



## NPLD POSITION PAPER 2025



The **Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity** (NPLD) is a European-wide platform that works to strengthen the protection, promotion, and normalization of regional, minority, and lesser-used languages across Europe. Our network brings together **41 member organisations** from 13 European states, including regional governments, public institutions, universities, and NGOs. Collectively, we represent **21 different languages**, spanning a rich linguistic landscape.

The **NPLD Position Paper**, adopted during the General Assembly held in Pamplona/Iruña in May 2025, defines the shared strategic priorities of the network for the coming years. It sets out clear policy recommendations for European, national, and regional institutions, with the overarching goal of ensuring that linguistic diversity becomes a central pillar of Europe's democratic, social, educational, and technological development.

The document addresses key areas such as the legal recognition of minority languages, multilingual education policies, access to EU programmes, digital inclusion through AI and language technologies, and the revitalisation of endangered languages. It also calls for concrete measures to combat linguistic discrimination, promote the use of minority languages in the labour market, and monitor the implementation of language policies through transparent and comparable indicators.

With this paper, the NPLD renews its commitment to advocate for inclusive, forward-looking language policies that respect and reflect Europe's multilingual reality.

## 1. Legal recognition and protection of minority languages

The NPLD urges European institutions and Member States to strengthen the legal protection of regional and minority languages, ensuring their official recognition.

The NPLD also highlights the persistence of linguistic discrimination in several European states and calls for concrete legal measures to eliminate this phenomenon, which continues to affect minority language speakers in both public and private spheres.

## 2. Multilingualism as a key priority in the EU agenda

We call for reinstating an EU Commissioner for Multilingualism, a position discontinued in 2010. We also call for multilingualism and linguistic diversity to be a central pillar in EU strategies for sustainable development, social cohesion, and innovation. This includes strengthening the role of minority languages in initiatives such as the European Education Area, Digital Europe Programme, and Horizon Europe, ensuring that linguistic diversity is actively promoted in research, education, and technological development.

## 3. Ensuring active inclusion of minority languages in European programmes<sup>1</sup>

While minority languages are not explicitly excluded from EU programmes, they are often overlooked in their design and implementation. We call for explicit inclusion mechanisms, such as dedicated funding streams, linguistic accessibility requirements, and policy guidelines, that ensure regional and minority languages are actively considered in all relevant EU initiatives. Minority languages must be eligible for all EU programmes and funding opportunities, ensuring equal participation of linguistic communities in educational, cultural, technological, research and cooperation projects.

## 4. Prioritising Regional and Minority Languages in Education

Education policies should prioritise regional and minority languages, as hegemonic languages already have a strong presence in all other spheres of society. Schools must guarantee access to high-quality education in and/or on regional and minority languages from early childhood to higher education and to ensure that advanced learning materials in regional or minority languages are provided. This requires effective pedagogy to reflect various linguistic models and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://npld.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NPLD\\_2021\\_report\\_KuipersSchukking.pdf](https://npld.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NPLD_2021_report_KuipersSchukking.pdf)

programmes, teacher training, learning material, and access to new learning technologies such as AI-driven tools and digital education platforms, to strengthen the use and transmission of these languages. All European students must have the right to receive education in a multilingual environment that includes regional and minority languages, ensuring linguistic diversity and intergenerational transmission.

## 5. Digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and linguistic diversity<sup>2</sup>

Digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and language processing tools must include all European languages, preventing digital fragmentation and ensuring equal access to technological innovations. Special attention must be given to under-resourced languages, ensuring that AI-driven language technologies, speech recognition, and machine translation tools support linguistic diversity rather than reinforce existing inequalities.

## 6. Economic and social integration of minority languages

Economic and employment policies should promote the presence of minority languages in both the public and private sector, advertising, commerce, and consumer products, ensuring their economic viability.

## 7. Protection and revitalisation of endangered languages

We call on the EU and national and regional governments to adopt urgent measures to protect and revitalise endangered languages, with specific programmes for intergenerational transmission and community engagement. This should include dedicated funding mechanisms, targeted language revitalisation grants, and policy initiatives that support education, media presence, and community-led language initiatives to ensure long-term sustainability.

## 8. Inclusion of minority languages in migration policies should be a key EU priority

Migration integration strategies must acknowledge the multilingual reality of many regions and facilitate the inclusion of new communities in diverse linguistic environments. Policies should strike a balance between linguistic integration and the protection of regional and minority

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<sup>2</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/min-lang-2022-4-ai-and-ecrml-en/1680a657c5>

languages, ensuring that newcomers are encouraged to learn both the regional language and the dominant national language rather than solely assimilating into majority linguistic norms.

## 9. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: time for action

More than 25 years after its adoption, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) faces persistent non-compliance by many states. We call for a renewed political commitment, the establishment of binding enforcement mechanisms, and a clearer role for the EU in monitoring adherence. This includes integrating compliance assessments into broader EU evaluations of democratic and human rights standards, linking adherence to funding incentives, and ensuring regular reporting and accountability mechanisms between Member States, the Council of Europe, and the EU institutions.

The NPLD will actively strive to encourage more European countries to sign and ratify the European Charter

## 10. Monitoring and evaluation of language policies

The NPLD will advocate for creating clear indicators to assess the impact of language policies, including measures of language transmission rates, institutional support, digital presence, and public perception. Regular monitoring mechanisms should ensure compliance and adaptability to emerging needs, with a transparent reporting framework that allows for comparative analysis across regions and languages.