



UNIVERSITÉ  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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MIME  
Mobility and Inclusion  
in Multilingual Europe



With the support of the European Commission, the **MIME PROJECT (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe)** set out to study the diversity of languages in a context of political change, the challenges that this diversity poses for European companies and the innovative solutions available thanks to integrated linguistic policies. Twenty-five teams from sixteen countries, including the University of Geneva (UNIGE), Switzerland, bringing together researchers from eleven different disciplines, worked on this topic for four years. One of its results is a collection of 72 linguistic policy questions, with two pages devoted to each, covering most of the themes studied under the project. Called *MIME Vademecum*, this work is a tool to help people confronting multilingualism issues to familiarise themselves with the latest advances in research and to develop their own responses to the challenges of linguistic diversity.

### MIME: 72 questions of linguistic policy under the microscope

After four years of work, the MIME project (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe) has produced its conclusions on the challenges of language diversity in Europe, focusing in particular on the balance between mobility and inclusion.

The MIME Project has received 5 million Euros in the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development. It is the first research project on linguistic diversity that simultaneously tackles questions as varied as the constitutional provisions for the protection of minorities, the sociological conditions for the linguistic integration of migrants, the effectiveness of various pedagogical approaches in the teaching of foreign languages, recourse to new technologies in automatic translation or the development of an integrated theory of linguistic policy as a question of public policy.

#### **The four challenges of language diversity in the 21st century**

These four years of research are reflected in a number of publications, conferences and scientific seminars, allowing four main challenges to be studied in depth. The first concerns the management of language diversity, taking into account its transversal nature. "Multilingualism occurs in all facets of political, social, economic and cultural life," explains François Grin, Professor of economics at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at UNIGE and coordinator of the MIME project. "The manner in which it is managed has major effects on the well-being of people and societies, whether in terms of use or the sharing of resources, both material and symbolic." States should therefore seriously address the management of language diversity; a laissez-faire attitude is not really a solution.

The second challenge is to involve monolingual people in this issue, showing them that this challenge also has relevance for them. To be really inclusive, a multilingual project should also engage people and communities whose daily life is largely monolingual, highlighting the advantages for all of a policy favouring linguistic and cultural diversity at European level.

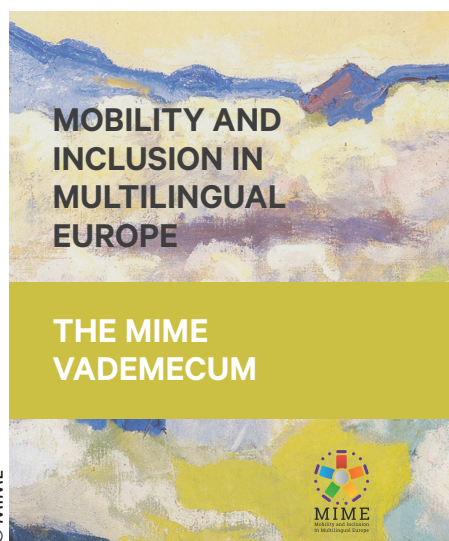
Thirdly, the mobility of citizens within Europe needs to be taken into account, as well as its impact on the vitality of the languages. “People are increasingly confronted with the need to change country or region”, observes François Grin. “Their inclusion needs to be facilitated in the specific linguistic and cultural contexts in which they settle.”

Finally, there is the aim of managing in the best way possible the compromise between two objectives that do not necessarily converge: on the one hand, mobility, and on the other, the inclusion of citizens in a multilingual Europe. We need to design, develop and introduce linguistic policies as a form of public policy, combining measures that favour the mobility of citizens from different parts of Europe, without compromising local inclusion, and measures that favour the anchoring of people in a specific local context, without restricting the opportunities offered by mobility.

### **MIME Vademecum, a collection for public policy**

On the basis of the research carried out on these four challenges, the teams working on the MIME project have, in parallel with publications aimed at a scientific readership, put together a collection for a wider public. This work, *MIME Vademecum*, contains 72 linguistic policy questions, two pages being devoted to each question. They touch on most of the themes covered by the project, such as translation and interpreting, language teaching, the linguistic integration of migrants and the management of official multilingualism. This collection is primarily intended for people who, through their professional or political activities (for example civil servants or MPs at local, national or international level), are involved in questions of linguistic policy and are sometimes called upon to take a stand in this regard. *MIME Vademecum* is a tool that will allow them to familiarise themselves with the latest research advances made in this field, helping them to gain knowledge from actual cases and develop their own responses to the problems they may face.

*MIME Vademecum* can be downloaded free of charge [here](#).



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*MIME Vademecum*, a work focusing on 72 questions of linguistic policy with two pages devoted to each issue.

### **High definition pictures**

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