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<https://ecspm.org/>

European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism (ECSPM)

5th December 2024, ECML Professional Network Forum

OUR IDENTITY

- We are a European **civil society** (the space that exists as an intermediary between the private sector and governments)
- We are a **platform** (our political agenda being to promote languages spoken in Europe)
- We work to ensure that **multilingualism** is treated as an asset and a commitment of the European Union

PROFILE OF OUR ORGANISATION

- We are structured as **an umbrella organisation** for the following institutions, who are officially members (two more have applied for membership):
 - Twenty (22) are academic/university centres, researching and supporting bi-/multilingualism in education mainly in Europe forming our **CURUM** constituency – one of these being a community of organisations with over 30 branches in Europe, Asia and North America
 - Four (4) are European and international networks for the teaching, learning and testing of languages (**ALTE**, **EDiLiC** , **ICC-Languages**, **FIPLV**) with hundreds of members
 - Four (4) are European networks for the promotion and support of European national, regional and minority languages (**EFNIL**, **FUEN** , **NPLD** , **Sprachenrat Saar**)
 - Two are European associations related to the arts (**LAF** and **EARights**)
- We have **signed partnerships** with the following institutions:
 - **CCERBAL** at the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI) of the University of Ottawa
 - **ECML** and are an active member of their Professional Network Forum (PNF)
 - **CRACKER** (a federation of European projects and organisations working on technologies for a multilingual Europe)
 - **LLL** (The Lifelong Learning Platform) a European Civil Society Platform for Education

OUTREACH

- We work for greater linguistic justice and language equality, driving for change in attitudes towards languages and the monolingual ethos of communication in society and in its institutions – especially education.
- Currently our members and partners **represent more than 200 institutions** that are concerned with covering all issues concerned with language rights, language education and the use of languages in society. Our members **reach out to thousands of beneficiaries**.

OUR FUNCTION

- We are a leading **European social and academic platform** making it possible to share of ideas, policies, research, and good practices with stakeholders across Europe.
- We also collectively advocate actions which aim to ensure that **all languages spoken in Europe** (national, regional, minority and migrant languages) are seen as assets that need to be supported, promoted and protected.
- As an **NGO**, we function independently of the European Commission, under Danish law – as our Secretariat is in Copenhagen – but we are enrolled in the Commission’s Transparency Registry.

OUR MISSION

- Our mission is to disseminate research and practices based on the view that multilingualism is an asset for European economic, social, cultural development, as well as a facilitator for intellectual growth, social, and personal development.

“MULTILINGUALISM IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION”

ECSPM's concerns

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- We research and take action to promote:
 - Individual multilingualism
 - Social multilingualism
 - Institutional multilingualism

ECSPM'S ENGAGEMENT

ACTIONS, PROJECTS, EVENTS



THEODOROS MARINIS, ECSPM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

PARTICIPATION & CREATION

- We regularly participate in the European Education Summit to understand, discuss and recommend multilingualism policy priorities proposed by the European Commission.
- In 2018 we inaugurated the **Cluster of University Research Units for Multilingualism (CURUM)** and have since been expanding this alliance, which is the first of its kind in Europe. The CURUM is a communal space for research, the results of which can contribute to the development of a European Education Area by 2025, taking forward the European Council's mandate, comprised of proposals including the improvement of the teaching/learning of languages to ensure Europeans' multilingual habitus and awareness raising regarding Europe's shared linguistic and cultural heritage.
- ECSPM is a member of the **Professional Network Forum (PNF)** of the Council of Europe's European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) which meets once a year at ECML's headquarters in Graz to exchange information with the other partners, to support the work of and provide counsel to ECML concerning its activities.
- We have become members of the **Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)**, consenting to the Agreement on reforming research assessment – a venture supported by the European University Association, Science Europe, and by about 700 organisations from over 40 countries.

PROJECTS Part 1

- We provided support to the ECML 2020-2022 project on “Mediation in Teaching and Assessment”
- We were a partner institution of the European Language Equality (ELE) project, which involved the development of a strategic agenda and roadmap to develop full digital language equality in Europe by 2030.
 - European Parliament resolution “Language equality in the digital age”, have found a striking imbalance in terms of support through language technologies and issue a call to action
 - ELE research findings show that there are still significant language barriers that hamper communication and the free flow of information across the EU. Multilingualism is a key cultural cornerstone of Europe and signifies what it means to be and to feel European. Many studies and resolutions, as noted in the recent EP resolution “Language equality in the digital age”, have found a striking imbalance in terms of support through language technologies and issue a call to action
 - Connection with the European Language Grid (ELG), which constitutes **one** Platform for all European Language Technologies: tools & services, language resources, organisations.

