

University of Teacher Education Carinthia

Models and Methodologies for Minoritised Languages in Education

*16–17 Oct 2026
Klagenfurt / Celovec*

Book of Abstracts

An International FOSTERLANG Conference

Models and Methodologies for Minoritised Languages in Education

16–17 October 2026

University of Teacher Education Carinthia

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Contents

16 October 2026 — Friday

Welcome Speeches	5
Keynote 1	6
Mònica Pereña.....	6
<i>The Linguistic Model of the Catalan Educational System: From Immersion Programs to a Plurilingual Approach</i>	
Panel 1 – Strengthening Minority-Language Education through Governance ...	8
Michael Vrbinc.....	8
Sergio Crasnich.....	9
Laura Horvat and Elizabeta Tóth.....	10
Panel 2 – The Role of Minority Self-Organization in Minority-Language Education	12
Artur Jabłoński & Anna Kościukiewicz-Jabłońska.....	12
Danilo Katz.....	13
Andrea Bartole & Chiara Vianello.....	14
Alen Vugrinec.....	15
Keynote 2	16
Maria Begoña Iturgaitz Rodríguez.....	16
<i>Basque at the Heart of the School System: Principles, Policies and Practices</i>	
Panel 3 – Models and Methods of Minority-Language Education in Practice: Challenges and Perspectives	18
Hanna Ellwart.....	18
Jana Smid & Katarina Virnik.....	19
Eva Zojer.....	20
Monika Tylawska.....	21

Exhibition – Borders and Migration: In the Garden of the (In)visibles.**Introduction to the exhibition..... 23**

Giuseppe Grimaldi..... 23

Horizon Europe MultiLX – From multilingual youth practices to emerging policy recommendations..... 23

Clara Seitz..... 23

17 October 2026 — Saturday**Keynote 3..... 24**

Durk Gorter..... 24

*Pedagogical Translanguaging***Panel 4 – (Comparative) Research Perspectives on Minority-Language Education..... 26**

Judith Purkarthofer..... 26

Luca Melchior..... 27

Franco Finco..... 28

Ursula Doleschal..... 29

Sophie Rädcl..... 30

Participatory Workshop with Teachers and Educational Experts..... 31**Joint Keynote 4..... 32**

Brigitta Busch & Petra Roter..... 32

*European Standards on Managing Linguistic Diversity: How to Ensure Effective Access to Minority Language Rights in Education?***Panel 5 – Minority-Language Education: Global Comparisons and Theoretical Perspectives..... 34**

Justyna Olko..... 34

John Joseph Sullivan..... 35

Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej..... 36

Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones..... 37

Sabina Zorčič..... 37

Programme at a Glance

All sessions take place in Room HSB unless stated otherwise. All panel sessions are chaired by Daniel Wutti, all keynotes by Eva Hartmann. Travel, accommodation and dinner information: see the conference booklet.

Friday, 16 October 2026

07:45–10:30	School visit optional, prior registration required
10:30–11:15	Transfer, arrival and conference registration · Aula / Foyer
11:15–12:00	Welcome speeches and FOSTERLANG introduction Georg Sitter · Peter Reichmann · Justyna Olko · Daniel Wutti
12:00–13:00	Keynote 1 Mònica Pereña — The Linguistic Model of the Catalan Educational System: From Immersion Programs to a Plurilingual Approach
13:00–14:00	Lunch · University cafeteria
14:00–15:15	Panel 1 – Strengthening Minority-Language Education through Governance Michael Vrbinc · Sergio Crasnich · Laura Horvat and Elizabeta Tóth
15:15–16:30	Panel 2 – The Role of Minority Self-Organization in Minority-Language Education Artur Jabłoński & Anna Kościukiewicz-Jabłońska · Danilo Katz · Andrea Bartole & Chiara Vianello · Alen Vugrinec
16:30–17:00	Coffee break · Room 1210
17:00–17:45	Keynote 2 Maria Begoña Iturgaitz Rodríguez — Basque at the Heart of the School System: Principles, Policies and Practices
17:45–19:00	Panel 3 – Models and Methods of Minority-Language Education in Practice Hanna Ellwart · Jana Smid & Katarina Virnik · Eva Zojer · Monika Tylawska
19:00–19:20	Horizon Europe MultiLX – From multilingual youth practices to emerging policy recommendations Clara Seitz · Room HSB
	Exhibition – Borders and Migration: In the Garden of the (In)visibles Giuseppe Grimaldi · Aula / Foyer
19:20	Departure to joint dinner registration required

Saturday, 17 October 2026

08:45–09:15	Arrival and morning coffee · Room 1210
09:15–10:15	Keynote 3 Durk Gorter — Pedagogical Translanguaging
10:15–10:30	Coffee break · Room 1210
10:30–12:15	Panel 4 – (Comparative) Research Perspectives on Minority-Language Education Judith Purkarthofer · Luca Melchior · Franco Finco · Ursula Doleschal · Sophie Rädcl
12:15–13:15	Lunch · Room 1210
13:15–14:50	Participatory Workshop with Teachers and Educational Experts chaired by Yelizaveta Andakulova
14:50–15:15	Coffee break · Room 1210
15:15–16:15	Joint Keynote 4 Brigitta Busch & Petra Roter — European Standards on Managing Linguistic Diversity: How to Ensure Effective Access to Minority Language Rights in Education?
16:15–16:30	Coffee break · Room 1210
16:30–18:00	Panel 5 – Minority-Language Education: Global Comparisons and Theoretical Perspectives Justyna Olko · John Joseph Sullivan · Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej · Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones · Sabina Zorčič — Challenges of Introducing the Romani Language in Elementary Schools: The Case of Slovenia
18:00–18:30	Closing discussion, synthesis and FOSTERLANG outlook
18:30	Departure to joint dinner registration required

16 October 2026 — Friday

Welcome Speeches

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 11:15–12:00

**Georg Sitter, Vice-Rector for Teaching and School Development Counselling,
University of Teacher Education Carinthia**

**Peter Reichmann, Provincial Minister (Landesrat) for Education, Government
of Carinthia**

**Justyna Olko, Full Professor at the University of Warsaw, who leads the
FOSTERLANG consortium**

**Daniel Wutti, Conference Chair and co-lead of FOSTERLANG Work Package
3, University of Teacher Education Carinthia**

Keynote 1

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 12:00–13:00

Mònica Pereña, Linguapax International & Catalan Government; formerly Deputy Director of Multilingualism, Catalan Ministry of Education

The Linguistic Model of the Catalan Educational System: From Immersion Programs to a Plurilingual Approach

ABSTRACT

This presentation outlines the newly updated linguistic model introduced by the Department of Education of Catalonia, designed to address contemporary social changes, globalisation, and shifting linguistic demographics. Grounded in extensive research by educators, academic groups, and Council of Europe experts, the model solidifies established language immersion strategies while shifting towards a multilingual framework.

Key pillars include the integration of language and content (CLIL) and the interconnected learning of multiple languages. While Catalan remains the foundational vehicular language and a vital tool for social cohesion, the model ensures full student mastery of Catalan, Spanish, and Occitan (in Aran) by the end of compulsory education, alongside one or two foreign languages. Furthermore, it reinforces intercultural competence by recognising students' diverse family languages. Attendees will gain insight into how this model positions language at the centre of knowledge construction to foster robust, plurilingual competencies for the present world.

