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6^r November 2015

Dear Christina

Thank you for your letters of 28 September and 9 October 2015, enclosing the two reports from the European and External Relations Committee 'Connecting Scotland' inquiry.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee, and all of those who contributed oral and written evidence, for their detailed and thorough considerations. My response to both reports is enclosed with this letter.

I hope you find this helpful and I look forward to engaging further with the Committee over the coming months.

Kind regards
Fiona

FIONA HYSLOP

How the Scottish Government and its agencies engage internationally – published 25 September 2015

Observation / Recommendation	Para. no.	Government response
<p>The Committee welcomes the refresh of the Scottish Government's International Framework and its alignment to Scotland's Economic Strategy. It considers that in a globalising world characterised by new and evolving forms of virtual communication it is crucial that Scotland should be present and visible through its international engagement. For this reason, the Committee welcomes the Scottish Government's approach of having an online platform for the International Framework as it provides greater flexibility than was previously the case to respond to developments and changing circumstances.</p>	25	<p>The Scottish Government welcomes the Committee's positive reaction to the format of Scotland's refreshed International Framework. It was our intention to produce a modern, dynamic framework that strikes the balance between flexibility and providing a long-term outlook with clearly focussed objectives. An online platform was the clear choice for this policy instrument making it possible to raise awareness of our common vision for Scotland's international engagement easily and efficiently to partners worldwide. Since the Framework's publication in March 2015 the Government has uploaded case studies of international engagement to showcase how these contribute to the outlined strategic objectives. Examples of the internationalisation agenda in action can be found online under: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/International/strategy/CaseStudies</p>
<p>The Committee also welcomes the twin focus of strengthening capacity in Scotland to engage internationally and supporting engagement abroad. The second strand of this inquiry provided evidence on the breadth of engagement of Scottish organisations abroad and the opportunities that international engagement brings to Scotland and its people. The Committee therefore recognises the value of promoting internationalism both at home and abroad.</p>	26	<p>The Scottish Government welcomes the Committee's evidence demonstrating the wide array of Scottish organisations' and individuals' international engagements. The Government believes strongly that these activities are vital to the reputation and growth of our country. Internationalisation will therefore continue to be at the centre of this Government's International Framework and we will continue to mainstream internationalisation across portfolios.</p> <p>The Scottish Government agrees with the Committee that the promotion of internationalisation is an important long-term investment (as mentioned in para 34, 2nd Connecting Scotland report) which is why the internationalisation agenda is a central tenet of its Economic Strategy and International Framework.</p>

<p>The Committee has previously considered some of the Scottish Government's individual country plans and welcomes the intention to refresh these. In light of the evidence that the Committee heard from other sub-state governments, it considers that it is important that the Scottish Government is responsive to changes in the economic and political situation of individual countries. In this context, the refresh of the India, Pakistan and Americas country plans will allow Scotland's International Framework to be more responsive to changing global trends.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>The current refresh of the India, Pakistan and Americas country plans will take into account developments in these countries as well as reflecting broader global trends, matching requirements in our priority countries with established Scottish expertise. For example, the scope of the Americas plan will be expanded to consider engagement with countries in South and Central America where relevant opportunities arise. We will ensure that the plans remain relevant and responsive by taking a One Scotland Partnership approach to working with stakeholders and other partners to review the aims and objectives in the country plans and progress made towards them.</p> <p>In addition to the refreshing of the India, Pakistan and Americas plans, the Government continues to monitor developments in its partner countries.</p>
<p>The Committee is aware of the Scottish Parliament's Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee's report on Internationalising Scottish Business and that the Scottish Government is currently working on a new Trade and Investment Strategy which will support the wider internationalisation objectives set out in the International Framework. This report does not therefore address issues relating to trade and investment in any great detail.</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>The Scottish Parliament's Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee's report on Internationalising Scottish Business will inform the development of the Scottish Government's Trade and Investment Strategy.</p>