PROJECTS Part 2

- We are members of CoARA [Multilingualism WG](#), along with representatives of 28 European universities, organisations and associations concerned with making multilingualism a positive indicator for the assessment of scientific research and publications, teaching and learning in universities.
- We have completed Action 2 of the MUDExI project which involves a *Case Study on Linguistic Mediation in Higher Education*. The participating universities include Babes Bolyai University (Romania), National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece), University of Foreigners in Siena (Italy), University of São Paulo (Brasil), University of Sofia (Bulgaria), University of Strasburg (France). One can access a brief report of the Case Study and a presentation of the conclusions and implications [here](#).

POLITICAL ACTION

- We have prepared the “**Declaration for Multilingualism in HE**”, which has been translated from English into 28 European languages (accessed [here](#)) and has been uploaded in English on the “change.org” platform as [a petition](#) to make HEIs multilingual spaces. Having reached more than 1,600 signatures, we continue to seek the support of academics from across Europe and beyond.



ECSPM EVENTS

RESEARCH DISSEMINATION AT ANNUAL SYMPOSIA 2017-2014

At our annual symposia, our invited speakers have included distinguished scholars from many European countries, but also from many other parts of the world including: Africa, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, New Zealand, Singapore, and the USA.

2024 EVENTS

- **2024 Seminar & Workshop: “MULTILINGUALISM IN RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT IN HEIs”** hosted by the Centre for Multilingualism, University of Konstanz, Germany in collaboration with the CoARA Multilingualism Work Group (WG) members. Held on 4-5 April 2024, it brought together scholars working in language studies and multilingualism, academics and researchers from other fields of study, as well as technology and publishing professionals to discuss issues related to the generation of valid and reliable criteria for the assessment of multi-/plurilingual teaching, research, and academic publishing.
- **2024 ECSPM Symposium: “PLURILANGUAGING IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL SPACES”** hosted by the University of Ghent, Belgium, 22-23 May 2024, the central notion of the event being *plurilinguaging*, understood as the enactment of plurilingualism that is defined and described in the CEFRCV (Council of Europe, 2020). Like the notion of translanguaging, it refers to language users involved in a process of meaning-making, using all the linguistic and semiotic resources they have in their repertoire, rather than trying to decide which ‘language’ to use in which social context. The symposium brought together a group of distinguished academics, but also educators and other language professionals who shared, discussed, and presented their views and experiences, but also raised questions and pointed to those queries that need to be investigated.

COARA WG MULTILINGUALISM – SURVEY (2024)



- **Language use in Science Communication and Citizen Science Projects**
- A: Science Communication, B: Citizen Science, C: My language(s), D: Demographic information
- ECSPM member organisations,
- 145 started the survey
- 89 full data sets

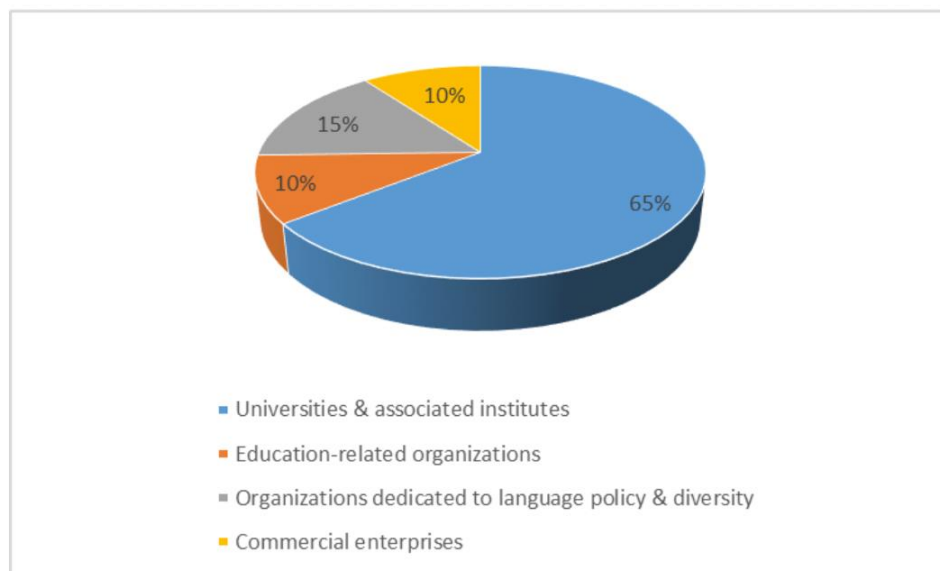


Figure 1: Types of organisations represented among respondents (%)

