

## Professional development

[Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec \(2022\)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture](#)

### Measures

b. xviii. *Facilitate the professional development of teachers and other educational staff in relation to plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture.*

c. i – c ix. call for strong professional development for teachers to support plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture. They emphasise integrating key concepts into teacher education curricula; challenging preconceptions about language and culture; developing teachers' own plurilingual and intercultural competences; exploring practical classroom approaches; managing linguistic and cultural diversity; fostering democratic, autonomous, and critical learning environments; assessing plurilingual and intercultural learning; encouraging teacher mobility; and building teachers' capacity for action research to inform policy and practice (summary).

### What is it about?

Professional development primarily concerns providing teachers with time and opportunities to reflect on their practice and to develop the awareness, competences, and approaches needed to implement plurilingual and intercultural education effectively. As the Recommendation states, institutions responsible for initial and in-service teacher education should focus on pedagogies that support inclusive plurilingual and intercultural learning across the whole curriculum. Opportunities should also be provided for school principals, directors, managers and other staff to engage in collaborative reflection within the institution.

## Why is this important and what can be done?

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Implementing plurilingual and intercultural education implies a major shift in approach to education, involving staff, especially teachers, in every institution. All teachers need to acquire the key competences required for plurilingual and intercultural education, and all staff need to understand the role played by their own plurilingualism and attitudes. Establishing a culture of collaborative reflection within the institution on language and cultural diversity, using plurilingual and intercultural learning activities in classrooms and fostering autonomy and democracy across the whole school are important steps forward.

The professional development of teachers and school staff takes place in a variety of ways: following initial teacher education or staff training and further in-service training opportunities, professional experience in schools, instances of teacher mobility and action research<sup>1</sup>, undertaken individually or with colleagues, all aid this essential professional development.

For further details please see Explanatory Memorandum paragraph 5.c, p. 34-36.

## Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

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Resource 1: [From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe](#)

This Council of Europe publication was designed to *"offer an analytical tool to serve as a reference for formulating or reorganising language teaching in Council of Europe member states ... and, through it, an examination of European language policies."*

Chapter 5 *'Creating a Culture of Plurilingualism'* seeks to clarify in practical terms the feasibility of promoting plurilingual education in European societies and education systems. Within the chapter, section 5.4, *'Preparing education systems for plurilingualism'* (pages 77-79), discusses policy and practice related to raising language teachers' awareness and enhancing their training with plurilingualism in mind. Within the section there is a pointer to one of the reference studies related to the Guide: *'Language teacher education policy - promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural communication'*. Parts 4,5 and 6 of this reference study provide useful guidance on reshaping language teacher education policy with plurilingual and intercultural communication in mind. The above sections of resource 1 and the reference study

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<sup>1</sup> A process in which teachers investigate their own practices in order to improve educational outcomes both for themselves and for their students.

can be used to aid policy makers in scoping and planning the adaptation of language teacher education and other forms of professional development to the requirements of PIE.

Resource 2: [Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education](#)

The Guide serves as a resource for shaping plurilingual and intercultural language education policies and for embedding such approaches across curricula. It presents key issues and principles of curriculum design from a plurilingual and intercultural perspective and explains how to identify, integrate, and sequence relevant content and goals throughout the different stages of education.

Chapter 2 includes a short subsection (pages 72-75) on the implications for teacher training, including 2.11.1 on '*The importance of teacher training*', which highlights areas of possible resistance among teachers to necessary changes in approach, and 2.11.2 on '*Possible training strategies*'. Within this there is reference to Appendix III of the *Guide*: "*Outline for specification of teachers' competences with a view to plurilingual and intercultural education*" (pages 131-133). These elements can be useful resources for policy makers and teacher education curriculum designers during the review of teacher education curricula.

Resource 3: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#)

This resource is for use by "*education systems to equip young people with all of the competences that are needed to participate effectively in a culture of democracy, and to live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies*". It contains lists and descriptors of competences, and guidance on their inclusion in curricula and in teaching and learning

Specific pages / extracts:

[Volume 1](#), chapter 6 describes a model of the competences required in democratic cultures and for intercultural dialogue

[Volume 2](#), chapter 1 (especially on pages 2, 4, 5, 10-12, 14, 17-19) outlines the key descriptors that can be used for reference during the planning of curricula

[Volume 3](#), especially chapter 2, discusses the relationship between competences for democratic culture and pedagogy. This includes 'modelling democratic attitudes and behaviours' in the classroom (pages 29-35).

This comprehensive framework is essential for policy makers who are reviewing and planning school curricula which incorporate a focus on the development of the competences described.

Relations with other resources within the topic area: [Manual of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture Introductory Course](#); various other '[guidance documents](#)'; '[Competences for democratic culture and the importance of language](#)'.

## Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

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### Resource 1: [Developing teacher competences for pluralistic approaches](#)

This ECML resource provides a reference framework of teacher competences for pluralistic approaches, i.e. the approaches described and promoted in the [FREPA](#), which overlap with certain approaches relevant to PIE. The material includes [a proposed framework](#) of the teacher competences in question and [numerous practical materials for teacher education](#), including worksheets for teacher educators and related worksheets for course participants.

### Resource 2: [Building blocks for planning language-sensitive teacher education](#)

This ECML resource helps teacher educators working with teachers of different languages and subjects to embed language-sensitive education, which is a prerequisite for plurilingual and intercultural education, in teacher education curricula and pedagogic practice. The resources comprise six 'building blocks' that can be used to raise the awareness and enhance the competences of teacher education decision makers and teacher educators, and to enhance teacher education curricula and courses. For example, [Building block 1](#) provides an overview of 'language-sensitive education' with tasks and opportunities for reflection. [Building block 6](#) offers descriptors of competences across 7 dimensions related to language-sensitive education needed by teachers of all languages and other subjects, many of them essential for teachers implementing plurilingual and intercultural education.

These competences overlap with those outlined in the framework provided by the *Developing teacher competences for pluralistic approaches* project (Resource 1 above). The Building blocks can assist teacher educators in ensuring that there is a greater focus on language in their courses, and that steps are taken to further develop relevant teacher competences.

### Resource 3: [Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education - A training kit](#)

This ECML resource provides "a kit for language teacher educators to enable them to introduce plurilingualism and pluriculturalism into their classroom practice". The kit lays out a rationale for including a focus on plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in teacher education courses and ideas about how to do so. In particular, chapters 3 and 4 provide guidance for teacher educators on how to approach these topics, and the following long section (pages 19-60) offers examples of four relevant professional learning 'itineraries', each with a different focus and each containing examples of possible teacher training activities, complete with worksheets.

Resource 4: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume](#)

The CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR-CV) updates and extends the 2001 CEFR, which provided a common basis for developing language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, and textbooks, supporting the alignment of curriculum, teaching, and assessment. It includes the complete set of updated and extended CEFR descriptors, replacing those from 2001. As well as being updated, these now also cover areas such as mediation, online interaction, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, and sign language competences. The CEFR-CV offers a vision of language learning and use in which learners are viewed as active, responsible participants in society, using language to achieve real-life goals and engage meaningfully with others.

Chapter 2 (25 pp.) “Key Aspects of the CEFR” explaining the CEFR educational vision, which gives the basis for using relevant CEFR descriptors effectively for plurilingual and intercultural education in classroom practice and assessment.