

Questionnaire for stakeholders

Name of respondent : The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)
 Organisation :
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 Title and position: Vice-President

Introduction

Our consortium has been awarded a contract by the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture to perform a 'feasibility study on the setting up of a European Agency for Linguistic Diversity and Language Learning'.

The objectives of the study are:

- to assess the need for setting up a European Agency for Linguistic Diversity and Language Learning, taking into account the existing organisations in the field of linguistic diversity and language learning and the policies set out in the Commission's Action Plan¹;
- to make a preliminary assessment of the likely positive and negative impacts of the setting up of such Agency, as well as to study alternative scenarios.

The type of 'Agency' under consideration would be an autonomous Community body, as there exist already a number of them : e.g. Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) in Thessaloniki; or EUMC (the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia) in Vienna.

A wide variety of actors is working in this broad field of 'linguistic diversity and language learning'. We consult stakeholders and policy-makers, both at European, international, national and regional levels to learn their opinions and views on what it is like to work in this field, and what the European public level can further contribute.

Thank you to prepare your answers on the questions below, and to return the questionnaire to us. During our interview, we will explore your opinions and answers.

Questions

1. Considering the broad field of 'linguistic diversity and language learning' and the wide variety and important number of actors in this field, do you think there is a need for more substantial action or greater support at a European level ?

	Yes, this would be <u>very</u> useful	Yes, this <u>can</u> be useful	Not useful / adequate provisions exist	Not relevant to us / I don't know
Policy advice				
• towards EU level decision-makers	X	O	O	O
• towards national level decision-makers	X	O	O	O
• advice towards institutions (in general)	X	O	O	O
Research				
• comparative (cross-national) research based upon existing research results	X	O	O	O
• New empirical research: collect statistical and other data	X	O	O	O
• To develop and test tools and methodologies	X	O	O	O
Financial support for concrete actions: in e.g. research, awareness raising, promotion	X	O	O	O

¹ COM(2003) 449 final : http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/doc/official/keydoc/actlang/act_lang_en.pdf

	Yes, this would be <u>very</u> useful	Yes, this <u>can</u> be useful	Not useful / adequate provisions exist	Not relevant to us / I don't know
Cooperation and networking: support and develop networking among various actors, and at different levels (regional, national, EU, international)	O	X	O	O
Co-ordination of activities undertaken by various actors	X	O	O	O
Centralisation of information and knowledge at EU level	X	O	O	O
Dissemination of information	O	X	O	O
Promotion of the multi-lingual society	X	O	O	O
Defence and representation of RML (regional and minority languages) / lesser-used languages communities	X	O	O	O
Please specify any other field(s) where you perceive needs : There is a need for an independent agency which, in respect for minority and lesser used languages at least, might assist those linguistic communities under threat to ensure that public authorities fulfill their legal obligations towards them to guarantee their legitimate rights. In other words, it might act as an enforcing agency in which case it should have sufficient resources to ultimately fund and support appropriate test cases in the courts, nationally and internationally.	X	O	O	O

2. How can the needs which you have identified ideally be solved at the EU level ? Below are different alternatives. Can you please rank them according to how adequate you consider them to tackle the needs (whereby 1=most adequate, and 7=least adequate) ?

Ranking (1-7)	Option
2	To extend the role and tasks of the European Commission
6	To extend the tasks of an existing institution : (please specify which institution you see apt)
4	To develop or create existing / new networks
5	A virtual agency (managed by existing institutions as a project)
1	To create a an autonomous (new) agency
7	No action
...	Other :

3. If an autonomous new Agency were created, what should be the scope of its work (note : several of the below suggested elements can be ticked)

	Yes	No
The promotion of the <u>asset</u> of a multi-lingual society, focussing on :		
• lifelong language learning for all	X	O
• better language teaching	X	O
• cultural activities and media (involving 'language')	X	O
The <u>rights</u> of linguistic communities in the EU		
• information	X	O
• promotion / representation	X	O

	Yes	No
Research and knowledge-building		
• centralisation of information	X	O
• comparative (cross-national) research	X	O
• new research	X	O

<p>Covering which languages ? If an agency were created, do you believe that it should cover <u>all</u> languages ?</p> <p>As an EU agency, it should concentrate upon languages which are indigenous to the EU, or the Council of Europe geographical areas. Of course, in a global climate, it should also be concerned with non-indigenous linguistic communities also, but these should be of secondary importance.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> → please continue below
<p>If you do <u>not</u> think it should cover 'all' languages : which are the languages it should cover then ? (more than one category can be ticked)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU official languages - National official languages - Regional official languages - Regional / minority languages - Immigrant languages - Other languages 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

4. In your own words, which do you consider should be the 3 main objectives of such an Agency ?

1)	To be completely independent – free from political interference so that linguistic communities can feel confident in its unbiased position.
2)	To promote linguistic diversity and encourage public authorities to fulfill their legal responsibilities to ALL language communities within the European Union.
3)	To monitor, and if appropriate, to enforce public authorities to comply with their legal obligations.