BIOGRAPHY

Mònica Pereña holds a degree in Catalan Philology from the University of Barcelona and a Diploma in French Studies at the University of Toulouse-Le Mirail, France. She completed doctoral studies in "Contemporary Catalan Literature: From theory to practice" at the University of Barcelona and took part in the research programme "The Language, Equity, and Educational Policy (LEEP)" at the School of Education at Stanford University. She has an Executive Master in Public Administration from ESADE Business School.

She started her professional career as a teacher. Currently, she is responsible for international evaluations at the National Agency for Educational Evaluation in Catalonia. Previously, she participated in the design and development of Catalonia's language policy, led the creation of linguistic infrastructures such as the online course Parla.cat, the search and correction tool Optimot, corporate machine translation systems, and the adaptation of Catalan language certificates to the Council of Europe's Common European Framework. As Deputy Director of Language and Multilingualism at the Ministry of Education of Catalonia she ran the linguistic policy of the Catalan education system and she developed linguistic programmes designed to improve teachers' performance in methodology and school organisation, and was responsible for in-service teacher training. She was also responsible for the reception strategies for migrant and refugee students and for the implementation of international programmes. She is the author of the volume "Ensenyar i aprendre llengües en un model educatiu plurilingüe: Metodologies i estratègies per al desenvolupament de projectes educatius i per a la pràctica docent" (Teaching and Learning Languages in a

Multilingual Educational Model: Methodologies and strategies for the development of educational projects and teaching practice), Quaderns d'educació, Ed. Horsori, 2016.

Since 2016 she has been president of Linguapax, an international organisation with UNESCO consultative status dedicated to the assessment, protection, and preservation of the world's linguistic diversity.

Panel 1 – Strengthening Minority-Language Education through Governance

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 14:00–15:15

Michael Vrbinc, Education Directorate for Carinthia

Minority School Education in Carinthia: The Role and Responsibilities of the Carinthian Education Directorate

ABSTRACT

On 1 January 2019, the former Regional School Board for Carinthia and the School Department of the Office of the Carinthian Provincial Government were merged to form the Carinthian Education Directorate, a joint federal-provincial authority.

Within the new organisational structure, the Department for Minority School Education was established as Department 3 of the Pedagogical Service, in accordance with Section 31 of the Minority School Act of 1959.

The department's remit encompasses all matters relating to minority school education, including subject-specific supervision of all schools within the scope of the Minority School Act, as well as supervision of Slovene language instruction at all other schools in Carinthia and all the responsibilities of school quality management (SQM).

BIOGRAPHY

Michael Vrbinc (born 9 December 1963 in Klagenfurt, Austria) is a secondary school teacher of German and Slovene, specialising in school administration and minority education. From 2003 to 2015, he served as Principal of the BG and BRG for Slovenes in Klagenfurt. He subsequently worked as a Subject Inspector at the Regional School Board for Carinthia.

Following Austria's 2019 education reform, he joined the Carinthian Education Directorate (Bildungsdirektion für Kärnten), where he serves as a School Quality Manager in Department 3 of the Pedagogical Service. This department is responsible for minority school education in Carinthia.

Sergio Crasnich, National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Regional Unit Koper/Capodistria

Preserving Minority Identity: Language Policies towards Italian-Language Schools on the Slovenian Coast

ABSTRACT

The main features of Slovenia's protective language policies regarding public schools in which Italian is the language of instruction will be examined. Grounded in a constitutional framework that regulates bilingualism, the state guarantees and finances a parallel educational framework wherein Italian serves as the primary medium of instruction (L1), complemented by mandatory Slovene language acquisition (L2). Crucial institutional support is provided by the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (ZRSŠ) and the National Examination Centre (RIC), which are responsible for the development and adaptation of school curricula and for the implementation of translated standardised assessments. Although this framework serves as the primary mechanism for preserving and fostering the cultural and linguistic heritage of the autochthonous Italian minority, current demographic shifts present new challenges. The increasing enrollment of non-native students is giving rise to debates regarding the potential slowing of academic progression and the necessity to maintain a balance between protecting minority identity and embracing a multicultural perspective in order to promote cross-border cooperation and integration.

BIOGRAPHY

Sergio Crasnich, PhD in Educational Research, is a teacher and Senior Adviser at The National Education Institute of Slovenia (ZRSŠ), where he develops curricula for schools with Italian as the language of instruction. He chairs the National Commission for the National Assessment of Knowledge (NPZ) in Italian (L1/L2) for ISCED levels 1 and 2 of basic school. He has conducted research on bilingualism and text comprehension with the Universities of Rome (La Sapienza) and Trieste, and on teacher professional development with the Faculty of Education at the University of Primorska (UP PEF). He has participated in cross-border initiatives, including the CROMO/CROMO 2 projects (co-managed by ÖSZ and PH Kärnten) and the development of language e-learning modules within EDUKA2 (co-managed by SLORI and UP PEF).

Laura Horvat and Elizabeta Tóth, National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Regional Unit Murska Sobota

A Model for Bilingual Education in the Ethnically Diverse Region of Prekmurje

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the authors will discuss the model of bilingual education in the ethnically mixed region of Prekmurje (the Slovene-Hungarian region) in the Republic of Slovenia. In the current bilingual region, monolingual Slovene and monolingual Hungarian elementary school classes operated from after World War II until the late 1950s. After completing elementary school, members of the Hungarian ethnic group were unable to continue their education in Hungarian secondary schools due to the Iron Curtain, and their lack of knowledge of the Slovene language did not ensure their successful integration into monolingual Slovene secondary schools. In postwar Yugoslavia, this gave rise to the need to introduce a model that would resolve this problem. The bilingual educational model was introduced in 1959, first in elementary schools, and later expanded to include secondary schools as well.

They will present the bilingual school (sub)system: its legal framework and how the model fits into the Slovenian school system. They will highlight the developmental and advisory role of the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (ZRSŠ), Murska Sobota Regional Unit, within this educational system and discuss the most important tasks of educational advisors working in this field.

At the ZRSŠ, they prepare curricula, adapt them, and assist in the translation of curricula, competency catalogs, implementation guidelines, and other curricular and professional materials for the field of education and training of national communities. Educational advisors also collaborate with the National Examination Center (RIC) on procedures for testing proficiency in the language of instruction, as well as on national proficiency tests and the general and vocational high school graduation exams. The National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia is responsible for carrying out development and advisory work related to the modernisation and development of programmes, for their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as for conducting and coordinating the education and training of professional staff at educational institutions. The ZRSŠ responds to current and other needs in the education and training of the national community, in line with the specific characteristics of the field and the development priorities of the country's education system.

The paper will also focus on presenting the implementation of bilingual instruction in elementary and secondary schools, with a special emphasis on literacy opportunities in bilingual elementary schools (in Slovene, in Hungarian, or simultaneous literacy instruction in both languages) and on the teaching of Hungarian in bilingual elementary schools and bilingual high schools. They will also discuss languages of instruction in bilingual schools, curriculum adaptations,

language-based learning groups, the use of teaching materials, and additional training for bilingual teachers.

BIOGRAPHY

Laura Horvat is a professor of history and Hungarian by training. As a teacher at the Bilingual High School in Lendava, she has been teaching Hungarian at various levels (native language and second language—language of the environment) and in various programmes (in the general high school, vocational high school programmes, and technical high school programmes) since 1999; she has mentored high school students in competitions and events and served as a mentor to students during their teaching practicums. From 2002 to 2012, she served as a member of the National Subject Commission for the Vocational Matura in Hungarian; between 2004 and 2015, she was a member of the National Subject Commission for Hungarian; and since 2020, she has been the chair of that commission. She is a co-author of the Subject Examination Catalog for Hungarian as a Second Language (bilingual Slovene-Hungarian high school), which has been in effect since 2024. Between 2007 and 2015, she served on the commission for testing proficiency in Hungarian as a language of instruction for employees in bilingual preschools and schools.

Since 1 September 2026, she has been employed at the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia as an advisor for Hungarian.

Elizabeta Tóth is a professor of German and Hungarian by training. For 22 years (since 1 September 1999), she worked as a teacher at the Bilingual High School in Lendava, where she taught Hungarian (Hungarian as a native language and Hungarian as a second language—the language of the local community) in various high school programmes (in the general high school programme, as well as in secondary technical and vocational programmes); she also taught German for several years. As a high school teacher, she performed several other duties in addition to teaching: e.g., participating in development tasks and projects, coordinating and mentoring students on international projects, mentoring student teachers during their teaching practicums, mentoring students in competitions, and mentoring students at celebrations and public events, etc. She also performed certain additional professional duties: for example, she was a member of the State Examination Commission for Secondary and Vocational Schools, an examiner for external proficiency tests in Hungarian and German, a member of grading committees, and she participated in the preparation of curricula and other professional materials. For several years, she also served as chair of the Education Committee of the Pomurje Hungarian Self-Governing National Community and was first vice-chair and then chair of the Association of Educators at Bilingual Schools and Preschools in Prekmurje.

On 1 September 2026, she completed her fifth year of employment at the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Education, where she is a member of the subject-area group for ethnic minority education and the subject-area group for languages (subject group for Hungarian) and works at the Murska Sobota Regional Office as an advisor for ethnic minority education (bilingual education in Prekmurje). As part of her work as an educational advisor within the regional office, she primarily focuses on the field of bilingual education.

Panel 2 – The Role of Minority Self-Organization in Minority-Language Education

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 15:15–16:30

Artur Jabłoński & Anna Kościukiewicz-Jabłońska, Naja Szkòła (Kashubian minority, PL)

From Language Teaching to Education through the Language: The Role of NGOs in Kashubian Education

ABSTRACT

This presentation examines the role of non-governmental organisations in Kashubian education at two interconnected levels: running schools and helping shape the conditions for language teaching across the education system. It takes as its starting point the distinction between the prevailing model of additional, optional Kashubian lessons in public schools and an approach in which Kashubian also becomes a medium of instruction for selected subjects and a language of everyday school life.

Schools run by NGOs account for a small proportion of institutions teaching Kashubian, yet they provide a space for developing and testing bilingual and multilingual approaches to education, combining the acquisition of language skills with cultural participation and the development of community ties. One example is Naja Szkòła in Wejherowo, which operates under the patronage of the Perspektywa Kaszëbskô association.

The second area of analysis concerns the activities of the Kashubian-Pomeranian Association: contributing, in cooperation with the Polish Ministry of National Education, to the development of core curricula for the Kashubian language and Kashubian history, publishing textbooks, and supporting teacher training. These activities allow the association to be understood as a community-based support structure for Kashubian education, fulfilling a range of advisory and coordinating functions.

BIOGRAPHY

Anna Kościukiewicz-Jabłońska is a media manager and an expert in independent education for minority communities. She holds a degree in English philology and is a translator. She has been involved with Radio Kaszëbë for 22 years and served as headteacher of Naja Szkòła, a bilingual independent primary school in Wejherowo, from 2019 to 2023. She is Vice-President of the Perspektywa Kaszëbskô association.

Artur Jabłoński has been the school proprietor responsible for Naja Szkòła, a bilingual independent primary school in Wejherowo, since 2017. He is a journalist, writer, local government politician, and researcher affiliated with the Center for Research and Practice in Cultural Continuity at the University of Warsaw. He holds a PhD in the humanities and is President of the Perspektywa Kaszëbskô association.

Danilo Katz, Slovenian Pedagogical Association Carinthia, AT

Bilingual Education in a Minority Context: Challenges, Innovation and Educational Self-Help in Carinthia

ABSTRACT

Bilingual education in Carinthia, Austria, faces particular challenges arising from the coexistence of German and Slovene, varying language proficiency among pupils, and the requirements of the Austrian education system.

Although neighbouring Slovenia provides numerous educational resources, differences in curricula, linguistic environments and cultural backgrounds often limit their use in Carinthian schools. This creates a need for teaching materials specifically adapted to the region's bilingual and minority-language context.

Founded in 1984, the Strokovno pedagoško združenje / Pädagogische Fachvereinigung Kärnten (Association of Bilingual Educators in Carinthia) has addressed these challenges through professional cooperation and grassroots initiative. Over the past decades, the association has developed and published nearly 100 educational resources, including textbooks, teaching aids, digital learning games and other publications.

The presentation highlights the association's achievements and demonstrates how the dedication, creativity and collective initiative of educators contribute to preserving the Slovene language, improving educational quality and strengthening bilingual education in a minority context.

BIOGRAPHY

Danilo Katz (born in 1975 in Wolfsberg, Austria) is an Austrian educator, school principal, songwriter and cultural organiser committed to bilingual education and the Slovene-speaking minority in Carinthia.

He has served as principal of the Europaschule St. Michael ob Bleiburg / Evropska šola Šmihel pri Pliberku for the past 15 years and has chaired the Strokovno pedagoško združenje / Pädagogische Fachvereinigung Kärnten for 20 years. He also serves on several expert committees focusing on minority-language education.

He is the administrator and developer of the educational platform mala.sova.at, where he regularly creates and publishes interactive online learning games.

In addition, he has directed the Voxon Music Academy for 15 years and is a songwriter and founder of VINK, a band performing original songs in four languages. He also serves as vice-chairman of the Kulturni dom Pliberk/Bleiburg cultural centre and is a founding member of the environmental education initiative Weltacker / Njiva zemljanov.

His work combines education, multilingualism, digital innovation, music, culture and community engagement.

Andrea Bartole & Chiara Vianello, Coastal Self-Governing Community of the Italian Nationality (Italian minority, SI)

Language, Culture, and Identity: The Italian National Community in Slovenia

ABSTRACT

The presentation will focus on the legal framework governing the Italian national community in Slovenia. Specifically, it will trace the perspective provided by constitutional provisions and specific laws. The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia provides special forms of protection for national communities recognised as autochthonous, such as the establishment of self-managing communities. The history of the Italian community in Slovenia has centuries-old roots and stems from the history of the Republic of Venice, whose imprint remains evident throughout the region.

Furthermore, it will highlight the importance of minority associations and the role of minority schools and mass media in language preservation. It will also examine the practical implementation of bilingualism in nationally mixed areas, which is managed by the Office for Bilingualism. Bilingualism in these territories derives from constitutional provisions that establish Italian and Hungarian as co-official languages alongside Slovene in the nationally mixed areas where national communities reside.

BIOGRAPHY

Andrea Bartole works as an Administrative Manager at the Coastal Self-Governing Community of the Italian Nationality (Comunità Autogestita Costiera della Nazionalità Italiana). He holds law degrees from both Italy (Trieste) and Spain (Madrid), and he previously worked as a legal advisor in the private sector. In his current role, he focuses on minority rights, handling relations with government bodies and ministries, and manages various national and cross-border projects.

