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European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages

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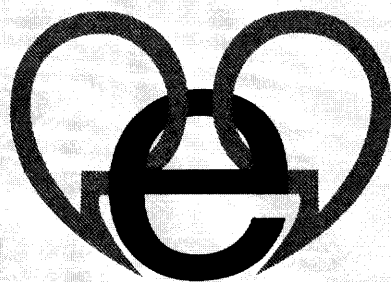
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Annual Report 1996

Version Française sur le dos

European Bureau for
Lesser Used Languages
10 Sráid Haiste Íocht.,
IRL - Baile Átha Cliath 2.

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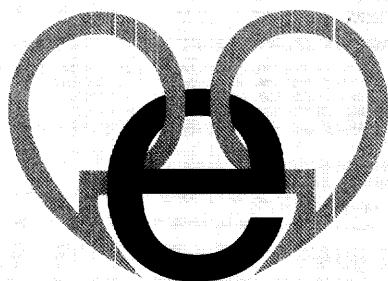
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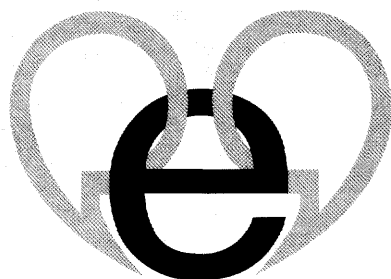
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The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages



“Since 1984 the Bureau has been uncovering Europe’s hidden linguistic heritage and offering speakers of regional and minority languages a voice at European level...”

Introduction

The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages entered its 14th year of activities in 1996: 14 years of acting and speaking on behalf of the circa 50 million EU citizens who speak a language other than the official languages of the states in which they live. Since 1984 the Bureau has been uncovering Europe’s hidden linguistic heritage and offering speakers of regional and minority languages a voice at European level, a voice that represents an integral part of our common European cultural heritage and which enriches the present and future of the Union, in whose shape all citizens have a role to play.

Such is the cultural overlay of Europe, a vast geographical area, long divided by rivalries and conflict, but now seeking to reunite and build a future of peace, harmony and prosperity for all its peoples. Europe now recognizes that such peace and unity can only be achieved by respecting and rejoicing in the rich diversity of its many peoples. No language holds an intrinsic superiority over another but some languages have gained prestige in that they become official languages of powerful states. It is now recognized that all languages have their own unique and intrinsic value and that each one enriches the whole of human experience. With representative committees in 13 out of 15 EU member states and offices in Dublin and Brussels providing employment for nine people, the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages has been playing a vital role in maintaining and ensuring the future of this, Europe’s linguistic mosaic. This report outlines one year of the Bureau’s activities in ensuring the continuity of this mosaic.

Establishment and Aims

On the 16 of October 1981, as a result of a series of motions on regional languages and cultures, the European Parliament adopted the Arfé Resolution. A second resolution was adopted two years later in which the Commission of the European Communities was asked to continue to intensify its activities to promote these languages. One of the ways to do this was to set up an organization which would represent lesser used language speakers at European level.

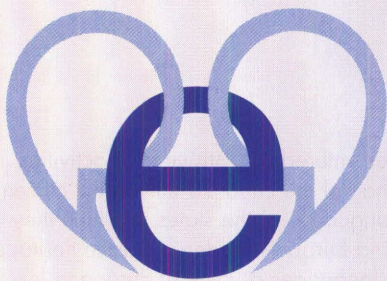
The Bureau’s purpose is to promote and defend the autochthonous regional or lesser used languages of the countries of the European Union and the linguistic rights of those who speak these languages. One of the Bureau’s goals is to define legal frameworks that apply to authorities at all levels - the European institutions, the States, the regions, etc. - in order to guarantee all citizens belonging to a linguistic minority all of the services they need in order to develop and use their language in everyday life.

Legal Status

The Bureau is registered both in Ireland and Belgium as a non-profit association. The Bureau’s Head Office and General Secretariat are based in Dublin and the Brussels Information Centre was opened in 1992. At its 1996 Annual Assembly, the Council of the Bureau decided to change the legal status of the Bureau’s entity in Belgium from an ASBL (Association sans But lucratif) to a AI (“Association Internationale”) which is better suited to the international character of the office. This change which will come into effect in May 97, does not affect the daily work of the Brussels Information Centre.

Membership

The Bureau’s member state committees comprise cultural organisations, official institutions and bodies active in the field of lesser used languages and cultures. The members’ associations are organised within Member State Committees. At present, the European Bureau is made up of 13 Committees which represent the interests of the various minority language communities. The Committees are represented within a General Council which meets twice a year to determine the Bureau’s policy and strategy. Every three years, the Council elects a new Board of six persons including a president and two vice-presidents. The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the operation of the Bureau. 1996 was the first year of the current Board.



Offices

The Council and the Board of Directors are supported in their work by the General Secretariat, which is located in Dublin and implements their decisions, in collaboration with the Member State Committees. The Dublin Head Office's main task is to make contact with the various European institutions, the Member State Committees and numerous official and voluntary associations and organisations across Europe. In addition it is responsible each year for the implementation of a work programme consisting of practical projects. The Brussels Information Centre was created from the need to have a representation of the European Bureau in the centre of European decisions: Brussels. The Information Centre aims at collecting in one place the essential literature and reference works concerning linguistic minorities (documentation service). Through its editorial work and a regular press service it then spreads this information and tries to raise public awareness. Moreover it informs on different EU programmes which might be of interest to minority language communities (information service). The organisation of cultural events and conferences in Brussels is another part of its yearly work programme.

Organigram

BUREAU STRUCTURE

Member State Committees

IRL F D FN E UK A I B L NL SW DK

Council

2 members from each MSC

Board of Directors

President

Vice President 1 (*External Relations*) Vice President 2 (*Fund Raising*)
 Ordinary member 1 (*Personnel*) Ordinary member 2 (*Finance*)
 Ordinary member 3 (*Planning*)



President Allan Wynne Jones

STAFF

Secretary General

Dublin Head Office
 Office Manager Secretary Project Officer 1 Project Officer 2

Brussels Information Centre
 Office Manager Secretary Project Officer 1 Project Officer 2

Members of the Council of the European Bureau

President

Allan Wynne Jones
 Hengwrt
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 UK-Powys SY20 8HE (Cymru)

*“The Dublin Head
Office’s main task is to
make contact with the
various European
institutions, the
Member State
Committees and
numerous official and
voluntary associations
and organisations
across Europe...”*

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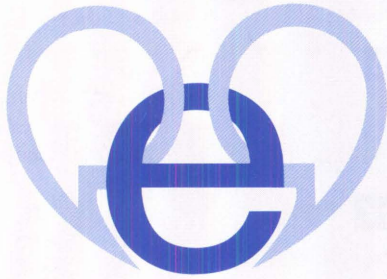
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Allan Campbell
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Board of Directors

- Allan Wynne Jones, Wales, President
- Christian Brandt, Swedish community of Finland, Vice-President in charge of fund-raising
- Bojan Brezigar, of the Slovene community of Italy, Vice-President in charge of external relations
- Jean-Luc Fauconnier, of the Walloon community of Belgium, in charge of personnel
- Jelle Krol, of the Frisian community of the Netherlands, in charge of finance
- Peadar Ó Flatharta, Ireland, in charge of strategic planning

Staff



Dónall O Riagáin

Dublin Head Office

Secretary General: Dónall O Riagáin, founder member and first president of the Bureau, he has been since 1984 the organisation's Secretary General. As well as having overall responsibility for the day to day direction of the organisation as a whole, he deals with matters relating to the Council and Board and with external relations.



Diarmaid Breathnach

Office Manager: Diarmaid Breathnach joined the Bureau in 1986 and is responsible for the overall co-ordination of projects carried out in the Dublin Head Office in addition to the general duties of an office manager. He is also editor of the Bureau's newsletter *Contact-Bulletin*. He is fluent in French, English, Irish and German. He is a graduate of University College Dublin and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in French and German.



Olwyn Ní Chróinín

Executive Secretary: Olwyn Ní Chróinín joined the Bureau eleven years ago and is executive secretary to the Secretary General. In addition she deals with general enquiries to the Bureau from around the world and manages and services the flow of information in and out of the office and deals with general enquiries by letter, phone, fax and e-mail. She is fluent in Irish and English and holds a diploma in secretarial studies.



Caoimhe Ní Lochlainn

Project Officer 1, Caoimhe Ní Lochlainn, is responsible for the study visit programme and youth projects which involve co-ordinating meetings and work of the Youth Advisory Committee and the organisation of an annual youth seminar. She is also responsible for press relations in the Dublin Head Office. She is fluent in English, Irish and Italian. She is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Italian and History.

Project Officer 2, Mared Roberts, joined the organisation in 1995 and was made a permanent employee in 1996. In addition to being personal assistant to the Secretary General she is responsible for projects dealing with education. She is fluent in French, English, Welsh and German and is a graduate of University College Wales, Cardiff where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in French and German.



Ivana Suhadolc

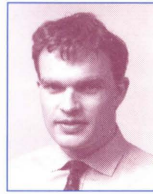
Brussels Information Centre

In June 1996 Ms Myriam Alkain, office manager of the Brussels Information Centre, announced her decision to leave her position the following November. Ms Alkain, a Basque philologist from the university of Deusto, had been with the Bureau since 1994. The BIC's new manager is Ms Ivana Suhadolc, a Slovene from Italy and fluent in French, English, German, Slovene and Italian. Ms Suhadolc who holds degrees in languages and literature from the Ca'Foscari University of Venice, is a former journalist with the RAI, the public radio and television station in the Veneto region.



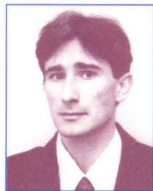
Helga Janssen

Executive Secretary: Since the establishment in May 1992 the BIC's Executive Secretary is Helga Janssen. She is responsible for general correspondence, for contacts with suppliers and printing houses, for invoices and payments and preparatory work for the accountant. In addition she deals with practical aspects of the BIC's informatics and Internet connection. Ms Janssen, who is fluent in Dutch, German, French and English, is a graduate in Modern languages and Secretarial work.



Wolfgang Jenniges

Project Officer 1: Since November 1982 the BIC's Documentalist is Mr Wolfgang Jenniges. He is responsible for the documentation centre containing the reference library, and press cuttings and periodicals. In addition he is in charge of several series publications, language-related correspondence and the establishment of a cultural database. Mr Jenniges holds degrees in classical and oriental philology and history from the University of Leaven. He is fluent in German, Dutch, French, English and Spanish.

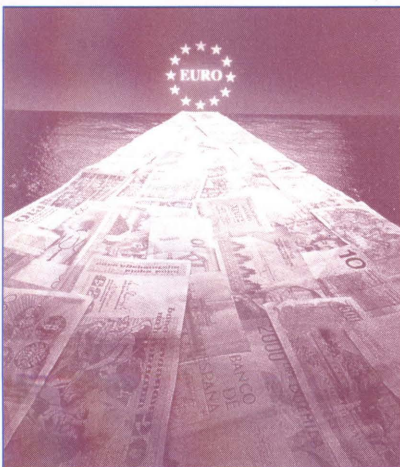


Christian Demeuré-Vallée

Project Officer 2: Christian Demeuré-Vallée comes from Brittany and has been working in the BIC since November 1995. As Information Officer he is responsible for the Bureau's contacts with the media, which include personal contacts, press releases, language-related correspondence and the organisation of press conferences. He also co-ordinates several projects involving publications and cultural events. Mr. Demeuré-Vallée who is fluent in French, Breton and English, is a graduate in Economics, Sociology and European affairs from the universities of Rennes and Nantes.

