

Policy Toolbox

Towards Plurilingual and Intercultural Education

Language Policy Programme, Education Department

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Action-oriented approach

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

Measures

- b. iii. ensure that curriculum guidelines and curriculums provide pupils and students with the opportunity to develop [...] the competences needed to engage in authentic and progressively complex oral and written communication, [...].**
- b. xi. create conditions that are favourable to the organisation of complex learning environments [...].**
- b. xiii. encourage pedagogical approaches that empower learners by developing their autonomy and their critical thinking skills, make space for the learner's voice, create a democratic classroom and school culture and prepare learners for lifelong learning.**
- c. vi. helping teachers to develop the pedagogical competences needed to support a democratic classroom culture that fosters autonomous learning and critical thinking and makes space for the inclusion of the learner's voice.**

What is it about?

The action-oriented approach focuses on what learners *can do* in the language(s) concerned, on acting in the language in the pursuit of a personally meaningful goal, rather than learning about the language with decontextualized exercises. It promotes syllabuses based on tasks, ideally a succession of collaborative tasks contextualised with a scenario, rather than linear syllabuses based on grammatical progression. The concrete situated nature of the collaborative learning activities develops learner agency and responsibility and facilitates the inclusion of all learners. The action-oriented approach has been pioneered by the CEFR and CEFR Companion Volume.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Education prepares the individual to be an active participant in democratic society by promoting their personal development, while combining social responsibility with growing self-awareness, self-confidence, independence of thought, and critical cultural and language awareness. Rec. 2022 EM - 4.i. (p.25). An action-oriented approach, in which students learn to *do things* in the language, collaborate and contribute to the conceptualization and preparation of a concrete artefact or performance directly helps the development of these competences.

See also Toolbox Entries on [Learner autonomy, agency, and critical thinking](#) and [Complex learning environments](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - 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. 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](#) explains the CEFR vision of language education, focusing on key concepts; [Section 2.1](#) (pp.29-30) discusses implementing the action-oriented approach.

Resource 2: [The action-oriented approach](#) (video)

This ECML resource is an 8-minute video explaining the concept of action-orientation. It begins with a brief introduction of the CEFR and then, in the main part of the video (7 minutes) three secondary school teachers (from Canada, the Netherlands and Germany) explain what the action-oriented approach means for them and the way they implement it in their classes.

This video gives policymakers an overview of ways in which the action-oriented approach can be implemented in different ways in real world-oriented tasks at different levels in different contexts. This may be of assistance when developing guidelines that highlight the importance of making space in the curriculum and/or teacher education for the development of learner agency, autonomy and responsibility.

Resource 3: [CEFR Companion volume implementation toolbox](#)

This ECML resource and specifically [the action-oriented approach and the learner as a social agent](#) offers a short (3-minute) and a more in depth (13-min) video explainers on the action-oriented approach

It focuses on explaining the action-oriented approach and providing exemplar tasks for vocational and tertiary education. This video gives a very good, quick overview of what the action-oriented approach entails.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - Companion volume](#)

See above.

[Chapter 2](#) explains the CEFR vision of language education, focusing on key concepts. This is particularly useful for giving (future) teachers a good understanding of the CEFR in general and the action-oriented approach in particular. While [Section 2.1](#) (pp.29-30) is explicitly concerned with implementing the action-oriented approach, the whole chapter is relevant to it.

Resource 2: [CEFR website – Action-oriented approach page](#)

This ECML resource is extremely useful for teacher educators. It provides info-sheets, videos, workshop materials and articles on mediation, supplemented by a corresponding page on ideas for implementation of the action-oriented approach.

The Action-oriented approach page includes the 8-minute video [The action-oriented approach](#), which explains the concept of action-orientation (See description of Resource 2 in Section 2a above).

Resource 3: [A Guide to Action-oriented, Plurilingual and Intercultural Education](#)

This resource outlines the educational vision of the CEFR Companion Volume, explaining crucial aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, including an eight-page [Section 4.2](#) on the action-oriented approach. The Guide also summarises work of the Council of Europe in language learning, summarises theoretical inputs to the action-oriented approach ([Section 3](#)), and gives a good overview of Council of Europe resources (with links) on different aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education as well as providing orientation for teacher educators and curriculum developers on how to implement it.

Additional languages in the curriculum

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

Measures

b. iii. Ensure that curriculum guidelines and curriculums provide pupils and students with the opportunity to develop, ideally in at least two languages in addition to the language/s of schooling, the competences needed to engage in authentic and progressively complex oral and written communication, and that every effort is made to provide certification of those competences

b. v. Reflect on traditional linguistic hierarchies and seek to diversify the range of languages offered.

What is it about?

“Additional language” refers to any language a person learns after their home language(s) (Rec. Definition 3h). These languages are often called “foreign” or “regional” languages, but the expression “additional languages” can be confusing in diverse societies. It is important that learners from an early age acquire skills in at least two languages in addition to the language(s) of schooling – and their home language if these are not the same. Education systems should also offer teaching in more than just English, to support real plurilingual development.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Education systems should promote linguistic and cultural diversity and the learning of several languages as part of an integrated linguistic repertoire and as a foundation for democratic culture in Europe. They should ensure that learners’ existing competences are recognised and built upon at each stage of education. All learners, including those in vocational pathways, should have access to more than one additional language. Authorities should critically review the range of languages on offer, taking account of national priorities, local contexts and neighbouring languages. They should provide parents and learners with guidance on language choices, including on assumptions about usefulness or ease. Curricula should be based on the CEFR. (Rec. 2022, b iv & v).

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

Resource 1: [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: Key aspects of the CEFR for teaching and learning

Resource 2: [From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education. A guide to educational policy making in Europe](#)

The Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe supports Member States in creating inclusive language policies that promote linguistic diversity, plurilingualism, social cohesion, and equal access to language learning. It offers practical guidance for well-designed language education, based on clear principles and democratic values, with a focus on effective implementation through broad social acceptance.

See especially chapters 5 ‘Creating a culture of plurilingualism’ and 6 ‘Organising plurilingual education’

- **Chapter 5** describes how to influence social representations of languages and plurilingualism and proposes practical ways to promote plurilingualism within education systems.
- **Chapter 6** proposes approaches for designing diversified learning pathways and offers practical strategies for implementing plurilingual education.

Resource 3: [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.

See especially chapter 3 on ‘Organising a curriculum for plurilingual and intercultural education’. The chapter proposes structured approaches for implementing plurilingual and intercultural education. It also offers practical suggestions for using plurilingual scenarios to support diverse learning pathways.

Resource 4: [Motivation Manifesto](#)

The ECML Motivation Manifesto highlights why the teaching and learning of multiple languages is important and how motivation plays such a significant role in the learning process. It also identifies the key actors and factors that influence motivation in the context of language learning.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators

Resource 1: [From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education. A guide to educational policy making in Europe](#), especially chapter 6 on ‘organizing plurilingual education’ (6.5/6.7)

See above

6.5 contains discussions of in-class language learning and self-directed learning (pages 89-92), which offer useful food for reflection for teacher educators. 6.7 on diversifying language teaching methods (pages 100-101) also offer opportunities for broadening teacher educators’ and course participants’ view of how best to adapt methods to learners’ needs.

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

See above

See especially **appendices III** (*Outline for specification of teachers’ competences with a view to plurilingual and intercultural education*), **IV** (*Instruments and resources for developing and implementing curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education*), **V** (*Learning methods and activities*) and **VI** (*Taking into account the linguistic and cultural repertoire of allophone pupils*) – **pages 131-164**). The tables and other material in these appendices provide useful stimuli for planning the content and methodology of teacher education courses.

Resource 3: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume](#)

See above

See especially Chapter 2 (page 25 ff.) on the key aspects of the CEFR, which presents the CEFR educational vision, and is particularly relevant for Teacher Education.

Assessment

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

Measures:

b. xvi. Supporting the creation and the use of assessment instruments aligned with the goals of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture, developing learners' autonomy.

c. vii. Helping teachers to develop assessment competences that take account of plurilingual and intercultural learning.

What is it about?

“Assessment” is the process of purposefully and systematically gathering and interpreting information about competences gained in relation to learning objectives in order to monitor progress, diagnose difficulties, measure achievement and offer opportunities to reflect on learning. In both policy and practice, different forms of assessment are fundamental to evaluate learners' progress in achieving plurilingual and intercultural competences and to encourage their critical reflection, agency and autonomy (CM/Rec 2022)1, Principles iv – vi). Assessment literacy is an important aspect of teacher education (CM/Rec 2022)1, measures c vii).

Why is this important and what can be done?

