

# ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP on MODERN LANGUAGES

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## BREXIT AND LANGUAGES: A CHECKLIST FOR GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATORS AND OFFICIALS

### *Four essential language-specific objectives of the Brexit process:*

#### **1. Guarantee residency status for EU nationals already living in the UK and safeguarding future recruitment of EU citizens to address the shortage of language skills**

##### **Why?**

- An estimated 35% of modern foreign language teachers and 85% of modern foreign language assistants in our schools are non-UK EU nationals. Without them, MFL teaching would collapse.
- The UK alone is not producing enough languages graduates to fill the teacher shortage – estimated at 3500 if the Government is to meet its EBacc target.
- Around a third of public service interpreters working in our courts, police stations and the NHS are non-UK EU nationals. Without them, large numbers of people would have justice or health care delayed or denied.

#### **2. Ensure access to and participation in the Erasmus+ programme (as do Norway and Switzerland)**

##### **Why?**

- Employers favour graduates (in all subjects, not just linguists) who have spent a year abroad and acquired language and intercultural skills.
- Without Erasmus+, UK graduates will be disadvantaged in a global labour market.
- Erasmus+ plays a crucial role in the supply chain of language recruits to teaching and research in schools and universities.
- The quality and value of MFL degrees will be diminished if the year abroad element is removed.

#### **3. A commitment to legislate to replicate the rights enshrined in the 2010 European Directive on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings**

##### **Why?**

- Natural justice and the human rights of individual defendants and witnesses will suffer if good quality interpreting services are not guaranteed as of right.

#### **4. A post-Brexit plan in education (from primary school to post-graduate research, including apprenticeships), business and the civil service, with specific actions to ensure the UK produces sufficient linguists to meet its future requirements as a leader in global free trade and on the international stage**

##### **Why?**

- The UK's language skills deficit is currently estimated to cost 3.5% of GDP.
- Trade negotiations and other key functions currently carried out by the EU will require UK officials with language skills in the future.
- To realise the UK's potential as a leader in world trade the education system must ensure provision in a much wider range of languages and capitalise on the more than 1 million pupils who are bilingual.
- 83% of SMEs operate only in English, yet over half say language skills would help expand business opportunities and build export growth.
- Research by the British Academy demonstrates that without such a cross-government languages strategy, the UK will be unable to meet its security, defence and diplomacy requirements.

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