Funding

Each year both Bureau offices prepare a work programme with several concrete projects for approval to the Commission. These are funded through the EU's budget line B3-1006.



Sources of income during 1996 were the Department for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht in Ireland, the National Ministry of Education in Luxembourg, the Regional Government of Friesland and the Germanophone Community in Belgium (Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft Belgiens). Furthermore rent-free office accommodation is provided for the Brussels Information Center by the Communauté française and during the past year Council and Board meetings of the Company were hosted (full or partial) by the following: Communauté française de Belgique (Charleroi Council meeting), Udarás na Gaeltachta (Annual Assembly, Dún Chaoin), Swedish People's Assembly (Helsinki Board meeting), Folkshegeskoalle Schylgeralan (Skylge Board meeting, Friesland).

Partnership projects are also sources of indirect support and during the past year the following Bureau projects benefited from partners: travel expenses of a speaker, Université de Haute Bretagne, the provision of a meeting room and a reception for the Breton Cultural Presentation in Brussels were covered by the Communauté française de Belgique; the Hanse Office contributed to the launch in Brussels of the Bureau publication *North and Saterfrisian*; another Bureau publication *Between Alps and Adriatic - The Slovenes in the European Union* was co-financed by the Office of Slovenes Abroad of the Republic of Slovenia.

Member State Committee (MCS) Activities

Introduction

With the exceptions of Greece and Portugal the Bureau has committees in all EU member states. Each of the MSCs meets several times throughout the year and each of them has its own separate work programmes. MSCs also provide written reports of their activities which are collated, reproduced and distributed by the Dublin Head Office to interested parties. These reports serve as a rich source of information with up to date news on activities taking place throughout lesser used language areas. Work also continued throughout the year on harmonizing Committee statutes and further developing their representativity. A Romance language section (CROMBEL) of the Belgian committee was also established and its statutes published in the *Moniteur Belge*.



Danish MSC Report

Time was also taken up during the past year in making contact and promoting cooperation with lesser used language communities in countries where there were no member state committees. The fruit of this work was evident during the Council meeting of the Bureau at its Annual Assembly in October 96 when draft statutes from this applicant Swedish committee were received and accepted by Council. The new Swedish MSC represents the Sweden Finns, the Tornedalian Finns, the Sami and the Roma.

Each of the Bureau's member state committees is representative of all autochthonous lesser used languages communities within the state in question. Central, regional and local government agencies involved in the promotion of these languages in addition to major voluntary organizations engaged in their promotion are also represented on most of them. There are certain states however, such as Luxembourg and Italy where official agencies are prevented by legislation and normal practice from participating in the activities of committees. Member state committees provide the Secretariat with annual reports of their activities.

Austria

Communities represented: Croatians, Czechs, Hungarians, Roms, Slovaks, Slovenes. The Austrian Committee is made up of 15 organisations representing each of the country's minorities.

Contact: Dr Jan Petrik (Secretary), Österreichisches Volksgruppenzentrum, Teinfaltstraße 4, A-1010 Wien.

A study visit was organised to Carinthia in May and consisted of lesser used language speakers from different European regions outside of Austria. The visitors were given an opportunity by members of the Austrian committee to see at first hand the situation of Carinthian Slovenes in this part of Austria.

The visit encouraged the committee to initiate European projects of its own. The Slovene-speaking grammar school intends to connect up with similar schools in Ireland and Belgium through the setting up of pupil exchanges. In the meantime the Slovene Economic Association was granted funding for a project involving cross-border tourism. A bilingual (German/Slovene) association KIS- Farmers' Education Co-operative concentrated during the year on becoming one of the main partners in Carinthia in the area of INTERREG programmes. The association which was set up to deal with areas such as adult education in rural areas, counselling, project development etc. worked towards becoming the co-ordinator of INTERREG projects in the region. Projects which involve cross-border co-ordination on INTERREG agricultural projects are PHARE cross-border projects between Slovenia and Carinthia.

In December of this year the member organisations of the committee together with the Austrian centre of Ethnic Groups presented the *1996 Report of Ethnic Groups* at the Austrian Roma Cultural Association's premises in Vienna. The report focuses mainly on the ethnic minorities of Austria and it is intended to update it annually. It is available in English and German.





Belgium

Communities represented: the German language community, the area with a German-speaking community that has no or only limited recognition (Montzen and Malmedy area), the Luxembourgish community (the Arlon area) and the Romance language community (Walloon, Picard, Champenois, Gaumais). The Belgian Committee represents two official institutions, the German-speaking Community and the Council of Endogenous Languages of the French Community, as well as two voluntary organisations: the Adult Training Institute of the German-speaking region and Areler Land a Sprooch, which represents the cultural life of the Arlon area.

Contact: Mr Jean-Luc Fauconnier, rue de Namur 600, B-6200 Châtelet (Romance community).

Denmark

Community represented: Germans of North Schleswig.

The Committee is made up of the three main organisations of the German minority in the administration, education and the media.

Contact: Mr Jan Sternkopf (Secretary), Skibbroen 18, DK-6200 Aabenraa



After many years of preparation the European Centre for Minority Issues was opened in Flensburg, Germany. Members of the German minority in Denmark played an active part in the establishment of this centre which is an independent academic institution established by agreement between the governments of the Kingdom of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Federal German State of Schleswig Holstein. The Committee also received a visit during the year from a representative of the DGXXII (Education, Training and Youth) of the European Commission, which deals with funding for lesser used languages. The Committee briefed the Commission on the situation of the German-speaking minority of southern Denmark. Other activities of the Committee during 1996 included further dissemination of Bureau publications, and preparation for *Euroschule*, a gathering of school children from lesser used language regions which will take place in the region in 1997.

Finland

Communities represented: Sami, Swedes, Gypsies, Russians, Tartar

The Committee is made up of representatives from the following linguistic minorities: Swedes, Sami, Gypsy, Russian and Tatar.

Contact: Mr Christian Brandt (Secretary), Folktinget, Unionsgatan 45 H 100, SF-00170 Helsingfors

The Committee met twice in 1996 and decided to organise two seminars in 1997. One in Lapland on the Sami situation and one in Helsinki on the Russian minorities in this country.



France

Communities represented: Alsatians (German), Basques, Bretons, Catalans, Corsicans, Flemish (Dutch), speakers of Mosellan Frankish, Occitans, speakers of Oil languages.

The Committee represents some 60 organisations and associations active in the cultural development of the minorities represented.

Contact: Mr Charles Castellani (Secretary), Scola Corsa Bastia, 75, rue Voltojo, Miomo, F-20200 Bastia.

The French Committee met three times during the year to discuss its work programme and progress on work to date. The visit of the French President to Quimper on May 30 was considered to be the highlight of the year. Jacques Chirac, during the visit declared himself in favour of the addition of France to the list of signatories of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. As a result of his statement members of the French Committee decided to immediately intensify contacts with members of the National Assembly (French Parliament) especially those of the governmental majority. This resulted in a session of the Assembly dedicated totally to a debate on France's regional languages. The Committee will now concentrate on setting up a Regional Languages and Cultures Intergroup made up of members of all factions in the Assembly favourably disposed towards France's regional languages and cultures. It will be the aim of the Intergroup to apply pressure and increase support for France's signing of the Charter.



The Committee also published a small booklet in French *Quelles langues pour nos Enfants?* (What languages for our children) which contained a brief description of all the regional languages to be found in France. Members of the Committee also



*“With the exceptions
of Greece and
Portugal the Bureau
has committees in all
EU member states.”*



attended meetings of the Haut Comité National des langues régionales (Supreme National Committee for regional languages) in addition to meetings with various institutions involved in regional languages.

Germany

Communities represented: Danish, North Frisians, Saterfrisians, Rom and Sinti, Sorbs. The German Committee is made up of two representatives of each of the main organisations for each minority.

Contact: Jurij Wuschansky, Bund Lausitzer Sorben e.V., Postplatz 2, D-02625 Bautzen

The Danish minorities year took part for the first time in the 'Schleswig-Holstein Tag' which was celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of Schleswig-Holstein. The minority's participation was indicative of the growing co-operation between the Danish minority party and their German neighbours. Parliamentary elections were held in March throughout the whole of Schleswig Holstein and two seats were won by the Danish party 'Südschleswigscher Wählerverband'.

North Frisian: On the retirement of the two professors of Frisian Studies, it was decided to replace this department with a department of North-Sea Germanic Studies. In Kiel the Chair for Frisian Studies was abolished however a compromise was reached to ensure the continuing training of teachers of this language. A celebration to mark the publication of *North Frisia and Saterland, Frisian between Marsh and Moor* by the European Bureau was held in Husum castle in North Frisia.

Sater Frisian: A unexpected high number of children enrolled following the announcement of pre-primary classes for children in Frisian. And following the unexpected death of the Frisian teacher no effort was spared in finding a suitable replacement with Frisian as her mother tongue. Efforts in this regard proved successful and a teacher returned to her native village in the Saterland to pass on this language to the adults of the future. Here the launch of the Frisian booklet was also celebrated locally.

Sinti and Roma: Alterations and extensions to the Documentation and Culture centre in Heidelberg in preparation for the exhibition *The Holocaust of the Sinti and Roma* were completed this year. Also two international conferences *Roma Music and Viennese Classicism* and *Jazz and Flamenco* were organised as part of the *Music of the Sinti and Roma* series which started in the Autumn of 1995. The Centre also organised further conferences and seminars on the subject of minorities. One such conference was in co-operation with the officer responsible for national minorities in Hungary.

Sorbian: Vigorous protests were organised against the threatened destruction of the Sorbian village of Horno to facilitate brown coal mining. An international conference was held in Cottbus in September on the *Modernisation of the Vocabulary of European Regional and Minority Languages*. It was well attended by scholars from 13 east and West European countries representing 15 languages in all.

The Federal government indicated this year that it may gradually reduce its financial support for the Sorbian people and that this would eventually lead to a total withdrawal of support. This has very serious implications as half of the funds of the *Foundation for the Sorbian people (Stiftung für das Sorbische Volk)* comes from the national coffers.

Ireland

Community represented: Irish.

Five government departments and five other State agencies are represented on the Committee. Members also include 16 voluntary organisations active in the fields of education, youth, the media and the promotion of the language.

Contact: Mr Daithí Ó Dufaigh (Secretary), 26 Cearnóg Mhuirfean, IRL-Baile Átha Cliath 2.

The Irish Committee co-operated with another Irish language organisation in a campaign to have the language regime discussed at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) in Ireland, with particular reference to the status of the Irish language in the Union. The campaign was extensive and outgoing - encompassing lobbying of politicians at all levels. During the latter six months of the year when Ireland held the EU presidency the committee strongly encouraged the use of Irish in formal proceedings. Brochures and publicity material were produced in the language and it was accorded full recognition at the meetings of EU ministers of culture hosted by the Irish Minister of Culture, Michael D. Higgins T.D. in Galway.



The Committee hosted, in collaboration with Bord na Gaeilge, the state board responsible for promoting the language, a study visit to Ireland in April. 13 participants in all visited the main Irish language youth festival *Slógadh*, the new Irish television station and other attractions of Irish interest. *Teilifís na Gaeilge* the new Irish language television service came on air at the end of October. Approx. 30 people are directly employed by the new station but some other 500 jobs are being created indirectly in various independent service and production companies. TnaG acts mainly as a commissioning agency rather than a producer of programmes itself.

