



## European Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity

### NPLD

Languages are essential for many aspects of everyone's lives and are most probably humankind's greatest development. Languages form bonds, build teamwork and drive everyone's lives forward in a unique way. Languages are one of the most basic parts of people's identity. Languages are therefore very powerful but also very emotional tools. They are not only a means of communication, but they also have embedded within them many of the values, aspirations and the way of life of the speakers of these languages. All languages, regardless of number of speakers or legal status, are key for the personal, social and economic development of societies.

*'All languages are the expression of a collective identity and of a distinct way of perceiving reality and must therefore be able to enjoy the conditions required for their development in all functions'*

Article 7, Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights

## The main advantages of being a member of the NPLD

### The NPLD...

- 1.** Is the recognised voice in Europe protecting Constitutional, Regional and Small-state languages in the EU;
- 2.** Provides international visibility for regional languages in Europe, ensuring that it portrays *all* languages - regardless of number of speakers political status - as an opportunity for the personal, social and economic development of societies;
- 3.** Has high prestige with the European institutions such as the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe;
- 4.** Promotes the sharing and exchange of best practices among its members, policy makers, practitioners, researchers and experts across Europe;
- 5.** Is a unique platform where you can have access to European experts and to the latest developments in language planning and management in Europe;
- 6.** Publishes reports developed by prominent European experts on the current issues in the context of lesser-used languages such as languages and migration, languages and the economy, etc;
- 7.** Keeps members constantly updated on the latest developments through periodic policy briefings and reports on multilingualism;
- 8.** Provides opportunities for members to create working groups on specific topics;
- 9.** Offers advice on developing holistic, high quality strategic plans for your language, along with information and guidance on funding opportunities that are available at EU level;
- 10.** Has a proactive Secretariat in Brussels, a true European antenna to follow the latest developments on multilingualism in Europe and across the world.

## What is the NPLD?

1. Introduction
2. Languages
3. Objectives and key principles
4. Why should you join
5. Members and Membership
6. Structure

### 1. Introduction

The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) is a European network working in the field of language policy and language planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small-State Languages (CRSS) across Europe. The NPLD includes governments, both state and regional, universities, research institutes and associations as its members.

The NPLD works to ensure the languages spoken in Europe – international, national, regional, minority, endangered but also migrant languages – are all seen as valuable assets and a source of personal, social and economic development, which need to be supported and promoted.

- 1.1. The NPLD is a dynamic network of State and regional governments as well as universities, research centres and organisations that are committed to developing a holistic approach to language planning and management in order to promote, preserve and invigorate their languages in the twenty first century.
- 1.2. The NPLD acts to share best practice in language planning and sets up joint funded language projects between its members, which serves to raise awareness on the different linguistic realities across Europe and to work in close partnership and collaboration with different language realities.
- 1.3. Members of NPLD range from member states to regional governments to organisations who deal with language promotion at a very practical level. NPLD has 14 Full Members and 22 Associate Members. The 14 full members are either governments, both State and regional, or public bodies working in the field of language policy.
- 1.4. The Network's Chair is Sietske Poepjes, Regional Minister responsible for Frisian Language and Culture in the Netherlands. The Vice Chairs are Sabrina Rasom, representing the Ladin community in Fassa Valley in Italy, and Gregorio Ferreiro Fente from the Regional Government of Galicia in Spain. The Secretariat of NPLD is located in Brussels.

### 2. Languages of the NPLD

- 2.1. The NPLD comprises a broad range of languages – which includes official EU languages such as Irish, Swedish and Finnish – to languages with official status in their territories such as Basque, Catalan, Galician, Welsh or Frisian and other vibrant language communities with

varying degrees of official recognition such as Breton, Corsican, Occitan, Friulian or Ladin, among others.

- 2.2. The NPLD is open to all CRSS languages as well as to institutions, public bodies, associations, universities, and civil society organizations working in the field of linguistic diversity and multilingualism across Europe.
- 2.3. The NPLD is currently financed through a membership fee. It has had the financial support of the European Commission for the periods 2010-2012 and 2013-2015.

### 3. NPLD's Objectives and key principles

- 3.1. NPLD monitors EU development on **language issues** from an **interdisciplinary approach**, that is, we look at issues that are closely interlinked with language policies such as the role of languages in education, the link between languages and the economic vibrancy of regions, the importance of language for immigrant integration or languages and new technologies, among many others.
- 3.2. NPLD **represents** the voice of Europe's CRSS languages at EU level
- 3.3. NPLD **exchanges best practices** and **provides advice** in language related issues.
- 3.4. NPLD **promotes** understanding, collaboration and partnerships in field of linguistic diversity.
- 3.5. NPLD **works** in close collaboration with the European Parliament and informs the European Commission on CRSS language development.
- 3.6. NPLD **monitors legislation and funding mechanisms** that are relevant to the development of CRSS languages.
- 3.7. NPLD acts as an **advisory capacity** to EU institutions, autonomous governments, research centres and associations on all aspects of language policy, language promotion and regeneration.
- 3.8. NPLD **exerts political influence** on behalf of CRSS languages in order to secure linguistic equality for its language communities.
- 3.9. NPLD represents all CRSS language communities, with a special regard for those that are **endangered** or that face conditions that may endanger or hinder language development.
- 3.10. NPLD monitors **funding opportunities** at EU level but also from a wide variety of other stakeholders.

