

Study on "Multilingualism: Between Policy Objectives and Implementation"

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About the study

- assess multilingualism and language learning policies and their outcomes
- European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe (1992)
- EC 'Communication on multilingualism' – Action Plan (2003)

What was done

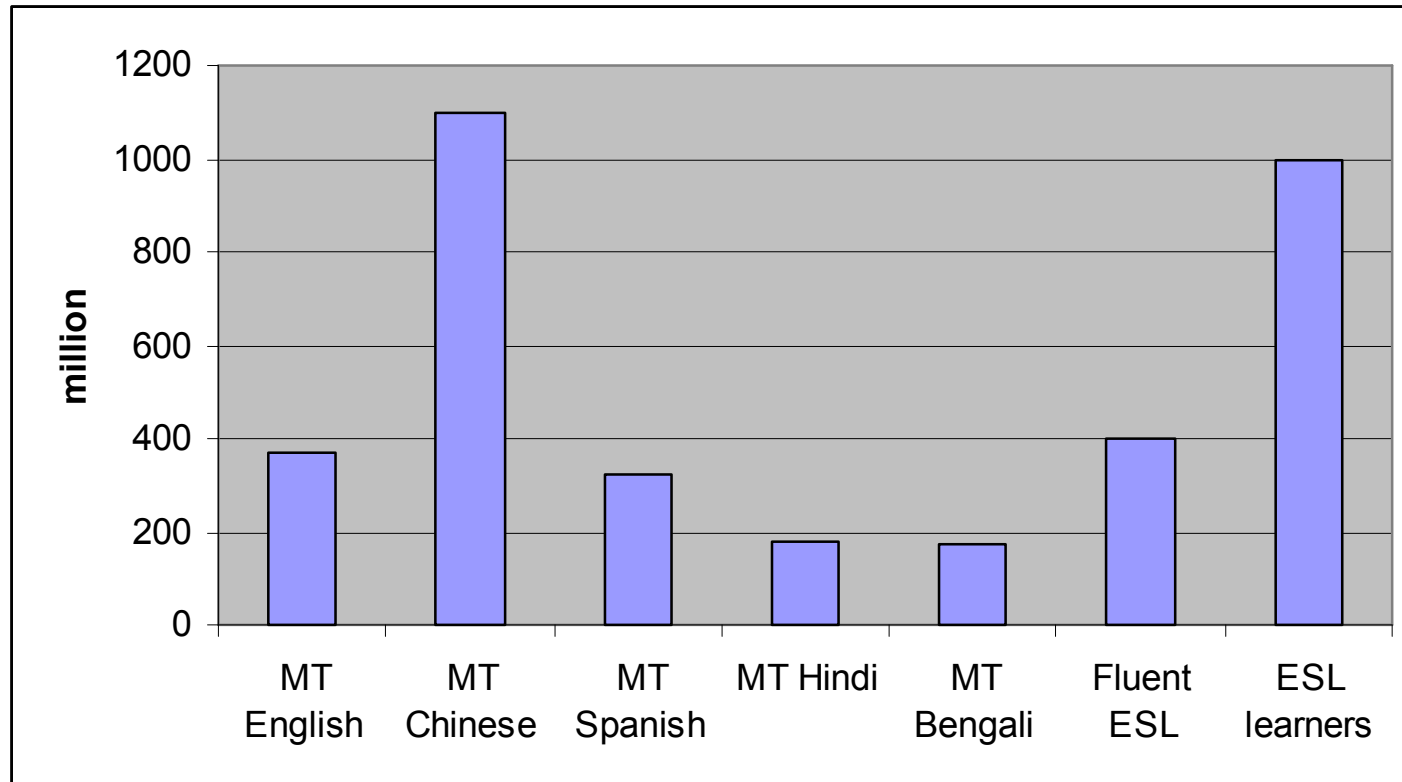
- Carried out by MENON Network
- Brussels-based. Members include 3 Universities (Erlangen; HUT; BUTE); 3 research institutions (SCIENTER - IT; Tavistock Institute - UK; Lambrakis - GR)
- Mainly desk based research – supported by expert and stakeholder interviews
- Policy analysis (EU and member states)
- Content analysis – key studies and reports
- Mapping of initiatives outside EU and national institutions (national; regional; local levels)
- Statistical analysis – implementation scoring and analysis for Action Plan and Charter



