

Press Release

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Graz Centre to discuss language education's role in social cohesion

Strasbourg, 25.09.2007 – The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) of the Council of Europe will mark the completion of its second medium-term programme by organising a conference devoted to "Languages for social cohesion – language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe" in Graz, Austria, on 27-29 September.

The conference will serve as a platform for presenting the results of the projects of the Centre's 2004-2007 programme as well as other work by language professionals on developing and implementing tools to improve the teaching and learning of languages in the context of securing greater social cohesion in Europe.

The event will specifically focus on four thematic areas: coping with linguistic and social diversity; communication in a multicultural society; professional development and reference tools; innovative approaches and new technologies.

Some 250 participants will hear speakers from the Centre's programmes, government institutions, universities, non-governmental and international organisations address the orientation of future reforms and developments in the practice of language teaching and learning in Europe.

Speakers will include the former Slovenian Minister of Education and Rector of the University of Primorska, Lucija Čok, and Harald Hartung, Head of Multilingualism Policy Unit of the European Commission. Participants will be welcomed by official representatives of Austria, the host country of the ECML.

The conference will close with the launching of the Centre's third medium-term programme 2008-2011 "Empowering Language Professionals: Competences - Networks - Impact – Quality".

For more information on this event and links to a live broadcast of the proceedings via internet on 28 and 29 September, please visit <http://www.ecml.at/conference>

The European Centre for Modern Languages was set up in 1995 to contribute to improving language teaching in Europe by supporting its member states in the implementation of their language teaching policies. The Centre's mission is to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching in order to help Europeans learn languages more efficiently. More information is available on <http://www.ecml.at>

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