Irish medium education was much in the news since the Summer when the Education Minister apparently changed the rules governing the application for the recognition of new *Gaelscoileanna* (Irish medium schools). This left four schools without official recognition, despite the fact that they more than qualified under the rules as applied the previous year. Again an intense lobbying and publicity campaign was organised by several language organisations, most of which are represented on the Irish MSC. The Minister reversed her decision on the school in question.

Italy

Communities represented: Albanians, Catalans, Croats, French (Franco-Provençals), Friulans, Germans, Greeks, Ladins, Occitans, Rom, Slovenes, Sards.

The Italian Committee is made up of about 60 representatives of the main organisations active in the cultural life of each of the above communities.

Contact: Prof. Domenico Morelli (President), via Pietro Bonfante 52, I-00175 Roma. Many cultural events amongst many of Italy's linguistic minorities took place during the year. The largest of these was the Albanian Festival of Song which took place in Calabria for the fifteenth year in a row.

On a political level representatives from the Committee had contacts with M. Vigneri, Under Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior who is responsible for the Bureau for Linguistic Minorities. MSC representatives requested the Ministry to favourably consider the new law being discussed by Parliament on minority languages. Confemeli (Italian Member State Committee) proposed the following text for inclusion on the bill: "Confemeli's task is to provide representation for lesser used languages amongst Italian, European and International institutions in addition to taking initiatives to coordinate, promote and encourage studies and research which are of common interest to all minorities".

Furthermore the Committee reached agreement with officials from the Ministry of National Education on a common initiative which would result in the implementation of two rulings of the Ministry's Council relating to the protection of lesser used languages. Prefects in those regions where minority languages are spoken invited mayors from the different communes to come up with proposals which would, either independently of or within the framework of school curricula, promote the linguistic and cultural heritage of minorities. Also in conjunction with the same Ministry a programme was set up whereby native speakers are brought into schools to assist in the teaching of the minority language. These speakers come from the country or area where the language is originally spoken thus encouraging cultural exchanges between the minorities.

A Documentation Centre was opened within the Interior Ministry with the help of the Italian member state committee of the Bureau. The aim of the centre is to collect material which will be used by the central Bureau and also by other State offices.

Finally the fourth volume in the series "Europe: Minority Culture and Rights" was published this year. In it the Ministry for the Interior writes: 'Italy has produced a lot in this domain, but there is certainly room for improvement in its system of protection of lesser used languages'.

Luxembourg

Community represented: Luxembourgish.

The Luxembourg Committee is made up of the main association for the promotion of Luxembourgish.

Contact: Mr Lucien Jacoby (Secretary), Maison 66, L-9776 Wilwerwiltz.

The Committee met three times during 1996 in March, June and November, and the two main activities in which it involved itself during this period were the publication by Action Lëtzebuergesch of a translation of Psalms into Luxembourgish (*D'Psalmen op Lëtzebuergesch, éditions St. Paul, Luxembourg*), and the seminar *Teacher Training, Lesser Used Languages and the Culture of Peace* which took place in Luxembourg in





November (see also page). Furthermore the Committee continued with its distribution of its brochure *Le Luxembourgeois aujourd'hui*, a brochure for people coming to Luxembourg familiarising them with the language and its usage throughout the state. An extra print-run of 3,000 copies was made of the French version while the German language version was reproduced in the magazine "Zielsprache Französisch" published by the University of Sarre (vol 2/16, 1,200 subscribers).

Netherlands

Community represented: Frisian.

The Committee is made up of an official organisation 'Berie foar it Frysk' the Advisory Bureau for the Frisian Language of the Provincial Government of Fryslân, and representatives of nine organisations active in the fields of culture, education, research, youth, the media and literature.

Contact: Mr Reitze Jonkman (Secretary), c/o Fryske Akademy, PO Box 54, NL-8900 AB Ljouwert/Leeuwarden.

The Netherlands became the fourth country in 1996 to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (see page 24). Frisian is covered in part III which means the State must have an active policy to promote and strengthen this language. The Charter also gives recognition in Part II to Low Saxon, the name given to a group of regional varieties spoken in several eastern provinces of the Netherlands. As a result of the inclusion of Low Saxon in the Charter the Netherlands Committee decided to accept representation of Low Saxon on its national committee from 1997 onwards..

In February the three year experiment of broadcasting in Frisian came to an end and no new funding was found. However broadcasting in the language was further guaranteed during the year when the Dutch Parliament agreed for the State to cover half of the costs while the remaining 50 % would be raised by a provincial TV licence and commercials.

The Frisian municipality of *Ferwerderadiel* decided that only the Frisian version of its villages names would be the official version. *Ferwerderadiel* was the fourth such municipality to do this, resulting in over 40% of all place names having the Frisian version as the official one. This means that in these villages official monolingual forms are in standard usage.

Spain

Communities represented: Basques, Catalans, Galicians, Occitans. (Occitan - Aranese - is represented within the Catalan Subcommittee).

The Spanish Committee of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages is made up of three subcommittees - Basque, Catalan and Galician - which work autonomously. Each subcommittee is organised around a major linguistic institution.

Contact: Mr Aureli ArgemR i Roca (President), c/o Ciemen, Rocafort, 242 bis, E-08029 Barcelona.

The Committee's main activity this year centred around the *Barcelona World Conference on Linguistic Rights* which was co-organised by CIEMEN on 6-9 June 1996, with the moral and technical support of UNESCO. The basic objective of the conference was to draw up an international convention on linguistic rights. An Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights was adopted and M. Issakson, the UNESCO representative who was present confirmed the organisation's intention to use the declaration as a basis for preparing an Intergovernmental Conference. This conference will hopefully lead to the preparation of an *International Convention on Linguistic Rights* which would be submitted to the UN for approval.

Sweden

Communities represented: Sami, Sweden Finns, Tornedalians.

Contact: Heikki A. Kirjavainen, Timjansgatan 26, S-424 42 Angered

Due to lobbying by the Committee the government appointed a special committee to examine the possibility of Sweden signing and ratifying the Council of Europe's *Convention on Regional and Minority Languages*. The committee was also contacted by the Roma who expressed an interest in becoming a member sometime in 1997.

United Kingdom

Communities represented: Cornish, Irish, Gàidhlig, Scots and Welsh.

The Committee of the United Kingdom is made up of Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish Subcommittees and, more recently a Cornish Subcommittee. The four Subcommittees work in a relatively autonomous manner. The United Kingdom Committee is made up of 20 official bodies and about 20 organisations representing



the cultural life of each community.

Contact: Llinos Dafis, Iaith Cif, Ty Bangor, 36 y Stryd Fawer, Llanbedr Pont Steffan,

WALES

The Committee started the year in re-structured form with wide representation in the sub-committees and a smaller number of representatives, elected by and from the sub-committees, meeting at UK level.

Sub-committees held their own meetings with full agendas and the range of issues discussed was reported at UK meetings. Representation were made to the British Government about the Lesser used Languages Budget Line and the Council of Europe's Charter of Regional and Minority Languages and also about Irish language education in Northern Ireland. The Welsh sub-committee also co-operated in the study visit to Wales in November.

As well as discussion and action on matters relating to one or more parts of the UK, the Committee discussed developments within the Bureau at European level and relations with the Commission. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended meetings of the Council of the Bureau and the Commission's colloquy held in Brussels in March. At the Autumn meeting of the UK Committee in Bangor a presentation was made to a former chairman Dafydd Orwig in recognition of his work for the Welsh language and for the Bureau over many years. His death soon afterwards was a grave loss to the cause of the UK Committee.

Summary

Through their activities and indeed by their very existence, the Member State Committees encourage co-operation between the linguistic communities within a single State. Although the situations differ from one minority to the next, such collaboration has proven to be very valuable. It fosters the development of a concerted strategy at State and European level. The effects of this collaboration can be seen clearly in the efforts undertaken within the various Committees for the signature of the Charter.

By seeking legal protection and disseminating information, the Committees work continually to reinforce the solidarity between communities in different European countries. The Committees' institutional lobbying also concerns minorities in other States. They also constitute an indispensable channel for information and contact for organisations that wish to develop European exchanges or projects. In this way, the Committees make a discreet yet effective contribution to developing European cultural exchanges.

The development of tools for transmitting information between Committees is another important aspect of this co-operation. The Committees contribute to the pooling of resources which a single minority may lack. Furthermore, the collective development of tools for transmitting information makes it possible to combine efforts in order to influence the views of the majority within a State regarding the fate of linguistic and cultural minorities. Through this co-operation within the European Bureau, the efforts of the various linguistic communities become better coordinated and more effective year by year.

Finally, activities carried out in the Member States on behalf of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages make it possible to put an end to the isolation in which those who defend speakers of minority languages often feel. By its very existence, the Bureau gives them external recognition. This simple recognition by a European body undeniably constitutes a powerful tool for enhancing the value of their own culture in the eyes of many speakers of minority languages. It is increasingly common to consider the building of Europe and the confident affirmation of one's identity as two facets of the same process. Having patiently contributed to this process during the 13 years of their existence is not the least of the merits of the Bureau and its Committees.

“Through their activities and indeed by their very existence, the Member State Committees encourage co-operation between the linguistic communities within a single State.”

Meetings of Council and Board of Directors

The Council of the Bureau met twice during 1996 and the Board of Directors six times.

The Council met in Brussels and Charleroi on 28 & 30 March. The Council went to Charleroi at the invitation of the Communauté française de Belgique and the

delegates were welcomed by the Mayor of the city in the Musée du Verre where the meeting was held. The Annual Colloquy, in association with the European Commission took place on 29 March. The Annual Assembly was held on 18/19 October in Ionad an Bhlascoid Mhóir, a cultural interpretative centre, at Dún Chaoin in the south-west of Ireland. The Assembly was hosted by Údarás na Gaeltachta, the development authority for Irish speaking areas.

Board meetings were held in Brussels on 9 February and 28 March, in Dublin on 3/4 May and 17 October, in Helsingfors on 14/15 June, at the invitation of the Svenska Finlands folkting, and on the Frisian island of Skylge, 13-14 September, at the invitation of the Folkshegeskoalle Schulgerlân.

Advocacy

Networking and Provision of General Information (DHO and BIC)

Speaking on behalf of lesser used languages is one of the key elements of the Bureau work programme. Much of this activity is comparatively routine and is usually best carried out in a low key, discreet manner - speaking to parliamentarians about reports and motions for resolutions in the European Parliament, or to members of the Committee of the Regions about draft opinions; making written submissions to national and regional governments; formally and informally making suggestions to policy makers and administrators etc.

However, there were some occasions in 1996 which merit mention.

During 1995 the Bureau formulated a number of proposals concerning the Intergovernmental Conference and its task of reviewing and amending the Maastricht Treaty. There were eleven separate points raised. The main points related to the insertion in Article B of an indent which would include among the objectives of the EU the strengthening *in all its diversity of the rich linguistic and cultural heritage of the citizens of the Union*, the enhancement of the role of the Committee of the Regions, the removal of the unanimity clause from Article 128, the downward extension of the principle of subsidiarity to cover regional and local authorities and the inclusion in Article 8, Part 2, which deals with citizenship of the following sentence, *The Union shall cherish all its citizens equally and shall uphold their rights irrespective of race, nationality, language, culture or religion*. The proposals also included a call for the development of a European Language Policy. The Bureau's submission was sent to the members of the Reflection Committee, charged with preparing the Conference. These included the Foreign Ministers of all member states. The submission was also sent to over a hundred parliamentarians and to all members of the Committee of the Regions.