Chiara Vianello works as a Translator at the Coastal Self-Governing Community of the Italian Nationality (Comunità Autogestita Costiera della Nazionalità Italiana). She holds a bachelor's degree in Interlingual Communication and a master's degree in Translation from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her professional interests include terminology standardisation, translation in multilingual institutional contexts, and implementation of linguistic rights within the Italian community in Slovenia.

Alen Vugrinec, Hungarian Self-Governing National Community of Pomurje
(Hungarian minority, SI)

The Hungarian National Community in Slovenia: Between Institutional Protection and Everyday Reality

ABSTRACT

The Hungarian national community in Slovenia is an autochthonous minority with a distinct legal and institutional position within the country. This presentation will provide an overview of the community, its traditional settlement area in the Prekmurje region, and its role in Slovenian society. Attention will be given to the system of minority self-government and the role of the Hungarian Self-Governing National Community of Pomurje in representing the interests of the community and supporting its cultural, linguistic, social and economic development.

The presentation will also briefly address the constitutional and political framework for the protection of the Hungarian national community in Slovenia, as well as its cultural life and efforts to maintain Hungarian language and identity. Finally, it will highlight some of the key challenges facing the community today, including demographic change, the transmission and everyday use of the Hungarian language, the involvement of younger generations, and the long-term vitality of a small minority community.

BIOGRAPHY

Alen Vugrinec holds a master's degree in teaching English and a master's degree in teaching German as a Foreign Language. Since 2019, he has worked as a teacher of English and German at the Bilingual Secondary School Lendava. Since the 2025/26 school year, he has been serving as Assistant Principal at the same school.

He has participated as a speaker at various international conferences, including WAB – Words as a Battlefield at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor; the IATEFL Slovenia International Conference; and the international conference (To) Be a Pedagogical Inspiration: Practice That Recognises and Nurtures a Child's Potential. He is also active in writing professional articles related to English language teaching and pedagogical work in secondary education.

In addition to his work in education, since 2023 he has served as Vice-President of the Hungarian Self-Governing National Community of Pomurje, the central umbrella organisation representing the autochthonous Hungarian national community in the Prekmurje region. The organisation was established in 1975 based on the Slovenian Constitution and legislation governing self-governing national communities.

Keynote 2

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 17:00–17:45

Maria Begoña Iturgaitz Rodríguez, Institute for Basque and Language Education

Basque at the Heart of the School System: Principles, Policies and Practices

ABSTRACT

The Basque Autonomous Community has developed a comprehensive language education policy that places Basque (Euskara) at the centre of the educational system while promoting multilingual competence in Spanish and foreign languages. The recent educational reforms, including the new curriculum and the establishment of the Institute for Euskara and Language Education (EHIKA), aim to strengthen Basque language acquisition, improve student outcomes, and foster plurilingual competence through a whole-school approach.

This paper presents the main features of the current Basque language education model and the strategic actions implemented in recent years. The model is based on integrated language education, language plans in every school, and common curricular targets for Basque and Spanish. It promotes coordinated development of language and communication competence, multilingual competence, and cross-curricular language use.

Particular attention is given to three key initiatives: the Language Plan in every school, the National Reading Strategy, the EUSLE programme for newly arrived students, and the Integrated and Integral Language Treatment, including CLIL and Pluriliteracies for Deeper Learning approaches. These programmes seek to enhance literacy, accelerate Basque language acquisition, support inclusion, and improve academic achievement through coherent multilingual practices.

Lessons learned highlight the importance of well-structured school language plans, coordinated work across languages, and sustained support for newcomers. The Basque experience demonstrates how minority language revitalisation, educational equity, and plurilingual competence could be advanced simultaneously through a systemic and evidence-informed language education policy.

BIOGRAPHY

Maria Begoña Iturgaitz Rodríguez has combined classroom practice, educational leadership, teacher education, and curriculum innovation with a strong commitment to multilingual and language education. As an Educational Advisor for the Basque Government's Department of Education (2009–2025) and currently as a Language Educator at EHIKA (Institute for Basque and Language Education), she has designed and delivered professional development programmes, advised schools on language policy and plurilingual education, and coordinated innovation projects at regional and international levels. Among them, the last one (2022–2026) was the Pluriliteracies for Deeper Learning project, a collaborative initiative between the Basque Government and the University of Edinburgh aimed at promoting deeper learning through plurilingual pedagogies and disciplinary literacy.

Her work has also involved the development of educational resources and teacher-training materials. She co-authored *Dip, Dip, Dip* (2005), a collection of didactic materials supporting the early introduction of English in Early Childhood Education, and *INEBI* (2007), a set of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) materials for Primary Education, supporting schools in the development of coherent foreign language policies and practices.

Her academic background includes postgraduate studies in multilingual education, notably the course *Focus on Multilingualism: Language Integration in the Curriculum* (University of the Basque Country, 2017). She completed studies in Basque Philology at the University of the Basque Country and hold a University Degree in General Basic Education with a specialisation in Mathematics and Natural Sciences (1985). Her continuing professional development has focused on multilingual pedagogies, including specialised training in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at the Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE, 2012).

Panel 3 – Models and Methods of Minority-Language Education in Practice: Challenges and Perspectives

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 17:45–19:00

Hanna Ellwart, Naja Szkòła (Kashubian minority, PL)

Five Languages, One School: Kashubian Identity and Multilingualism at NAJA SZKÒŁA

ABSTRACT

NAJA SZKÒŁA is a private Kashubian primary school in Wejherowo, in northern Poland, founded in 2017. The presentation shows how a small regional school combines a strong local identity with an open, international outlook. Kashubian, a recognised regional language in Poland, is part of everyday school life, both in lessons and around the school. Alongside Polish, all students learn Kashubian, German and English as compulsory languages, and those who are interested can also learn Spanish. The talk describes how the school organises multilingual learning and how it helps students build a confident cultural identity while preparing them to meet other cultures. It also shows how the school works against harmful stereotypes about Kashubian culture and language. Finally, it presents the school's plans to open up internationally through Erasmus+ projects, partnerships with schools abroad and intercultural events. The school is looking for partner schools, especially those working with regional or minority languages, to exchange experiences and build joint projects.

BIOGRAPHY

Hanna Ellwart has been the headteacher of NAJA SZKÒŁA in Wejherowo, Poland, since 2024. It is a private Kashubian primary school, founded in 2017, where Kashubian is spoken every day, both in lessons and around the school. She also teaches History, Health Education and Education for Safety there. She found her calling as a teacher in Greece, where she volunteered at a kindergarten through the European Voluntary Service (EVS) after secondary school. After university, she spent a year and a half teaching English in the Peruvian jungle. In Poland, she worked as a primary teacher at an international school running the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP). She has taken part in more than 20 Erasmus+ training courses and youth exchanges across Europe. Her ties to Kashubian culture go back to her earliest years: her family has run the regional publishing house Region for 34 years. In her work, she aims to help students grow up with a strong cultural identity and to break down harmful stereotypes about being Kashubian. She speaks fluent English and Spanish and is learning Kashubian.