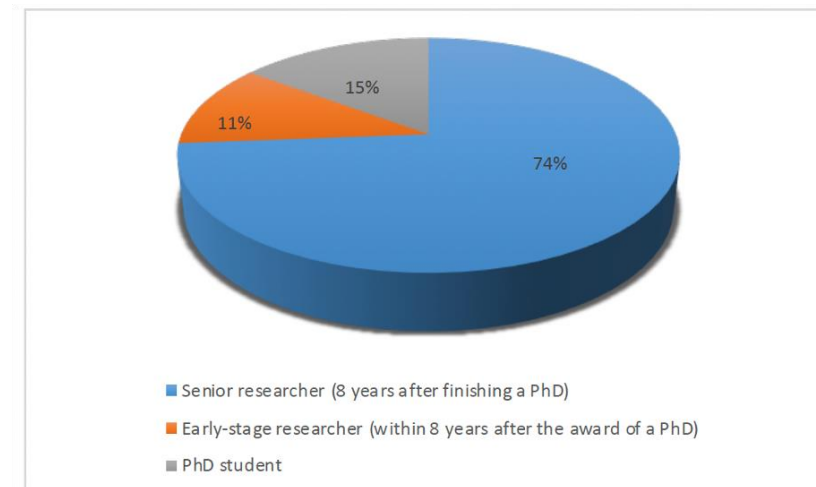


Figure 2: Career stage of respondents active in HEIs (%)

COARA WG MULTILINGUALISM – SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

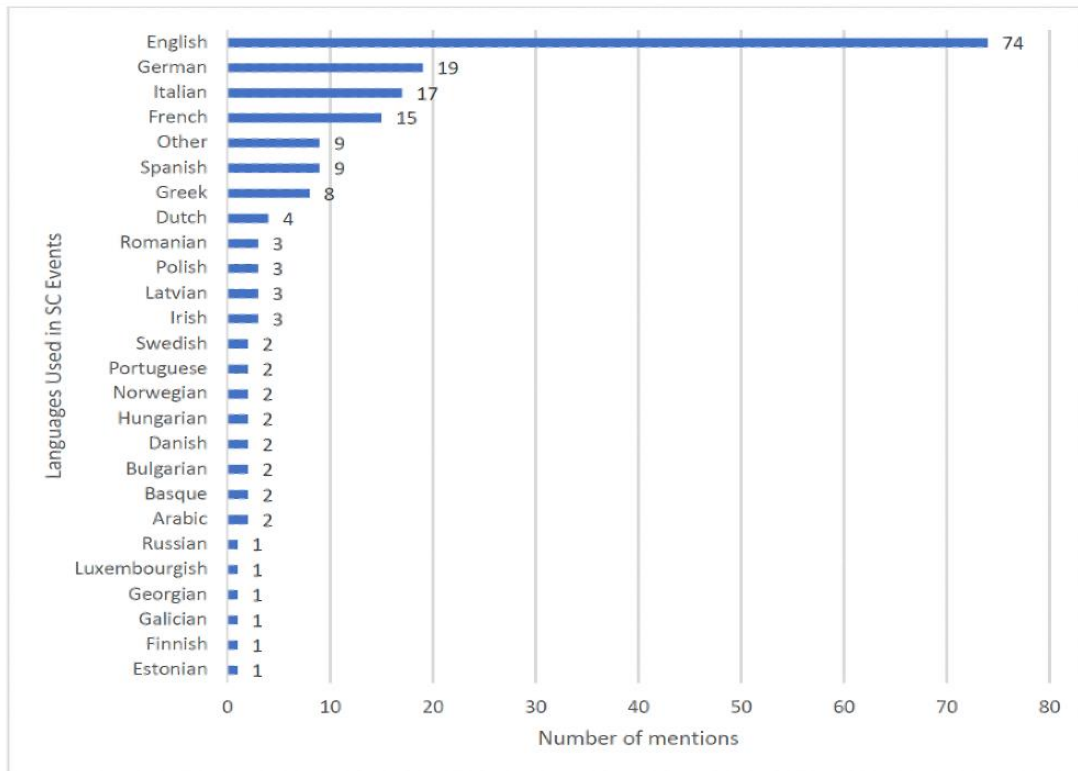


Figure 3: Languages used in SC events (N)