Defining clear objectives for teaching languages is fundamental to ensure shared criteria, reliable measures of achievement, and maintaining consistent assessment procedures that take account of learners' plurilingual repertoires. This clarity of objectives should lead to the establishment of milestones for language learning, including coherent transitions through the successive learning stage. Appropriately designed methods of assessment of learning (summative) and for learning (formative), including self-assessment and peer-assessment, make it possible to check whether these objectives have been achieved. Assessment should be in line with pedagogical approaches that empower learners by making space for their voices, leading to a more democratic classroom (Rec. 2022, b xvi).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#) (CEFR)

The CEFR provides a common basis for designing syllabuses, curricula, exams, and teaching materials, helping educators and institutions reflect on and align their practices. It outlines what language learners need to do and to know in order to communicate effectively, introduces key concepts like action-oriented tasks and plurilingual competence, and offers validated descriptors and proficiency levels to support teaching, learning, and lifelong assessment.

See especially chapter 3 that introduces the CEFR Levels, and Sections 9.1 and 9.2 on assessment.

Resource 2: [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. 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.

See chapter 2, and specifically section 2.7 on needs profiles and proficiency profiles on plurilingual and pluricultural competences.

Resource 3: [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.

Section 2.10 introduces how assessment works within curricula that value learners' plurilingual repertoires and aim to connect different language subjects at school. It explains why assessment plays a key role at all levels—from classroom feedback to national standards—and how it should align with curriculum goals to support effective teaching and innovation. The section also offers practical ideas for assessing learners' progress and for evaluating language curricula from a plurilingual and intercultural perspective.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume](#)

See above

See especially chapters 3, 4 and 5 which provide descriptors that can inspire both assessment tasks (Chapter 3 and 4) and success criteria to evaluate the outcomes (Chapter 5).

See also Appendices 2, 3 and 4 (Assessment grids).

Resource 2: [European Language Portfolio](#)

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) enables learners to document their language skills, learning experiences, and cultural knowledge. It supports learner autonomy, plurilingualism, and intercultural competence. The ELP includes a Language Passport (a summary of language proficiency), a Language Biography (tools for reflection, goal-setting, and self-assessment), and a Dossier that encourages learners to document their achievements both in and outside formal education.

See especially the Language Biography, which has the following aims:

- To make learners more aware of the languages and competences that make up their plurilingual repertoire.
- To provide a detailed inventory for goal-setting and self-assessment checklists that can help teachers to identify, value and use all the languages available in the learning environment, as well as to encourage them to adopt approaches which foster learner agency.

Further resources

[Aligning Language Education with the CEFR: A Handbook](#)

This focuses on the alignment of examinations to the CEFR by encouraging increased transparency in linking goals and assessment. It can serve as an additional resource for both policy/decision makers and teacher educators.

[Assessment in Plurilingual and Intercultural Education](#)

This resource is a brief overview of the various aims of assessment in plurilingual and intercultural education, and of selected competences having to do with core aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education. A satellite study to the *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education*. It can serve as additional resource for both policy/decision makers and teacher educators.

[Relating language examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment](#) (CEFR) Highlights from the Manual)

This ECML resource offers an introduction to linking examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in a valid way. The highlights are targeted at producers of language examinations, who are less familiar with psychometric procedures and who are not (yet) assessment experts.

Attitudes and beliefs about plurilingual and intercultural education

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

Measure

c. ii. (on teacher education): **Challenging attitudes, beliefs and preconceptions about language, language learning, plurilingualism, culture and intercultural learning.**

What is it about?

Plurilingual and intercultural education depends not only on teachers' skills but also on their attitudes and beliefs about linguistic and cultural diversity. Teachers need support to recognise the educational value of diversity, understand how it shapes classroom learning, and reflect on how their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence their practice. Without this awareness, learning activities risk remaining superficial, and the full potential of plurilingual and intercultural education cannot be realised.

Why is this important, and what can be done?

Understanding the historical, social, and democratic value of linguistic and cultural diversity helps teachers, learners, and citizens rethink assumptions about language hierarchies, tolerance, international understanding, and communication practices.

Changes in attitudes can be supported through:

- clear political guidance and leadership,
- teacher education that includes direct experience with linguistic and cultural diversity,
- professional reflection within schools, and
- positive examples and visible learning outcomes.

Such measures help teachers develop not only competence but also the openness, awareness and personal conviction needed to make plurilingual and intercultural education meaningful and sustainable.

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

Resource 1: [From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education. A guide to educational policy making in Europe](#)

The *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* supports Member States in creating inclusive language policies that promote linguistic diversity, plurilingualism, social cohesion, and equal access to language learning. It offers practical guidance for well-designed language education, which is based on clear principles and democratic values, with a focus on effective implementation through broad social acceptance.

See especially the following sections:

1.3 *linguistic ideologies*, on the dangers of stereotypes, especially concerning the relative importance of different languages.

5.3 *Disseminating plurilingualism, creating social consensus* – here the case is made for formal actions and campaigns to create a widespread positive attitude to plurilingualism.

5.4 *Preparing education systems for plurilingualism* – a practical approach to developing readiness: “*Disseminating a culture of plurilingualism is a precondition for the success of the technical changes by which plurilingualism will be implemented in education systems.*” (page 76).

Resource 2: [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.

Based on a model of the competences required in democratic cultures and for intercultural dialogue outlined in chapter 6 of [volume 1](#), chapter 1 of [volume 2](#) lists key descriptors designed to be used by those developing curricula for school education. These also provide useful reference material for adult and teacher education. The competences are divided into four main groups: ‘values’, ‘attitudes’, ‘skills’ and ‘knowledge’. Several of the values and attitudes are relevant to plurilingual and intercultural education. One of the groups of values includes “*Valuing cultural diversity*”, for example “*Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to help us recognise our different identities and cultural affiliations*” (p.16). A relevant group under ‘attitudes’ is “*openness to cultural otherness*”, e.g. “*Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture*” (p.17). These are followed by relevant groups of ‘skills’ such as ‘*Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills*’, and ‘knowledge’, including ‘*Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication*’.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Supporting multilingual classrooms](#)

This ECML resource developed various ‘teaching units’ listed [here](#) that can be used in teacher education and staff training. A relevant example is [Challenging preconceptions](#)

Resource 2: [Promoting plurilingualism - Majority language in multilingual settings \(MARILLE\)](#)

Section 4 (pages 31-36) focuses on ‘Teachers’ knowledge, understanding and skills for promoting plurilingualism’ and contains useful discussion of this knowledge, understanding and skills, followed by a tabular summary. Related to this, pages 65-72 contain useful lists of questions for reflection for teachers, teacher educators, and school heads.

Resource 3: [Section 3 of the ECML’s CoEduMigrant Moodle course](#)

This ECML resource explores ways of challenging language teachers’ attitudes by using a problem-based learning approach.

Resource 4: [European portfolio for pre-primary educators: the plurilingual and intercultural dimension](#) (PEPELINO)

This ECML resource is designed to be used as a practical tool by pre-school teachers during their work. It explores the knowledge, attitudes and skills related to language and culture needed by pre-primary teachers. For example, pages 36-37 of section II encourage reflection on attitudes as well as on pedagogical skills that are important when responding positively to the linguistic and cultural diversity of children.

CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), bilingual and immersion education

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

Measures

- b. viii. promote bilingual and immersion education and content and language integrated learning (CLIL)**
- b. vii encouraging teacher collaboration across subjects and languages**
- c. iv. engaging teachers in a detailed exploration of what plurilingual and intercultural approaches to education entail in terms of classroom practice**

What it is about?

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a form of bilingual and plurilingual education in which learners study curricular subjects through an additional language, different from the language of schooling. CLIL is part of a continuum of approaches ranging from immersive models where learning takes place largely through an additional language to more flexible forms of bilingual teaching.

In line with the Recommendation, these approaches combine language learning and subject learning, strengthen learners' plurilingual repertoires and foster intercultural understanding. They also require explicit attention to the language dimension of all subjects, including subject-specific discourse genres, academic practices and ways of building knowledge (see also toolbox entry "The language(s) schooling"). By integrating cognitive challenge with language development, they enable learners to engage in critical and creative thinking across disciplines.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Bilingual education (CLIL, immersion) may pursue different aims depending on the status of the languages involved (foreign, regional, minority or migration languages) and the educational context. By using more than one language as a medium of instruction, learners not only develop competences in several languages but become aware of how language shapes knowledge and develop strategies to access and express subject content in different ways. Engaging with the same subject through more than one language also enables learners to view knowledge from multiple academic and cultural perspectives, supporting deeper learning and intercultural understanding. To achieve these benefits, links between subject content and language need to be made explicit, and effective collaboration between language teachers and subject teachers is essential. Bilingual approaches require careful curricular

planning as well as sustained and systematic professional development to help teachers plan, implement and reflect on integrated language-and-content learning across the curriculum.

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

Resource 1: [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.