<p>The Committee recognises that during the course of its inquiry, the Scottish Government published the refresh of its International Framework and that some of the concerns expressed by stakeholders have been addressed in the refreshed framework. However, drawing on the written evidence that it received, the Committee concludes that there is a body of evidence suggesting that stronger collaboration between the Scottish Government and its agencies on one hand, and business and other sectors within Scotland on the other, would contribute to the achievement of the objectives in the International Framework. In particular, given that internationalisation is one of four interlinked priorities in Scotland's Economic Strategy, the views of some representatives of the business community that there is a need for improved communication and engagement merit recognition.</p>	<p>43</p>	<p>The Scottish Government recognises the critical role of the business community in developing and delivering the internationalisation agenda.</p> <p>Over the last few months we have engaged with a wide range of business organisations and other stakeholders to inform development of the Trade and Investment Strategy. We have also established a 'One Scotland Partnership' with membership drawn from across the private sector, industry bodies and academia to contribute advice, expertise and experience, and provide constructive challenge to the development of the Strategy.</p> <p>The Strategy will consider our approach to improved communication and engagement with the business community.</p>
<p>During the second strand of this inquiry, the Committee engaged in greater depth with the university sector in Scotland and was struck by the range and extent of universities' international engagement and collaboration, and the many benefits this brought to both the Scottish economy and Scottish society more broadly. The Committee considers that the Connected Scotland initiative described in the evidence submitted by the British Council and Universities Scotland, presents a potential model for collaboration between the Scottish Government, its agencies and key sectoral partners which can maximise the resources available and achieve more wide-ranging impacts through joint working.</p>	<p>44</p>	<p>The Scottish Government very much welcomes the Committee's recognition of Connected Scotland as a model for collaboration between the Scottish Government, its agencies and key sectoral partners which can maximise the resources available and achieve more wide-ranging impacts through joint working. The Scottish Government shares the Committee's view and will consider future opportunities to apply this approach in other areas on a case-by-case. In the meantime, we continue to support and learn from the Connected Scotland approach.</p>

<p>In the evidence that the Committee heard from other sub-state governments and from academics, it was clear that many sub-state governments attached considerable importance to the ethical or moral aspects of their international engagement. The promotion of ethical or moral concerns was a key part of the paradiplomacy activities of a number of sub-state governments, for example the Flemish and the Basque Governments in relation to international development, and the Committee reiterates the calls in the evidence for the Scottish Government to continue to ensure that its commitment to human rights is a central tenet in the implementation of its International Framework.</p>	<p>45</p>	<p>The Scottish Government agrees with the Committee and its witnesses that human rights principles need to underpin our country's international engagements. This is an explicit part of the Scotland's International Framework which affirms that the promotion of human rights is central to Scotland's role as good global citizen which is an indispensable aspect of our international identity and activities.</p>
<p>The Committee acknowledges the evidence provided by the Scottish Government and its agencies on the achievements that they have made under the International Framework and the EU Action Plan since their publication. It considers that there is tangible evidence to demonstrate the contribution that the Scottish Government's international engagement has made to Scotland's economy, as well as in terms of cultural diplomacy through sporting and cultural events.</p>	<p>72</p>	<p>The Scottish Government welcomes the Committee's acknowledgement of the significant material and immaterial value of its on-going international and European engagement. The Government believes that its chosen combination of political, economic, cultural, social and sports-based engagement has many cross-cutting benefits as relationships in one area often facilitate further engagement in another area.</p> <p>The Scottish Government believes that continued engagement on European issues allows it to showcase that it is both a committed partner and strong European actor that is promoting meaningful and effective reform of the European Union that will benefit not just Scotland, but the EU as a whole. The Government is committed to active participation in both Europe and the wider International Framework to build stronger partnerships to promote innovation, investment, and inclusive growth for Scotland.</p>

While the Committee recognises the value of paradiplomatic activities, particularly the long-term investment in the development of networks and relationships, it would welcome a more systematic and regular evaluation of the achievements of the Scottish Government's International Framework and its offices abroad. It notes the evidence emphasising the identification of objectives in this respect. While the Committee considers that the publication of case studies is helpful, it suggests that further consideration be given to how progress to meeting the commitments for each strategic objective in the International Framework could be measured.	73	As noted in some of the evidence to the Committee, it is extremely difficult to apply a measurement framework to our paradiplomatic activities. Further consideration will be given to how we could measure progress against our international objectives, in line with Scotland's National Performance Framework.
The evidence heard by the Committee on the competences of other sub-state governments demonstrated the variety of constitutional arrangements that were in place. It was clear that under the federal systems of Belgium, Germany and Canada there were clearer delineations of competence and that, particularly in the case of Belgium and Canada, the entities and provinces respectively had far-reaching powers in relation to international relations.	84	The Scottish Government is aware of the constitutional arrangements in other federal and non-federal states. Following the Smith Commission's recommendations on intergovernmental cooperation in regards to foreign affairs and representation in the European Union, the Scottish Government is engaging with the UK Government and other devolved administrations to ensure that practical arrangements for cooperation recognise that international relations have a direct influence on devolved policy competences. The Government intends that this should help ensure Scotland's interests are fully reflected in the process of developing and representing the UK's and Scotland's position on international and EU matters.