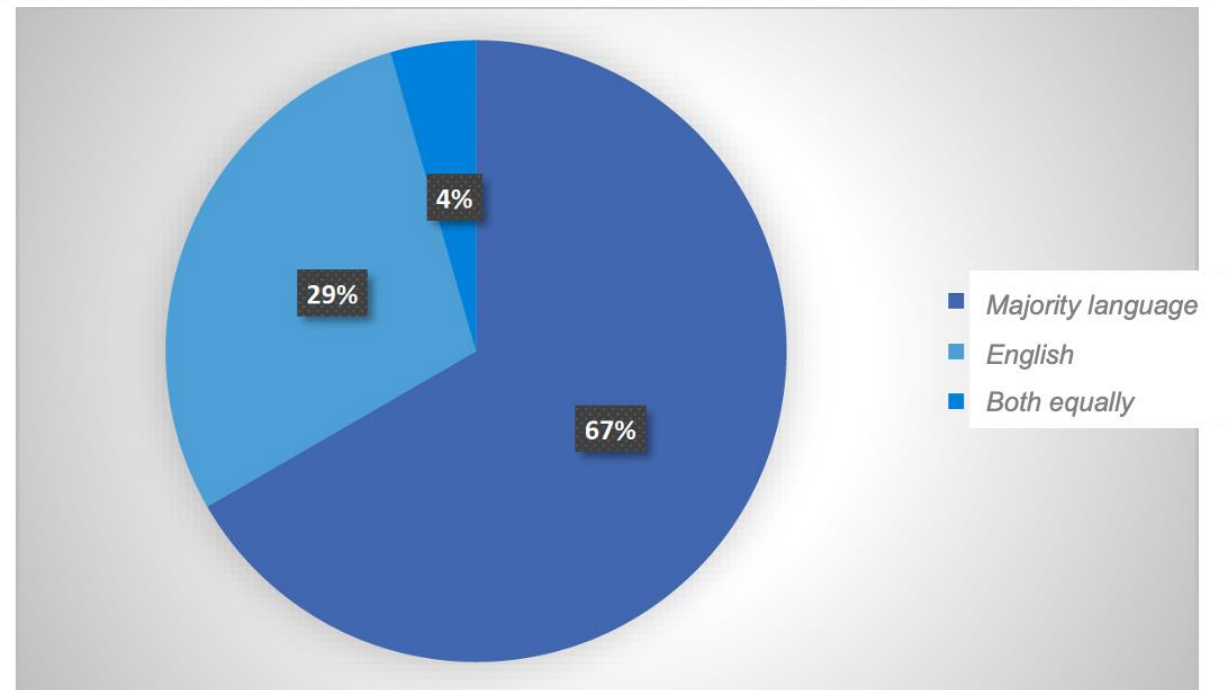


Figure 4: Use of majority language vs. English for Science Communication (%)

COARA WG MULTILINGUALISM – CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