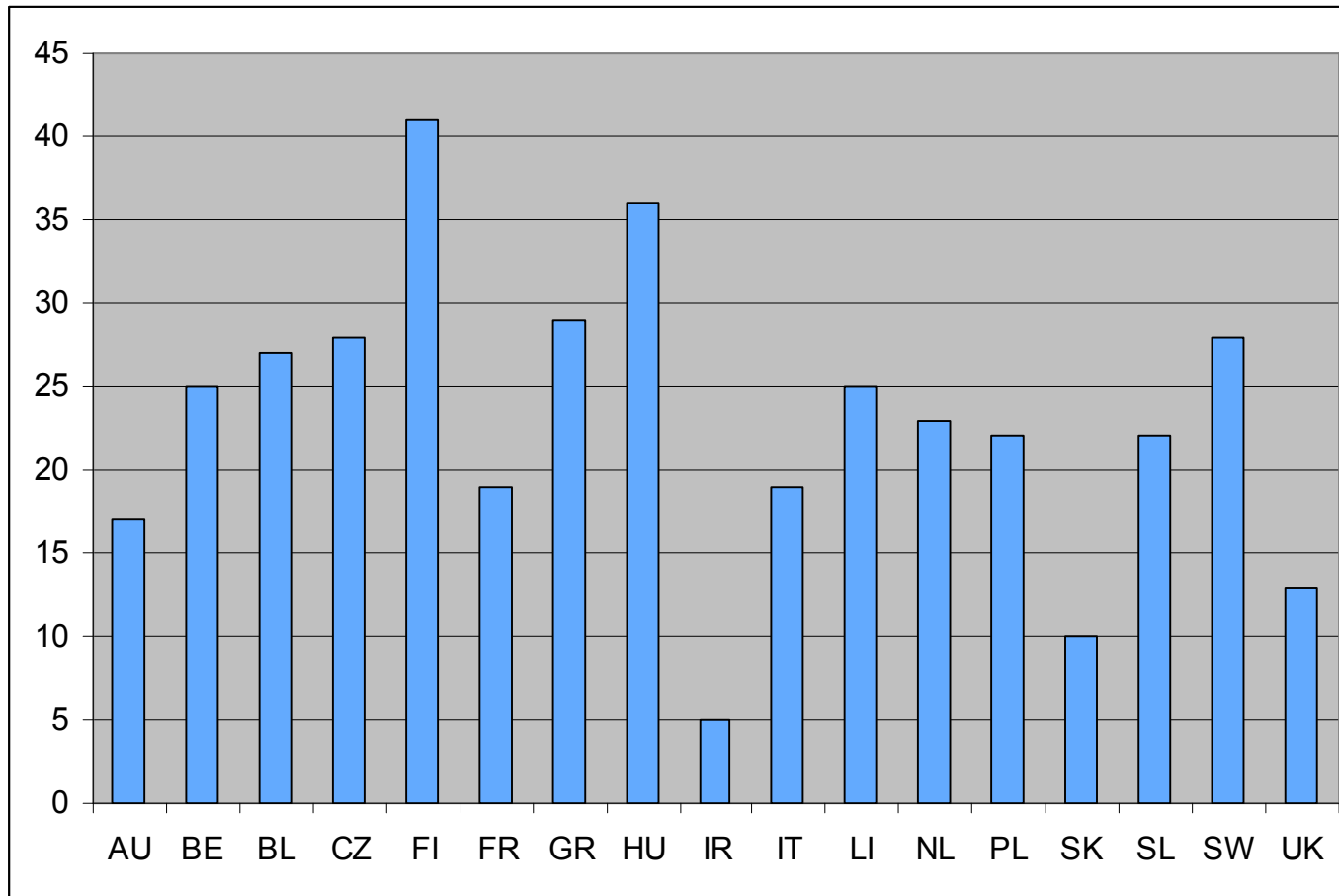
Key Issues

- Contrasting policy agendas – mobility v inclusion
- Multilingualism more prioritised than linguistic diversity
- Contrasting involvement of main EU institutions
- Low priority in EU funding mechanisms
- Citizen resistance to ‘multilingual Europe’
- Globalisation of English