Chapters 1 and 2 offer robust conceptual and practical foundation for designing curricula that integrate content and additional language learning. The two chapters clarify aims, constructs, and curriculum approaches grounded in plurilingual and intercultural framework.

Chapter 3.9.2 (pp. 108–120), offers decision makers a clear framework for designing inclusive bilingual education across ISCED levels 0-3, showing how immersion, CLIL and other bilingual approaches can be combined in realistic, flexible and coherent curricula.

Resource 2: [A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning](#)

This ECML resource shows teachers and material developers ways of fostering deep learning by paying attention to the development of students' subject specific literacies as well as their conceptual understanding and automatization of subject-specific procedures, skills and strategies.

This resource extends CLIL by supporting learners in becoming effective meaning-makers through the development of subject-specific literacies across languages and cultures. It fosters deep, transferable learning and promotes responsible, globally minded citizenship. Policymakers can use this resource to *review or redesign curricula* in ways that explicitly integrate content and language objectives, ensuring inclusive, language-sensitive education. It supports system-level decisions that foster plurilingual competences, intercultural understanding, and workforce-relevant literacies.

- the [Pluriliteracies Model](#) explains the integration of deeper (content) learning and language progression.
- the section on [Implementation](#) offers strategies to align subject and language objectives.

Resource 3: [CLIL in languages other than English](#)

This ECML resource supports the development and long-term sustainability of CLIL in languages other than English (CLIL-LOTE), offering a coherent set of recommendations and examples to strengthen plurilingual and democratic competences across educational levels.

- See in particular the section on [Curriculum](#)

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [CLIL in languages other than English](#)

See above

Especially the sections on [Teacher Education](#) and on [Materials for the CLIL LOTE class](#).

Resource 2: [The European Framework for CLIL teacher education](#)

A conceptual framework crafted to guide the design of professional development programmes for CLIL educators. It offers overarching principles—not prescriptive mandates—emphasizing dual-focused teaching of both subject content and language.

Resource 3: [Language skills for successful subject learning - CEFR linked descriptors for mathematics and history/civics](#)

This ECML resource helps teacher educators to plan tasks and materials on how to integrate language and content objectives by raising awareness of the role of academic language in subject learning. It offers a structured framework (Planning–Teaching–Learning) and practical tools to support inclusive, language-sensitive instruction in multilingual classrooms. This resource provides a clear framework for embedding language-sensitive teaching across subjects, supporting equity and quality in education. Its alignment with European frameworks enhances coherence across systems.

Resource 4: [Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education](#)

See above

Appendix 5 is valuable for **CLIL and immersion teacher education**, as it translates policy principles into pedagogical implications that directly support the integration of content and language learning. It highlights the competences CLIL teachers need—such as scaffolding academic language, designing cognitively challenging tasks through an additional language, and fostering collaboration between subject and language teachers—while also stressing the importance of reflective practice.

Further resources

[ECML thematic area on CLIL](#)

The website offers various tools and materials to teacher educators who want to use CLIL as a way to enhance a language sensitive approach to subject teaching in additional language(s). Another important aspect is the wealth of materials for CLIL in languages other than English. Through the areas of the website, it is possible to apply for an ECML Training and Consultancy session with experts in the field.

Complex learning environments

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

Measures

5.b. xi. create conditions that are favourable to the organisation of complex learning environments, including those that fully integrate the use of digital media.

5b xiii-xiv: encourage pedagogical approaches that empower learners by developing their autonomy and their critical thinking skills, [... as well as] learners' language and cultural awareness and equip them to engage in intercultural dialogue.

5b xiv: encourage pedagogical approaches that develop 5b xvii. encourage learning mobility, whether physical or virtual, on the part of teachers and learners.

What is it about?

Complex learning environments (CLE) refer to vibrant spaces where many languages and cultures thrive. CLEs involve dynamic real-world interactions and cater to diversity by being adaptable. Students are not forced to fit the room or activity; the room or activity changes (physically, socially, and digitally) to fit the student. Digital tools empower learners to step outside the physical classroom walls, giving them access to real-world resources and opportunities to experience different language encounters not available locally. Learning languages is about connecting with different cultures in a meaningful way. By integrating different technologies, including AI, different learning spaces and multimodal, adaptable learning activities, CLEs address the reality of today's classrooms, i.e. their linguistic and cultural heterogeneity and the resulting need for flexible teaching methods. In this way, CLEs reflect and best prepare learners for the real plurilingual, complex world outside the classroom.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Plurilingual and intercultural learning depends on ... [complex] "learning environments where languages flourish" ... [which] ... provide access to learning opportunities in a wide range of languages (See Explanatory Memorandum p. 32). Thus, there is a need to:

- design curricula and learning environments that prioritize dynamic, real-life interactions in multiple languages, and move beyond traditional methods and learning spaces;
- integrate digital tools into teaching practices that create virtual connections, allowing students access to authentic tasks and interaction with global resources and communities;
- ensure that digital tools and AI encourage critical reflection and are used in ethically and socially responsible ways;
- create authentic action-oriented activities for increasingly diverse learner groups to engage with diverse linguistic and cultural contexts, essential for developing the plurilingual and pluricultural competencies needed for democratic societies.

See also Toolbox Entries on the [Action-oriented approach](#), [Learner autonomy, agency, and critical thinking](#) and on [Democratic classrooms](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Rethinking language education after the experience of Covid](#)

Especially: Executive summary, Parts 3 & 4, and [Policy Guidelines](#)

This ECML survey and publications reflect the impact of the pandemic on language education with observations drawn from the rapid shift to digital resources that are extremely relevant to complex learning systems. Key findings stress the need for enhanced digital literacy, learner autonomy, adaptable assessment methods, and hybrid learning models to ensure equitable and effective future language education systems. Policy-makers can use this ECML report and the [policy guidelines](#) (in particular sections E, F, L, and M) as a strategic roadmap to modernize language education, specifically leveraging the lessons learned during the pandemic about the necessity of digital integration. By adopting the report's recommendations on hybrid and remote learning models, they can justify funding for digital infrastructure and teacher training, ensuring that "complex learning environments" become a permanent, resilient feature of schools rather than just an emergency measure.

Resource 2: [E-lang citizen - Digital citizenship through language education](#)

"E-lang citizen" connects digital citizenship with language learning. It provides a **pedagogical framework** and **resources for teachers to help students** use digital tools creatively and critically. The goal is to develop language skills while fostering responsible, active online participation and cross-cultural interaction in a real-world digital context. Policy-makers can draw on the "E-lang citizen" resource to ensure that the integration of digital tools within complex language learning environments promotes responsible digital citizenship. [The profile of the "digital citizen" as a user of languages and digital tools](#) offers guidance for developing curricula that not only use digital media but also educate learners on critical engagement, online safety, and ethical interaction, thereby adding a vital dimension of societal readiness to digital language learning. The [teaching and didactic framework document](#) defines a socio-interactional approach that merits consideration when integrating CLEs into language teaching

Please note: this resource is also useful for teacher educators.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Enriching 21st century language education: The CEFR Companion volume in practice, 2022 \(Case studies in implementation\)](#)

This publication is highly relevant for **teacher educators and policy advisers** because it serves as a practical bridge between the theoretical updates in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Companion volume (2020) and real-world implementation.

The resource provides concrete examples and case studies (from primary to adult education) that educators can use to update training modules. This helps future teachers understand how to move beyond traditional "four skills" teaching to concepts like mediation and plurilingualism. It offers educators tangible scenarios to train teachers on how to facilitate communication and meaning-making in diverse classrooms and complex learning scenarios. It also offers pedagogical strategies for valuing and utilizing students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, a crucial skill for modern teachers that needs to be embedded in initial teacher training.

Sections that are particularly relevant for teacher educators and policy advisers when reflecting CLEs are **section 1.4.2 on the action-oriented approach, 1.4.4 on plurilingualism, and 1.4.5 on online, digital**

interaction and transaction. Specific samples of practice relevant to online learning and CLEs are presented in **chapters 9 and 11**. In essence, this resource translates the "what" and "why" of the CEFR Companion Volume into the "how," enabling both educators and policymakers to modernize language education systems effectively.

Please note: this resource is also useful for policy makers.

Resource 2: [CEFR Website – key concepts - Online interaction](#)

Resources available on this website outline the distinct characteristics of the types of agency language users need to effectively interact in digital environments. Digital spaces, now used naturally in personal and professional communication and networking, are key elements when creating and managing CLEs. and digital tools and resources used in them have become recognized as valuable in language learning.

In addition to access to workshop materials and relevant publications, the site offers videos explaining and exemplifying, for example, how the **CEFR-Companion Volume informs the creation of (digitally-mediated) collaborative learning environments** as well as on how **learners as social agent benefit from the affordances of digital spaces**. There is also a detailed section on concrete [ideas for implementation](#).

A similar resource is available on the principles and practical implementation of [action-oriented learning](#) as described in the toolbox entry on the action-oriented approach.

