

**Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLIE)**

Building bridges between linguistics and schools

<https://clie.org.uk/members/>

Right Honourable Michelle Donelan MP  
House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA

14 July 2020

Dear Minister

We write to express our grave concern over the announcement you made on 30 June that EU nationals and students from other EEA countries and Switzerland will no longer be eligible for home fee status, bursaries and student loans for courses starting in academic year 2021. This will have a devastating impact on teacher supply in Modern Languages. We note that the Government has pledged that 75% of students will be taking the EBacc with Languages by 2022 (DfE, 2019). Primary languages have also been a statutory part of the curriculum since September 2014. There are obvious implications for teacher supply, yet the issues of MFL teacher shortage, and the dire state of MFL provision, have been in the public domain for three decades now and never been addressed in an effective manner. The loss of EU nationals can only have a disastrous effect upon this picture. The annual British Council Language Trends MFL survey, (published 29 June) reports the numbers of EU citizens who are language teachers as follows: almost 70% of state schools and 90% of independent schools have at least one teacher of languages who is a citizen of a European Union Member State (excluding Ireland). Comparable statistics for EU teachers in the 2019 survey were 67% (state) and 79% (independent). There thus appears to be an ever greater reliance on teachers from outside the UK and Ireland. Crucially, to put this into clear perspective, teachers from the EU constitute about 36% of teachers in UK secondary schools (Tinsley 2018). To make matters worse, many of these are considering leaving Britain to take up posts elsewhere (Bowler, 2020; Skapinker, 2017).

Despite the gravity of this situation, Language Teaching (apart from Mandarin) does not feature on the UK Home Office's Shortage Occupations List (2016, updated 2020). ). Without the assurance that funding will be provided for supporting language teachers from abroad, they will not have access to the £26,000 bursary and will be required to pay international fees of 13,900. Those needed a Subject Knowledge Enhancement course will be required to pay the course fees of £200/unit of study (so £2400 for 12 units) and receive no bursary. Our long-standing inability to recruit sufficient numbers from within the UK is exacerbated by the fact that over 50 University Language Departments have closed courses since 2000 (Kelly, 2019) and of the few students that study languages to degree level, only 6% consider teaching as a career (Shapinker, 2017).

The National Curriculum for MFL informs us that 'learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity'. We hold out little hope of this if the issue of providing financial support for support for

ITE students from EU countries is not resolved. We therefore request that you give our concerns urgent consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Gee Macrory'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'G' and a long, sweeping 'y'.

Dr Gee Macrory

Chair of CLiE (Committee for Linguistics in Education), [www.clie.org.uk](http://www.clie.org.uk)

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