Jana Smid & Katarina Virnik, bilingual class teachers (Slovene minority, AT)

Insights from Bilingual Classroom Practice in Carinthia/Koroška

ABSTRACT

Bilingual education in southern Carinthia rests on the Minority Schools Act of 1958/59: in bilingual classes, lessons are to be taught in German and Slovene in roughly equal proportions. Enrolment, however, is not automatic — parents have to register their children, and the reality is rather heterogeneous: classes in which all children are registered, integrated classes in which registered and non-registered children learn together and a team teacher joins for part of the week, and schools where Slovene is organised in varying models, from a daily or weekly change of language to two days a week. Two bilingual class teachers report from this everyday practice.

BIOGRAPHY

Jana Smid & Katarina Virnik are bilingual class teachers at Volksschule 11 Maria Gail / Ljudska šola 11 Marija na Zilji and Volksschule Föurnitz / Ljudska šola Brnca.

Eva Zojer, Komenský School Association (Czech and Slovak minority, AT)

The Komenský School Model in Vienna

ABSTRACT

In her contribution, the educational work at the Komenský School in Vienna is presented according to the school's motto 'Bilingual learning – from kindergarten to graduation'. The school provides continuous bilingual education in Czech/Slovak and German from kindergarten to secondary school graduation; its Centrope Schooling concept, developed in cooperation with the Vienna Directorate of Education, responds to the linguistic and educational needs of children growing up in a multilingual and multicultural environment.

One of its core principles is the equal status of Czech and Slovak alongside German in both education and social interaction. Literacy – the initial development of reading and writing skills – begins in each child's strongest language, in Czech, Slovak or German, thereby providing a stable foundation for the further development of multilingualism. Children subsequently learn in linguistically mixed classes, and, with the exception of language classes, subjects such as Mathematics and the Arts are taught bilingually, so that both languages are actively used in different educational and cognitive contexts.

The contribution follows the various educational levels of the Komenský school association – from kindergarten to primary school and on to lower and upper secondary school – and explains their particular features, with a focus on Czech and, alternatively, Slovak language teaching and on continuous language promotion across the levels. Particular attention is given to the transitions between kindergarten and primary school and between primary school and lower secondary school, which present particular challenges for pupils and teachers alike.

Finally, the presentation gives an insight into the Czech and Slovak cultural and social landscape in Vienna: selected organisations and institutions are presented, and their collaboration and their importance for the preservation of language, culture and traditions is made visible, showing the Komenský School as part of a vibrant multilingual network. Bilingual drama, sports and instrumental education extend the use of languages beyond the classroom, and the model is particularly relevant to the Central European border region, where cross-border mobility calls for flexible educational pathways.

BIOGRAPHY

Mag. Eva Zojer has been teaching Czech, German and Drama at the Komenský School since 1998. She also works as an assistant to the headmistress, school quality management representative, school librarian, class teacher and Erasmus coordinator. She initiates and organises numerous projects, theatre productions and author readings at the Bilingual Real Gymnasium of the Komenský School Association.

Monika Tylawska, Ruska Bursa (Lemko minority, PL)

From Displacement to Cultural Survival: Institutional Barriers and the Decline of Lemko-Rusyn Language Education in Poland

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the contemporary sociolinguistic and educational status of the Lemko-Rusyn minority in Poland, analyzing the systemic challenges of minority language preservation in the aftermath of twentieth-century geopolitical disruptions. Historically rooted in the Carpathian region, the indigenous Lemko population suffered severe fragmentation due to mid-twentieth-century communist repressions, most notably the forced resettlements of 1945–1946 and Operation Vistula in 1947. Although officially recognised as an ethnic minority in Poland since 2005, the Lemko community faces critical institutional bottlenecks in safeguarding its linguistic heritage. Drawing on recent demographic and educational data from the 2023/2024 school year, this study highlights a dramatic decline in student enrollment across all educational tiers, culminating in just 12 pre-schoolers and 11 secondary students nationwide.

The analysis reveals that the preservation of Lemko-Rusyn is severely hindered by systemic and infrastructural barriers within the Polish education system. Because the language functions strictly as an elective, non-mandatory subject, classes are relegated to late-afternoon hours, creating severe logistical strain and commuting barriers for rural youth. Furthermore, the field suffers from an acute shortage of modernised textbooks and a total absence of higher education programmes to train new Lemko educators since 2017, shifting the operational burden entirely onto non-governmental organisations. Finally, the paper discusses changing domestic dynamics, where a pragmatic shift towards the dominant language and the breakdown of home transmission among younger generations pose existential threats to endogamous language continuity. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how institutional marginalisation and infrastructural gaps accelerate language shift, even within legally protected minority frameworks.

BIOGRAPHY

Monika Anna Tylawska is a philologist, educator, researcher, and socio-cultural activist dedicated to preserving, developing, and promoting the Lemko language and culture in Poland. She bridges an academic and educational perspective with translation work, literary creation, and local governance. She resides in Rozdziele, a village with a vibrant Lemko identity, where she serves as the elected village mayor (*sołtys*), fostering local community development and cultural heritage.

She graduated in Russian Philology with a specialisation in the Rusyn-Lemko Language from the Pedagogical University of Kraków and completed postgraduate studies in “Management and Leadership in Education” at the Jagiellonian University, alongside studies in Occupational Health and Safety. Professionally, she teaches at the M. Kromer High School in Gorlice, where her courses include the Lemko language.

Her research achievements include 11 years of lexicographical work on the monumental Contextual Dictionary of the Lemko Language edited by Prof. Olena Duć-Fajfer, for which she personally compiled over 4,100 entries. As a translator, she renders academic

publications and complex cultural texts into Lemko. She is also a creative writer in the language, authoring original poetry and children's fairy tales that aid early language acquisition. She actively shapes the minority media landscape as an ongoing editor and presenter for Lem.fm radio, and participates in local theatrical productions.

Exhibition – Borders and Migration: In the Garden of the (In)visibles. Introduction to the exhibition

Friday, 16 October 2026 · 19:00–19:20

Giuseppe Grimaldi, University of Trieste

The Garden of the Invisibles

ABSTRACT

The Garden of the Invisibles is a cross-border anthropological project developed within the Transform4Europe Alliance through collaboration between the University of Trieste, the University of Primorska, and partner institutions. Born from joint fieldwork in Autumn 2023, students and researchers collected objects left behind by migrants along the Italian–Slovenian–Croatian frontier. These ordinary items—clothes, backpacks, medicines, documents, toys—became silent traces of journeys that can no longer be directly narrated. The project does not reconstruct individual biographies but investigates how such objects acquire meaning through emotions, local politics, and border imaginaries. Through a travelling exhibition and student-led research, the objects generate encounters across European contexts, revealing how perceptions of borders and mobility shift depending on place. The “garden” emerges as a shared and contested space where presences, absences, and interpretations take root, inviting reflection on what becomes part of contemporary European heritage.

BIOGRAPHY

Giuseppe Grimaldi is a migration anthropologist and research fellow at the University of Trieste. His work focuses on the relationship between migration and borders. He has conducted ethnographic research in Israel, Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, and Italy, and founded a public research project on the link between migration and local identity in Southern Italy. He received the 2024 SIAA Award (Italian Society of Applied Anthropology) for his participatory research on agricultural exploitation. He has published in numerous national and international journals and authored a monograph on the relationship between second-generation youth of Ethiopian and Eritrean origin and the construct of Italian identity (*Fuorigioco. Figli di migranti e italianità*, Ombre Corte, 2022). A new monograph on informal brokerage in the agricultural sector in Southern Italy is forthcoming.

