IO4 Recommendations to policy makers on the implementation of Plurilingual Curricula

1. **General framework**

2. Any kind of plurilingual whole school policy is realised in a given framework of language policies: at a European, national, regional, local level, and under school-specific conditions; it is set in a given historic situation and subject to current developments.

3. Every framework level can support or endanger its implementation.

4. Both affordances and challenges regarding the PlurCur proposal (European linguistic policies, regional policies, conditions at a specific school, etc.) have to be taken into consideration.

The paper therefore first outlines the existing European/national/regional framework, then enumerates recommendations/proposals formulated by the partner schools and finally provides examples of good practice in connection with elements of a PlurCur policy.

2. **What kind of multilingualism/plurilingualism is the aim?**

Multilingualism/plurilingualism is defined as:

- Language proficiency in individual languages plus plurilingual proficiency in specific areas (mediating, translating, code switching, code choice etc.)
- Varying proficiency in the respective languages depending on the needs of the speaker
- Language knowledge that is interconnected, languages that interact with each other and lead to transfer phenomena
- "Division of labour" of the languages involved, i.e. languages are developed in differing areas.
- Multilingualism/plurilingualism needs continuous support for learning, maintaining and managing the languages at a person's disposal.

The PlurCur concept used as a basis for Plur>E considers interconnected language teaching, CLIL teaching and project work, among other approaches, are central to a whole school policy.

2.1 Background: European linguistic policy

Any measures implemented at a regional, local or school level should reflect the Council of Europe Linguistic Policy. Its main aims are:

- All citizens speak at least their L1 + 2 other languages (minority, migrant, neighbouring...)

- Multi- and plurilingualism guarantees social cohesion, peace building, economic opportunities

- European countries adhere to the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Barcelona declaration of linguistic rights.

- European linguistic policy specifically promotes minority languages and lesser used languages.

(cf. e.g. Europäische Kommission (1995), *Weißbuch zur allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung* [Online at http://europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_de.pdf].)

2.2 Linguistic policy in project partners' countries/regions:

All countries represented in the Plur>E project are multilingual and pluriethnic, meaning that various languages have been in use over centuries within the territory of the respective states. The migratory movements of the last 60 years have added a number of new languages to the (autochthonous) languages used and heard.

Most of the countries (Austria, Ireland, Germany, Italy/South Tyrol) recognise more than one official language, or at least (several) minority languages, in their constitutions.

2.3 Language Education Policy Profiles (LEPP) and educational challenges

Ireland

There is currently no foreign/modern language policy in Ireland at any level within the education system. A comprehensive policy is urgently needed for schools to motivate and encourage students to learn languages and to continue learning languages at all levels to support personal, professional and economic needs. This language policy/strategy seems to be imminent since it is of particular importance in a post-Brexit environment.

A LEPP (language education policy profile) process was started in 2005 and continued until 2007 (see LEPP Ireland document, Language Policy Division Strasbourg and Department of Education and Science Ireland).

Austria

Austria participated in the LEPP process of the Council of Europe during which a Country Report was written and a multilingual educational policy was formulated. Several measures support multilingual approaches (e.g. heritage language classes; bilingual classes as part of curricula; early language learning in primary schools). This provides a good basis for the implementation of plurilingual curricula and different types of pluri- and multilingual

approaches in schools. However, more needs to be done to spread these approaches and to actually implement them.'

South Tyrol

The project partners in Bolzano draw our attention to the fact that any measures discussed or taken in the educational field are closely related to the general socio-political and historical situation of the region or country. In South Tyrol, a bilingual/trilingual region, at least three languages (German, Italian and mostly English) are taught in schools. Recently, laws have been passed with the aim to improve multilingualism at school, which is quite innovative from a historical point of view, since due to the „Autonomiestatus" Article 18 multilingual teaching is actually forbidden in German-speaking schools. This reduces the possibilities of implementing plurilingual education projects (e.g. bilingual schools, continuous CLIL-teaching at all educational levels). However, new research has shown that the ethnical groups are actually drifting apart and that the knowledge of the second language has suffered a severe drawback over the last seven years (EURAC kolipsi-study). Furthermore, CLIL projects in Italian schools have also been analysed and the results in connection with language proficiency are not encouraging. This has sparked a new discussion about the efficiency of CLIL-approaches and about multilingual approaches in general.

3. Recommendations for policy makers

3.1 General attitudes

Linguistic and language education policies that contribute to peace and understanding and promote individual and societal development

➢ are based on the respect for the (linguistic) rights of all citizens
➢ see <u>any</u> language in a person's repertoire as a resource for the individual and for society
➢ recognize and promote *all* the languages that individuals bring to the society/to school and counteract the existing hierarchy of languages that favours some languages at the cost of others
➢ contribute to improving the profile of languages (as students, above all in technical careers, often perceive languages as less important than other subjects).
➢ involve all politicians, educational authorities and all stakeholders (school management, teachers, parents, students) in the discussion and implementation of whole school curricula
➢ support public debates about the benefits of multilingualism
➢ support multilingual/plurilingual approaches instead of teaching languages in „separated compartments"
➢ anchor multilingualism/plurilingualism in schools across all levels.

