



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

John Swinney
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Scottish Government

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BY E-MAIL

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Dear Mr Swinney,

1+2 Languages Policy – Progress Update

At its meeting on 14 January 2021, the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee considered the written bi-annual updates from the Scottish Government in relation to a range of EU issues, namely the 1+2 languages policy, Horizon 2020 and the European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund.

The Committee would welcome clarifications on some points relating to the 1+2 languages policy update.

Firstly, Annex B of your letter details the numbers of teachers of languages (excluding head and depute head teachers) in secondary schools and indicates a reduction in teachers for some languages. In particular, the number of secondary school French language teachers has reduced from 826 in 2013 to 648 in 2019 and the number of German language teachers from 136 teachers in 2013 to 80 in 2019.

The Committee notes that French and German language teachers accounted for 55% of all language teachers in secondary schools in 2019. The Committee would welcome your views on how the 1+2 policy can achieve its aims of expanding language learning with a reduced number of teachers available in some key languages.

Secondly, in the same annex, a table details the numbers of teachers of 'Other modern languages' in secondary schools. The Committee notes that this category of teachers is described in the annex as being formed "of teachers whose main subject is recorded as 'modern languages' but are likely to be predominantly teaching some combination of the other specified languages". The Committee would be grateful if you could provide a breakdown of the languages covered under this category.

Thirdly, Annex A of your letter on 'Language Attainment 2020' provides a breakdown of entries and passes for national examinations in modern languages. The Committee would welcome data on the total number of students presenting for examination across all subjects at each SCQF Level in order to put the modern language figures into context.

Finally, in the 'Findings from the 2019 local authority survey' section of your letter, you state that the survey found that 70% of secondary schools are providing the full L2 entitlement from S1 to S3. The survey also found that 83% of secondary schools are providing the full L3 entitlement from S1 to S3. The Committee would welcome clarification of why 83% of secondary schools are providing L3 entitlement but only 70% of secondary schools are providing this entitlement at L2.

The Committee would welcome a response to this letter no later than 15 February 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Joan McAlpine MSP
Convener, Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee