

European Day of Languages - 26 September 2013



The European Day of Languages is for Everybody!

More than ever language and communication represent central aspects of our society. Language learning offers a way of opening our minds to new perspectives and cultures.

The European Day of Languages is an opportunity to celebrate the linguistic wealth which is represented within the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. It is an occasion to celebrate all languages present in Europe, also those with non-European origins used on a daily basis around the continent. With some 225 indigenous languages in Europe and between 6000-7000 languages spoken around the world, the Day is a reminder of the many benefits of language learning, not least to further develop cognitive competences, break down cultural barriers and open the door to new friendships and professional opportunities.

Find out more about the European Day of Languages and the hundreds of events taking place around the continent at: www.coe.int/edl.

Statement by Ólöf ÓLAFSDÓTTIR, Director, Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Background information on the Day

The European Day of Languages is a day to encourage language learning across Europe.

At the initiative of the Council of Europe, the European Day of Languages has been celebrated every year, on 26 September, since the European Year of Languages in 2001.

The specific aims of the Day are to:

- alert the public to the importance of language learning in order to increase plurilingualism and intercultural understanding;
- promote the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe;
- encourage lifelong language learning in and out of school.

The dedicated website for the Day is available in 25 languages and in 2012 over 675 events were registered in the events' calendar of the site. This figure represents only a small proportion of the activities taking place in Europe and beyond around 26 September, which are organised mainly by schools, universities, language and cultural institutes and associations.