The Institutional Affairs Committee of the European Parliament held a public hearing on the IGC on 26 & 27 February and the Secretary General accepted an invitation to present the Bureau's proposals. They were well received.

In anticipation of the Irish Presidency the President, Secretary General and a director accepted an invitation to present the proposals at a meeting of the Joint Committee on the Irish Language in the Irish Parliament. (A written submission had already been made to the Joint Committee on the topic and on the need for a Bill of Rights for Irish speakers.) The attention of the media was drawn to the Bureau's IGC proposals at press receptions in Brussels, Dublin, Helsinki and Charleroi.

The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, a body established to assist the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in his work, set about preparing a set of guidelines on Linguistic Rights to assist the High Commissioner in his work. The Secretary General accepted an invitation to participate in an expert consultation, held in Oslo on 14 October. The guidelines will be based on existing legal instruments. Work on this project will continue in 1997.

As far back as 1988 the Bureau proposed that a meeting be held of governmental agencies, be they at national, regional or provincial level, charged with promoting lesser used languages. The main purpose of such a gathering would be to facilitate an exchange of ideas and experiences, to identify areas for practical cooperation and to develop a new political lobby for lesser used languages at European level. The



*Advocacy. From left to right:
Michael D. Higgins, President of Culture Council,
Allan Wynne Jones and Dónall O Riagáin.*

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*“The Brussels
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Bureau was delighted when the Irish Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Mr Michael D. Higgins TD, who was President of the Culture Council during the second half of the year, took the initiative and convened such a meeting at An Spidéal on 1 & 2 November.

The President and Secretary General of the Bureau were among those who attended. In the course of an address to the conference, the Minister said, *I believe that it is important that member states not only display an interest in fostering minority language groups which exist within their own boundaries but also display an active interest in the other language groups which exist elsewhere in the Union. I congratulate the Bureau for the significant contribution it has made in heightening awareness amongst the people of Europe of the rich linguistic diversity which exists in our midst.* The Bureau regards the conference as being a very promising initiative and will endeavour to persuade other countries to build on the work started at An Spidéal.

The members of the Board of Directors met Minister Higgins on 17 October and were briefed by him on another initiative of his which came to fruition in December when the European Council of Culture and Audio-visual Ministers unanimously adopted a resolution on the integration of cultural matters into Community actions. This gives substance to the legal provision in Article 128[4] of the Maastricht Treaty that requires the Community to take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaty.

The Brussels Information Centre was opened in 1992 and a large part of its activity involves providing information and technical advice on all the various aspects of promoting the lesser used languages of the EU. Hundreds of requests for information and advice are received from all over the world. The type of information sought includes general information on the languages represented by the Bureau, language policy at European level, information on EU programmes (funding) in the domains of culture, education, regional policy and information on possibilities of partnership action between minority language communities.

On a more general level the Centre's role in providing information is twofold. It disseminates European information to the various linguistic communities and disseminates information on these same communities to the European media in particular through its information brochures. Special mention should be made of the BIC's cooperation with the ambitious project "Books and texts from the Regions of Europe" coordinated by the following: Région Languedoc-Roussillon (F), Generalitat de Catalunya (E), Co. Dhún Laoghaire-Ráth an Dúin (IRL), Região do Norte (P) and Periferia Atikis (GR). The presentation took place during the General Assembly of European Regions in December in Basle and various literary texts in approx. 20 minority languages were provided for display by the BIC. The Brussels Information center began preparatory work on a Bureau homepage on the Internet: <http://www.eblul-bic.be>.

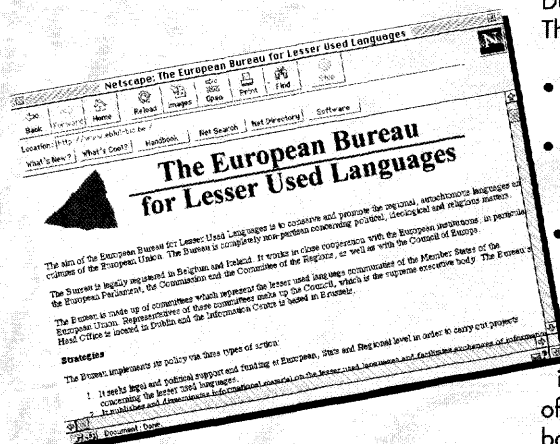
Press Service (BIC)

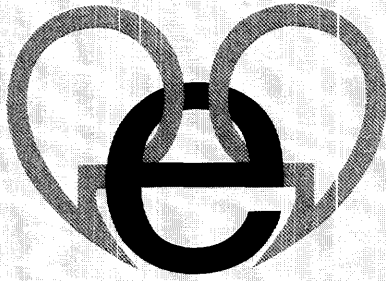
During the year 20 press release were sent by the BIC to approximately 300 media. They dealt with the following themes:

- EU-action programmes concerning minority languages, e.g. the call form, proposals for projects published by the Official Journal of the Commission;
- positive or negative events related to specific minorities, e.g. the creation of a new TV-channel in Irish or the refusal of funding for minority language newspapers in France;
- the European Bureau's and other international institutions' initiatives in favour of minority languages e.g. the international conference on language rights in Barcelona.

Apart from two press conferences held together with the BIC's cultural presentations in Brussels and another one at the occasion of the Charleroi Meeting of the Council of the Bureau, a special press conference was organized by the BIC for Brussels-based European journalists, for members of the European parliament and for representatives of the regional delegations in Brussels. At this occasion the Bureau's publications and its activities in 1995 were presented.

Members of the Bureau staff in both offices gave approx. 40 radio, television, newspaper interviews in the course of the year. In addition assistance is provided to radio and television producers in compiling programmes relating to minority language issues. In addition up to 100 newspaper articles on the basis of information provided by Bureau offices were collated.





Bureau Info (DHO)

This is the internal newsletter of the organization with a circulation of 300 copies every two months. The object of this in-house production is to disseminate up-to-date information directly to the members of the MSCs. The information consists in the main of descriptions of the Bureau work programmes and their implementation, reports from meetings, events and developments in European institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Commission. In this way those people on the ground directly involved with our languages can be kept in regular contact with what is happening on a broader European level.

Documentation Centre (BIC)

One of the main aims of the Brussels Information Centre is to gather documentation material on minority languages in the European Union. The library consists of a general section of around 500 titles and forty language sections with approx. 2,000 books; it comprises reference books, dictionaries and linguistic, historical and sociological literature. It also has a collection of videos, tapes and CDs. In addition the Documentation centre receives 200 magazines and periodicals on a regular basis through subscription or exchange facilities with BIC publications and Contact Bulletin. The BIC makes available a selection of several thousand of geographically and chronologically classified press cuttings based mainly on six daily and two weekly international newspapers which are reviewed by the BIC staff.

Library(DHO)

The library at the Head Office has been built up over the years and consisted of 2,850 titles at the end of 1996. These titles are linked for the most part to minority languages and linguistics in general and include books, academic research papers and theses, acts of seminars and conferences and periodicals and magazines in minority languages from the regions where they are spoken. All titles have been computerized and a printout of the database was produced during the year.

Cultural Presentations (BIC)

“Each year the Brussels Information Center organises conferences and evenings during which minority languages and cultures are presented in order to make the general public in Europe and Brussels aware of the situation...”

Each year the Brussels Information Centre organises conferences and evenings during which minority languages and cultures are presented in order to make the general public in Europe and Brussels aware of the situation, the needs, and the cultural diversity and richness of these communities. In 1996 the BIC organized two such cultural events, the first in July and the second in September. The first cultural event was organized in collaboration with the Hanse-Office, the Brussels representation of the German Länder Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg, and was held at the premises of that Office. Its theme was the present situation of North and Saterfrisian in Germany. Prof. Marron C. Fort (Univ. of Oldenburg), co-author of *North Frisia and Saterland: Frisian between Marsh and Moor* gave an overview of the linguistic situation and prospects of these communities, and stressed the particular dangers for these smallest Germanic language communities in Europe. At the same occasion the booklet was presented to the press.

The second cultural evening focused on “The present situation and prospects for the Breton language in Europe”. Prof. Lukian Kergoat from Rennes University gave a presentation of the language in its current state. He examined the reasons for the current crisis for Breton, which until the 1950s, was the most widely spoken Celtic language. He also described recent changes in the attitude of local elites and official authorities that could inaugurate a better future for the language. The success of these two cultural events was measured by the high attendance of 100 people which included MEPs, journalists, regional representatives and inhabitants of Brussels. These events inspire the BIC for the future organisation of such cultural events and conferences for and about minorities in Brussels.

In May the BIC took part in the three day long “Fête des Langues/Talenfeest” in Brussels which was attended by thousands of mainly young people. There was an information stand with the Bureau’s publications, along with various animation activities as a quiz and language plays, which ensured the presence of the minority languages in one of the most important language festivals in Europe.

Publications



Contact Bulletin

Newsletter CONTACT BULLETIN (DHO)

First launched in 1983 and with a total print run of 40,500 this year the Bureau's international newsletter was distributed free of charge to 18,000 subscribers on the mailing list, 6,600 through member state committees and the Brussels Information Centre and almost 16,000 distributed at conferences and seminars etc. The aim of the newsletter is to provide information world wide on all developments in the field of lesser used languages in Europe. The material comes primarily from the members of the Bureau's own member state committees. The reports of study visit participants are another valuable source of editorial material. The main objective of Contact-Bulletin is to disseminate information on lesser used languages and about the Bureau and its work. It also gives publicity to Commission activities favouring lesser used languages throughout the Union. Information generally includes reporting on conferences, listing new publications, publicizing programmes of which lesser used language speakers can avail, and publishing articles of general and specific interest to its readers.

The first edition of the year had articles on Saterfrisian, Livonian and Basque, in addition to regular features such as letters to the editor and information on new publications. In addition this was the Bureau's first time that the newsletter was published in Spanish, thus bringing to five the number of languages in which it is available. The second edition concentrated on more legislative themes such as an interview with Professor Sergio Cescotti, President of the Autonomous Region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia who spoke about the new language law for Friulian. Also included were an in depth article on the recommendations of the Bureau to the Intergovernmental Conference (see also page 24), and the new act on the status of the Slovak language in the Slovak Republic, where despite opposition and public protests from linguistic minorities legislation was passed to make Slovak the only official language of this newly independent state. The final edition of the year had as its main feature article an overview of the lesser used languages of Finland and Sweden, where the Bureau had just established new member state committees. News of Ireland's first all-Irish language TV channel, the European Ethnic Broadcasting Association and the ratification of the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages by the Netherlands were also reported.