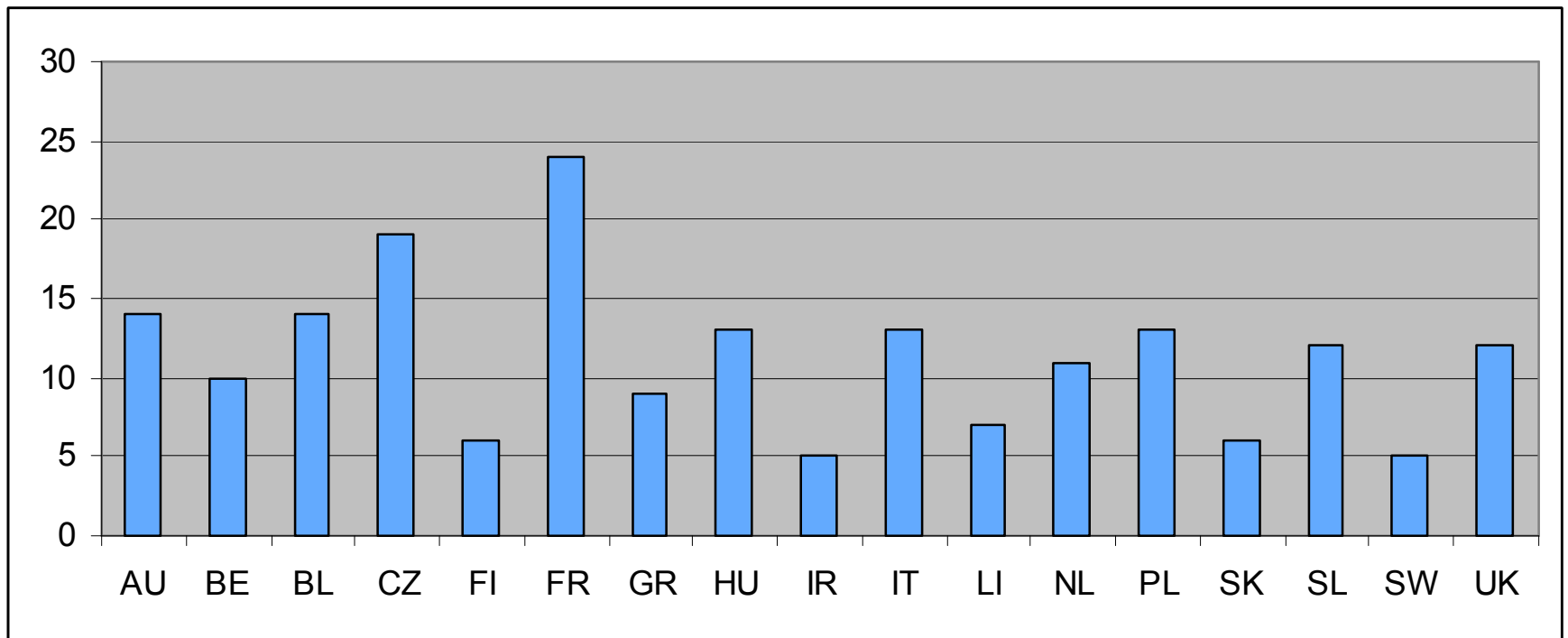
Global Spread of English



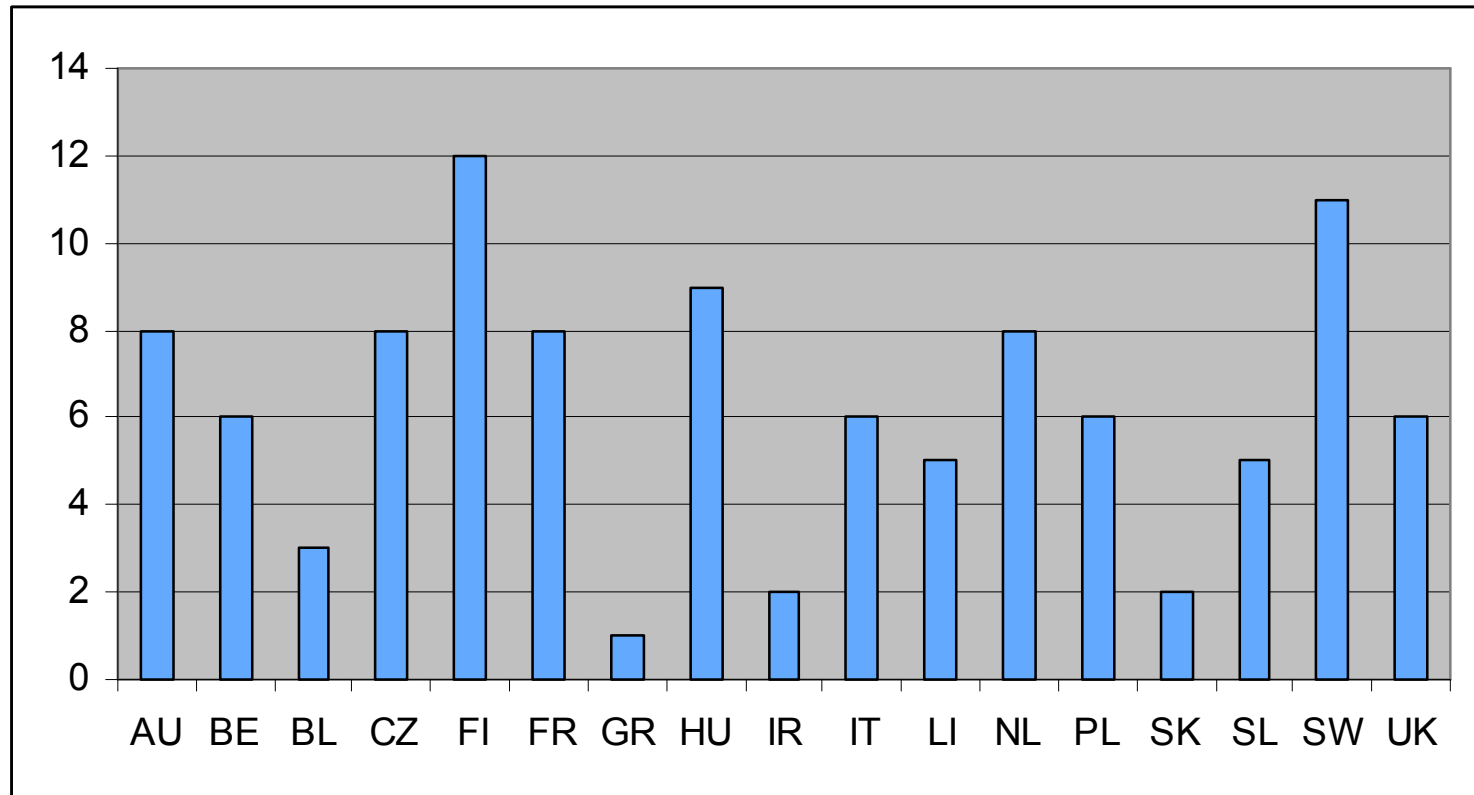
Action Plan Implementation Scores, Lifelong Language Learning



