

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

2005/2213(INI) - 27/04/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Manolis **MAVROMMATIS** (EPP-ED, GR) in response to the Commission communication on a 'European Indicator of Language Competence'. (Please see the summary dated 21/03/2006.)

Parliament felt that it was essential for the achievement of a People's Europe and the knowledge-based society, both of which are aims of the Lisbon strategy, for every citizen to have a practical grasp of at least two languages other than his own. The acquisition of just one common language of communication (as a lingua franca) is not sufficient. It welcomed the Commission proposal concerning the inclusion of a European Indicator of Language Competence among the criteria used by Member States under the 'Education and Training 2010' programme. The indicator in question sought to establish accurately, reliably and at regular intervals on the basis of objective tests overall foreign language proficiency standards in all the Member States. Parliament agreed with the Commission' that in the initial phase this indicator should be used to assess linguistic proficiency in the five most widely taught languages in the Union's education and training systems (English, French, German, Italian and Spanish). However, measures should be taken to extend these tests to a wider range of official Union languages without undermining standards of teaching in respect of other languages not assessed by the indicator.

Parliament called on the Member States to participate actively in the implementation and development of the Indicator and give fresh impetus to language teaching. It pointed out that the Indicator proposed by the Commission did not involve additional EU budget outlay, the estimated operating expenditure being met by the existing Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes and the new integrated Lifelong Learning programme. The Commission and Council must accordingly ensure that the new integrated Lifelong Learning programme was endowed with the necessary resources for the promotion of language learning, and that the next financial perspectives include sufficient funding for measures to make full use of the Indicator.