3.2 Measures to be taken at the educational and teacher training levels:

A plurilingual whole schol policy

- provides the necessary means to support plurilingualism in all people by maintaining the languages that students speak at home and in their communities and by providing research-based language learning/teaching programmes
- diversifies the number of languages offered across the educational career of our students
- promotes content and language integrated learning (CLIL) in several languages
- provides more support for immigrants: for example, through a native language lessons programme and more support for improving the language skills of immigrant children in the respective majority language/language of schooling
- introduces foreign languages at primary level
- installs/maintains smaller classes at post-primary level to support greater engagement in class
- provides resources for the cooperation of teachers across languages and subjects.
- installs obligatory training courses in the field of plurilingualism for pre-service/in-service teacher training and offers continuous training for language teachers in the languages they are teaching
- promotes language-learning and use through obligatory exchange programs for language teachers and pupils
- encourages and facilitates online partnerships with schools abroad.
- provides IT facilities in schools that are up-to-date to allow students to work online using modern technology and resources; this promotes self-directed, autonomous learning.
- allows greater flexibility on timetables for CLIL, collaborative and cross-curricular teaching.
- supports universities in their efforts to continue requiring a modern foreign language as an entry requirement and to offer more language modules as part of many more courses than currently on offer.
- provides greater funding for exchange programmes at all school and university levels.
- supports the continuation and expansion of the Erasmus+ University study programme.
- provides more financial and other types of support for schools (e.g. personal resources, experts) for a whole school language policy.

4. Good Practice Examples – learning from the experience of others

Austria:

Curriculum Mehrsprachigkeit (Krumm/Reich 2011)

The "Curriculum Mehrsprachigkeit" (Krumm/Reich 2011), written on the basis of the LEPP process, is available online and can be downloaded from [http://oesz.at/download/cm/CurriculumMehrsprachigkeit2011.pdf]. It contains a variety of

suggestions and activities for plurilingual approaches in the classroom (taken from the Austrian Curricula) across all levels of the Austrian school system.

Interesting information on multilingual initiatives and projects in primary and secondary schools is provided at www.schule-mehrsprachig.at/.

HLW Rankweil

The Austrian partner school focused on metalinguistic awareness and language-learning awareness in students' learning through using at least four different languages. A further focus was preparing the students for the use of multiple languages during their internship abroad (self-reported use of languages and transfer strategies). Examples are found at the Plur>E website.

Germany:

The region of Nordrhein-Westfalen (NRW)

   a. approved an initiative to promote "Plurilingualism alive and kicking" (Initiative lebendige Mehrsprachigkeit) for a better integration of immigrants, supporting nursery, day care and schools,

   b. introduced plurilingualism as an obligatory topic for the final high-school exam Abitur in German (since 2016).

Heinrich-Heine-Gymnasium Köln

This partner school has created a Multilingual Drama Module: Students use all their languages in the theatre group; these languages are: language of instruction, foreign languages learnt in school, dialects, sociolects and home languages.

Ireland:

ASR Ireland

Ardscoil Rís in Limerick carried out a variety of initiatives and projects to motivate students to use the languages that they are learning. The aim was to increase the profile of German/French and Irish in the school environment and to promote cross-curricular teaching. Students were further encouraged to engage with languages outside of classroom content.
Students are taught and encouraged to write blogs and use online platforms in German and/or French; to translate and perform songs in German and French; to write memes using several languages; to participate in Qi Gong lessons in German as well as watch, study and work on

movies, art and culture in a plurilingual approach. Students organised an intercultural event and have developed an app for mobile phones that promotes and facilitates the learning of several langauges.

Italy/South Tyrol:

Mehrsprachencurriculum Südtirol

In December 2015, the provincial government approved a huge package of measures to promote plurilingualism in German schools (Maßnahmenpaket zur Förderung der Mehrsprachigkeit in der deutschen Schule). The school department regards the promotion of plurilingualism as one of the major objectives and considers plurilingualism a valuable opportunity for various forms of communication. This package of measures includes numerous initiatives with the objective to promote plurilingualism. It offers support to schools working in the field of plurilingual education. The publication of the curriculum "Mehrsprachencurriculum Südtirol" by the governing department offers an important resource for promoting and implementing plurilingualism in schools. Various training courses in the field of plurilingualism support interested teachers in their work. The EURAC Bozen accompanies plurilingual education through research.

Good Practice examples from the schools in South Tyrol:

The Gymnasium „Walther von der Vogelweide" in Bozen is the first school to create a CLIL-section in the field of science-mathematics-English/ law-Italian/history-Spanish/ art history-French.

The Fachoberschule für Tourismus und Biotechnologie „Marie Curie" Meran offers various projects and activities in which students use their languages outside the classroom: A group of students took part in the English language project „Youth Parliament to the Alpine Convention" (YPAC); a Festival of Languages with multilingual presentations and performances was organised in the school; other activities included a language café, a multilingual cook book and a tourism project for which students prepared a creative multilingual tour in the „Touriseum" (local museum of tourism).

The Sozialwissenschaftliches, Klassisches Sprachen- u. Kunstgymnasium Meran focuses on comparing multilingual and and multicultural realities (teaching modules):
- transfer of skills in different languages learnt and spoken by students
- focus on literary texts and intercultural education
- presentations of experiences during language weeks in Spain and France: analysis of stereotypes

Other activities organized were a languages and sports-competition; activities connected with the European Day of Languages; the promotion of language certificates

The Sozialwissenschaftliches Gymnasium Bozen offers a language café that is organised twice a year for abut 60 pupils to get an insight into 12 – 13 different languages and cultures; and multilingual workshops: working across languages, some unknown to participating students

Turkey:
Esenler Vocational School Istanbul

In the context of the Esenler vocational school, multilingualism refers to the fact that all languages offered according to the curriculum are equally important. For this project partner, this means:
-- instead of competition, there is mutual enrichment;
-- regular teacher meetings to promote understanding of each other's languages, teaching goals and challenges;
-- allowing all the languages that students bring to the school into the classroom; using prior language knowledge in all (language) classes.

Challenges:
Our official curriculum should allow us to regulate our own curriculum according to our needs. Being unable to design our own curriculum makes our work very challenging and complicated.