Clara Seitz, University of Teacher Education Lucerne, Switzerland

Horizon Europe MultiLX – From multilingual youth practices to emerging policy recommendations

17 October 2026 — Saturday

Keynote 3

Saturday, 17 October 2026 · 09:15–10:15

Durk Gorter, University of the Basque Country

Pedagogical Translanguaging

ABSTRACT

Translanguaging is a widely used concept in bilingual and multilingual education. This presentation examines translanguaging from the perspective of vulnerable minority languages. It starts with the general context of minority languages and the learning of minority languages as an additional language. Starting from ideas on the focus on multilingualism the presentation moves to the origins of translanguaging in the bilingual education context of Wales, it was initially conceived as a pedagogical strategy for developing linguistic and academic skills in both Welsh and English. Over time, however, the concept has been expanded and reinterpreted along diverse conceptual, pedagogical, and social lines. While translanguaging practices can be enriching, they also entail certain risks and, in some contexts, may inadvertently favour the majority language. Pedagogical translanguaging has several characteristics, levels and practices. Those are discussed in some detail and illustrated with examples from empirical studies.

The presentation concludes that, in cases of minority languages such as Basque, Frisian or Welsh, processes of standardisation and the promotion of academic language use are essential for the survival of these languages and for extending their functions into domains traditionally dominated by majority languages. At the same time, it argues for the importance of “breathing spaces” in which the minority language can be used without direct competition from the majority language. Teaching implications are pointed out. The presentation emphasises the need to consider the specific historical, sociolinguistic, and pedagogical contexts in which pedagogical translanguaging takes place.

BIOGRAPHY

Durk Gorter, a distinguished scholar in the field of multilingualism, held the position of Ikerbasque research professor at the University of the Basque Country. He led the Donostia Research group on Education And Multilingualism (DREAM), contributing significantly to research on multilingual education, European minority languages, and linguistic landscapes.

His contributions include several books such as “The Handbook of Linguistic Landscapes and Multilingualism” (2025), “A Panorama of Linguistic Landscape Studies” (2024), “The Minority Language as a Second Language” (2024), and “Pedagogical Translanguaging” (2021), all co-authored with Jasone Cenoz. The book “Educational Agency and Activism in Linguistic Landscape Studies” (2024) was co-edited with Edina Krompák. He published also numerous articles and book chapters.

He taught in the European Master in Multilingualism and Education (EMME) programme and supervised various PhD theses. He also served as the editor-in-chief of the journal “Language, Culture and Curriculum”.

Gorter has been visiting scholar at various universities, and he has presented at conferences worldwide. His work in the field of multilingualism earned him the Distinguished Scholar of Multilingualism award from the International Association of Multilingualism. He is included in Stanford University's list of “World's Top 2% scientists”.

Panel 4 – (Comparative) Research Perspectives on Minority-Language Education

Saturday, 17 October 2026 · 10:30–12:15

Judith Purkarthofer, University of Duisburg-Essen

Researching and Communicating Language Organization

ABSTRACT

Multilingual education runs smoothly in some places, and feels incredibly hard in others. In an attempt to understand how differences, linked to ideologies, power hierarchies and potentially traumatic events, contribute to successful education, I will present a model for researching and communicating about multilingual forms of educations that was developed from research in families, early child care, schools and universities. By making explicit what is often considered mere background, we can hope to explain some difficulties and progress that children and adults experience.

BIOGRAPHY

Judith Purkarthofer works in multilingualism studies at the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany. Her current focus is on multilingual families and lived experience of language across the lifespan. This topic conveniently includes all educational institutions as well as civil society: language policy in schools and pre-schools, racism and discrimination in community media and other social spaces and more recently the relationship between multilingual families and public authorities. She employs and discusses approaches that allow an understanding of children's and adults' voices in research, for example in *Speaking Subjects in Multilingualism Research: Biographical and Speaker-centred Approaches* (edited by Judith Purkarthofer & Mi-Cha Flubacher, 2022). www.heteroglossia.net

Luca Melchior, University of Klagenfurt

Friulian Language Teaching in Schools

ABSTRACT

The paper traces Friulian teaching from voluntary initiatives in the 1960s–1970s to a more systematic presence since the 1990s, situated in the former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia plus seven Veneto municipalities without direct funding. The current model is additive and voluntary (opt in) with a 30 hours per year minimum; there are no regular immersion/bilingual schools; implementation rests on Art. 4 of Law 482/1999 and Regional Law 29/2007. CLIL is favoured by law; initiatives such as Eduka2 and the Val Canale project, together with the Docuscuele centre (founded 2016), support materials development; experiences with the first primary textbook “Anìn!” and a lower secondary book in preparation highlight further needs.

BIOGRAPHY

Luca Melchior studied German Studies and Romanian Language and Literature at the University of Udine and subsequently obtained an additional qualification in Italian as a Foreign Language from Università Ca' Foscari, Venice. In 2008, he received a joint PhD in Romance Linguistics from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich and the University of Udine. He completed his Habilitation in General Linguistics in Italy in 2013 and 2018.

His academic career includes teaching positions at Leipzig University, LMU Munich, and the University of Mannheim, as well as several years as a University Assistant in the Department of Romance Studies at the University of Graz. From 2012 to 2016, he was involved in the FWF-funded project “Network of Knowledge” at the Department of Linguistics, University of Graz. From 2018 to 2021, he was Professor of Multilingualism Research at the Institute of Cultural Analysis at Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt. Since September 2023, he has been University Professor of German Language Education at the Department of German Studies, AECC, Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt.

His research interests include General and Applied Linguistics, Multilingualism and Plurilingualism, Language Education, Lexicography and Metalexicography, Sociolinguistics, and Language Policy.

Franco Finco, University of Teacher Education Carinthia

German Language Education in Italy's German-Speaking Linguistic Enclaves: Local Varieties and Standard German

ABSTRACT

The teaching of German in the German-speaking linguistic enclaves of northern Italy, excluding the Province of Bolzano (South Tyrol), does not follow a single model. In the Walser communities of the Aosta Valley, the Mòcheno and Cimbrian communities of Trentino, and Sappada, Sauris, Timau and Val Canale in Friuli Venezia Giulia, schools operate within multilingual settings that encompass Italian, local Germanic varieties and, in some cases, Standard German. A central pedagogical distinction is that teaching Standard German and fostering the local community language are related but not equivalent aims. Overall, these approaches seek to promote multilingual education that sustains local varieties while developing competence in Standard German; their continuity and implementation depend on local circumstances and individual school projects.

BIOGRAPHY

Franco Finco is Professor of Linguistics and Language Education at the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Education (Institut für Geisteswissenschaften und kulturelle Bildung) at the University of Teacher Education Carinthia (Pädagogische Hochschule Kärnten) in Klagenfurt, Austria. He is a Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Rijeka (Sveučilište u Rijeci), Croatia. He also teaches in the Department of Humanities and Cultural Heritage (Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici e del Patrimonio Culturale, DIUM) at the University of Udine, Italy. His research focuses on language education and the sociolinguistics of linguistic minorities, as well as linguistic and cultural contact in the Alpe-Adria region. He is a member of several research centres and cultural institutions in Austria, Italy and Croatia.

Ursula Doleschal, University of Klagenfurt

Slovene Education in Austria

ABSTRACT

My paper looks at the structural conditions governing the presence of Slovene in the Austrian education system, as provided for by legal regulations (language of instruction, language instruction as a first language or as a foreign language). The focus is on the minority education system in Carinthia.