## 4. Why joining the NPLD?

**In addition to the list of advantages of joining, you will also benefit from:**

- 4.1. A monitoring service at the EU level that looks at all relevant legislation and funding proposals for languages.
- 4.2. Funding opportunities: NPLD will be applying for EU funds for language projects in which people in your language community may want to participate.
- 4.3. The possibility of access to EU funding, as it is difficult for smaller language communities to apply because of the thresholds often required (co-funding etc.) are too high and are designed for larger languages and institutions. The NPLD acts in the spirit of solidarity. It gives you instant partners and a network so that you can set up the language project that you want to do and that best benefits your language.
- 4.4. NPLD provides advice on tailor made activities and developments to promote and strengthen your language.
- 4.5. The ability to discuss and debate with other managers and stakeholders at a senior level who have a great deal of knowledge and expertise regarding language planning at a governmental level.
- 4.6. Your community will also have an opportunity to learn how language planning and management develops at a European level.

## 5. Members & Membership

- 5.1. The Network comprises two levels of membership - **Full members** and **Associate members**. The **Full Members** are the main funders of the network and automatically have a seat on the Steering Committee (SC). The Associate Members pay a smaller fee and a number of them are chosen by the Associate Members themselves to be represented on the SC. All the **Associate Members** can participate and discuss issues in the Network by attending the annual General Assembly. All members are expected to contribute towards the funding of the Network.
- 5.2. **Full members** have greater voting powers within the Network's structure, which reflects their greater financial contribution. All Steering Committee members, however, will have an influence on policy decisions.

## 6. Structure

The General Assembly is the main forum of the Network; all members meet at least once a year. The Steering Committee (SC) of the network is composed of the Full Members and some periodically

elected Associate members and it works as the decision-making body. The SC members meet at least twice a year. The Chair's Committee is in charge of the strategic direction of the Network.

### Chair's Committee members

#### **Sietske Poepjes, Chair**

Sietske Poepjes is Regional Minister responsible for Frisian Language and Culture in the Netherlands. She was elected NPLD's Chair for three years in June 2017 and, as the Chair, her main responsibility is for the strategic direction of the Network in discussion with the Chairs' Committee.

#### **Sabrina Rasom, Vice-Chair**

Sabrina Rasom is the representative of the Ladin community in Fassa Valley, Trento, Italy. She has been a Vice-Chair since May 2016 until 2018.

#### **Gregorio Ferreiro Fente, Vice-Chair**

Gregorio Ferreiro Fente is the representative of the Government of Galicia, Spain, and was elected Vice-Chair in June 2017 for a period of two years.

### Staff

#### **Vicent Fenollar i Sastre, NPLD's Policy and Outreach Manager**

Based in Brussels, he is responsible for NPLD relations with the EU institutions and external communications and to monitor policy developments at EU level on multilingualism.

[Vicent.fenollar@npld.eu](mailto:Vicent.fenollar@npld.eu)

#### **Eva Soms i Bach, NPLD's Finances and Administration Manager**

Based in Brussels, Eva is in charge of the financial and economic aspects of the European network, as well as the coordination of its members.

[Eva.soms.bach@npld.eu](mailto:Eva.soms.bach@npld.eu)

## FULL MEMBERS 2017

1. Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia
2. Government of Basque Country
3. Government of Bizkaia
4. Government of Catalonia
5. Government of Corsica
6. Government of Galicia
7. Government of Ireland & Irish Institute of Language (Foras Na nGaeilge)
8. Government of Navarre
9. Government of Valencia
10. Government of Wales
11. Province of Friesland
12. Province of Trento -Fassa Valley
13. Public Office for the Breton Language
14. The Swedish Assembly of Finland – Folktinget
15. Government of Balearic Islands

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS 2017

1. Aurten Bai Foundation
2. Bangor University (Prifysgol Bangor)
3. Cardiff University (Prifysgol Caerdydd)
4. Conseil Général du Finistère
5. Convergencia Occitana
6. Cornwall Council
7. Cwmni Iaith
8. EBLT (Europeesk buro foar lytse talen)
9. Fryske Akademy
10. Iaith Cyf (Welsh Centre for Language Planning)
11. Institut Estudis Occitans (Occitan Studies Institute)
12. Macedonian in Greece -EDESSA
13. Mentrau Iaith Cymru
14. Noregs Mallag
15. Soillse and University of Highlands and Islands
16. Soziolinguistika Klusterra
17. Stockholm University
18. The Archives of the Sweden Finns
19. Trinity St David's College (Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant)
20. URDD
21. Welsh National College (Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol)