

**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)****26 September 2025***English only***CCJ statement on the occasion of the European day of languages 2025**

On this European Day of Languages, the Advisory Council on Youth wishes to reaffirm the need to preserve and promote language diversity in Europe, and recognise the efforts done through the Council of Europe framework to support regional or minoritised language speakers.

In 2001, the Council of Europe (CoE) declared September 26 as the European Day of Languages as a means to keep alive the spirit and goals of the European Year of Languages (EYL) 2001. However, language policy in the framework of the Council of Europe dates all the way back to 1954 with the European Cultural Convention, one of Council of Europe's first treaties and which led to the creation of the Council's own youth policy from which the co-management structure stems. This comes to highlight the strong bond between youth and language in the CoE framework.

One of the main goals of EYL 2001 was “to celebrate and enhance Europe’s wide linguistic diversity as a source of mutual enrichment to be protected and encouraged”, a diversity that needs to go beyond the confines of broadly recognised and consolidated state languages by including regional and minoritised languages. However, in the 24 years that have passed, Europe’s minoritised languages have seen further minoritisation due to state-centric frameworks and systemic diglossia. In some cases, even recognised state languages such as Luxembourgish or Belarusian have seen increased vulnerability<sup>1</sup> due to pressure from neighbouring, more globalised languages, in the former case, or due to the partisan agenda of the Lukashenka regime in the latter case. It is also necessary to mention the special situation of endangerment faced by language communities of a non-territorial nature, such as the Romani language, which don’t have a strong association to a specific territory but whose particular characteristics are equally enshrined in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as grounds for protection under the scope of the Charter.

Recalling the shared history of Council of Europe youth policy and language policy, while also building on the inclusive spirit enshrined in Recommendation 1539 (2001) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Advisory Council on Youth wishes to remind member States of the Council of Europe, of the importance of ensuring the continued linguistic and cultural diversity of our continent, both of official state languages and beyond. Therefore, the Advisory Council calls on all member States of the Council of Europe, and signatories to the European Cultural Convention<sup>2</sup>, to leave behind outdated nineteenth century notions about the relationship between national identity and the state, by ratifying and duly implementing the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as a means to recognise and preserve language diversity in our continent. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary General's offer to provide support to member States in their ratification of the charter and in their implementation of recommendations by the

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO. (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026>

<sup>2</sup> In line with the Committee of Ministers’ Deputies [decisions taken in their 1435<sup>th</sup> meeting](#)

Committee of Ministers and the Committee of Experts<sup>3</sup>, and therefore we encourage member States to accept said offer.

Standing up for the rights of the youth in Europe also means standing up for their right to diversity, and in a continent that is home to over 275 autochthonous languages<sup>4</sup>, few things represent human diversity as much as language pluralism. As poet and Nobel laureate Frederi Mistral wrote about his mother language, Occitan: “We will keep it whether you like it or not”.

*The statements of the Advisory Council are published for the purpose of informing the public about the activities of the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe youth sector. The statements reflect the opinions and positions of the Advisory Council and its members. The views expressed therein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe.*

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<sup>3</sup> Berset, A. (2025, April 2). *Application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (2023-2024). Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the Parliamentary Assembly.* Council of Europe. [https://pace.coe.int/en/files/34206/html#\\_TOC\\_d36e607](https://pace.coe.int/en/files/34206/html#_TOC_d36e607)

<sup>4</sup> Price, G. (Ed.). (2000). *Encyclopedia of the languages of Europe.* Blackwell.