

Promoting multilingualism and language learning in the European Union: the European Indicator of Language Competence

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Manolis MAVROMMATIS (EPP-ED, GR) in response to the Commission communication on a 'European Indicator of Language Competence'. The committee welcomed the Commission's proposals, saying that greater and more widespread linguistic proficiency was a yardstick for measuring the quality of European education and training systems, as well as being essential for the achievement of the Lisbon strategy. MEPs believed, however, that the Commission and Council should ensure that further languages were added as soon as possible to the language proficiency tests (which would initially focus on the five most widely taught languages in the EU: English, French, German, Spanish and Italian). The Member States, for their part, were urged to participate actively in the implementation and development of the Indicator, and to give fresh impetus to language teaching.

The Commission was also asked to be more proactive in informing the public of the advantages of foreign language proficiency and in helping to promote multilingualism.

Lastly, the committee pointed out that the proposed Indicator did not involve additional EU budget outlay, as expenditure would be met by the existing Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes, and the new integrated Lifelong Learning programme. It called on the Commission and Council to ensure that the latter programme was allocated the necessary resources for the promotion of language learning and that the next financial perspective included sufficient funding for measures to make full use of the Indicator.