European Inventory on Bilingual Education Systems (DHO)

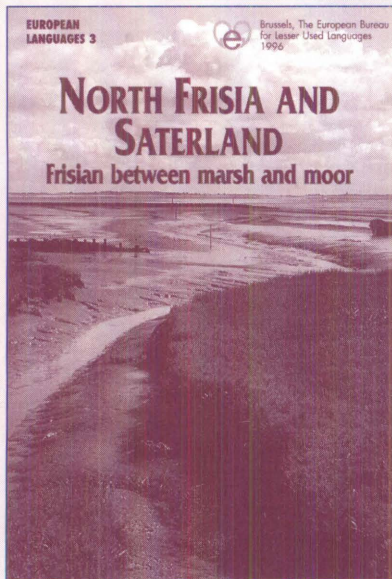
Compiled with the aid of a questionnaire sent to educational organizations and schools, this inventory, the first of its kind, lists those organizations involved in immersion or multilingual education programmes in EU countries where teaching (full or partial) is carried out in a minority or regional language. In addition to listing names and addresses of these organizations the inventory sets out, on the one hand, the main characteristics of such teaching for each language community, while on the other hand providing socio-linguistic data in putting such characteristics into context. The fifty fiches compiled in the inventory provide a relatively broad-ranging insight into what exists today as immersion or multilingual education in regional or minority languages in Europe. On reading through the inventory and studying the replies to the questionnaires one immediately sees the difficulty in identifying children who speak minority languages. In most cases the inventory shows that minority language children already speak the surrounding majority language when they begin their schooling, and in many cases only speak the dominant language. Apart from what might be termed strong minorities such as the Germanophones of Belgium, or the Swedophones of Finland, most pupils on multilingual or immersion programs speak the majority language at home. Replies to another question show that in most cases schoolchildren tend clearly to prefer speaking the majority language amongst themselves. Thus, if the school is an essential environment for the maintenance and development of threatened minority languages it is not enough in itself to reverse the process of language shift in favour of the dominant language. Parents and the community have their part to play. The inventory also clearly shows the great diversity that exists in immersion and multilingual education programmes; some provide teaching conducted exclusively in the minority language whereas others divide the timetable more or less evenly between the two languages.

European Dimension Teaching Pack (DHO)

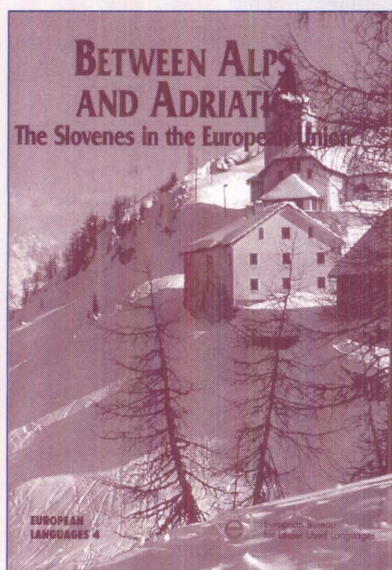
This takes on the shape of a teaching pack that introduces the European dimension to pupils in the 9 to 14 age group, the object of which is to develop their understanding



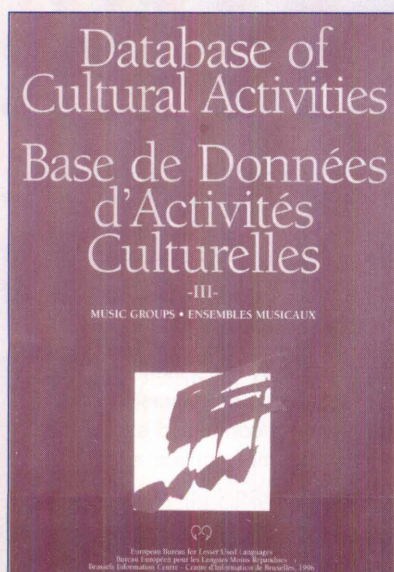
Education in the European Union Report



Frisian- Between Marsh and Moor (BIC)



Between Alps and Adriatic-The Slovenes in the European Union (BIC)



Database on Music Groups (BIC)

of Europe. Among the contents of the pack is a comprehensive introduction for the teacher in the form of a 56 page handbook containing an overview of Europe and its language communities, together with brief linguistic, historical and geographical outlines of Europe. Language cards briefly describe the relevant languages, while the full color profiles of selected schools and regions in six lesser used language communities (Aosta Valley, Kerry, Karasjok, Giulia, North Schleswig, and Friesland) are accompanied by a more detailed account in the handbook. In addition, the pack contains colour maps, photographs and A1 size wall charts, worksheets and sample copies of European Bureau publications, and a video. The information pack was produced as a pilot project in Irish, Welsh and Scots Gaidhlig and its object is to present Europe in its broadest possible sense through the eyes of a lesser used language speaker and to develop pupils' understanding of the diversity and richness of Europe and its people. In addition it provides them with an appreciation of their own special place within the communities of Europe. The pack is flexible and open to many interpretations since its themes cover all aspects of life in Europe with its linguistic, geographic, historical and cultural diversity. Pilot copies were distributed to in schools for feed back and in the future it is hoped to publish the pack for wider distribution throughout the European Union (See also *Education* below).

Frisian- Between Marsh and Moor (BIC)

European Languages is a monographic series on various minority language communities within the European Union published by the Brussels Information Centre. The series third title deals with the North Frisian and Sater Frisian language communities in the Federal Republic of Germany. The booklet is divided into two parts: the first one tells the history of North Frisia and its language from the oldest times to the present day; the second one draws a picture of the Sater Frisian community. Both describe also the present linguistic situation and various initiatives to preserve the language. Despite the small number of speakers and their relatively isolated position, the Frisians in Germany are aware of their common origin and of the threatened position of Frisian with regard to powerful neighbouring languages. In the Middle Ages the Frisian language area stretched approximately from the Rhine estuary to the West. Today, of this original region, only the province of Friesland in the Netherlands remains. Added to this are two settlements in Germany: North Frisia in Schleswig Holstein and the Saterland to the west of Oldenburg in Lower Saxony. *North Frisia and Saterland: Frisian between Marsh and Moor* was written by two philologists dealing with the Frisian language in Germany: Ommo Wilts (Kiel) and Marron C. Fort (Oldenburg). The booklet is available in German, French and English.

Between Alps and Adriatic-The Slovenes in the European Union (BIC)

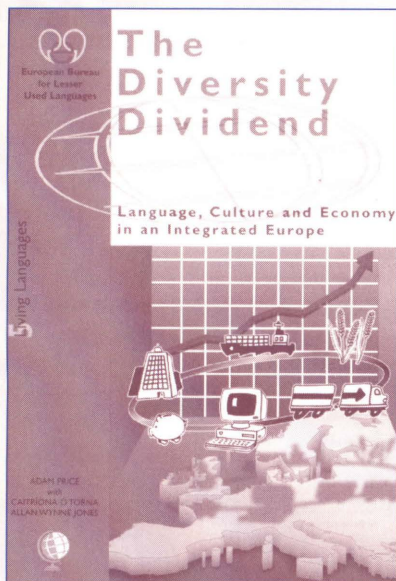
The Slovenes occupy an area extending from the north Adriatic along the eastern Alps and up to the western edge of the Danube plain. Significant numbers of native speakers outside of the Slovene Republic established in 1991, are to be found in Austria, Italy, Hungary and Croatia. This, the fourth volume in the *European Languages Series* is devoted to the Slovene minorities in Italy and Austria. The booklet successively describes the Slovene community in Italy and the Slovene community in Austria. It presents their socio-linguistic situation through the cultural, social, economic and political life of each community. The booklet, which is available in English, French, German, Italian, and Slovene, was written by M. Bojan Brezigar, journalist and director of the main Slovene daily newspaper in Italy.

Database on Music Groups (BIC)

The *Database of Cultural Activities* is part of a wide project undertaken by the Brussels Information Centre to give information on cultural activities of minority language communities and to bring them closer together. The third issue collects basic data on about 600 music groups performing in minority languages in almost thirty linguistic communities of the European Union. Information concerning the type of music, specialization, members, number of performances and productions is also given. Just like theatre, music is an important means for the transmission of the language and the time-honoured cultural traditions of the various linguistic communities. The list, which is available in a printed format in a bilingual English-French edition, will also enable contacts and exchanges.

The Diversity Dividend

Regional or minority languages are not only a cultural richness; they can be valuable resources and can lend an impetus also to economic development. This is the main message of this publication which appeared in English, French and Welsh. *The Diversity Dividend* probes the complex inter-relationships between three of the most basic and universal human phenomena - language, culture and economy - as they have developed in the context of Europe's minority language communities. The thesis



The Diversity Dividend

underlying the publication is that socio-economic cohesion and cultural-linguistic diversity prove mutually reinforcing. The booklet is the fifth volume in the *Living Languages Series*.

Other and forthcoming Publications

In 1996, the BIC also produced the 1995 Annual Report in English, French and German. During the course of the year, work was carried out on several other publications such as a second edition of the *Select Bibliography on lesser used languages in the European Community*, which was first published by the BIC in 1993. Due to popular demand the publication went out of print and work began this year in producing an updated and completed version. The new edition will incorporate more than 2,000 titles including new language sections for the minorities of Austria, Finland and Sweden. Also to be published in 1997 is a booklet on the Sámi which will be the fifth in the *European language series*. In addition popular publications which have gone out of print, such as *The Sound of Europe (Living Language Series 1)* which was reprinted in German with external funding from the *Landesrat für Kärnten* (Klagenfurt, Austria), *Stiftung für das sorbische Volk* (Bautzen, Germany), and *Domowina* (Bautzen, Germany).

Education (DHO)

The Bureau, since its establishment, has always emphasized the importance of youth and has been diligently opening up Europe to young lesser used language speakers.

Teacher Training Seminar

A seminar entitled *Lesser Used Languages, Teacher Training and the Culture of Peace* was held in Luxembourg from 28 to 30 November 1996. The Dublin Head Office organised the event in close co-operation with the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle, Luxembourg* and *UNESCO/LINGUAPAX*. Linguapax is a UNESCO project which focuses on the promotion of culture through multilingual education. The programme was born out of the idea that in our multicultural society the role of languages, whether national, mother tongue or foreign, is increasingly becoming a deciding factor in the socio-educative field. The LINGUAPAX project brings together researchers, teachers and education planners from different countries. This conference brought together experts in the field of teacher training and peace studies who presented papers on themes ranging from the education and the values of peace in Cambodia to Language Policy and Teacher Training in a divided Community (Northern Ireland). Speakers travelled from Wales, Ireland, Catalonia, Cambodia, Alsace, Moscow, Italy, Friesland, Munich, Brittany, Belgium and Austria.

Following on the seminar, a meeting was held between the organisers to draft plans for collaboration on a similar project in the near future.

Coordination of Euroschule

Euroschule (Euroschoole) is a biennial event which brings together pupils, parents and teachers from different language communities. It is an unique opportunity for school children from lesser used language regions to experience the various cultures, languages and customs of other regions in Europe. *Euroschule 1997* is to be held in the German-speaking region of North Schleswig, Denmark from Wednesday 9 April to Sunday 13 April 1997. The last *Euroschule* was held in Trieste, Italy in April 1995 and was hosted by the Slovene community there.

The Bureau is responsible for the general co-ordination and continuity of this event and it invested much time during 1996 in ensuring that the next *Euroschule* would be as successful as those held to date. A debriefing meeting of past organisers was held in Aabenraa, Denmark in August, the aim of which was to share and document the experiences and suggestions of past organisers. Representatives from the previous

“The Bureau, since its establishment, has always emphasized the importance of youth and has been diligently opening up Europe to young lesser used language speakers.”

organising committees as well as current organisers were present. It was decided during this debriefing meeting that children attending the event would spend their first day with host families, the second day in one of the five participating German speaking schools and the third day in Tinglev where all the children would take part in sport events and various competitions. Children from Danish-speaking schools (the majority language of the region) would also be invited to participate in the events of the third day. A brochure and logo for the event were designed and a copy of the logo sent on disk to participating schools so that they could prepare their own promotional material such as tee-shirts, stickers etc.