<p>The Committee notes that the evidence also demonstrated the way in which some sub-state governments had progressively sought and gained more powers in the international sphere. This differs from the position in Scotland where the situation has remained largely static as foreign affairs are reserved to the UK Government and the UK Parliament under the 1998 Scotland Act. The evidence showed that many of the sub-state governments sought to engage with international institutions and sign treaties and memoranda of understanding, and that this was not the sole prerogative of sovereign states.</p>	85	<p>As part of the above mentioned Smith process the Scottish Government is engaging with the UK and other devolved Governments to seek a better way of ensuring that the Scottish Government's policy competences are more appropriately and effectively represented in regards to the EU and international relations and institutions. The Scottish Government has concluded memoranda of understanding with other Governments in the past and will continue to do so, when it is of mutual benefit to Scotland and its partners.</p>
<p>The Committee notes the varying motivations behind international engagement policies and recognises that a number of these motivations also drive the Scottish Government's international engagement. It also recognises that international engagement plays a vital part in promoting the economies of sub-states, as well as the political profile, the identity and the culture of sub-states.</p>	95	<p>The Scottish Government agrees that there are varying motivations that drive our international engagement. As such, the International Framework seeks to clearly identify our twofold internationalisation agenda: To create an environment within Scotland that supports a better understanding of international opportunities and a greater appetite and ability to seize them; and to influence the world around us on the issues that matter most in helping Scotland flourish. It then provides structure and focus for our engagement through four key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing our global outlook to set the domestic conditions for success, • Strengthening our external relationships, roles and networks, • Building our reputation and international attractiveness • Engaging in the European Union as a committed and active partner.
<p>The Committee notes the scale and ambition of other sub-state governments. It also notes that some sub-state governments use their foreign offices to cover a range of activities, for example the Flemish House model. In this context it welcomes the Scottish Government's intention to establish One Scotland Hubs and the opening of the Scottish Hub in Dublin with a dedicated team working to increase trade and investment.</p>	104	<p>The Scottish Government is pleased the Committee welcomes the establishment of an innovation and investment hub in Dublin. Further hubs will be launched in London and Brussels in 2016 allowing us to strengthen government to government relations, promote greater collaboration between governments and their agencies around shared priorities, including shared approaches to compete for access to European funding.</p>

How Scottish organisations engage internationally – Published 9 October 2015

Observation / Recommendation	Para. no.	Government response
<p>The Committee considers that there is considerable potential to build further on the international engagement activities of universities and colleges in Scotland, and encourages the Scottish Government to continue to consider ways that it and its agencies can support the international engagement of universities and colleges. It is further convinced that there are manifold benefits that would derive from expansion of international activity, including significant economic, social and cultural benefits. In that context, the Committee calls on the Scottish Government—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to consider the comments set out in the summary of evidence about public investment in research (especially funding streams such as the EU programme Horizon 2020) and support for higher education institutions more generally; • to continue to argue the case for the reintroduction of the post-work study visa as the lack of opportunities to remain in the UK following graduation make it far more difficult to attract international students; • to increase funding to support the outward mobility of students; and • to support networks and collaboration that promote international engagement further. 	13	<p>The Scottish Government agrees that there is considerable potential to build further on this success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government continues to support research and knowledge exchange in our Universities, building on increasing levels of funding since 2007. • The Scottish Government will continue to press the UK Government for the reintroduction of a post study work route for Scotland. The reinstatement of this route has strong cross sectorial and cross-party support in Scotland. It is an important lever for attracting the best international student talent (including to colleges), securing essential income streams and allowing talented graduates to continue contributing to Scotland after their studies end. • The Scottish Government supports outward mobility opportunities to enhance academic achievement and employability for students and staff. Our investment in those programmes is considered in context from time to time to ensure that Scotland's outward mobility needs continue to be met. • The Scottish Government welcomes the recommendation to support networks and collaboration that promote international engagement further. Connected Scotland is the key mechanism that the Scottish Government uses to do this. • For the first time, as part of a pilot initiative to encourage more Scottish students to study abroad, Scottish domiciled students studying at eligible European universities can apply for the same bursary and loan support as students attending university in Scotland. • The pilot will initially run over two years, the first intake of students will be in academic year 2014-15 then academic year 2015-16. An evaluation will be undertaken throughout the two year intake.

