

## Three key imperatives of language policy

### **1. Freedom of Choice**

Recognize and respect the right of each person to speak as he or she chooses. Recognize the existence of (minority) language communities and the right of a person to actively participate in those communities.

### **2. Promotion and Preservation**

Promote the robust use of heritage languages. Make efforts to preserve endangered languages.

### **3. Practicality**

Teach common languages which are commercially important and which will improve access to information and participation in society and government.

## The EU's "trilingualism" policy

Every European should speak at least three language.

This policy represents a compromise among the positions represented by the three different imperatives of language policy above. In a sense, every European already wants to speak English (cf. practicality), so the EU wants to ensure that heritage languages do not suffer because so much money is being spent on English language learning. The EU is therefore spending money on heritage language programs (cf. promotion and preservation). Of course, there is no guarantee that people will study minority languages of the EU (e.g., Sorb) which are not EU treaty languages, but the three-language policy helps to make such minority language study a viable option.