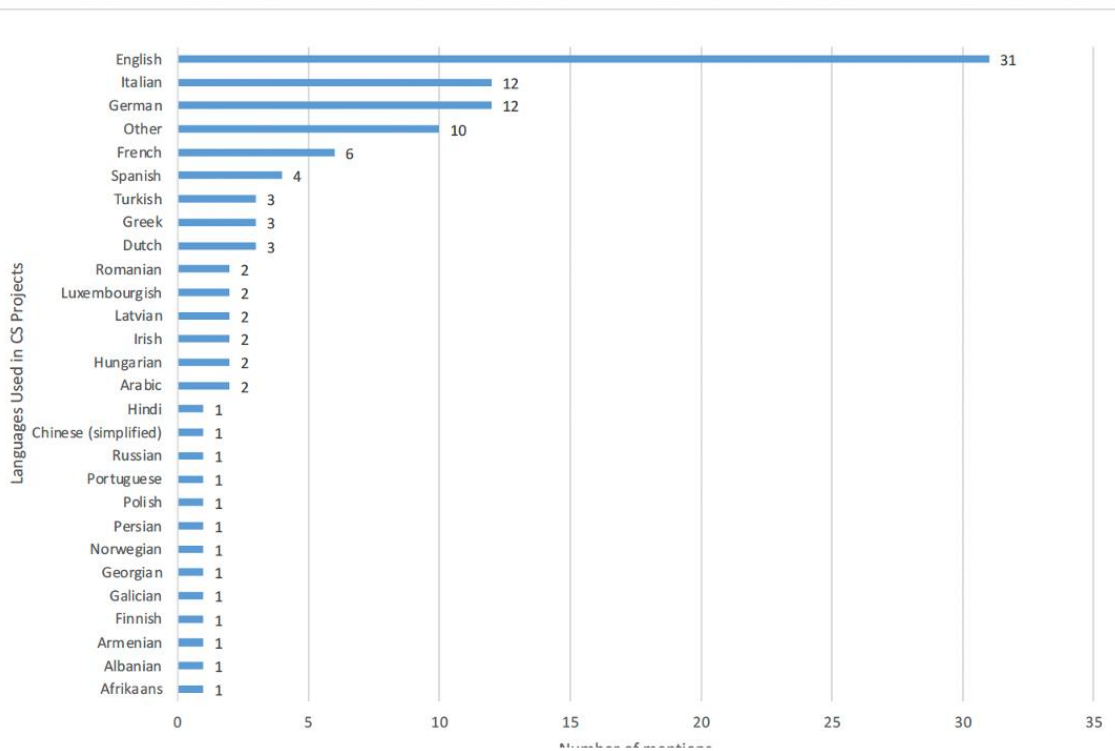


Figure 5: Languages used in CS activities (N) – 55 respondents

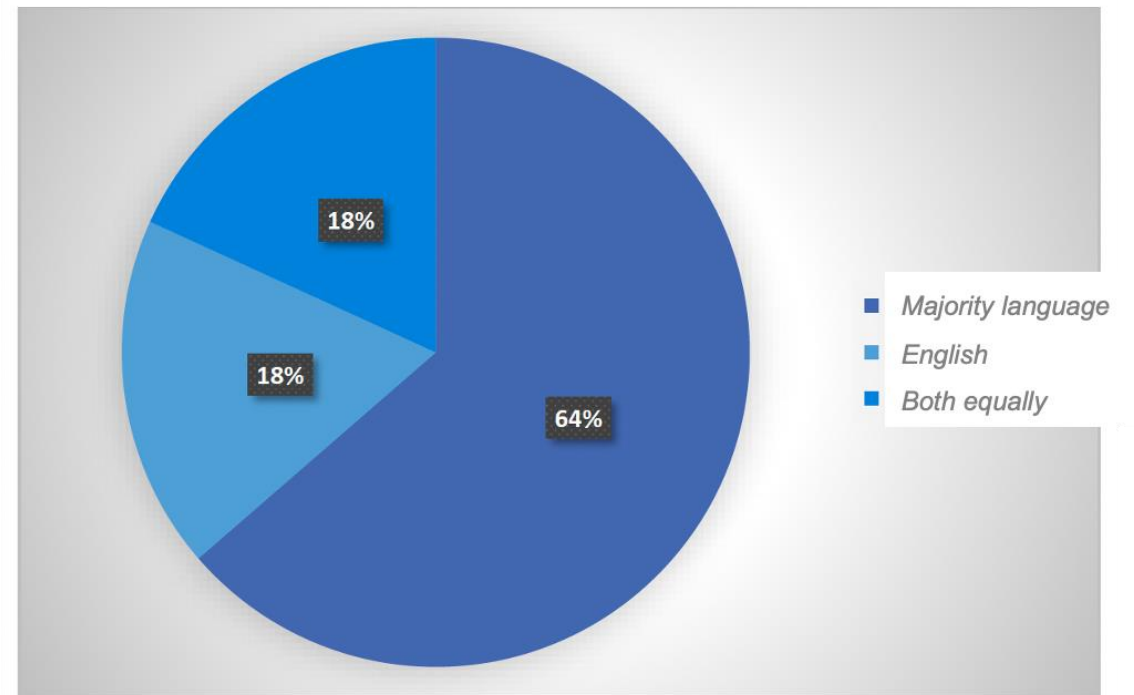


Figure 6: Use of majority language vs. English in Citizen Science projects (%)

