

PLURI Online course

Languages in focus: From EU policy to Multilingual education

Project PLURI - Plurilingualism for better education, cohesion and linguistic diversity -
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Partner



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Language rights and discrimination

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The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the EU or EACEA.

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The EU supports multilingualism in its programmes and institutions

- The EU has 24 official languages
- EU nationals have the right to communicate with the EU institutions in any of these languages
- Legal acts and their summaries are available in all official EU languages.
- Meetings of the European Council and the Council of the European Union are interpreted into all official languages. Members of the European Parliament have the right to use any official language when speaking in Parliament.

Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

1. Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, **language**, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

Discrimination means that one person is treated worse than others because of personal characteristics



In certain situations, different treatment can be justified, even if it is based on prohibited grounds for discrimination.



Language discrimination is based on one's native language, accent, etc.



Example: in job ads phrases like “must be a native speaker” should be avoided. But setting language requirements is okay.



Language discrimination is based on false beliefs

Less fluent speakers are seen as less intelligent

Normal intelligence - accent doesn't reflect intelligence

Strong foreign accents are hard to understand

If an accent is new to you, you might need time to adjust

Native speakers know the language perfectly

Teaching and practice develop language skills

CEFR can help set reasonable language skill requirements

01

Basic User

- **A1:** Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
- **A2:** Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

02

Independent User

- **B1:** Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
- **B2:** Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

03

Proficient User

- **C1:** Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
- **C2:** Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.

Recap

Language discrimination is illegal in the EU

It is okay to set language skill requirements, as long as they are reasonable

Language discrimination stems from false beliefs about language

CEFR is a useful tool for setting these requirements

Thank you for watching!

Visit the PLURI project website to find more activities, links and inspiration.

