

language education policy issues, followed by the promotion of the European Language Portfolio and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Both of these Council of Europe initiatives were widely disseminated by the Language Policy Division in 2001.

14. More than 30 different themes were proposed for a future "European Day of Languages" (EDL). Three out of four co-ordinators regarded specific EDL activities in their country as feasible, mainly in the form of seminars and conferences, festivals and fairs. ■

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Country Language Education Policy Profiles

The Language Policy Division is launching a new activity to assist member States in reflecting on their language education policy. The aim is to offer member States the opportunity to undertake a 'self-evaluation' of their policy in a spirit of dialogue with Council of Europe experts, and with a view to focusing on possible future policy developments within the country. It should be stressed that developing a language education policy profile does not mean 'external evaluation'. It is a process of reflection by the authorities and members of civil society, and the Council of Europe experts have the function of acting as catalysts in this process. The activity may be applied not only at national level, but also, if preferred, to a local administrative area such as a city or a region.

This activity will be launched in Hungary in autumn 2002, and presented at the November conference.

Authorities who are willing to consider this activity for 2003 and 2004 are invited to contact the Language Policy Division (decs-lang@coe.int).

The Council of Europe has declared 26 September an annual European Day of Languages

The European Year of Languages 2001 was successful in involving millions of people across 45 countries in activities to celebrate linguistic diversity and the benefits of being able to speak another language.

www.coe.int/JEL

European Day of Languages
26 September



Journée européenne des langues
26 septembre

Why do we need a European Day of Languages?

While many people agree that everyone should be able to speak another language, in many countries only about half can do so.

There have never been more opportunities to work or study in a different European country – but lack of language competence prevents many people from taking advantage of them.

Globalisation and patterns of business ownership mean that citizens increasingly need foreign language skills to work effectively within their own countries.

Europe is rich in languages – there are over 200 European languages and many more spoken by citizens whose family origin is from other continents. This is an important resource to be recognised, used and cherished.

Language learning brings benefits to young and old – you are never too old to learn a language and to enjoy the opportunities it opens up.

Learning other peoples' languages is a way of helping us to understand each other better and overcome our cultural differences.

What are the aims of the European Day of Languages?

- To alert the public to the importance of language learning
- To increase awareness and appreciation of ALL the languages spoken in Europe
- To encourage lifelong language learning

The **theme** of the European Day of Languages 2002 is **lifelong language learning**.

How can I get involved?

- *Spread the word*
Help to make sure as many people as possible are informed about the Day, by publicising it to friends and colleagues,

in newsletters, on websites, at meetings and to contacts in the media. Ideas are available at the website below.

The experience of the European Year of Languages 2001 shows we can achieve much more in partnership than alone. The Day provides an opportunity to continue to strengthen partnerships developed during the year at local, regional, national and international levels.

- *Organise events*

Partners in the European Year of Languages organised many thousands of successful events, ranging from talks to activities involving whole towns and cities. A selection of practical ideas applicable to any situation and further information can be found on the Council of Europe website for the Day at www.coe.int/JEL

The European Day of Languages: frequently asked questions:

- *How can we celebrate lifelong language learning?*

Lifelong language learning means language learning at all stages of life both within and outside of the education system. We can always improve our skills or take up a new language.

- *How can we celebrate the European Day of Languages?*

It could be celebrated in schools, in workplaces or in any public place, with activities involving old and young; this can involve ALL languages, whether learnt in childhood or taken up at a later age.

- *Who is responsible for organising the European Day of Languages?*

It has been recommended that the Day should be celebrated in a decentralised and flexible way. There are no organisational guidelines at international level, though there are national "relays" / contact persons in most countries. The details of the "relays" are available on the website.

- *Will the Day have its own logo?*

The logo for the Day is the same as that used for the European Year of Languages. It can be obtained from the address below or from the website. Organisers of events can use the image alone, or add the words "European Day of Languages", as they wish, provided the objectives are in keeping with those of the Day.

- *What support is available?*

The Council of Europe web site offers examples, suggestions and a data base

to which you can add your events. A poster was produced and made available in electronic form to national authorities and possible partners for adaptation to national, regional or local needs. Support at national level varies according to the priorities and resources of each country.

European Day of Languages website:
www.coe.int/JEL ■

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Federalism in education in the Russian Federation

This project was launched in March 2000 with a national seminar in Snegiri (cf doc. DGIV/EDU (2000) 06). The primary goal of the project on Federalism in Education in the Russian Federation is to explore the issues of implementation of educational policies in the context of power sharing among the levels of government (federal, regional and local self-government). In-depth case studies in four regions (Subjects) of the Russian Federation were carried out in 2001 in Moskovskaya Oblast, Chuvash Republic, Primorskiy Krai and Irkutsk Oblast (docs DGIV/EDU

(2000)12 and 19, (2001) 25 and 26). The discussions focused on the contradictions among laws affecting educational provision, on the devolution of responsibilities to regions without assigning an adequate revenue base and on the principles of standards setting and quality assurance in federal states. It was emphasized that there was a need for the framework federal law on education to allow sufficient flexibility in policy implementation with shared responsibilities between the levels of governance in the fields of access, mobility and identity-development (in-service teacher training,

modern information technologies), assessment as well as equal educational opportunity. These issues as well decentralization, school funding and public accountability in educational policy will be discussed in the course of further implementation of the project later this year. ■

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

This double issue, though far from exhaustive in terms of the variety of activities undertaken by the Council of Europe's Education Directorate over the past few months, offers a good overall view of the focus and meaning of our work. We hope that it also gives an adequate illustration of how we go about reconciling the need for targeted country- and region- based activities with the continuing requirements of broad, multilateral co-operation, which, in education, involves the 48 countries of the European Cultural Convention (ECC). The two approaches are intimately linked and nourish each other. Targeted co-operation activities, carried out at the request of the countries concerned and dealing with various aspects of educational provision, draw on the broad-based, standard-setting work that is the staple of multilateral, cultural co-operation in such diverse areas as education for democratic citizenship (EDC), history teaching, the impact of new technologies on teaching and learning, education policies, and so on.

Though varied, these activities represent a coherent ensemble, carefully crafted and implemented so as to reflect the specific "added value" of

the Council of Europe's contribution to international educational co-operation and its political mission in favour of genuine democracy, social cohesion and the defence of human rights, including cultural and educational rights. A rapid glance through this issue can only comfort the notion of coherence and balance of a programme that is, we believe, also good value for money, judging by the extra budgetary resources that governments provide to strengthen specific aspects of our work, effectively doubling our financial possibilities.

As shown in this issue, the Council of Europe's co-ordinating role was highlighted at the second conference of ministers of education of South-East Europe, whose general objectives were to improve co-operation and step up reform (page 2). The Organisation is also co-organiser of a colloquy on Teaching about the Holocaust and artistic creation, at which education ministers are to officially launch a day of Holocaust remembrance in all the ECC signatory states (page 4).

Legislative reform (page 5), the recognition of qualifications and student mobility (page 5) and education policies (page 8) continue to be priorities