COARA WG MULTILINGUALISM – PLURILINGUAL PRACTICES

Science Communication

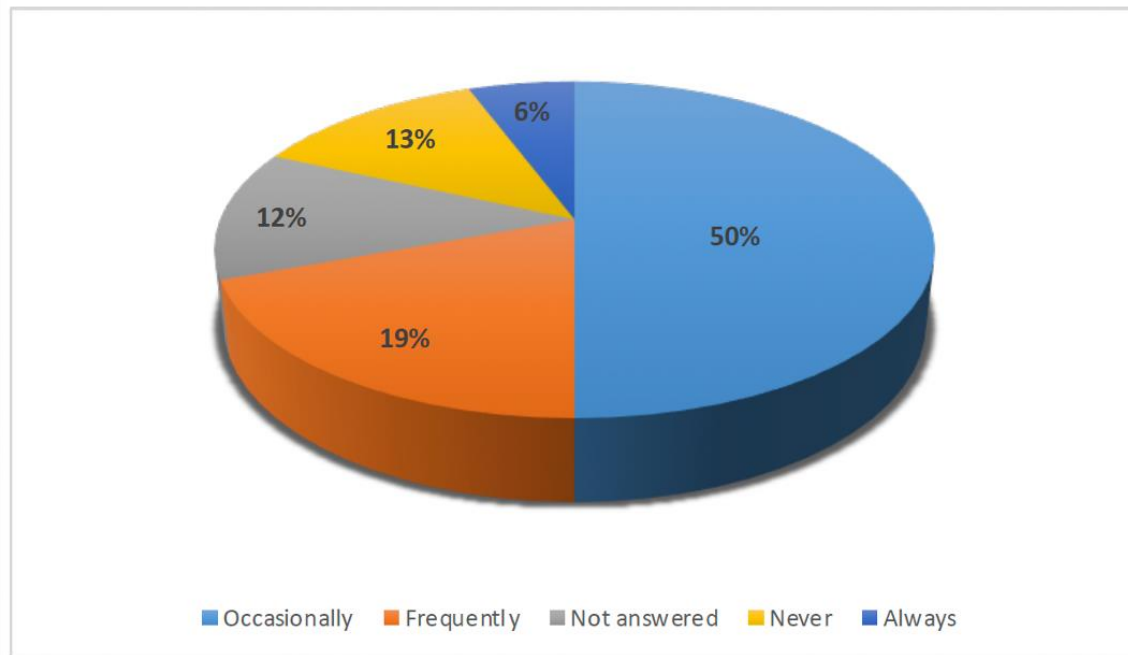


Figure 7: Frequency of plurilingual practices (%)