Action Plan Implementation Scores, Better Language Teaching



Action Plan Implementation Scores: Building a Language-Friendly Environment

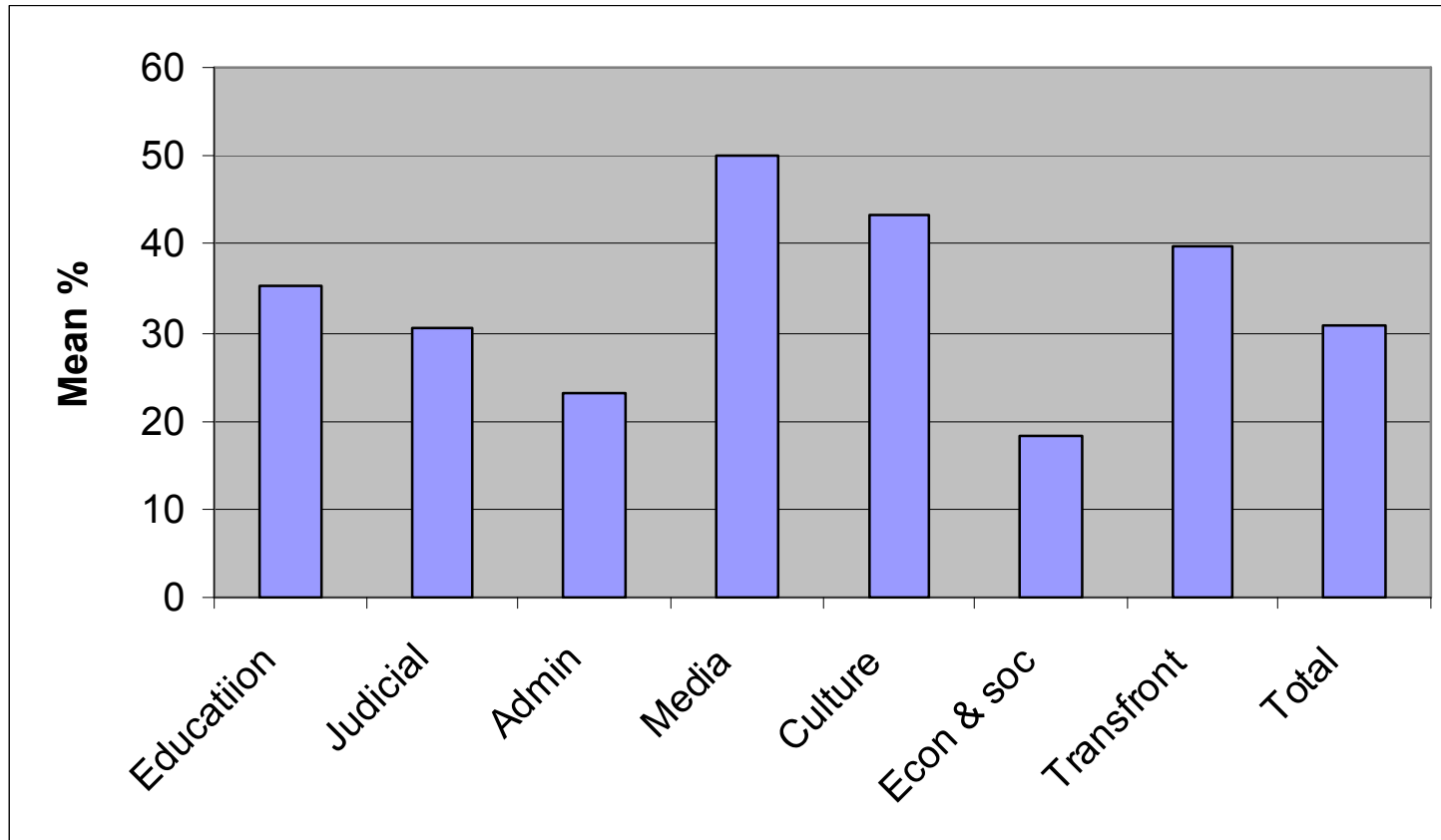




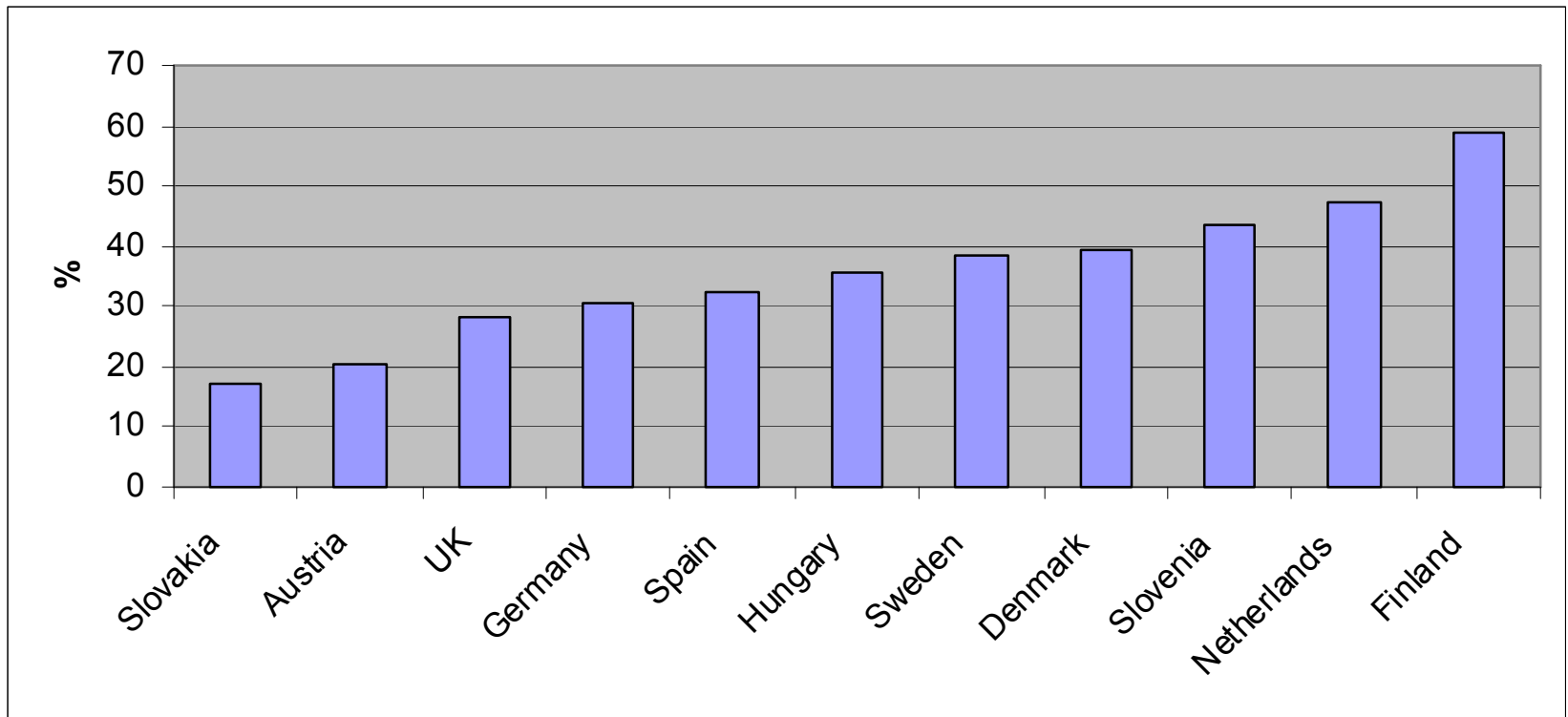
The Minority Language landscape, sampled countries