Curriculum

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

Measures

b ii. - b xvi; c i., c vii. (summary)

The measures call on authorities to ensure that the language dimension of all subjects is made explicit in curriculum guidelines and curricula and that learners are given opportunities to develop the competences needed for authentic, increasingly complex communication in at least two additional languages, with appropriate certification. They also highlight the need to create favourable conditions for complex learning environments, including those that integrate digital media, and to support the development of teaching and learning resources that foster plurilingual repertoires and intercultural awareness. Pedagogical approaches should empower learners by fostering autonomy, critical thinking, learner voice, and a democratic classroom and school culture, and promote language and cultural awareness to prepare learners for intercultural dialogue.

Assessment practices must also be strengthened through instruments aligned with the aims of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture.

At the curricular level, systems should assign a central role to the concepts and principles of plurilingual and intercultural education, including the language dimension of all subjects, and in teacher education they should help teachers develop assessment competences that recognise and value plurilingual and intercultural learning.

What is it about?

A curriculum is a coherent set of plans and practices with regard to educational vision, goals, content, learning activities, learning environment, assessment, grouping, learning time, role of the teacher, and learning resources with reference to a learning period. All elements of a curriculum are interrelated to operationalise an educational vision. A curriculum can be considered in terms of plans, implementation, experiences and outcomes. It is a multi-layered system involving various levels from international guidelines and national policy through school and classroom to the individual learner, with all levels influencing each other. A curriculum must meet learners' needs (relevance); be logically structured into a coherent whole (consistency); be usable in the situation for which it is intended (usability); and lead to the desired outcomes for learners (effectiveness).

Why is this important and what can be done?

A curriculum provides a framework to design, structure, implement, and evaluate educational programmes. Teachers are central to this process, interpreting, selecting, and shaping content in response to student needs and contexts. To achieve quality education, it is essential to ensure alignment between the core components of the curriculum: goals, teaching and learning activities, and ways to verify whether students have successfully achieved the intended learning outcomes. As far as plurilingual and intercultural competences are concerned, it is essential that they be included in the vision and goals of national and school curricula. This applies to all subjects, not only to language curricula.

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training. The Language Dimension in All Subjects](#)

This ECML resource develops responses to the current challenges of education systems highlighting the importance of language not just as a separate subject in school, but in all subjects across the curriculum.

It serves as a practical guide for curriculum development and teacher training, providing measures and guidance to make language requirements explicit in curricula, materials, and teaching practices.

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

This ECML resource 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.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [CEFR-QualiMatrix. A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use](#)

This ECML resource supports language education professionals in engaging in curriculum renewal supported by the action-oriented approach fostered by the CEFR which integrates planning, teaching and assessment as a means to promote quality in language education.

CEFR vision of teaching and learning. It includes an [interactive matrix for self-evaluation](#), a [database of promising practices](#) and a collection of [resources for planning, teaching and assessment](#).

Resource 2: [A Guide to Action-oriented, Plurilingual and Intercultural Education](#)

This ECML resource outlines the educational vision of the CEFR Companion Volume, explaining crucial aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, It summarises work of the Council of Europe in language learning, and gives a good overview of Council of Europe resources (with links) on different aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education as well as providing orientation for teacher educators and curriculum developers on how to implement it.

Chapter 5, in particular, discusses how to use the CEFR Companion Volume in curriculum design for action-oriented, plurilingual and intercultural language education.

Further resources

[Curricula and Evaluation - Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education](#)

Overview of a number of tools to support the creation of curricula and the introduction of evaluations.

Democratic classrooms

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

Measures

b. xiii. encourage pedagogical approaches that empower learners by developing their autonomy and their critical thinking skills, make space for the learner's voice, create a democratic classroom and school culture and prepare learners for lifelong learning.

c. vi. helping teachers to develop the pedagogical competences needed to support a democratic classroom culture that fosters autonomous learning and critical thinking and makes space for the inclusion of the learner's voice.

What is it about?

The Recommendation CM/Rec (2022)1 sees the democratic classroom as a key facilitator of plurilingual and intercultural education and a learning environment which encourages learner autonomy, fosters critical thinking and values the learner's voice.

A democratic classroom can be characterised by:

- **equal opportunities**: all learners are encouraged to participate actively and have equivalent access to resources and support;
- **respect for diversity**: different languages, cultures, and perspectives are acknowledged and valued by both teachers and learners in the classroom;
- **shared governance**: learners participate in negotiating and making decisions including about learning activities and classroom rules;
- **learner agency**: learners can reflect critically on their own learning and make meaningful and informed choices about their own priorities and ways of learning, competences essential for effective (life-long) learning;
- **collaborative learning**: learning activities encourage powerful, autonomous group learning opportunities, which involve critical reflection, negotiation, peer evaluation and mutual support.

Developing a democratic culture in classrooms needs to be part of – and will be enhanced by – a democratic culture in the whole school. Teachers who work in an environment where there is collaborative reflection on the attitudes, values and skills intrinsic to democratic culture, where different opinions are listened to and there are positive views of diversity are more likely to develop the attitudes and skills necessary to establish such a culture in their classrooms.

See also Toolbox Entry on [Complex learning environments](#).

Why is this important and what can be done?

For many teachers, moving towards establishing and maintaining a truly democratic classroom culture in which learners are encouraged to contribute their thoughts and feelings and to engage in critical thinking and interaction poses new challenges because as learners they may well not have experienced such classrooms. As stated in both the Measures cited above, it is very important that the pedagogical competences needed are addressed in the initial training and professional development of all teachers and other educational staff.

Teacher educators and supervisors should strive to ensure that teachers adopt attitudes and develop the pedagogical competences needed to ensure that, in their classrooms:

- learners are free and feel safe to express their own thoughts, feelings, and viewpoints
- learning often involves critical thinking and reflective dialogue
- learner autonomy and empowerment are nurtured
- strategic competence in effective collaborative learning is developed
- differences among learners are seen as useful rather than as obstacles
- relationships between teachers and among learners are trusting and respectful
- learners are encouraged to reflect on and develop an openness to other languages and cultures and the relationships between different languages and cultures.

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

Resource 1: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#) (RFCDC).

The Framework is a model of the competences that need to be acquired by learners if they are to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse democratic societies.

In addition to a model of the competences required in democratic cultures and for intercultural dialogue (**provided in volume 1**) and detailed descriptors of the specific values, attitudes, skills and knowledge described in the model (**volume 2**), there is guidance in volume 3 on appropriate methods and approaches and on teacher education (see below). The RFCDC is thus essential for policy makers who are reviewing and planning school curricula with the aim of incorporating a focus on the development of the competences described and who are seeking to foster whole-school approaches to democratic culture.

It is critically important that decision makers ensure access for all educational staff, especially teachers, to opportunities in their initial and in-service education to explore and further develop their own competences for democratic culture, including the very values, attitudes, skills and knowledge to be mirrored in their work with learners.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture \(RFCDC\)](#)

See above, especially [Volume 3](#).

This part of the RFCDC focuses on the implementation of the Framework in schools. It covers implementation in the curriculum, in pedagogy, in assessment, in teacher education and in the whole school approach.

Chapter 2 highlights that democratic values are communicated through how teachers act and interact, not only through what they teach. It shows how involving learners in decisions about lesson aims, content, materials or classroom rules helps reshape traditional teacher–learner roles and creates an inclusive learning climate. When teachers use participatory and inclusive methods, they send learners the message that everyone is valued and can contribute—something especially important in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. By practising democratic processes in everyday classroom situations, learners develop the competences they need to participate actively in school and society.

The appendices to Chapter 2 on ‘CDC and pedagogy’ contain numerous examples of practice such as using and developing CDC through co-operative learning, project-based learning and developing critical thinking skills (pages 44-50).

Resource 2: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture -Teacher reflection tool](#)

This useful handbook supplements the practical guidelines offered in volume 3 of the RFCDC by looking at ways in which teachers can use self-observation (looking at what they do from the point of view of an observer) and reflection in their professional development to develop the competences needed to establish democratic classrooms and ensure greater learner participation and agency in lessons (in any subject).

Professional learning is further stimulated by opportunities to reflect on various ‘scenarios’ in which the CDC described in volume 2 of the Framework are necessary or would be advantageous.

Resource 3: [Teaching Unit 6 - Creating democratic classrooms](#) from the resources provided through the ECML’s ‘supporting multilingual classrooms’ project.

This worksheet aims to help teachers to formulate “*classroom strategies to enhance democratic practice in the multilingual classroom settings*”. It provides suggestions for practical activities that aim to increase learners’ awareness of CDC and, especially in activity 2, to explore the features of democratic classrooms.

Further resources

[Developing competences for democratic culture for young learners through language education \(DECODE\)](#) project website.