Introducing the European Dimension to Primary Schools

A working group consisting of education specialists from Ireland, Scotland and Wales was set up to investigate the possibilities of introducing the European dimension, with particular relevance for lesser used languages into the primary schools curriculum. The group met several times throughout the year to prepare a European Dimension Teaching Pack which was introduced to nine schools (three each from Irish, Welsh and Gàidhlig areas) as a pilot project at the beginning of the school year in Autumn. The Bureau sees itself here as having responded to the need for material offering a European context in education. Pupils are increasingly aware of the international and global context of their lives and of their interdependence. It is widely recognized that a curriculum plan which intends to be broad and balanced can only be successful with the inclusion of the European context. Such a context can be identified and developed within the range of subject areas which are covered in the pack which is flexible and open to many interpretations since its themes cover all aspects of life in Europe with its linguistic, geographic, historical and cultural diversity. It is intended next year to produce a more definitive version of the pack with the aim of bringing it into classrooms in more lesser used areas (see also publications).

Publication of Inventory of Bilingual School Systems in the European Union

1996 also saw the publication of the first database of bilingual school systems in the European Union. As well as being a very useful reference it also provides potential sources for cooperation and exchange of information for relevant educational establishments. Work on this project was carried out by Anne-Sophie Oudin, the Luxembourg based Education officer of the Bureau (see also Publications).

Youth (DHO)



Introduction

The Bureau, since its establishment, has always emphasized the importance of youth and has been diligently opening up Europe to young lesser used language speakers. Other than some contact between local organizations, young people growing up in minority language areas are generally socially, culturally and economically deprived. The regions to which they belong do not correspond to states, and the state structures often do not suit the needs of these young people whose language may not even be taught in their schools. European programmes offer them the opportunity to meet and come into contact with young people from other member states but the majority of agencies administering these programmes are located in member state capitals, far away from regions where a minority language is spoken. In addition most of the information from these central agencies is produced only in the official language of the state and for this reason young people from the peripheral regions where a lesser used language is spoken do not benefit as much from these programmes as they could. The Bureau's main activities in the field of youth are coordinated by its Youth Advisory Committee, which in addition to keeping young people aware of what's happening at European level also organizes an annual youth seminar.

Youth Advisory Committee

This committee assists the Bureau in its aim of providing information on European funding for youth projects in the lesser used language communities; to encourage transnational cooperation between the youth organizations of these communities, to conduct research into the needs and aspirations of young people and in more practical terms to organize an annual youth seminar for young speakers of our

“The Bureau’s annual youth seminars are seen to provide the youth from minority language regions with an opportunity to meet with others in the same situation as themselves and to report to the Secretariat with regard to youth activities.”

languages. The Youth Advisory Committee advises the Bureau on how best to achieve these aims. The normal term of office is three years and this coincides with the terms of office of the President and the Board of Directors. A youth representative from each of the Bureau’s member state committees was nominated. The role of these youth representatives is to report to member state committees of the European Bureau with regard to youth activities in their respective minority community/communities. Such a structure has been cultivating an exchange of information between the minority communities with regard to youth activities and ensures that the Bureau at central level does not lose touch with developments on the ground in this field.

The Committee met twice during 1996. The first of these meetings took place in the Dublin Head Office early in the year and consisted for the most part of a brainstorming session in preparation for the annual youth seminar (see below). The general areas considered by the committee included the chairing of meetings, taking of minutes, encouraging transnational cooperation, using the media for the benefit of young people in lesser used language communities and using advertising for the benefit of these same people. The second preparatory meeting of the committee took place in April during which the final programme of the seminar was agreed and various responsibilities allocated to members of the group. Themes for the various workshops were chosen and practical details finalised. The member of the committee are: Ronan al Louarn, Brittany; Sytske de Boer, West Frisia; Max Mauro, Friuli; and Peter Rustia, Slovene community of Italy.

Seminar: Training of Youth Leaders

This, the sixth in a series of youth seminars organized by the European Bureau had as its theme *Training of Youth Leaders belonging to Youth Organizations in lesser used Language Areas*. It took place in the Slovene-speaking town of Tinje/Tainach in Austria and was attended this year by participants representing over 20 minority languages. The seminar concentrated on the following main areas: the sharing of common experiences of young speakers of our languages, the promotion of international communication between them, European funding and the ins and outs of organizing European and international meetings involving youth and the media. The use of widely used methods in youth training were demonstrated in an effort to help those present apply them to their own organizations.

Throughout the seminar the group broke up into four working groups to discuss the various subjects. Each session ended with a plenary session involving all the groups where a rapporteur from each group gave a report on what took place during each respective session. Games were also used throughout not only to increase cooperation amongst the participants but also to evaluate how we communicate with one another and develop team spirit. The last day of the seminar was dedicated to youth and the media where participants heard contributions from representatives from ÖRF (the Austrian state broadcasting service), Nedelja (Slovene language newspaper), the International Network of Correspondence and Radio Onde Furlane.

The Bureau’s annual youth seminars are seen to provide the youth from minority language regions with an opportunity to meet with others in the same situation as themselves and to report to the Secretariat with regard to youth activities. The seminars, are not merely youth gatherings, but are of a didactic nature, providing the youth representatives with specific information on various topics and tailoring this information to their own experience as young members of minority communities. Copies of the seminar report were also made available during the year.

Study Visit Programme (DHO)

Study Visits

Since 1983 over 90 visits to over 35 of the EU’s lesser used language communities have been organized by the Bureau on behalf of the European Commission. To date over 1,000 persons have availed of the programme. The scheme, which is 100% funded by DGXXII, enables the study of educational, cultural, administrative and media structures relating to regional or minority languages and cultures in the community. Participants write reports on their experiences which add to the amount of high quality, selected and up-to-date information about minority languages throughout

the Union. The main aim of the study visit programme is to increase awareness of the European reality in the field of regional or minority language developments. The process of European integration must include cooperation between the minority language regions of the Union and these visits add greatly to improvements in contacts and exchanges of experiences throughout the Union.

Approximately 85 grants were made available by the Commission during 1996 to participants representing as many aspects as possible of regional/minority languages and who exercised responsibility at local, regional or national level and whose expertise in the main theme of the visit was used to increase awareness among many European citizens. These included those responsible for the promotion of regional or minority languages and cultures, journalists who are specialists on this subject and teacher trainers/researchers working in the member states of the Union. During the 1995/96 programme visits took place to the following regions: The Slovene Community in Italy, the Danish-speaking community in Germany, Northern Ireland, the Catalan Community in Sardinia, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Austria.



Study Visit Group, Wales.

Debriefing Meeting

Within the framework of the study visit programme the European Commission organized a debriefing meeting in October to take stock of participants' experiences and to gain feedback for improvement of the scheme. The meeting took place in Brussels and was attended by selected participants in the programmes from 1993 to 1996. Dr Olga Profili of DGXXII (European Commission) welcomed participants to the meeting by highlighting the transitional stage at which the scheme was at in the light of seeking a legal basis to secure the EU's budget line B3-1006 for minority languages. Her colleague Mr. Salmasi explained recent developments in the scheme in terms of financial support, organization, information to participants and the drafting of reports. Some of the proposals emanating from the meeting and to be implemented in future programmes included the active involvement of local/regional authorities in the visits, and the participation of people from non-minority groups who are sensitive towards minority issues and whose participation in the programme could help lesser used language speakers.

Relations with other Institutions

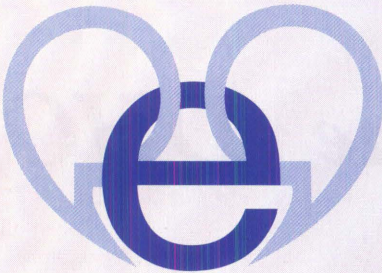
The European Union

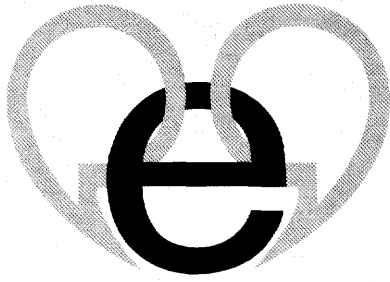
The Council of Ministers adopted a multiannual programme to promote the linguistic diversity of the Community in the information society. In the Official Journal of the European Communities on 21 November 1996 [96/664/EC] notice was given of the establishment of a new programme with implications for minority languages. While stressing the point that efforts must be made to ensure that all European citizens have equal opportunities to participate in the information society, irrespective of their social, cultural, linguistic or geographical situation the programme constitutes three main lines of action:

- support for the creation of a framework of services for language resources and encouragement for the associations involved in such a construction
- encouragement for the use of language technologies, resources and standards and their incorporation into computer applications, and
- promotion of the use of advanced language tools in the Community and Member States public sector.

European Commission

The Bureau works in very close co-operation with Directorate General XXII- Education, Training and Youth (DGXXII) of the European Commission who each year makes contracts with both Bureau offices to carry out specific work programmes which benefit the approx. 50 million speakers represented by the Bureau. The funding received by the Bureau from the Commission comes from budget line B3-1006 (Regional or Minority Languages and Cultures) and it is DGXXII which is responsible for the management of the line. The 4 million ECU provided by the line in 1996 was spent on projects being carried out in the communities themselves as well by funding organisations like the Bureau and the MERCATOR Information network (see page 25).





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In 1996, 166 projects received funding from the above source. The projects supported by the European Commission involve the organisation of conferences, the development of teaching tools, exchanges of experience, training, the development of technological tools, the organisation of cultural events, media productions, language standardization, publications and research. In addition to budget heading B3-1006, numerous other possibilities are open to the lesser used languages within the European Commission's various programmes, especially under programmes regarding culture, education or economic development.

The Commission's main objectives are: to encourage initiatives in the field of education, culture and information; to reinforce European co-operation and exchanges of information between the actors in the various linguistic communities; and to promote the teaching of these languages throughout the educational network, including adult education. Calls are published annually and for 1998 funding will be announced in Spring 97. Information notes and application forms will be available directly from the Commission (see address at back).

As is the case each year, the Commission invited regional language speakers to its annual colloquy in Brussels in March. The colloquy provided an opportunity for activists in the various linguistic communities and European officials in charge of the programmes of interest to these communities to look at the various views and practices. Bureau member state committees described their work programmes for that year and the rest of the day was taken up with discussing the Commission's new report on lesser used languages throughout the EU: *Euromosaic*:

Euromosaic - *The Production and Reproduction of the Minority Language Groups in the European Union*. This is an in-depth and analytical study which has been conducted on behalf of the European Commission. The study gives a comparative analysis of the situation of the different minority languages. The main aims were to describe the situation of each linguistic community, assessing its viability, and to provide precise data with research, using the same criteria for all languages. The institutes involved in the research and which compiled the report were the *Centre de Recherche sur le Plurilinguisme* of the Catholic University in Brussels; the *Institut de Sociolingüística Catalana*, Barcelona; the *Research Centre Wales*, University of Wales, Bangor and the *Fédération Nationale des Foyers Ruraux*, Paris. The report considers the linguistic groups within the general social, cultural, economic and political restructuring process in Europe. The current debate concerning a new united Europe reasserts the values of diversity and human resources. These linguistic groups therefore have a significant part to play and the authors of the study call for political recommendations which will consider the question of linguistic minorities as central to the debate on European integration and development. It is hoped to eventually make the information on the various language communities available on the Internet.

