

## "Multilingual Competences for Professional and Social Success in Europe" Conference, Warsaw, 28-29 September 2011

### DECLARATION

1. The conference "Multilingual Competences for Professional and Social Success in Europe", organised by the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Commission, was held in Warsaw on 28 and 29 September 2011. The conference was dedicated to the role of languages in preparing the citizens to function in a multilingual and multicultural Europe.
2. The conference was attended by experts from the EU Member States involved in language teaching, teachers and academics, representatives of research centres, National Agencies for Lifelong Learning Programme, European Language Label coordinators, representatives of the institutions involved in language teaching, initial teacher education and in-service teacher training, associations of translators and interpreters, students, as well as representatives of the European Union and the Council of Europe institutions.
3. Participants of the conference:
  - a) Have expressed their satisfaction that the conference comprehensively covered various aspects of language education, especially early childhood and primary education; multicultural classroom education; VET, education for mobility, the internationalisation of higher education and education targeted at the needs of the language services market;
  - b) Have emphasised that the European Day of Languages established by the European Union and the Council of Europe in 2001 has made a major contribution to raising social awareness related to the importance of language competences;
  - c) Have expressed confidence that projects implemented within the framework of the European Language Label competition promote linguistic diversity of the European Union, create a valuable database of the best and most innovative practices of language education, enrich and make existing practice of language teaching and learning more attractive by the introduction of school-specific language curricula, innovative teaching methods and use of modern communication technology;

- d) Have appreciated hitherto attainments of the European Commission and the Member States in the field of multilingualism, and in particular the Language Package announced in the summer of 2011;
  - e) Have called for ensuring the promotion of language learning and teaching adequate space in the new generation of the EU educational and youth programmes;
  - f) Have expressed the opinion that the appointment of a standing work group on languages by the European Commission would serve to strengthen the cooperation, exchange of experiences and good practice in the field of multilingualism between the Member States, and better prepare the citizens for educational and professional mobility.
4. The conference has emphasised that nowadays a good command of foreign languages and the ability to use them is a key competence essential to function in the modern world and labour market, which increases the educational opportunities of young people and the professional mobility of adults. Conclusions of the discussion groups reaffirmed that multilingualism is not only part of the European heritage but also a chance to develop a society which is open, respectful of cultural diversity and ready for cooperation.

Warsaw, 29 September 2011