This ongoing project, which forms part of the ECML's 2024-2027 programme, aims to *support the development of young learners' competences for democratic culture*. This will include developing and making available a collection of digital materials for teachers, as well as digital guidelines for the implementation of CDC in primary language classes.

Council of Europe (2020) [Competences for democratic culture and the importance of language](#)

Council of Europe (2023) [Manual of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture - Introductory Course](#).

Home languages

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

Measures

b. ix. Explore ways of including home languages – signed as well as spoken – that are not part of the official curriculum in the educational process and, where appropriate, provide formal recognition and certification of those languages

What is it about?

Home languages are understood as the languages used for communication in the home and those acquired in early childhood, including sign languages. The term refers to any language or languages used in a domestic context. The Council of Europe advises that these languages, especially those spoken by linguistic minorities or migrants, should be acknowledged in schools as an integral part of learners' linguistic repertoires. Plurilingual and intercultural education benefits from recognising and valuing home languages within the school community. These languages can be incorporated into the school environment by encouraging their use throughout the school, by offering them as subjects of study (e.g. in CLIL) or as media of instruction in other subjects, and by drawing on them as resources for learning additional languages. They can also be included within initiatives that link formal and non-formal learning, in which learners and their families are invited to participate actively.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Learners who receive schooling in a language that is not part of their repertoire should not be discriminated against by the education system. Efforts must be made to make room for home languages in the curriculum as well as within a framework of a plurilingual school policy. The curriculum can include at least optional teaching of these languages, organized in cooperation with the families and relevant cultural associations. When teaching additional languages and the language of schooling as a subject, learners' home languages constitute a resource for learning, particularly in the form of comparisons between languages (Rec. 2022, p. 34). School leaders, therefore, should ensure that teachers allow learners to use their home languages in the classroom, even though the teachers themselves do not understand those languages.

See also Toolbox Entry on [Whole-school approach](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

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

The Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe supports Member States in creating inclusive language policies that promote linguistic diversity, plurilingualism, social cohesion, and equal access to language learning. It offers practical guidance for well-designed language education, based on clear principles and democratic values, with a focus on effective implementation through broad social acceptance.

See especially Chapter 1: Language Policies and Language Education Policies in Europe - particularly 1.1.2 *National cohesion and linguistic minorities*, and 1.1.3 *Migrants: new linguistic minorities, new linguistic rights?* The principles of democratic management of language diversity outlined in the chapters, can be applied to design curricula.

Resource 2: [A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training. The Language Dimension in All Subjects](#)

The Handbook develops responses to the current challenges of education systems highlighting the importance of language not just as a separate subject in school, but in all subjects across the curriculum.

See especially chapter 10 on curriculum development and section 5.3 that provides provisions for disadvantaged learners with no or very limited proficiency in the language(s) of schooling.

Resource 3: [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.

See especially **Section 3.7.2:** Diversity of children from migrant backgrounds.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

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

Building on the ECML projects [Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures \(FREPA/CARAP\)](#) and [A guide to teacher competences for languages in education](#), this ECML resource website offers two types of tools to aid the development of teacher education programmes and courses – including the integration of home languages: a [Reference framework of teacher competences for pluralistic approaches \(FTC-PA\)](#) and [sequences of tasks for the development of these competences](#). The tools proposed on the resource website aim to complement the FREPA by focusing on helping teacher educators to develop teacher competences that facilitate integration of pluralistic approaches in language education, as well as in addressing the linguistic aspects of other subjects in the curriculum. The following teacher education materials may be especially relevant to the topic of language repertoires: [Awareness of and reflection on the plurilingual and multicultural profiles of learners](#) and [Confidence in one's ability to work with unfamiliar languages](#) in 'Commitment to values and principles', and [Reflecting on the links between learners' language repertoires and their productions in the target language](#) in "Didactic and pedagogical competence".

Resource 2: [Resources for assessing the home language competences of migrant pupils \(RECOLANG\)](#)

The ECML resource RECOLANG provides a set of values, principles and criteria for the assessment of home languages. These are based on a series of examples of existing assessment practices that have been used with migrant learners in secondary education. The overall aim is to support the social and institutional recognition of home languages and to enhance learners' plurilingual repertoires.

Resource 3: [European Language Portfolio](#)

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) enables learners to document their language skills, learning experiences, and cultural knowledge. It supports learner autonomy, plurilingualism, and intercultural competence. The ELP includes a Language Passport (a summary of language proficiency), a Language Biography (tools for reflection, goal-setting, and self-assessment), and a Dossier that encourages learners to document achievements gained both in and outside formal education.

Student teachers should be introduced to the ELP and the use of the ELP (see [European Language Portfolio. Using the ELP](#)): The individual's plurilingual repertoire can be described, planned, reflecting upon and assessed in the [Language Passport](#) and the [Language Biography](#). It can be documented and illustrated in the [Dossier](#).

Further resources

For teacher educators two other resources could be used: The virtual open course for primary school – [EducoMigrant](#) – and the [MARILLE](#) resource, aimed at secondary school, support (future) teachers to reflect on professional practices, to discover innovative and inclusive strategies and to deepen their understanding of working with learners from diverse backgrounds.

Intercultural competence/cultural awareness

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

Measures

b. xii. support the creation of teaching and learning resources designed to help the development of plurilingual repertoires and intercultural awareness and competences.

b. xiv. encourage pedagogical approaches that develop learners' language and cultural awareness and equip them to engage in intercultural dialogue.

c. iii. developing student teachers' and teachers' own plurilingual and intercultural competences as an essential dimension of their pedagogical competences.

What is it about?

“Intercultural competence” is the complex set of attitudes, knowledge, skills and values on which we draw when we engage in intercultural dialogue; and intercultural dialogue is how culturally diverse societies create and maintain social cohesion. The learning and teaching of intercultural competence are essential for democratic culture.

As an educational goal, intercultural competence is closely linked to plurilingualism because it enables plurilingual individuals to engage with the cultural diversity they encounter when they use the different languages in their repertoire. Intercultural competence allows them to respond to cultural diversity with respect, argue for and justify their own point of view responsibly and sensitively, and subject to critical scrutiny aspects of their own culture that are commonly taken for granted. (CM Rec (2022)1, Explanatory Memorandum, 3.d)

Why is this important and what can be done?

Plurilingual and intercultural education prepares the individual to be an active participant in democratic society by promoting their personal development, while combining social responsibility with growing self-awareness, self-confidence, independence of thought, and critical cultural and language awareness.

Education should provide space for learners and teachers to develop this competence, engage in intercultural encounters and dialogues – both in person and virtually – and interact with respect and understanding of cultural similarities and differences, locally and globally. In intercultural education, cultural diversity within the classroom, school, and community should be used as a resource that benefits everyone involved in the educational process (Rec. 2022, p. 26).

See also Toolbox Entry on [Plurilingual repertoires](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture \(RFCDC\)](#)

The RFCDC provides a systematic approach to designing the teaching, learning, and assessment of competences in a democratic culture. [Volume one: Context, concepts and model](#) of the Reference Framework contains the model of competences for democratic culture that was unanimously approved by European ministers of education at their standing conference in Brussels in April 2016. [Volume two: Descriptors of competences for democratic culture](#) lists the descriptors of the competences for democratic culture that are intended to help educators identify learning outcomes, achieved proficiency after a period of learning, and areas for further development. [Volume three: Guidance for implementation](#) offers guidance on how the model of competences and the corresponding descriptors may be used in six education contexts.

See especially [Chapter 1](#) in *Volume three: Guidance for implementation*, which explores how the competences for democratic culture (CDC) model can be used by those in charge of designing and developing curricula and curriculum reform in education, and the section “Curriculum” on the subpage [Guidance for implementation](#).

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.

Intercultural competence is addressed in the [design of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education](#), see especially [Chapter 1.5](#) “Ways of bringing plurilingual and intercultural education into the curriculum” (p. 26-28), and in [the curriculum scenarios for plurilingual and intercultural education](#).

Resource 3: [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. 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.

See especially the understanding of pluricultural competence, which is developed in [Section 2.3](#), and the descriptor scales for plurilingual and pluricultural competence in [Chapter 4](#), in particular the section [“Building on pluricultural repertoire”](#) (p. 124f). The descriptor scales can be used to develop and review the design of language curricula.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture \(RFCDC\)](#)

See above

See especially [Chapter 4](#) in *Volume three: Guidance for implementation*, focusing on the role and tasks of teacher education in promoting and implementing education based on the RFCDC, and the section "Teacher Education and Training" on the subpage [Guidance for implementation](#).

Resource 2: [The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters. Online self-study course for educators](#)

Complementing the [Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters \(AIE\)](#), the [Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters for Younger Learners](#), and [Images of Others: An Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media \(AIEVM\)](#), targeted for learners, this resource represents a self-study online course for teacher educators and teachers who seek support in working with the AIE. The course contains activities based on the key concepts and theory underpinning the AIE to help teacher educators and teachers explore the potential of this pedagogical tool for learning through reflection on personal intercultural experiences.