Country	No.	Languages covered	No.	Languages not covered
Spain	3	Basque, Catalan, Catalan2, Valencian	4	Aragones, Asturain, Galician, Occitan
Austria	3	Croatian, Hungarian, Slovenian	1	Czech
Slovakia	8	Bulgarian, Hungarian, Polish, Romany, Ruthen, Czech, Croatian, German	0	
Germany	11	Danish, Low German1, LowG2, LowG3, LowG4, LowG5, Low Con, N Frisian, Romany, S Frisian, Sorbian	1	Czech
Hungary	3	German, Romanian, Slovakian	2	Serbian, Slovenian
Sweden	3	Finnish, Tor Finnish, Suomi	0	
Netherlands	1	Frisian	0	
Denmark	1	German	1	Faroese
UK	3	Irish, Gaelic, Welsh	2	Cornish, Scots
Slovenia	2	Italian, Hungarian	0	
Finland	2	Suomi, Swedish	1	Tatar

Implementation ratios for the seven key Articles of the Charter



Charter implementation scores by country



Key Conclusions - 1

- 1 in 5 Europeans active language learners
- Uneven distribution of skills – most in smaller countries
- English dominant in schools
- 46m lesser used language speakers; around 60 languages
- Knowledge base fragmented
- Multilingualism and language learning not ‘mainstreamed’ in European policies
- Socrates and Leonardo main funding mechanisms – impact small but important

Key Conclusions - 2

- Few member states close to achieving implementation targets of the Action Plan
- Main obstacles: lack of trained teachers; curriculum time; poor support for training and placements; no partnerships in adult learning; dominance of English
- Action Plan too complex and ambitious – not tailored to individual states
- Around 25% initiatives outside EU/MS – not enough relevance to everyday life of learners
- Only 30% of Charter provisions implemented – mostly in ‘Media’ component – varies across MS
- Obstacles: complexity; dominance of English; skills shortages; lack of training

Recommendations

- More research to expand knowledge base
- Promote culture change – particularly ‘hard to reach’ groups
- Meta-analysis of programmes to find out ‘what works’
- Overcome ‘fear factor’ of language learning; make it more applicable to everyday life – use existing community spaces
- Incentives for language learners
- Dedicated funding programme Action Line
- Collaborative working between key stakeholders – feasibility study for ‘Agency for Multilingualism’
- Review Action Plan and Charter

Action Plan and Charter

- Review Charter and Action Plan - current structure, format and monitoring and evaluation systems
- More flexible structure – audit of MS strengths and weaknesses; customisation to reflect needs and progress
- Key areas to improve:
 - better info for parents;
 - incentives for teacher training; specialised HE programmes for LLL;
 - partnerships to support adult learning in MS
- Support incentive schemes – e.g. Belgium language learning vouchers