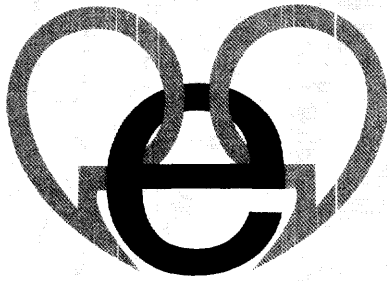
The Commission also published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* an *Invitation to Tender, by open procedure, concerning “the Evaluation of the action to promote regional and minority languages and cultures”*. The evaluation is required to provide information, recommendations and conclusions with a view to overhauling the action - from the point of view of its management, content and financial arrangements - and to gauge to what extent the main objective of this action i.e. the promotion and protection of regional or minority languages and cultures, has been achieved over the past five years.

European Parliament

Parliamentary Intergroup

In 1983, at the initiative of MEPs Arfé and Hume, the European Parliament set up an Intergroup for the minority languages. The Intergroup is made up of members of nearly all the political groups within the Parliament, which assure the presidency on a rotating basis. For 13 years its members have met regularly each month during the Parliament's plenary sessions in Strasbourg. It has been responsible for the main EP resolutions in favour of regional or minority languages. It monitors the implementation of the proposals contained in the resolutions and presses for increased budgetary provision. As a result of its work, the budget for the lesser used languages increased by 350% during the last legislative term, between 1989 and 1994. The Intergroup is one of the Bureau's main allies, and it often deals with the same topics as the Bureau, but at institutional level. The Bureau receives an invitation to all of its meetings and was present at all of these in 1996. The president of the Intergroup during 1996 was Mr Berndt Posselt, an EPP member from Bavaria.

The EP's Institutional Affairs Committee held a public hearing in Brussels in 26 & 27



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February and the Bureau accepted the invitation to present its submission. The Bureau's proposals were sympathetically received and the organisation was later afforded an opportunity to present its ideas at a meeting of the Intergroup on Minority Languages.

Budget Heading

The EU budgetary provision for lesser used languages, line B3-1006, stood at 4m. ECU in 1996 but a reduced figure for 1997 -3.675m. ECU- was adopted. This reduction was made despite representations made by the Bureau to members of the Budgets Council and a number of parliamentarians, especially members of the EP's Budgets Committee, and is a source of concern and disappointment.

Intergovernmental Conference

The heads of government of the fifteen member states of the European Union opened the *Intergovernmental Conference* (IGC) in Turin on 29 March. The aim of the Conference is to refine and redevelop the European Union by providing it with structures and outline policies which can bring it safely and securely into the third millennium. In a recent letter to the European Bureau and indeed to other organisations and individuals, Commissioner Marcelino Oreja wrote of a “pact with the people between the Union, the member states and the citizens”. The Bureau believes that one must now recognise that democratic structures will not function properly unless there is an effective two-way flow of information and communication. The IGC opened up a new window of opportunity for the European Bureau and for all those concerned for Europe's linguistic and cultural diversity. The Bureau prepared a submission for the IGC on lesser used languages and this was launched at a press reception in Dublin on 2 May. Deputy Dinny McGinley TD, Chairperson of the Irish Parliament's Joint Committee on the Irish Language took the chair, and Dónall Ó Riagáin, Secretary General of the Bureau presented the submission. A synopsis of its proposals were also presented to the President of the European Cultural Council in October.

The Bureau put forward 11 specific proposals, 9 of these related to amendments to the Maastricht Treaty. The proposals were intended to benefit lesser used languages. A copy of the proposals were sent to the Reflection Committee for the IGC, which included the foreign ministers of the member states, to over 100 MEPs and to all members of the Committee of the Regions. They were also presented at an EP Public Hearing on the IGC, in Brussels in February. The IGC affords the member states of the European Union a unique opportunity to define and underpin language and human rights. It is however governments of the member states who will make the decisions at the end of the day and it was in this context that the Bureau called on the Member State Governments to positively examine its proposals and to seize the initiative in this field at the Conference.

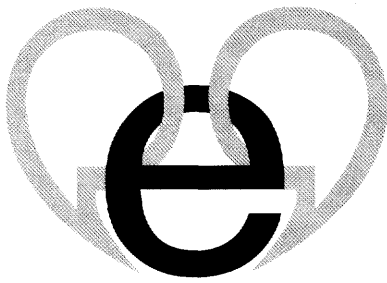
Committee of the Regions

The Bureau continued to develop its contacts with this committee throughout the year and attended a meeting with Commission 7 in January. Commission 7, (Citizens' Europe, Research, Culture, Youth and Consumers) is the commission whose work is most relevant to the Bureau. An opinion on the Multilingual Information Society relating to the application of technology in the field of languages was sought by the Commission. The Bureau offered a number of suggestions to the rapporteur and these were incorporated into the text which was ultimately adopted by the COR. Also it was the President of the Committee of the Regions, M. Pasqual Maragal I Mira, who agreed to write the foreword to the booklet *The Diversity Dividend*.

Council of Europe

European Charter for Regional and/or Minority languages

One of the greatest milestones in the world of lesser used languages was the Council of Europe's vote in June 1992 to accord the legal form of a convention to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. In October of that same year the Convention was laid open for signature. Two countries, Romania and the Ukraine this year added their name to the list which included: Austria, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Spain (EU) and Cyprus, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway, the Ukraine, Romania and Switzerland (non-EU). The Netherlands became the fourth state to ratify the Charter after Finland, Norway, and Hungary. The Dutch Parliament sent a letter to the Council of Europe in May confirming its ratification. In its explanatory report it outlined its two main arguments in favour of ratification: its contribution to political stability in Eastern Europe and the strengthening position of Frisian in the Netherlands. Five ratifications are necessary however for the Charter to come into force as a convention.



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Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

On 10 November 1994, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. While it does not define the term “national minority,” this document does have an indisputable principle as its starting point: the safeguarding and development of human rights and fundamental liberties, including linguistic freedom. To date, 34 Council of Europe Member States have signed the Convention. They are: Albania, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Seven states have ratified the Convention: Cyprus, Moldova, Hungary, Romania, San Marino, the Slovak Republic, and Spain. 12 instruments of ratification need to be lodged with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for it to come into affect as a convention.

Mercator Information Networks

Mercator is a network of specialized information centres covering the following fields: legislation, education and media. The initiative to establish Mercator came from the Bureau in 1987 but the centres are now autonomous structures, coordinated by the European Commission.

The network is made up of three main centres: Mercator-Law and Legislation in Barcelona (Catalonia), Mercator-Education in Ljouwert (Fryslân) and Mercator-Media in Aberystwyth (Wales). Mercator was established in order to gather all available information on the minority languages and cultures, and it is a very useful instrument for disseminating and exchanging information both inside and outside these linguistic communities.

Mercator-Law and Legislation

A book containing the texts of the Acts of the 2nd *International Symposium of European Languages and Legislation* which was held in Gandia in 1995 was published this year by the Mercator Center in Barcelona. The title of the book is *Los derechos en la nueva Europa* and is available directly from MERCATOR-Legislation. In addition to time spent on preparing for the World Conference on Linguistic Rights much time and energy was also spent on preparing for publication the *Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights* which was approved at the above conference held in Barcelona on 6 June.

Entries were added throughout the year to the data bank which has over 8,000 entries and which can be accessed on the web at:

<http://www.troc.es/ciemen/mercator>. This same web site was also updated during the year to include further services such as: an on-line bulletin, a specialized bibliography, a list of organisations, reproduction of documents on linguistic rights in Europe, reproduction of the texts of all the constitutions of EU states, and updates on the present situation of languages in Europe.

Mercator-Education

MERCATOR-Education initiated in 1995 a project concerned with the compilation of ‘regional dossiers’ on the position of minority languages in the various educational systems. The files are intended for politicians, teachers, students, researchers and journalists to provide them with up-to-date information on a specific region. They are developed on the basis of national files on the educational systems which are compiled in the context of the *Eurydice* project. In 1996 the first dossier, on Fryslân, was published. The final versions of dossiers on the Swedish community of Finland, Occitan in France and Irish in Northern Ireland will be published in the Spring of 1997. Others will follow.

The research project on models of bilingual education which focused on differentiation strategies in primary education has made good progress. By now the first report, that on Catalonia (Spain), is available. The second one, on Aosta in Italy, is expected in Autumn 1997. The reports on Ireland, the Basque Country, Fryslân and Wales are in their preparatory stages. The project will be completed by 1998. Also the related project on policy development for minority languages in the field of education and the media in the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom, has come into its second stage. The theoretical framework was developed and case studies will be prepared next year. An overview listing 44 language courses was published and distributed in April, 1996. A new overview is published every year around this time. Work continued throughout the year on updating databases on literature,

organisations and persons involved with minority language education. The existing framework of institutes and correspondents has contributed to this work. Also numerous information requests were dealt with by the Question and Answer Service.

Mercator-Media

During 1996, Mercator-Media, based at the University of Wales Aberystwyth, continued to collect and disseminate information on the communications media and information sources of the lesser used languages of the European Union. Media are defined very broadly to include radio and television, newspapers and magazines, electronic networks, publishers, major libraries, and booksellers that offer an international service through the post.

Once again, the core activity in collecting data was expanding and updating the database of media institutions. The fullest possible data were sought through questionnaires, phone, fax and e-mail, visits and field-work by a team of researchers and a network of expert informants. In June 1996, it became accessible for consultation through the World Wide Web at: <http://www.ihl.aber.ac.uk/DILS/mercator/>. Institutions will be able to check their entries on the Internet and send corrections. People with an Internet connection from all over the world have direct access to the data held. It was during this year that Mercator-Media developed its Website, with over 30 pages of information, including a description of Mercator-Media in several languages. Access to the media database, overviews of the media of lesser-used languages and links to appropriate Web sites.

There are also links to Mercator-Education and Mercator-Legislation as well as to the Mercator Centres' Joint Website, which hosts three databases of general information about lesser used languages: INSTITUTIONS & ORGANIZATIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHY and EVENTS. Data in these three databases are provided by the three Mercator Centres through a technical programme of data exchange. Mercator-Media has the editorial responsibility for the database of EVENTS, which was conceived and developed in 1996. It is updated monthly, except when it is necessary to include events which come to our attention at short notice. Events of interest to an international audience concerning lesser-used languages are eligible to be included. After an event takes place it will be archived according to the year in which it was held.

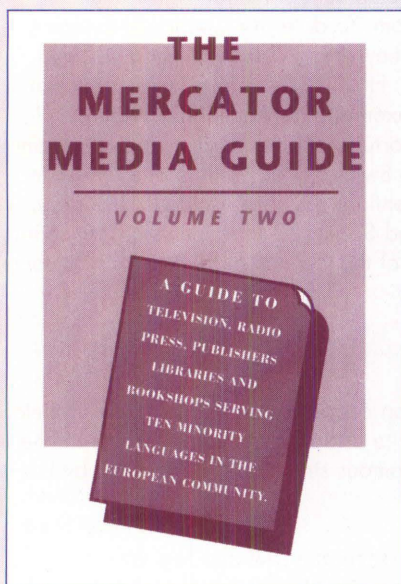
Despite using new technology, Mercator-Media continued to publish printed material. Mercator Media Guide Volume 2 appeared during the summer with sections on Asturian, Corsican, German in Belgium, Alsace Lorraine and South Tyrol, French and Franco Provençal in the Val d'Aosta, Friulan, Galician, Ladin and Sorbian. As in Volume 1, it consisted of selected edited entries from the Mercator-Media database as well as an overview of the language's situation and media in each language community concerned. Preparation work on the third volume was undertaken in 1996. It will include sections on the linguistic minorities of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Greece, those in Italy not included in Volume 2, German in Denmark and Danish in Germany, North Frisian and Occitan.