Resource 3: [Developing teacher competences for pluralistic approaches. Tools for teacher education](#)

Building on the ECML projects [Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures \(FREPA/CARAP\)](#) and [A guide to teacher competences for languages in education](#), this ECML resource website offers two types of tools to aid the development of teacher education programmes and courses: a [Reference framework of teacher competences for pluralistic approaches \(FTC-PA\)](#) and [sequences of tasks for the development of these competences](#). The tools proposed on the resource website aim to complement the FREPA by helping teacher educators develop teacher competences that facilitate the integration of pluralistic approaches in language education, as well as address the linguistic aspects of other subjects in the curriculum.

The following teacher education materials may be especially relevant to the topics of intercultural competence/cultural awareness: [Awareness of and reflection on the plurilingual and multicultural profiles of learners](#) in 'Commitment to values and principles', and [Helping learners to build informed knowledge and representations of linguistic and cultural diversity](#) in 'Didactic and pedagogical competences'.

Further resources

[Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility. Practical resources for teachers and teacher trainers](#)

This ECML resource offers activities and materials to support learners' intercultural learning before, during and after a mobility activity. The subpage [Mobility in teacher education](#) provides lesson plans for initial and in-service teacher education

Language(s) of schooling (as a subject and in other subjects)

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

Measures

b. ii. ensure that the language dimension of all subjects is made explicit in curriculum guidelines and curriculums;

b. xiv. encourage pedagogical approaches that develop learners' language and cultural awareness [...]

c.i. assigning a central role in their own curriculums to the concepts and principles on which such education rests, including the language dimension of all curriculum subjects.

See also [Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec \(2014\)5 on the importance of competences in the language\(s\) of schooling for equity and quality in education and for educational success.](#)

What is it about?

Languages of schooling are the dominant languages used for teaching and learning, for extra-curricular activities, and for the management of educational institutions. This concept includes both language taught as a subject in its own right, such as literacy and literature, and the language used to teach other subjects such as history, mathematics, or science. In many contexts, the language of schooling is a national or officially recognised regional language, and sign languages may be used in the education of deaf learners.

Language is central to the acquisition of knowledge and to success in school. It is therefore essential that all learners develop sufficient proficiency in the languages used to teach all subjects, since these differ from everyday language. Education prepares individuals to participate actively in democratic society, and this depends in part on developing appropriate competences in the languages of schooling as well as in other languages included in the curriculum.

Why is it important and what can be done?

Knowledge in school subjects such as mathematics, biology, history, or music is conveyed through specific forms of language that often differ from everyday communication. Acquiring subject-related knowledge therefore requires both cognitive skills and an understanding of the language used in each discipline. Within a plurilingual and intercultural approach to education, all teachers share responsibility for helping learners understand and use the academic language associated with their subject, including its terminology, registers, and genres¹, while encouraging learners to draw on their full linguistic and cultural resources.

The languages of schooling include what is commonly referred to as academic language, which appears in subject teaching. This comprises specialised terms and expressions as well as textual forms and genres such as argumentation and presentation, many of which may be unfamiliar to learners. These linguistic features can be particularly challenging for students who experience educational disadvantage, as they seldom encounter such language in everyday interactions. School curricula therefore need to address the linguistic demands of learning, and teacher education should incorporate approaches that integrate language and content, such as CLIL, so that subject-related language becomes accessible to all learners and can also draw on learners' home languages.

Council of Europe resources for policy/ decision makers

Resource 1: [A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training. The Language Dimension in All Subjects](#)

The Handbook develops responses to the current challenges of education systems highlighting the importance of language not just as a separate subject in school, but in all subjects across the curriculum.

- **Chapter 10** on **curriculum** development and academic language in the curriculum.
- **Chapter 6** on the language of schooling in primary education
- **Chapter 8** on subject-specific language requirements in secondary education

Resource 2: [A roadmap for schools to support the language\(s\) of schooling](#)

The ROADMAP enables schools to set up a tailor-made whole-school strategy to support the development of students' competences in the language(s) of schooling. The web-based tools help schools to develop the linguistic and critical thinking skills ALL students need in ALL subjects for learning and school success. Available in English, French, German, Finnish and Swedish.

Resource 3: [Language and school subjects - Linguistic dimensions of knowledge building in school curricula](#)

¹ Registers refer to language variations determined by a given context, purpose, and audience. A register is characterized by specific choices of vocabulary, tone, syntax, and level of formality. Examples include legal language, academic writing, casual conversation, and use of technical jargon. Genres are categories of discourse or text that share specific conventions, purposes, and structures. Common genres include narrative, argumentative, academic, and journalistic texts.

The publication is addressed to authors of curricula, textbooks, the designers of tests, and teachers of all subjects. It shows how learning in all subjects relies on specific language uses and discourse genres and offers a framework for identifying these linguistic demands. It also demonstrates how making these requirements explicit helps learners engage more successfully with subject knowledge and supports the aims of plurilingual and intercultural education.

- **Chapter 3** on forms of communication in the teaching of scientific, artistic and technical subjects

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training. The Language Dimension in All Subjects](#)

See above

- **Chapters 11 and 12** on **the language dimension in teacher education**

Resource 2: [Developing language awareness in subject classes](#)

This ECML resource helps subject teachers to identify the linguistic needs of their learners and provide tailored support. They are organised in three stages: planning, teaching and learning.

Resource 3: [Teaching the language of schooling in the context of diversity – study materials for teacher development](#)

This ECML resource provides guidance and materials to help teachers build on plurilingual repertoires of their learners and in particular learners' home languages in the classroom. The activities deal with many themes that are typically present in the language of schooling curriculum: web-based texts, non-verbal communication, idioms, literary texts and texts from other genres, such as adverts and cartoons.

Various materials for teacher educators and teachers of the language of schooling are offered. These provide opportunities for reflection and practical activities relating, for example, to expanding the scope of language of schooling as a subject and the inclusion of plurilingual learners. Watch, for example, a video about Moises, a ten-year-old latino student in the US, who struggles to communicate in his new school with limited access to his native language.

Further resources

Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/languages-of-schooling>

Learner autonomy, agency, and critical thinking

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

Measures

b. xiii. encourage pedagogical approaches that empower learners by developing their autonomy and their critical thinking skills, make space for the learner's voice, create a democratic classroom and school culture and prepare learners for lifelong learning;

b. xiv. encourage pedagogical approaches that develop learners' language and cultural awareness and equip them to engage in intercultural dialogue;

c. vi. helping teachers to develop the pedagogical competences needed to support a democratic classroom culture that fosters autonomous learning and critical thinking and makes space for the inclusion of the learner's voice.

What is it about?

Plurilingual and intercultural education considers learners as social agents who are empowered through the development of the following abilities:

Learner autonomy: the ability to take charge of one's own learning, identifying needs, setting goals, planning learning, managing their study and monitoring results, all in a process of learning to learn.

Learner agency: the willingness and ability to make choices, take and act on decisions, evaluate their outcomes and, as a result, reflect and self-regulate.

Critical thinking: the ability to analyse, evaluate, and interpret information logically and objectively. It involves questioning assumptions, considering different perspectives, and making reasoned judgments to solve problems or understand complex ideas.

Why is this important and what can be done?

These abilities help learners to act in the social world and exert agency in the learning process by exploiting all available linguistic resources in order to communicate and co-construct meaning in interaction.

Curriculum and teaching approaches should prioritise individual and collective agency, promoting learner autonomy and critical thinking. Activities should encourage learners to utilise their language skills to set goals, organise learning tasks, and evaluate outcomes. Collaborative, action-oriented projects can enhance this learning experience, helping learners create artifacts or performances. As social agents they become effective language learners, prepared for lifelong learning and active participation in democratic culture. (See Explanatory Memorandum 5.b.xiii-xiv)

See also Toolbox Entries on [Action-oriented approach](#) and [Complex learning environments](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Learners as social agents](#)

This short 5-minute video explains the concept of the learner as a social agent, which is central to plurilingual and intercultural education. It begins with a brief introduction of the CEFR and explanation of the way the concept of social agency encourages lifelong language learning. Then, in the main part of the video (4 minutes) three primary and secondary school teachers (one Italian, one Belgian, one German) explain what considering learners as social agents means for them in their classes.

This video gives policymakers an overview of ways in which social agency can be implemented in real world-oriented tasks at different levels in different contexts, with teachers sharing responsibility with the learners in that process. This may be of assistance when developing guidelines that highlight the importance of making space in the curriculum and/or teacher education for agency, autonomy and critical thinking.

Resource 2: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - Companion volume](#)

See especially [Chapter 2](#)

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. 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.

