



Education and Culture DG

European Commission

<http://ec.europa.eu/languages/day2011/>



European Day of Languages

www.coe.int/EDL



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
AND LANGUAGES

**JOINT COUNCIL OF EUROPE/EUROPEAN COMMISSION DECLARATION
TO MARK THE 10th ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES
26 SEPTEMBER 2011**

(SELECTED EXTRACTS)

Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity and language learning for all are fundamental principles of the Council of Europe and of the European Union. The ability to understand and use several languages helps citizens achieve their full potential, both socially and professionally. Language skills are essential for equity and integration. Against the current backdrop of increasing mobility, globalisation of the economy and changing economic trends, the need to learn languages and develop plurilingual and intercultural education is more obvious than ever before.

In 2001 the Council of Europe and the European Commission jointly launched the first European Year of Languages in order to raise awareness about Europe's rich linguistic heritage, to encourage multilingualism in society and to motivate European citizens to learn more languages.

Building on the success of this year, languages and language learning have since then been celebrated every year on 26th September, the European Day of Languages. Activities cover all languages, including the promotion of less widely used and taught languages, as well as migration languages and sign languages. The European Day of Languages should encourage lifelong language learning for personal fulfilment, full participation in Europe's democratic societies and professional development.

In 2011, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the European Day of Languages, the Council of Europe and the European Commission welcome the joint progress made during the past decade. The two Organisations reaffirm their commitment to the promotion of language policies and practices in keeping with their shared values and principles, and their intention to continue to seek synergies between their respective actions in Brussels and in Strasbourg, including those implemented by the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz.

In the future, the Council of Europe and the European Commission will continue to work in close cooperation to bring the benefits of Europe's linguistic diversity closer to the European citizens. The collaboration between the two Organisations will serve to promote the development of competences in the widest possible range of languages in order to enhance mutual respect, improve employability and mobility and to facilitate integration and active democratic citizenship in Europe's increasingly multilingual and diverse societies.

For the European Commission

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For the Council of Europe

Thorbjørn Jagland

Secretary General