An international journal dedicated to the study of the media in the context of lesser used languages, Mercator Media Forum, was first published in 1995 and launched at the European Parliament. The second issue was prepared during 1996, and contains 13 articles by experts, both academics and professionals working in the field of media in lesser used languages, including a selection of papers presented at the conference 'Reporting the European Mosaic' held in Wales in October 1995.

Both of these publications are advertised on the Internet.

The Question and Answer Service for the public, media professionals and academics alike was used during the year, and many more requests were received through e-mail than before. Again, Mercator-Media played a role in creating links for minority language media.

As in previous years, Mercator-Media publicised its work and that of the Mercator Network through a programme of lectures and seminars, visits, presence at conferences and festivals, interviews for radio and TV, articles in books and in the press. It also welcomed visitors to the centre, some of whom spent several days working with material available.



The Mercator Media Guide



“During the year the Bureau has also provided practical support, project ideas, contact names and information on new language initiatives to the lesser used language economic and community development network.”

Economic Development Forum

During the year the Bureau has also provided practical support, project ideas, contact names and information on new language initiatives to the lesser used language economic and community development network. This significant network has led to the creation of an Economic Development Forum for European lesser used languages communities and an information exchange AGORA, which initiates projects in this field and maintains the momentum of the Forum in between its annual meetings.

Among the significant events of 1996 were the forging of new ties with UNESCO. During a meeting of the research group of the Forum in Stockholm in May the coordinator of UNESCO's regional European programme on cultural pluralism promised financial support for the publication of a book in mid 1997. UNESCO's World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997) aims to create a world-wide network of researchers, planners and policy makers investigating the field of cultural diversity and social and economic development. The regional programme in Europe which deals with cultural pluralism is divided into three sections and it was proposed that the research group of the Economic Development Forum form a fourth division: language, culture and economy.

The Forum also initiated links with LEADER II groups which operate in bilingual areas. Amongst the possible networking themes proposed were cultural tourism, innovation in training and human resources development, care services, community cooperatives, language based enterprises and farm diversification. In addition AGORA has been collaborating with academic institutions in five regions where business and management education is provided through the local language: Friesland, Ireland, Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Scotland. Possible proposed areas of action are exchanges of students and staff between institutions, the development of a common model the relationship between language, culture and the economy; common difficulties in training and the recruitment of staff and students.

European Center for Minority Issues

On 4 December 1996, the Bureau attended the opening of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Flensburg, Germany. It is an independent scientific centre, which has been established by agreement between the governments of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany, including Schleswig-Holstein. The ECMI has specified several aims:

- to conduct research into, inform and give advice on questions and problems related to national and ethnic minorities and majorities in an European perspective
- to cooperate with and carry out its activities as part of a network of other European research institutions
- to promote practical experiences of minority protection through symposia, seminars and publications
- to become a platform for conflict-preventive dialogue between representatives of minority and majority communities

Furthermore, the centre hopes to enter into minority political and legal discussions with a view to giving a concrete contribution to the treatment of minority issues in Europe.

Obituary

Obituary: Dafydd Orwig 1928 - 1996

After a long illness, Dafydd Orwig died on 10 November 1996. He was a former Chairman of the UK Committee of the Bureau and a lifelong proponent of the Welsh language. Dafydd Orwig was one of the best known personalities in the Welsh language movement. A county councillor from Gwynedd, he was particularly active in ensuring Welsh its rightful place in public administration and local government. He was a respected and much loved member of the Council of the Bureau.

Future Challenges

“The Bureau, for its part, has always seen its primary role as being that of a non-governmental organisation...”

Towards the end of the year officials in DG XXII [European Commission] intimated that they intend to draft a legal act, which, if adopted by the Commission, the Parliament and the Council of Ministers, would lead to the establishment of a multiannual programme in favour of lesser used languages.

The Bureau warmly welcomes this initiative and has pledged its full support in getting the proposals through the various stages.

Nevertheless, the setting up of such a programme could impinge negatively on the privileged relationship the Bureau has hitherto enjoyed with the Commission. The European Commission could envisage the establishment of a *technical assistance bureau / bureau d'assistance technique [BAT]* or a network which would be responsible for carrying out projects on behalf of the Commission. Such an entity would be 100% subvented by the Commission and would consequently be answerable only to Commission officials. Alternatively, the Commission might opt to extend the competencies of an existing *BAT*. The role of the Bureau and its relationship with the Commission in such a changed scenario are unclear.

The Bureau, for its part, has always seen its primary role as being that of a non-governmental organisation, free to speak and act on behalf of lesser used language communities. It perceived no conflict between fulfilling this role and, at the same time, carrying out projects on behalf of the Commission.

While it could easily take two years to put the new programme in place the Bureau immediately initiated a debate on its future role - a debate which will no doubt continue during 1997. The active support of its many friends and collaborators will be crucial for the Bureau in facing these new challenges.

Thanks To

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Le Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle, Luxembourg for its subvention, for providing rent-free accommodation for the Bureau's Education Secretariat until its closure and for its invaluable support and cooperation in organising the seminar on *Lesser Used Languages, Teacher Training and the Culture of Peace*;

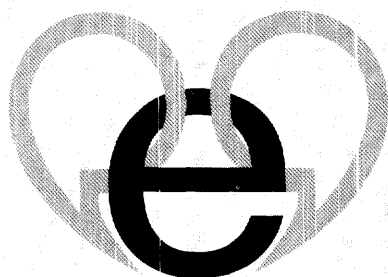
La Communauté française de Belgique for providing rent-free accommodation for the Brussels Information Centre, for hosting a meeting of the Bureau's Council in Charleroi and for hosting the Bureau's Breton cultural evening in Brussels;

Das Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft, Belgium for its subvention;

UNESCO/LINGUAPAX for its subvention and invaluable support in organising the seminar on *Lesser Used Languages, Teacher Training and the Culture of Peace*;

Údarás na Gaeltachta, Ireland for hosting the Bureau's Annual Assembly at Dún Chaoin;

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Thanks to the many
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 whose generous
 cooperation the
 Bureau could not have
 functioned as
 successfully as it did.

The Folkshegeskoalle Schulgerlân, Skylge, Fryslân for providing meeting - room facilities and low-cost accommodation for directors attending a Board of Directors meeting on Skylge;

Svenska Finlands folkting for hosting a dinner in honour of the directors during a Board meeting at Helsingfors;

Hanse-Office [Gemeinsames Büro der Länder Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein], Brussels for hosting a reception to launch *North Frisia and Saterland: Frisian between Marsh and Moor*; and

.....the many persons in EU institutions, other international organisations, members of member state committees, voluntary associations, universities, research institutes, public authorities and elsewhere without whose generous cooperation the Bureau could not have functioned as successfully as it did.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN BUREAU

Living languages Series-Série Langues lues Vivantes

No. 1	<i>Parler l'Europe</i>	3 ECU	<i>The Sound of Europe</i>	3 ECU
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	<i>Les dividendes de la diversité</i>			5 ECU
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European Languages Series-Série Langues européennes

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	<i>Langues d'Ecosse, une Réalité à trois dimensions</i>		
No. 3	<i>Nordfriesland und Saterland: Friesisch zwischen Meer und Moor</i>		
	<i>North Frisia and Saterland: Frisian between Marsh and Moor</i>		
	<i>Frise septentrionale et Saterland: Le frison entre mer et marais</i>		5 ECU
No. 4	<i>Between Alps and Adriatic: The Slovenes in the EU</i>		
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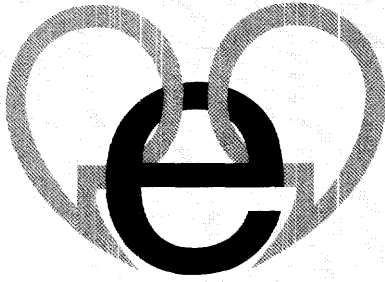
Key Words: A Step into the World of lesser used languages
Mots-Clés: Entrer dans le Monde des langues moins répandues **5 ECU**

Database of Cultural Activities -

1. <i>Theatre groups (out of print)</i>	
2. <i>Documentation Centres</i>	4 ECU
3. <i>Music Groups</i>	7 ECU

Vade-Mecum: Guide to Legal Documents, Support Structures and Action programmes pertaining to the lesser used languages of Europe (out of Print)
Vade-Mecum: Guide des Documents légaux des structures d'appui et des programmes d'action concernant les langues moins répandues de l'Europe) **8 ECU**

European Inventory on Bilingual Educational Systems
Inventaire européen des Systèmes éducatifs bilingues **10 ECU**



Brochures:

European Community Activity in Favour of Lesser Used languages 1983-1989
Les activités des Communautés européennes en faveur des langues et cultures moins répandues
Die Tätigkeit der Europäischen Gemeinschaft für die Sprach- und Kulturminderheiten
Attività della comunità a favore delle lingue e culture meno diffuse

Lesser Used Languages of the European Union Report of Activities 1989-1993

European Bureau Annual Reports, 1994 and 1995
Rapports annuels du Bureau 1994 et 1995

TV Coproduction Advisory Group, Final Report
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Livret à la jeunesse

Information Brochure on the European Bureau

Eenheid in Verscheidenheid *Aontacht san Éagsdúacht* *Unità nella Diversità*
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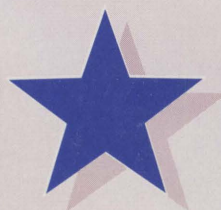
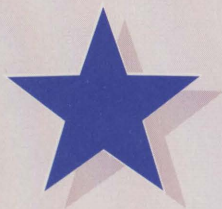
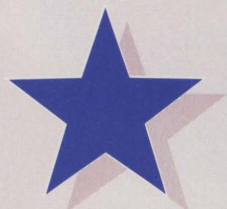
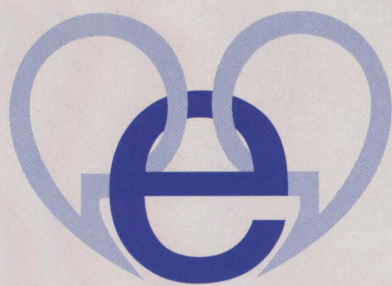
Mercator Information Networks: A Resource for European Languages

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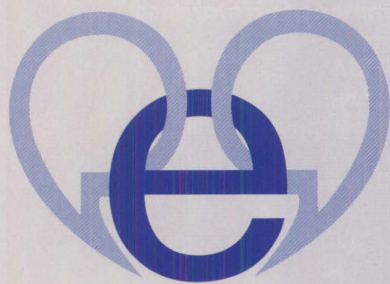
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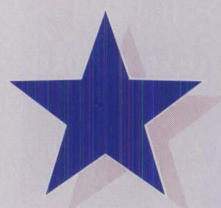
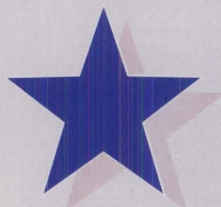
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