommendation (98) 6 concerning modern languages, 1998
- o Recommendation (2005)3 on teaching neighbouring languages in border regions

➢ **Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly** [http://assembly.coe.int]

- o Recommendation 1383 (1998) on *Linguistic Diversification*
- o Recommendation 1539 (2001) on the *European Year of Languages 2001*
- o Recommendation 1598 (2003) on *The Protection of Sign languages in the member states of the Council of Europe*
- o Recommendation 1740 (2006) on *The place of mother tongue in school education*

LANGUAGE POLICY DIVISION – www.coe.int/lang

➢ **Reference Documents and Selected Publications**

- o *From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe, 2007 (revised edition)*
- o *Plurilingual Education in Europe*
- o *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages : Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR)
  - ▪ *Guide for Users*
  - ▪ *Case studies concerning the use of the CEFR*
- o *Relating Language Examinations to the* Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment *(CEFR): Manual* (Preliminary Pilot Version)
- o European Language Portfolio www.coe.int/portfolio
  - ▪ *Guide for Developers of a European Language Portfolio*
  - ▪ *Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers*

➢ **Reports**

- o Conference on *Languages of Schooling: Towards a Framework for Europe*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, October 2006 (in preparation)
- o Forum on *Global Approaches to Plurilingual Education*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, June 2004
- o Forum on *Language, Diversity, Citizenship: Policies for Plurilingualism in Europe*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, November 2002
- o Conference on *Linguistic Diversity for Democratic Citizenship in Europe*, Innsbruck, May 1999