BIOGRAPHY

Ursula Doleschal was born in Vienna in 1963, she studied general linguistics and Slavic studies at the University of Vienna, where she defended her dissertation in 1993, titled “Genus als grammatische und textlinguistische Kategorie, eine kognitiv-funktionalistische Untersuchung des Russischen” (Gender as a Grammatical and Text-Linguistic Category: A Cognitive-Functionalist Study of Russian). From 1990 to 2003, she was a university assistant and adjunct professor at the Institute for Slavic Languages at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, where she earned her habilitation in Slavic linguistics in 2000. Since 1 July 2003, she has been a full professor of Slavic linguistics at the Institute of Slavic Studies at the University of Klagenfurt. Since then, her research has focused on multilingualism—in particular, language choice and multilingual speech—as well as language policy issues concerning the Slavic languages (Slovene, Bosnian, Croatian, Russian).

Sophie Rädcl, Sorbian Institute

Teaching an Endangered Language into the Future: Recent Developments in Lower Sorbian Education

ABSTRACT

Lower Sorbian (dolnoserbšćina), a West Slavic minority language spoken in Lower Lusatia (Brandenburg, Germany), is critically endangered: intergenerational transmission within families has largely ceased, and native speakers are now confined to the older generations. As a consequence, revitalisation efforts have shifted decisively towards the educational sphere. This talk traces the development of Sorbian language teaching in Lower Lusatia over the past three decades – from the launch of the WITAJ immersion programme in the late 1990s to the emergence of a Lower Sorbian educational network encompassing kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. Against this backdrop, two recent developments that point to a broader reconfiguration of the field are examined. Firstly, the introduction of a new teacher training programme for Lower Sorbian at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, starting in the winter semester 2026/27, which is designed to address the chronic shortage of qualified teachers. And secondly, an increased need for adult language learning measures. I argue that these developments mark a transition from school-based language transmission towards a more inclusive new-speaker paradigm, with significant implications for the future of the language.

BIOGRAPHY

Sophie Rädcl is a junior researcher at the Serbski institut/Sorbian institute in Cottbus/Chóšebuz and a PhD candidate at the University of Vienna. Her research interests are language revitalisation and adult language learning with a focus on Lower Sorbian.

Participatory Workshop with Teachers and Educational Experts

Saturday, 17 October 2026 · 13:15–14:50

Chaired by Yelizaveta Andakulova, University of Teacher Education Carinthia

Work Package 3 of FOSTERLANG asks how linguistic capital is passed on in a local ecology: through classrooms and teaching, in families, and in the networks that surround a school. The workshop extends this question to participants' own experiences and practices. Drawing on the participatory work carried out within FOSTERLANG with teachers and education experts across five language regions, Yelizaveta Andakulova invites participants to explore these questions in their own contexts. Working in small groups, participants discuss what works in the classroom, how a minoritised language gains visibility and standing within an education system, where practice and policy pull apart, and what should count as a best practice — and for whom.

BIOGRAPHY

Yelizaveta Andakulova, MA, is a Senior Scientist in the research team of the University of Teacher Education Carinthia, working in the FOSTERLANG project. In parallel, she is pursuing a doctorate in Media and Communication Studies at the University of Klagenfurt.

Joint Keynote 4

Saturday, 17 October 2026 · 15:15–16:15

Brigitta Busch, University of Vienna; Stellenbosch University; University of Teacher Education Carinthia

Petra Roter, University of Ljubljana

European Standards on Managing Linguistic Diversity: How to Ensure Effective Access to Minority Language Rights in Education?

ABSTRACT

This presentation will first address the key aspects of diversity management through minority rights as envisaged in the legally binding Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and most significant challenges to effective implementation of these standards. It will then focus in detail on minority languages rights, taking into account the Framework Convention with the thematic commentaries of the Advisory Committee and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The presenters will explain the substance of these European standards, the accompanying obligations of states and obstacles that persons affiliating with national minorities face when seeking access to their rights, in particular to those in the domain of education.

BIOGRAPHY

Brigitta Busch is a former professor of applied linguistics at the University of Vienna (Austria) and an extraordinary professor at Stellenbosch University (South Africa). In 2012 she was granted a Berta-Karlik research professorship for excellent female scientists by the University of Vienna. She has also been working for many years as an expert for the Council of Europe's Confidence-Building Measures Programme and was a member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Her main research interests focus on: sociolinguistics, multilingualism, biographic approaches, lived experience of language, language and trauma (<http://www.heteroglossia.net>).

Petra Roter, Ph.D. (cantab.), is a Professor of International Relations at the University of Ljubljana, where she researches and teaches human rights, with a focus on minority issues. She served two mandates as an independent expert elected in respect of Slovenia to the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. She was elected as President of the Advisory Committee in three mandates (2016–18, 2022–24 and 2024–26) and the First Vice President (2024–26). As a member of the Advisory Committee, she has helped states design policies and legislation to ensure effective equality of everyone, regardless of ethnic/linguistic/religious affiliations, and societal integration whilst protecting minority rights. She has contributed to the Advisory Committee's recent thematic commentaries, including the revised commentary on education. She was a member of the Ad-Hoc Working Group to prepare a text for the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture. She has also promoted Council of Europe standards on minority rights within other international institutions. She contributed to a number of thematic recommendations by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities as a conflict prevention institution, and was co-chairing the biggest

annual UN gathering on minority issues: the 16th United Nations Forum on Minority Issues in 2023.

Panel 5 – Minority-Language Education: Global Comparisons and Theoretical Perspectives

Saturday, 17 October 2026 · 16:30–18:00

Justyna Olko, University of Warsaw

Witnessing Language Transmission Rupture. Schools, Teachers and Collaborative Action in Indigenous Communities in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico.

ABSTRACT

In this talk I will share my experience of working with Nahua and Totonac communities in several municipalities in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico. While the vitality of Indigenous languages is still relatively high, the transmission gap is abruptly increasing in the younger generation. Combined with ongoing discrimination, prejudice and assimilation pressures, family members tend to normalise this situation even though it often severs family relationships and becomes the source of trauma. Teachers, even when Indigenous language speakers themselves, have to face, on the one hand, the legacy of school as the space of linguicide, and, on the other, negative attitudes of parents. Finally, I will discuss some strategies and collective attempts we have been developing together with school teachers to diagnose and challenge this situation of ongoing heritage language loss.

BIOGRAPHY

Justyna Olko is a professor at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of "Artes Liberales", director of its Center for Research and Practice in Cultural Continuity, and a guest researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig. Her main areas of research include Indigenous history and sociolinguistics, multilingualism, linguistic and cultural diversity, language revitalisation and decolonial research practices. Justyna is not only a recipient of both the ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants, but is also the first researcher in Poland to have obtained an ERC grant in the humanities, and the first woman and representative of the humanities and social sciences to be awarded the grant twice. She also led the "Engaged Humanities in Europe" project (Horizon 2020), officially recognised as "a success story" of the European Commission, and she currently coordinates the pan-European consortium project "Fostering Linguistic Capital" (Horizon Europe). Justyna consciously combines academic research with socially engaged work, acting as a self-reflective ally of Indigenous and ethnic minority groups. Over the last fifteen years, together with her team members she has been able to foster broad relationships and innovative networks between academic, NGOs and community partners in Europe and beyond.

