



Good afternoon, welcome to all of you at the 2018 Forum of the CEL/ELC.

Dear Rector,  
Dear Vice-President,  
Dear ELC Honorary and former Presidents,  
Dear Anne-Claude,  
Dear invited speakers and session chairs,  
Dear ELC members,  
All participants,  
Dear students,

With 20 years of policy-making history, our association brings together committed language specialists from around the European continent and beyond, to support European language infrastructures, improving societal and individual multilingualism and promoting language learning quality.

Filling a unique niche in the European language panorama, the CEL/ELC has a unique contact with universities, language institutions, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission, mediating at various levels in order to envisage, anticipate and adapt to the future language landscape.

Membership in the CEL/ELC grants institutions and language specialists access to a wide variety of projects and like-minded colleagues in similar language fields, and is open to all institutions of Higher Education and all national and international associations with a special interest in languages.

It is a privilege for me to be the President of such a network. Moreover, I have the honour to introduce the Forum on *The challenges of Multilingualism for Scientific Practice*, which is the result of preliminary analyses and reflections undertaken by the “Languages and Science”/“Langues et science” Working Group of the *Conseil Européen pour les Langues / European Language Council (CEL/ELC)*.

The objective of our Forum is to discuss questions related to the challenges of multilingualism for scientific practice, with particular regards to approaches linked to the creation of new knowledge. The ultimate question is how and under what conditions multilingualism can be advantageous for scientific practice (for research in all its dimensions, from day-to-day interaction within research groups up to the evaluation of research projects).

Through the exchange of multilingual experiences in a varied range of contexts, the Forum tries to contribute to the development of a research project with the aim of providing scientific arguments for the creation of alternative solutions that envisage a more equitable balance between English and other languages, and thereby contribute to knowledge quality. These issues will also be considered in terms of possible research policy measures, with a view to developing multilingual scientific practice at both the national and international level. We have shared these thoughts among our members, among all the specialists and colleagues in the field, and wherever we have found sensitivity and interest in these ideas. All these proposals have been written in Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish.

We have invited here the most important and well-known experts in the area – coming from a wide range of disciplines (namely, physics, chemistry, neurosciences, social sciences, philology, among the others) and from different positions in Higher Education and in the civil society – to analyse deeply the subject, the topics and the arguments surrounding it, in order to rethink our ideas – *The challenges of Multilingualism for Scientific Practice* - and to establish definitely some principal aspects, with these two objectives:

1. to consolidate our positions and to strengthen their interdependence;
2. to show all the benefits and to assess their effects, as to underline mature and balanced deliberations for multilingualism in scientific practice.

Where? In Europe, in our countries, in a globalised world of knowledge, in a globalised knowledge, and the same time in every peculiar characteristics of our disciplines. And for the benefit of all of them.

Thank you to Berlin Freie Universität, our host institution, which accepted to prepare and work for this important ELC project. Thank you to all the invited speakers, to all the convenors who accepted, who decided and chose to be here today.

We cannot imagine that we will find out all the solutions, but we are looking for finding all the best solutions for our scientific Community, here grouped thanks to the Working Group directed by Anne-Claude Berthoud and its main members – Manuel Célio Conceição, Wolfgang Mackiewickz and Piet Van de Craen –, thanks to our Scientific Board and to you all.

Maria Teresa Zanola  
CEL/ELC President