



**1st Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects
for the Support of Faculty Members and Researchers
and the Procurement of high-cost Research Equipment**

PROJECT TITLE

**CREATIVE MULTILINGUALISM: FROM PRACTICE TO
RESEARCH TO EDUCATION (MEinART)**

PROJECT NUMBER

HFRI-FM17-710

HOST INSTITUTION

UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

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DELIVERABLE 32

**POLICY BRIEFS (PB1 AND PB2)
USING WP4 AND WP5 FINDINGS**

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1. Introduction

Deliverable 32 was one of the two Deliverables of Work Package 6 'Guidelines and Recommendations'. This WP sought to use academic research findings for making feasible policy recommendations and to inform decision-making at the national and international level. The development of research guidelines was meant to cover any significant gaps that have been identified, and policy recommendations serve as a lever for improving policy efforts, streamlining policy coherence and supplying funding policy. D32 comprises two briefing papers, and was meant, by definition, to be short and to the point, so that it may be easily consulted by decision makers.

2. Policy Brief 1: Arts-Based Multilingualism

Creative multilingualism underlines language diversity, but also cultural pluralism. Their interconnexion provides multiples opportunities for expression and learning.

Ten key points:

- 1) 'Language' needs to be understood as intrinsically **diverse** - as '**languages**'. The entitlement of individuals and cultural groups to express themselves in their distinctive language must be supported as a fundamental **human right** and must be nurtured as vital to the sustainability of the natural and cultural world.
- 2) Every **language is interconnected** with the thought patterns, perceptual habits and **environment of its speech community**, creating a window onto the world that differs subtly from that opened up by any other language, and providing a medium for creating understanding of that point of view. The first language plays a central role in the learner's sense of identity.
- 3) Each speech community develops the vocabulary it needs to describe and create the world around it, giving linguistic prominence to the things it is most concerned with. Moving between languages and translating between them **opens our minds** to different ways of seeing the world and creates new meanings.

- 4) **Languages evolve in creative interaction with their natural environment**, and in this process they become an essential part of that environment's preservation.
- 5) **Languages can take many forms**. Oral, written, sign language, picture language, facial expression, gesture and voice can play an important part in conveying meaning. Diverse cultures develop different genres and media, with each one opening up new creative possibilities, as is evident in graffiti, literature, theatre, film, social media.
- 6) We are more multilingual than we think. More than half the global population speaks more than one language, making **multilingualism a common human experience** rather than an exceptional talent. Over 60% of people are bilingual or multilingual, often using multiple tongues daily, defying the misconception that monolingualism is the default.
- 7) Language learning changes our brain. **Language learning** is widely recognized as a **"mind-opening" experience** that transforms the brain, enhances cognitive abilities, and fosters deeper cultural empathy. Research indicates that it is a powerful mental workout, offering neurological, psychological, and social benefits that can last a lifetime.
- 8) Creativity needs to be understood as intrinsically bound up with our capacity for linguistically diverse thought, expression and action. **Languages** are far more than communicative 'tools': they **are creative**. Language diversity and creativity are mutually enriching.
- 9) **Diversity of languages** needs to be supported as a **rich source of creativity** in the arts, and recognized for its vital importance in the sciences. Creative multilingualism is an experiment in interdisciplinary research in which each new project demonstrates the role of languages at the creative heart of human endeavour.
- 10) The focus on the connection between language diversity and creativity demonstrates that beyond their communicative usefulness, **languages** also sustain and enrich **thought, literacy, social cohesion, the creative arts and scientific engagement** with sustainability.

3. Policy Brief 2: Public Pedagogy for Refugee Women

Recommendations for educating refugee women focus on creating safe, accessible, and flexible learning environments that integrate language training, vocational skills, and gender-sensitive support. Key strategies include utilizing female-only spaces, providing childcare, training female

teachers, offering digital education (ICT), and incorporating mental health support to foster self-reliance.

Ten key points

- 1) Education of refugee women should happen in **safe and accessible spaces**. Implementation of education activities within secure, female-only spaces can build trust, self-confidence and overcome mobility restrictions.
- 2) It is essential to offer education for refugee women accompanied with **holistic support services**, including childcare, transportation, mental health support and counseling, to address the practical barriers that prevent refugee women from attending classes.
- 3) MEINART interventions prove the importance of **gender-responsive pedagogy**. Teachers who work with refugee women should be aware of the trauma, stress and specific needs of refugee women.
- 4) Prioritize **Teacher Training** and encourage the **recruitment of female teachers**. Equip educators with specialized skills to manage multilingual classrooms, including training in culturally responsive teaching. Female teachers are very positively received and efficient with refugee women as students.
- 5) **Tailored curriculum and language training** is needed, to improve literacy, numeracy: focus on intensive language training, literacy, numeracy, and technical/vocational skills of refugee women, aligned with local job market needs for economic self-sufficiency.
- 6) **ICT-based education** is necessary, because it is relevant with what refugee women in their everyday life: they use technology to communicate, learn, but they face a lot of challenges, so learning at their own pace and building digital literacy match real-life needs.
- 7) Education institutions and actors must establish mechanisms for the **rapid recognition and validation of existing skills and qualifications** to prevent loss of previous educational progress.
- 8) Engage with **refugee community leaders and families** to promote the value of women's education and change social norms that limit access.
- 9) Adopt "**translanguaging**" **pedagogies**, allowing students to use their full linguistic repertoire and mix languages, to express themselves and grasp complex concepts, which improves understanding and confidence.

- 10) Create **culturally-responsive and inclusive learning spaces** that promote social interaction and socio-emotional well-being, while acknowledging and respecting diverse learning styles, communication methods, and languages, thereby reducing anxiety and fostering a welcoming educational environment for refugee women.