The CEFR-CV – especially [Chapter 2](#) (pp. 27-45) – gives policy-makers an overview of the origins and aims of the CEFR and explains its vision of language education, focusing on key concepts and ways in which the CEFR descriptors are intended to be used, as well as correcting some common misconceptions.

Please note: this resource is also useful for teacher educators.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#) (RFDCDC)

Especially in section in Volume 1: [Skills: Autonomous learning skills; Analytical and critical thinking skills – etc.](#)

The Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFDCDC) is particularly relevant for curriculum developers. It offers a model of the competences learners need in order to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and live peacefully with others in culturally diverse democratic societies. It defines a framework of values, attitudes, skills and knowledge & critical understanding, and provides descriptors for these aspects. It comes in three volumes: (i) the framework itself; (ii) the descriptors, and (iii) guidance for implementation.

The RFDCDC, especially the section referred to above, develops in more detail many of the more generic educational concepts mentioned in Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)1 on The Importance of Plurilingual and Intercultural Education and in the CEFR Companion Volume. With its conceptual explanations and its descriptors, it thus provides rich raw material to inspire (student) teachers to promote plurilingual and intercultural education.

Please note: this resource is also useful for policy makers.

Resource 2: [A Guide to Action-oriented, Plurilingual and Intercultural Education](#)

Especially:

[Section 4.2. The Action-oriented approach](#)

[Chapter 5. Curriculum design for action-oriented, plurilingual and intercultural language education](#)

This Guide outlines the educational vision of the CEFR Companion Volume, explaining crucial aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education. It summarises work of the Council of Europe in language learning, outlines reasons why language education has difficulty moving forward, summarises theoretical inputs to action-oriented, plurilingual and intercultural education, and explains implications of implementing it, citing Council of Europe resources and relevant academic literature.

The Guide gives a good overview of Council of Europe resources (with links) on different aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education as well as providing orientation for teacher educators and curriculum developers on how to implement it.

Resource 3: ECML resource introducing learner autonomy in teacher education :

https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/resources/Articles%20and%20publications%20on%20the%20ECML/Little_Learner%20autonomy.pdf

Mediation

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

Measures

- b. vi. promote the teaching of languages in interaction with one another.**
- b. ix. explore ways of including home languages.**
- b. xiv. encourage pedagogical approaches that develop learners' language and cultural awareness and equip them to engage in intercultural dialogue.**
- c. iv. engaging teachers in a detailed exploration of what plurilingual and intercultural approaches to education entail in terms of classroom practice.**
- c. v. helping teachers to develop the pedagogical competences needed to manage linguistic and cultural diversity for the benefit of all pupils and students.**

What is it about?

Mediation often refers to activities that facilitate communication between individuals or groups who, for whatever reason, are unable to communicate with each other directly. More generally, mediation refers to the role of schools and education systems in supporting learners' trajectories by reducing distances related to language, knowledge, social belonging and perceived otherness (Rec 2022, p. 13).

In the classroom, mediation tends to arise spontaneously when groups of learners use all the languages at their disposal to engage with, explore and explain curriculum or discipline content. Such activities typically lead to mediation in an extended sense, embracing a wide range of collaborative procedures by which teachers and learners negotiate diverse attitudes and beliefs as they construct knowledge. Mediation in this broader sense, whether within or between languages, is fundamental to teaching approaches that aim to harness and extend learners' individual and collective agency and create a democratic classroom culture by making space for the learner's voice. Rec. 2022 EM - 3.e. (p.23).

Why is this important, and what can be done?

Recognising the plurality of language resources that learners have and bringing languages into interaction with each other not only fosters the development of plurilingualism and intercultural competence but also develops learners' mediation abilities and supports inclusion and integration. From a wider educational and policy perspective, mediation constitutes a core educational function: it supports learners' mobility across school pathways, their access to communities of practice, and their inclusion in educational and social life. Rec. 2022 EM - 3.i. (p.25)

It is important to challenge the traditional view that only one language should be used in each lesson and to support the development of competences in interactive, mediational and plurilingual communication. The illustrative scales for mediation in the CEFR Companion volume provide a detailed description of these competences.

It is also important for teachers to recognise that they should support their pupils in building on their home languages in the classroom, even when the teachers themselves do not understand those languages. Rec. 2022 EM – 5c. iii-iv. (p.35 - edited). For example, learners can research a subject and/or bring to school materials and artefacts written in their home language and explain these to others. At the same time, education systems need to recognise mediation as a shared responsibility of teachers, learners and institutions, and to create structural conditions that enable mediation practices to support learners' mobility across school pathways, their access to communities of practice, and their inclusion in educational and social life.

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - 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. 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.

The sections of the CEFR-CV most relevant to mediation are [Section 2.5](#) (pp. 35-36) in which mediation is briefly introduced and [Section 3.4](#), which provides a comprehensive set of descriptors for different types of mediation. Here, for policy makers the most relevant parts are on Overall Mediation at the beginning of [Section 3.4](#) (pp. 90-92) and the short introduction to each of the groups of descriptors: Mediating a text, Mediating concepts, Mediating communication, and Mediating strategies.

Resource 2: [Mediation](#)

This short 6-minute video explains the concept of mediation, which is central to plurilingual and intercultural education. It begins with a brief introduction of the CEFR and then, in the main part of the video (5 minutes) three primary and secondary school teachers (one Israeli,

one Portuguese, one Canadian) explain what mediation means for them and the way they implement it in their classes.

This video gives policymakers an overview of ways in which mediation can be implemented in different ways in real world-oriented tasks at different levels in different contexts. This may be of assistance when developing guidelines that highlight the importance of making space in the curriculum and/or teacher education for acknowledging the range of languages in a class and for teaching languages in interaction with each other.

Resource 3: [Education, Mobility, Otherness – The Mediation Functions of Schools](#)

This Council of Europe document provides decision makers with a conceptual framework for understanding how schools act as mediation institutions. The last chapter (Conclusion, pp. 61-64) gives access to the main ideas of the document; section 4 (School trajectory and mediation, pp. 34-59) shows how schools (i.e. various players within an institutional framework) can strategically use mediation across all stages of the school career to turn mobility, diversity and transitions into drivers of educational success, social inclusion and long-term societal cohesion, rather than sources of inequality.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/ pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - Companion volume](#)

See above

Especially [Chapter 2](#) (pp. 27-45) and [Section 3.4](#) (pp. 90-122)

The CEFR-CV gives teacher educators and language programme managers and pedagogic advisors a 27-page [Chapter 2](#) on CEFR key concepts that is very suitable for introducing to (student) teachers such topics as mediation, and the use of CEFR descriptors.

[Section 3.4](#) also provides a detailed discussion of the concept of mediation and a large number of illustrative scales for mediation in both senses defined above (cross-linguistic/cultural – and collaborative procedures by which teachers and learners construct knowledge). All the illustrative descriptors contained in Chapters 3-6 (searchable in different languages in an Excel file at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>) also provide rich raw material to inspire (student) teachers to design tasks involving mediation.

Resource 2: [Mediation in teaching, learning and assessment](#)

This ECML resource, Mediation in teaching, learning and assessment (METLA), explains the concept of mediation and demonstrates how teachers of additional languages in primary and secondary education can include (cross)linguistic mediation in their teaching practices. The project provides a downloadable [Teachers' Guide](#), as well as a [repository of mediation tasks](#). It offers step-by-step guidelines on how you can design and evaluate your own language mediation tasks.

Resource 3: [A Guide to Action-oriented, Plurilingual and Intercultural Education](#)

This guide outlines the educational vision of the CEFR Companion Volume, explaining crucial aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, including a four-page Section 5.3 on [integrating mediation into the curriculum](#). It summarises work of the Council of Europe in language learning, summarises theoretical inputs, and gives a good overview of Council of Europe resources (with links) on different aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education as

well as providing orientation for teacher educators and curriculum developers on how to implement it.

Further resources

[CEFR website – Mediation page](#)

The webpage provides info-sheets, videos, workshop materials and articles on mediation, supplemented by a corresponding page on ideas for implementation of mediation, showing a wealth of resources.

Plurilingual repertoires

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

Measures

b. xii. support the creation of teaching and learning resources designed to help the development of plurilingual repertoires and intercultural awareness and competences.

What is it about?

Everyone has the potential to develop a plurilingual repertoire. This repertoire consists of the full range of interrelated language skills a person can draw on to communicate effectively in multilingual situations.

A plurilingual repertoire encompasses all the languages an individual is able to use. These languages may have been learned in different settings, such as at home, through social interaction, or in school, and they may serve different purposes, including communication with family, interaction with neighbours, or study in educational contexts. In some situations, two or more languages may be used simultaneously. Plurilingual repertoires are dynamic because the languages within them influence and interact with one another, and they are fluid in that they evolve throughout a person's life. It is also normal for individuals to have varying levels of competence across the different languages in their repertoire.