John Joseph Sullivan, University of Warsaw; Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas

The IDIEZ Model: Fostering the Self-Empowerment of Nahuatl Teachers from Outside the System

ABSTRACT

Mexico's bilingual education for Nahuatl speakers is transitional, confined to primary school, and does not reach all children who speak the language. Teachers are educational technicians, trained in Spanish to implement a curriculum that they had no part in designing, and many have limited proficiency in Nahuatl. The system does little to encourage critical and creative thinking. Beyond the official textbooks, little is written in Nahuatl for students, teachers or anyone else, while the large corpus produced by their own ancestors is excluded from the curriculum. Since 2002, the Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas (IDIEZ), a Mexican non-profit, has provided Indigenous university students with scholarships and a monolingual space in which they collectively work on teaching, research and revitalisation projects. Along the way they discover that they and their ancestors have important things to say, and that they can discuss complex topics and participate in high level academic work in their own language. This summer we will invite bilingual teachers in Chicontepec, Veracruz to participate in our collective reading and monolingual discussion of Older Nahuatl texts. This presentation asks whether such a model, operating outside the educational system, can supplement teacher preparation and foster teachers' self-empowerment.

BIOGRAPHY

John Joseph Sullivan is a Nahuatl philologist. He has a degree in Elementary Education from the Escuela Normal 'Manuel Ávila Camacho' (1981), a Ph.D. in Hispanic literature from the University of California, San Diego (1995), and was a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellow (2007). He is a co-founder of the Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas, a professor emeritus at the Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas, and he teaches Nahuatl at the University of Warsaw's Center for Research and Practice in Cultural Continuity and at the University of Utah. Dr. Sullivan is co-editor of the U of Warsaw's Totlahtol Series, and co-author of several books, including *Tlahtolxitlahucayotl: Chicontepec, Veracruz* (U of Warsaw, 2016), *Dialogue with Europe*, *Dialogue with the Past*. *Colonial Nahua and Quechua Elites in their own Words* (Colorado, 2018), and the forthcoming *Nahuatl and its Speakers across Time. A Multidisciplinary Account of Language Contact, Change and Continuity* (Cambridge, 2026).

Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Understanding Agency in Minority-Language Education: Ecological Perspectives and Lessons from the Lemko Community

ABSTRACT

This presentation explores agency in minority-language education through the lens of Mila Schwartz's (2024) Model of Ecological Perspectives in Early Language Education: Parent, Teacher, Peer, and Child Agency in Interaction, which conceptualises language education as a dynamic system shaped by the interplay of parental, teacher, peers, and child agency. Rather than viewing language maintenance and transmission as the responsibility of a single stakeholder, this perspective highlights how educational outcomes emerge through the continuous negotiation of roles, practices, and relationships across home and school environments.

Drawing on in-depth interviews conducted with members of the Lemko community in April 2026, the study examines how parental, teacher, and child agency interact in processes of minority-language maintenance and education. Particular attention is given to parental agency, especially fathers' involvement, as a key factor supporting language transmission, identity development, and children's engagement with the minority language. The findings show that parents act not only as language transmitters but also as advocates and facilitators of learning opportunities beyond school. Importantly, their agency is enacted through ongoing interactions with teachers, children, and community structures, highlighting the synergistic and relational nature of agency in minority-language education.

The presentation concludes by identifying community-based practices that foster cooperation among families, schools, and minority-language institutions. By foregrounding the voices and experiences of Lemko families, the study contributes to current discussions on agency in minority-language education and offers insights relevant to other contexts of minoritised language maintenance and revitalisation.

BIOGRAPHY

Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej (MA in English, PhD in Applied Linguistics, DLitt in Linguistics) is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. Her research interests encompass ecolinguistics, sociolinguistics, multilingualism, language policy, and multilingual education.

She is currently a researcher in the Horizon Europe project FOSTERLANG (2025–2028), where her work focuses on language and educational policies. Between 2020 and 2023, she participated in the international project MaMLiSE (Majority and Minority Languages in School Environments), which developed training materials for teachers working with children from migrant backgrounds and provided guidance for parents on fostering inclusive family language policies that value the full linguistic repertoire of the family.

Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej has authored more than 60 publications in applied linguistics, including four monographs. She has presented her research at approximately 70 national and international conferences and delivered invited lectures in Australia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Nepal, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam.

Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones, University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Language Models and Methodologies in Welsh Education: Examining Transmission, Acquisition, Use and Development

ABSTRACT

This presentation examines some of the theoretical perspectives and key concepts that are at work in education in contemporary Wales, with emphasis on language models and methodologies. It explores some of the main tenets of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, the Curriculum for Wales, Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy and the wider context of language revitalisation and sustainability. It focuses particularly on the relationship between Welsh language transmission, acquisition, use, and development, among children and young people in a range of sociolinguistic realities, considering how these interconnected processes are related to language practices, ideologies and identities. It reflects upon the central themes of WP3 of FOSTERLANG, namely inter- and intra-generational exchange, place-based education and community socialisation.

BIOGRAPHY

Professor Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones is the Director of the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, a multidisciplinary research centre of 25 staff and 15 doctoral students. She leads WP3 of Horizon FOSTERLANG and directs the work of the Collaborative Research Network of all 9 Welsh Universities on Bilingual Education, Welsh Language and Multilingualism. She is President of ELEN, the European Language Equality Network, and expert consultant to the Council of Europe for its report “Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States”, published earlier this year (<https://search.coe.int/cm/eng?i=09125948802ad239>).

Sabina Zorčič, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Challenges of Introducing the Romani Language in Elementary Schools: The Case of Slovenia

Chairs and Conference Management

The keynote sessions are chaired by Eva Hartmann, Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Transcultural Education, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Education, University of Teacher Education Carinthia. Her work focuses on bilingual and multilingual education, inter- and transcultural education, and minority school education.

The panel sessions are chaired by Daniel Wutti, University of Teacher Education Carinthia, who co-leads Work Package 3 of the Horizon Europe project FOSTERLANG with Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones (University of Wales Trinity Saint David).

CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT AND ON-SITE ORGANISATION

Ana Smrtnik-Einspieler · Esma Murić

EDITING

Pamela Glušič

Index of Speakers

Andakulova, Yelizaveta.....	31
Bartole, Andrea.....	14
Busch, Brigitta.....	32
Crasnich, Sergio.....	9
Doleschal, Ursula.....	29
Ellwart, Hanna.....	18
Finco, Franco.....	28
Gorter, Durk.....	24
Grimaldi, Giuseppe.....	23
Gruffydd Jones, Elin Haf.....	37
Hartmann, Eva.....	38
Horvat, Laura.....	10
Iturgaitz Rodríguez, Maria Begoña.....	16
Jabłoński, Artur.....	12
Katz, Danilo.....	13
Kościukiewicz-Jabłońska, Anna.....	12
Melchior, Luca.....	27
Olko, Justyna.....	34
Pereña, Mònica.....	6
Purkarthofer, Judith.....	26
Rädel, Sophie.....	30

Reichmann, Peter.....	5
Roter, Petra.....	32
Seitz, Clara.....	23
Sitter, Georg.....	5
Smid, Jana.....	19
Sullivan, John Joseph.....	35
Tóth, Elizabeta.....	10
Tylawska, Monika.....	21
Vianello, Chiara.....	14
Virnik, Katarina.....	19
Vrbinc, Michael.....	8
Vugrinec, Alen.....	15
Wąsikiewicz-Firlej, Emilia.....	36
Wutti, Daniel.....	5
Zojer, Eva.....	20
Zorčič, Sabina.....	37

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