This paper discusses the term social cohesion and its connection with languages against the backdrop of two key considerations. The first of these is the dramatic transformation of human societies worldwide under conditions of globalisation in which population mobility is central and at unprecedented levels.

Combined with demographic shifts in fertility rates these changes appear to be decisive and permanent and produce multicultural societies everywhere. Contrasting with this is the play of both nostalgia and established practices of states and education systems which are premised on uniformity. At the supra-national level we see both: the instrumental rationality of efficiency, which dominates in economics and regional security but which is contested by the stubborn resistance of tradition, and even atavism.

The traditional aspiration of most national states has been for linguistic uniformity and the desire for secure homelands recognisable by cultural continuity and tradition. In reality this is often a myth, but a myth on which many national states have been forged, community imagined and economies constructed.

The paper will comment on the programmes of the ECML and the contribution of research in language education in forging broad, citizenship based, socio-cultural community and cohesion.

The paper will be based on examples of language education practice drawn from examples worldwide to underscore the links between practical work in educational institutions with high level policy ambition and national aspiration for social cohesion and security.

**Biography of presenter/ Biographie du présentateur/ Bigraphischer Hintergrund des/der Beiträgenden:**

Prof Joseph Lo Bianco holds the Chair of Language and Literacy Education at the University of Melbourne and was formerly Director of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia. He is also Honorary Professor in Language Education at the University of Hong Kong. He has worked on language policy, literacy planning, bilingualism and multicultural education in many countries including Australia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Western Samoa and Scotland. He is also the founder of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia and the author of Australia’s first explicit language policy: the National Policy on Languages (1987).”

**Name of institution/ Nom de l’institution/ Name der Institution:**

University of Melbourne
Université de Melbourne
Universität Melbourne