Why is this important and what can be done?

The concept of plurilingual repertoire values learners' linguistic identities by treating all their language resources as assets rather than obstacles. It reflects real-world communication, where people switch between languages in multilingual and multicultural spaces. It also encourages the development of language awareness through language comparison, enhancing language learning, literacy and critical thinking. Furthermore, it challenges language hierarchies by valuing all languages and varieties, promoting intercultural awareness, respect and empathy. Therefore, those responsible for national, regional and institutional policy in all educational sectors should offer guidelines on encouraging students to reflect on, use and develop their plurilingual repertoire. (Rec. 2022, b xii)

See also Toolbox Entry on [Intercultural competence/cultural awareness](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

Resource 1: [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.

See especially [Chapter 1.3.2 The repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources](#) (p. 21-23). Plurilingual repertoires are included in the design of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education and in curriculum scenarios for plurilingual and intercultural education.

Resource 2: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume](#) (CEFR-CV)

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. 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.

See especially the understanding of plurilingualism, which is developed in [Section 2.3](#), and the descriptor scales for plurilingual and pluricultural competence in Chapter 4, in particular the section "[Building on plurilingual repertoire](#)" (p. 127-128), but also the section "[Plurilingual comprehension](#)" (p. 126-127). The descriptors scales can be used to develop and review the design of language curricula.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators

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

Building on the ECML projects [Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures \(FREPA/CARAP\)](#) and [A guide to teacher competences for languages in education](#), this ECML resource website offers two types of tools to aid the development of teacher education programmes and courses: a [Reference framework of teacher competences for pluralistic approaches \(FTC-PA\)](#) and [sequences of tasks for the development of these competences](#). The tools proposed on the resource website aim to complement the FREPA by focusing on helping teacher educators to develop teacher competences that facilitate integration of pluralistic approaches in language education, as well as in addressing the linguistic aspects of other subjects in the curriculum.

The following teacher education materials may be especially relevant to the topic of language repertoires: [Awareness of and reflection on the plurilingual and multicultural profiles of learners](#) in 'Commitment to values and principles', [Reflecting on the links between learners' language repertoires and their productions in the target language](#) in 'Didactic and pedagogical competences', and [Developing an awareness of my plurilingual identity](#) in 'Competences for professional development'.

Resource 2: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume](#) (CEFR-CV)

See above

[Chapter 2](#) is very suitable for introducing CEFR key concepts such as plurilingualism (see [Section 2.3](#)) and the use of CEFR descriptors. The illustrative descriptors for plurilingual and pluricultural competence contained in Chapters 4 provide rich raw material to inspire (student) teachers to design teaching materials, see in particular the section "[Building on plurilingual repertoire](#)" (p. 127-128), but also the section "[Plurilingual comprehension](#)" (p. 126-127).

Resource 3: [European Language Portfolio \(ELP\)](#)

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) enables learners to document their language skills, learning experiences, and cultural knowledge. It supports learner autonomy, plurilingualism, and intercultural competence. The ELP includes a Language Passport (a summary of language proficiency), a Language Biography (tools for reflection, goal-setting, and self-assessment), and a Dossier that encourages learners to document achievements gained both in and outside formal education.

Student teachers should be introduced to the ELP and the use of the ELP (see [European Language Portfolio. Using the ELP](#)): The individual's plurilingual repertoire can be described, planned, reflecting upon and assessed in the [Language Passport](#) and the [Language Biography](#). It can be documented and illustrated in the [Dossier](#).

Further resources

[Teaching the language of schooling in the context of diversity](#) (MALEDIVE)

This ECML resource focuses on ideas and information about plurilingual approaches. See especially [Visualising language repertoires: Examples](#).

[Collaborative community approach to migrant education - A virtual open course for educators](#) (EDUCOMIGRANT)

This ECML resource offers innovative ways to enhance young migrants' education by developing links between schools, the home and local partners in education

[European portfolio for pre-primary educators - The plurilingual and intercultural dimension](#) (PEPELINO)

This ECML resource is designed for educators and teachers in the pre-primary sector, either in initial or in-service training.

[CEFR Companion volume implementation toolbox](#), subpage on [Plurilingual aspects](#).

This ECML resource offers insights into the innovative aspects of the CEFR Companion Volume in language learning, teaching and assessment, including an introductory video and Power Point presentation on 'Building a plurilingual repertoire'.

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?

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 research², 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

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 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.

² A process in which teachers investigate their own practices in order to improve educational outcomes both for themselves and for their students.

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

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.

Whole-school approach

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

Measure

b. xv. The relevant authorities should encourage the adoption of inclusive whole-school/institution-wide approaches to linguistic and intercultural policy and practice.

What is it about?

A **whole-school approach** is a holistic way of creating language-aware schools and learning environments in which languages play a central role across all aspects of school life. Through the creation of coherent curricular policies and environments, all members of the school community work together to realise the vision of plurilingual and intercultural education.

Why is this important and what can be done?

Plurilingual and intercultural education embraces all curriculum subjects and disciplines. Therefore, attention should be paid to language and culture at all levels of education and within the whole school system. This entails emphasising welcome and inclusion; fostering a safe environment where all languages are respected and encouraged; implementing the Principles contained in the Recommendation in teaching, learning, assessment, the extracurricular life of the institution and relations with the wider community. Institutional policy documents should also valorise and indicate ways of benefiting from the plurilingual competences of teachers/lecturers and other staff as well as pupils and students who can play the role of language ambassadors for the school/ institution.

See also Toolbox Entry on [Home languages](#).

Council of Europe resources for policy/decision makers

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

This guide supports Member States in creating inclusive language policies that promote linguistic diversity, plurilingualism, social cohesion, and equal access to language learning. It provides reflections and practical guidance to achieve well-designed and coherent language policies based on clear principles, thorough analysis, and democratic values, with a focus on effective implementation through broad social acceptance.

See especially **chapter 5** on Creating a culture of plurilingualism, and **chapter 6** about the organisation of plurilingual education.

Resource 2 [Reference framework of competences for democratic culture. Volume 1. Context, concepts and model](#)

This publication provides a clear understanding of key principles and common goals in citizenship education to enhance participation in, and promotion of democratic society. The first volume provides a model of key competences, divided into four areas: values, attitudes, skills & knowledge, and critical understanding. Language is an essential part of any subject competence. The acquisition of competences for democratic cultures is thus also dependent on language competences.

[Chapter 6 \(pp. 37-58\)](#) provides a visualisation of the competence model and a clear description of the content of the different areas included.

School leaders and other decision makers can use this framework as a reference point in describing the school vision and mission, and in guiding pedagogies and assessment policies. The framework can also provide guidance for discussions between curriculum developers, teachers, teacher trainers, material developers and other stakeholders.

Resource 3: [Plur Clur: Towards whole-school language curricula](#)

This ECML resource seeks to encourage a global approach to all the languages learnt and used in schools. These include the language of schooling, home languages, foreign languages learnt as subjects in the school, as well as the languages used to teach different subject areas. The website offers a range of tools designed to support the clarification, development, and implementation of plurilingual, intercultural, and inclusive whole-school policies across diverse contexts in ECML member states.

When designing a whole-school policy, it is useful to be inspired by practical examples visualising possibilities in concrete terms.

Council of Europe resources for teacher educators/pedagogical advisors

Resource 1: [Learning environments where modern languages flourish](#)

This ECML resource offers tools for the development of whole-school language projects to support and strengthen cooperation and professional development of all actors involved. EOL presents a vision of a language-friendly environment and encourages a strategic approach to language teaching and learning. The starting point for such a global approach to language education is a widespread awareness of the role of languages for the promotion of democratic citizenship and social cohesion and the development of a school [language policy](#).

Resource 2: [A roadmap for schools to support the language\(s\) of schooling](#)

This ECML resource provides a self-assessment tool linked to a database of promising practices for the development of a tailor-made whole-school strategy to support students' competences in the language/s of schooling.

The tool helps different stakeholders (from school leaders to students and parents) to discuss and reflect on the way the language (or languages) of schooling is effectively taken into account in the whole school curriculum. It encourages them to consider different aspects, such as awareness of the language dimension in all subjects, attitudes towards languages, the role of language in learning, or language resources at school.

Resource 3: [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. 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.

For the embedding of a broad vision of language in a whole-school approach it can be very useful to read the chapter on [Mediation](#) (pp. 90-122).

In addition, the CEFR [website page on mediation](#) offers practical introductions, including videos and ideas for implementation. The concept of mediation focuses on the role of language in constructing and conveying meaning, either within or across languages and language varieties. It plays a crucial role in all subjects and helps all students develop linguistic and cultural awareness. Therefore, it deserves a visible place in whole-school approaches.

Short bibliography

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