5. If an agency were created, what should in your opinion be its roles ? Please tick how important you think the following roles are :

	Very important	Important	No opinion	Not important	Preferably not
Provide advice to policy makers (supporting role)	X	O	O	O	O
To do independent new research	O	X	O	O	O
To co-ordinate existing (research & other) activities	X	O	O	O	O
To compile and disseminate already existing information (knowledge centre)	X	O	O	O	O
To be a network building agency	O	X	O	O	O
To promote linguistic diversity and the multi-lingual society (awareness-raising)	X	O	O	O	O
To represent RML language communities	X	O	O	O	O
To represent immigrant / other language communities	O	X	O	O	O
Other : To monitor public authorities and to have "teeth" to ensure compliance.	X	O	O	O	O

6. In your opinion, which should be the main target groups of an Agency for Linguistic Diversity and Language Learning, if it were created ?

X	EU policy makers and institutions
X	National or regional policy-makers and institutions

<input type="radio"/>	The academic community
<input type="radio"/>	Professionals in the field of language training
<input type="radio"/>	NGOs
<input type="radio"/>	The different linguistic communities
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	The general public
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Other (please specify) : National, Regional and Local Governments

7. All in all, do you think that the Commission should establish an autonomous Agency ?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> no	<input type="radio"/> I have no opinion
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8. If no: why do you consider such an agency should not be established ?

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9. How do you consider a future agency could provide a significant contribution to the work of your own organisation ?

Advocacy and facilitating dialogue between parties in conflict.

10. How do you consider that your own organization could provide input for the work of the Agency ?

As an umbrella organisation for many national minorities, the FUEN would be able to relay information about specific linguistic problems to the Agency gained from direct experiences in the field.

11. Which would be the added value of such an agency ?

It might form a useful tool in conflict prevention and resolution while, at the same time, would assist the citizens of the European Union to access their legitimate linguistic rights and so maximise opportunities in other EU countries.

12. What are the conditions you think need to be fulfilled for the success of an autonomous Agency ?

It would need a solid financial foundation.

It should be free from political influence and be completely independent (difficult to ensure, bearing in mind that the EU is funded by domestic governments).

It should take into account, not just the legislation of the EU but also that of the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

Questionnaire

QUESTIONS	<u>ANSWERS</u>
1) Contact details of the organisation	<p>Name of the organisation (full name in original language and, if possible, in English or French):</p> <p>Name of respondent : The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), Union Federaliste des Communautés Ethniques Européennes (UFCE), Federalistische Union Europäischer Volksguppen (FUEV)</p> <p>Country: Germany</p> <p>Address: FUEV-Generalsekretariat Schiffbrücke 41 D - 24939 Flensburg</p> <p>Telephone: ++49 –461-128 55</p> <p>Fax: ++49 – 461 – 18 07</p> <p>E-mail: info@fuen.org</p> <p>Website: www.fuen.org</p>
2) Type of institution	_ International organization
3) Main geographic scope of activity	_ European _ International
4) Could you please specify which countries your organisation covers	Broadly speaking, the whole of Europe and extending into the Russian Federation and the Caucasus.

<p>5) Could you please indicate the scope of your organisation's work</p>	<p>_ Representation (defending the rights of linguistic communities) / Legislation</p> <p>_ Promotion of and awareness-raising about language learning and the multi-lingual society</p> <p>_ Cultural activities and cooperation in the broad sense</p> <p>_ Media</p> <p>_ Other (please specify) : Organising a number of seminars throughout the year to highlight the problems faced by various national minorities. Fact-finding trips to assess the scale of problems and, if appropriate acting as advocates with domestic governments.</p>	
<p>6) Could you please specify your core activity</p> <p>(in the field of linguistic diversity, regional and minority languages, culture and media)</p>	<p>One of the above (please describe) : The FUEN is an umbrella organisation for national minorities and lobbies on their behalf in the individual states of Europe. The general aim of the FUEN is to preserve the identities of European National Minorities, along with their languages, cultures and histories.</p> <p>Other (please describe) : In the course of a year, FUEN organises seminars for Slavonic minorities, German minorities and minorities without kin-state, in which the importance of minority languages is always emphasised.</p>	
<p>7) How many people and what type of staff in your institution?</p>	<p>_ Paid staff - <i>How many</i> : 2</p> <p>_ Voluntary - <i>How many</i> : ...6</p> <hr/> <p>_ Full time - <i>How many</i> : ...1</p> <p>_ Part time - <i>How many</i> : ...1</p>	
<p>8) Is your institution part of a wider network of similar organizations?</p>	<p>_ No</p>	
<p>9) Financing (and % of total budget)</p>	<p>_ Public subsidies</p> <p>_ Grants (project-specific)</p> <p>_ Commercial activities</p> <p>_ Donations</p> <p>_ Other : Membership subscriptions</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">%</p> <p>27%</p> <p>28%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>32%</p> <p>13%</p>

10) Which organisations / institutions are the most important sources of information for your organisation ?	The Council of Europe, The European Commission, The United Nations,
11) Who are your main target groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ general public _ adults _ researchers _ policy-makers _ other (please specify) : national minorities
12) Please feel free to add additional relevant information about your organisation and its activities	FUEN enjoys Participatory Status at the Council of Europe and Consultative Status at the United Nations. It currently has 76 full members from 32 different states, together with a significant number of associate members.