

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

RECOMMENDATION No. R (82) 18

OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES CONCERNING MODERN LANGUAGES

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 September 1982
at the 350th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members and that this aim can be pursued in particular by the adoption of common action in the cultural field ;

Bearing in mind the European Cultural Convention signed in Paris on 19 December 1954 ;

Having regard to its Resolution (69) 2 of 25 January 1969 on an intensified modern language teaching programme for Europe ;

Recalling Recommendation 814 (1977) of the Assembly concerning modern languages in Europe ;

Having noted the report "Modern languages : 1971-81" drawn up by Project Group No. 4 of the Council for Cultural Co-operation ;

Having noted the work of the Conference entitled "Across the threshold towards multilingual Europe—Vivre le multilinguisme européen", which was organised by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg from 23 to 26 February 1982 ;

Considering that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding ;

Considering that it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination ;

Considering that member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the field of modern language learning and teaching, may achieve greater convergence at the European level, by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies,

Recommends the governments of member states, in the framework of their national educational policies and systems, and national cultural development policies, to implement by all available means and within the limits of available resources, the measures set out in the appendix to the present recommendation ;

Requests the governments of member states to convey this recommendation and the reference document which forms its basis,¹ through appropriate national channels, to the attention of competent public and private bodies in their countries.

Appendix to Recommendation No. R (82) 18

**Measures to be implemented concerning
the learning and teaching of modern languages**

A. General measures

1. To ensure, as far as possible, that all sections of their populations have access to effective means of acquiring a knowledge of the languages of other member states (or of other communities within their own country) as well as the skills in the use of those languages that will enable them to satisfy their communicative needs and in particular :

1.1. to deal with the business of everyday life in another country, and to help foreigners staying in their own country to do so ;

1.2. to exchange information and ideas with young people and adults who speak a different language and to communicate their thoughts and feelings to them ;

1.3. to achieve a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage.

2. To promote, encourage and support the efforts of teachers and learners at all levels to apply in their own situation the principles of the construction of language-learning systems (as these are progressively developed within the Council of Europe "Modern languages" programme) :

2.1. by basing language teaching and learning on the needs, motivations, characteristics and resources of learners ;

2.2. by defining worthwhile and realistic objectives as explicitly as possible ;

2.3. by developing appropriate methods and materials ;

2.4. by developing suitable forms and instruments for the evaluation of learning programmes.

3. To promote research and development programmes leading to the introduction, at all educational levels, of methods and materials best suited to enabling different classes and types of student to acquire a communicative proficiency appropriate to their specific needs.

B. Language learning in schools

4. To encourage the teaching of at least one European language other than the national language or the vehicular language of the area concerned to pupils from the age of ten or the point at which they enter secondary education (or earlier according to national or local situations) with adequate time allocation and in such a way as to enable them by the end of the period of compulsory schooling, within the limits set by their individual ability, to use the language effectively for communication with other speakers of that language, both in transacting the business of everyday living and in building social and personal relations, on the basis of mutual understanding of, and respect for, the cultural identity of others.

5. To make provision for the diversification of language study in schools :

5.1. by making it possible for pupils, wherever appropriate, to study more than one European or other modern language ;

5.2. by ensuring the availability, according to local circumstances, of facilities for learning as wide a range of languages as possible.

1. Report "Modern languages : 1971-81".

6. To promote international contacts by individual pupils and classes through exchanges, study visits abroad and other means.

C. Language learning in upper secondary school, higher education, further education and adult education

7. To encourage educational institutions to provide facilities for the continuation of language learning by all students in upper secondary, higher and further education, as appropriate to their special fields of work and study, in order to facilitate international professional mobility and co-operation at all levels.

8. To ensure that adequate resources are available to enable students who have completed their full-time education to acquire further knowledge of languages in accordance with their professional, social and personal needs and motivations.

9. To take all the measures necessary to enable adults who have had hitherto little or no chance of learning a modern language to acquire the ability to use a modern language for communicative purposes.

D. Language learning by migrants and their families

10. To promote the provision of adequate facilities for migrant workers and the members of their families :

10.1. to acquire sufficient knowledge of the language of the host community for them to play an active part in the working, political and social life of that community, and in particular to enable the children of migrants to acquire a proper education and to prepare them for the transition from full-time education to work ;

10.2. to develop their mother tongues both as educational and cultural instruments and in order to maintain and improve their links with their culture of origin.

11. To promote the introduction and development of appropriate initial and further training programmes for teachers of languages to migrants, leading to recognised qualifications.

12. To participate in the development of language programmes involving co-operation between authorities or other bodies representing the host community, the migrant community and the country of origin, especially with regard to the production of teaching materials, teacher training and mother tongue development.

E. Initial and further teacher training

13. To promote the development and introduction of methods for such initial and further training of teachers of modern languages as will enable them to develop the attitudes and acquire the knowledge, skills and techniques necessary to teach languages effectively for communicative purposes, for example by :

13.1. considering the extent to which the pattern of modern language studies in higher education provides an adequate preparation for future language teachers ;

13.2. providing facilities through bilateral and multilateral agreements for all future teachers to spend a substantial period of their course of study in a country where the language they will teach is spoken as a mother tongue ;

13.3. contributing to an intensified programme of in-service teacher training, including internationally organised, staffed and recruited in-service courses for language teachers, and facilitating the participation of serving teachers in such courses ;

13.4. promoting stays at regular intervals by serving teachers in the countries whose languages they teach.

F. International co-operation

14. To promote the national and international collaboration of governmental and non-governmental institutions engaged in the development of methods of teaching and evaluation in the field of modern language learning and in the production and use of materials, including institutions engaged in the production and use of multi-media material.

15. To encourage by all appropriate means, taking into account their particular status, radio and television bodies to co-operate with those in other member states in the planning, production and exploitation of modern language learning programmes as well as of documentaries on life, society and culture in the countries where the language being learnt is spoken.

16. To consider means of international co-operation for monitoring the quality of language teaching materials and courses.

17. To take such steps as are necessary to complete the establishment of an effective European system of information exchange covering all aspects of language learning, teaching and research, and making full use of advanced information technology.

18. To ensure, as far as possible, that programmes which implement measures set out in the different chapters of this recommendation are notified to the Council for Cultural Co-operation, and that government-sponsored programmes contain provision wherever possible for consultation and co-operation between the agencies concerned and their counterparts in other member states.