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The European Day of Languages: celebrating 25 years of motivating Europe to learn languages

Strasbourg, 25.09.2025 – The [Secretary General](#) of the Council of Europe, **Alain Berset**, made the following statement, ahead of the [European Day of Languages](#) marked on 26 September:

“2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the European Day of Languages, a celebration of Europe’s rich linguistic and cultural diversity and a powerful reminder of the importance of language learning for democratic participation, inclusion, and mutual understanding.

Europe’s multilingual heritage is one of its greatest strengths. The Council of Europe actively promotes and protects this diversity, recognising that the teaching and learning of multiple languages is not a cultural luxury, but a political necessity—a vital means of bringing the European ideal to life and reinforcing the pluralistic, inclusive, and forward-looking values at the heart of the European project. This is underpinned by instruments such as the Council’s Common European Framework of Reference for Languages ([CEFR](#)) and its Companion Volume which have revolutionized language education and have been taken up worldwide.

Both the CEFR and the European Day of Languages were born out of the European Year of Languages 2001, a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission aimed at raising awareness of Europe’s linguistic wealth and encouraging lifelong language learning. Since then, 26 September has become a yearly celebration of all languages—large and small, spoken and signed, regional and migrant—highlighting the role of languages in education, society, and personal development.

To mark this special anniversary, the Council of Europe will launch a [Motivation Manifesto](#), developed with the support of the European Commission, to spotlight the critical role of motivation in successful language learning. Motivation is widely recognised as one of the most reliable predictors of learner achievement and addressing it is key to fostering engagement and educational success.

As we celebrate 25 years of the European Day of Languages, the Council of Europe reaffirms its commitment to plurilingual and intercultural language education, founded on shared democratic values. It will continue to work with its member states to bring the benefits of Europe’s linguistic diversity closer to its citizens—enhancing mutual respect and understanding, strengthening social cohesion and democratic citizenship. In doing so language education makes an important contribution to the New Democratic Pact.

This anniversary is not only a celebration, but a call to action: to support motivated, empowered learners who are ready to contribute to an open, democratic, and multilingual Europe.”

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