Citizen Science Projects

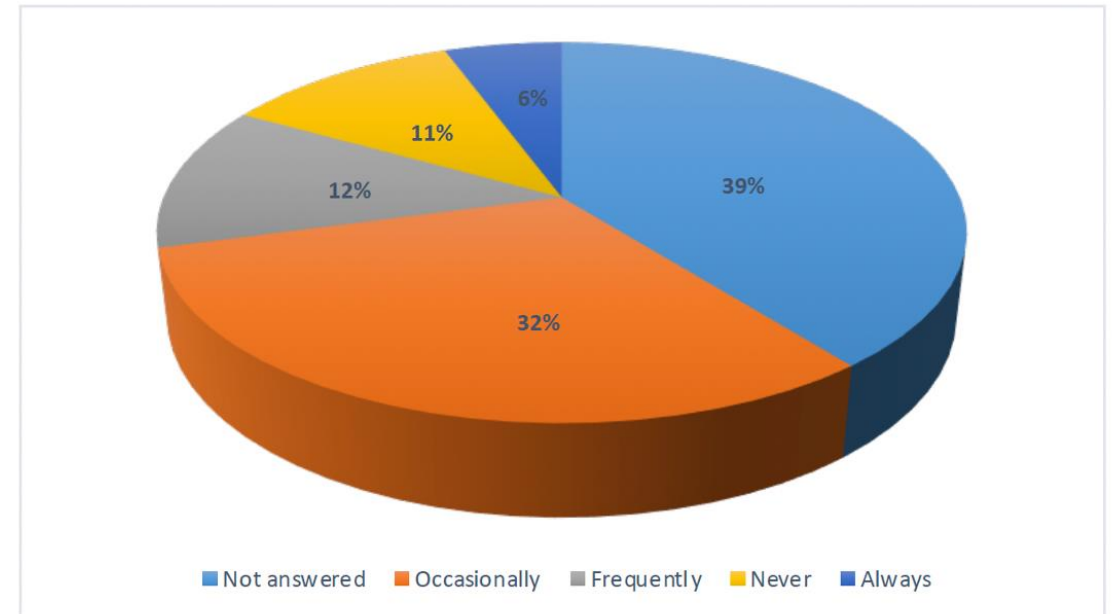


Figure 8: Frequency of plurilingual practices (%)

COARA WG MULTILINGUALISM – SURVEY TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- **English:** important in **SCIENCE COMMUNICATION** and **CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS**
- BUT → **the majority languages: most frequently used**
- Most important factor: **the audience.**
- Most frequently mentioned audiences: **general public, professional audiences, policy makers**
- **Very frequent use of plurilingual approaches in both SCIENCE COMMUNICATION and CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS (87%+ use plurilingual approaches)**

2025 EVENTS

- **Online Professional Development Seminar on Linguistic Mediation:** Organised at the request of Ukrainian higher education (HE) instructors, it will bring together professionals from different parts of Europe who have developed expertise in the use of linguistic mediation when teaching languages and other content subjects in HE so they can share their experiences and propose how they can develop meaningful activities for looking at language and communication based around mediation skills and strategies. The Seminar will be held in January 2025.
- **2025 ECSPM Symposium** on “**ACTIONS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES**” will be hosted by the Multilingualism, Discourse, and Communication Research Center (MIRCo) of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), 15-16 May 2025. It will build on insights from the EquiLing research project, as well as on the outcomes of previous ECSPM symposia, and will go beyond critical analysis of the management of multilingualism in lower and higher education which presently exacerbates social inequality. Also, this event will give ECSPM members an opportunity to discuss the new projects which it is undertaking as of early 2025.

STRENGTHENING ECSPM'S CONSULTANCY ROLE

- The ECSPM has begun working more closely with the European Commission and specifically:
 - the **Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (EAC)**, which “aims to support and stimulate the development of competences, the learning mobility of individuals, mutual learning through increased cross border cooperation and involvement of stakeholders, as well as policy reform in Member States and partner countries around the world” and in particular with:
 - the Schools and Multilingualism Unit, responsible for the Erasmus+ Teacher Academies
 - the Higher Education Unit, supporting higher education initiatives
 - the **Directorate-General for Interpretation**, especially with:
 - the Sector for inter-institutional relations and Outreach
 - the Sector dealing with Resources and Corporate Services (Strategic Planning and Reporting, Internal Control and Language Technologies)
 - the Knowledge Centre on Interpretation

2024-2025 WORK GROUPS

- In view of ECSPM's collaboration with CoARA on the one hand and with the European Commission DGs on the other, three (3) new Work Groups (WGs) are being formed, each to respond to the aim which will be described in detail by each group separately, and develop a well-defined Action Plan:
 1. **Continue working on the ECSPM project regarding multilingualism in higher education, as well as in research and publishing – the latter in collaboration with the CoARA multilingualism WG.**
 2. Prepare a proposal for a **European Teacher Academy** (funded by Erasmus+) and/or participate in the ETA consortium
 3. **Design and develop a virtual Knowledge Hub, dedicated to Translation, Interpretation and Cross-lingual Communication**, to be linked to the Knowledge Centre for Interpretation and Translation of the European Commission.

EXPRESSED INTEREST

- WHO (**World Health Organisation**) has invited the ECSPM to express active interest in its educational initiative for a "School of INN" (International Non-proprietary Names), an online platform freely accessible in four languages with INN translations available in all United Nations languages because providing international non-proprietary names for medicines plays a crucial role in defining and describing the active principles of medications. Link to modules and resources <https://extranet.who.int/soinn/>.
- The ECSPM has been contacted by the Afrikaanse Taalraad (Afrikaans Language Council) which is involved with work on multilingualism and reconciliation through language in South Africa and has significant experience with complex language issues in South Africa and Namibia. The Afrikaanse Taalraad, officially registered as a language council at the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious, and Linguistic Communities, wishes to collaborate with the ECSPM – to share experiences and best practices.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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