<p>The Committee considers that the range of international activities engaged in by local authorities provides significant opportunities at the local level for people living in Scotland to engage internationally. The Committee also notes that some local authorities are finding it more difficult to continue international engagement activities in the context of shrinking resources. However, the Committee is convinced of the positive opportunities that result from this international engagement, and calls on the Scottish Government to increase its collaboration with local authorities under the auspices of its International Framework with a view to promoting and coordinating international engagement.</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>The Scottish Government recognises the range of international activities engaged in by Local Authorities and we will continue to engage with them across our work to ensure that positive opportunities are realised.</p>
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<p>The Committee invites the Scottish Government to consider the following proposals calling for—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more opportunities to share learning and best practice with the development community, the Scottish Government, donors and other organisations working internationally; • a streamlining of the application process for major grant applications, with greater flexibility and an increased focus on outcomes in the distribution of projects; • more innovative and uniquely Scottish projects to be supported; • longer-term funding to enable demonstration of impact and to facilitate projects which require a longer investment, for example some education projects; • more effective use of diaspora communities in Scotland to support international development in their countries of origin; and • the extension of the policy coherence approach in Scottish Government policy areas to ensure that they were coherent with international development objectives; and • In addition, the Committee recognises the value of the work undertaken by the Centre for Sustainable International Development at the University of Aberdeen, and calls on the Scottish Government to consider the Centres recommendations in relation to the development of a code of conduct for all Scottish agencies working in international development based on the —to do no harm principle, to support a small number of partner countries with sustainable long-term programmes, and to provide support for Sustainable Development Research and Policy Hubs in key thematic areas where Scotland has a comparative advantage. 	<p>22</p>	<p>The Scottish Government notes these comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>more opportunities to share learning and best practice</u>: SG is already committed to this and seeks to share our learning: recent example of sustainability event run by SG International Development Team in July 2015, to encourage sharing and learning between both donors (incl SG), NGOs and private sector - at that event, we also shared learning/results from the SG funded Malawi Renewable Energy Acceleration programme (MREAP), via the Strathclyde University partner team. • <u>Streamlining of application process for major grant applications</u>: we are committed to open, fair and transparent grant making processes, and continue to consider new ways to improve our processes. We involve NIDOS, the Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) and our independent assessors IOD Parc in design of our funding rounds. • <u>more innovative and uniquely Scottish projects to be supported</u>: SG is also keen to see innovative projects proposed, in our most recent funding round for Malawi 2015-18 projects we specifically included this. • <u>longer-term funding to enable demonstration of impact and to facilitate projects which require a longer investment</u>: The length of SG grant funding periods is an issue that we had looked into last year, including undertaking an international comparators exercise, where we noted that SG funding practice for our International Development Fund was generally aligned with other European countries funding of civil society NGOs in that regard. It is an issue that we will continue to keep under review, and will give further consideration to for the future, to ensure that we follow – and even lead - best practice in this regard. • <u>more effective use of diaspora communities in Scotland to support international development in their countries of origin</u>: we agree with and support this recommendation: we core fund both the SMP and NIDOS, which work with and include in their membership diaspora communities. • <u>the extension of the policy coherence approach</u>: The Minister for Europe and International Development has continued to champion and affirm SG’s commitment to policy coherence for development as an approach across SG policies. We are already working across our Ministerial portfolios to support international aims: on climate change, water, education etc. We will continue to work on PCD for development, and to ensure that SG international engagement ensures a “do no harm” approach. • <u>development of a code of conduct</u>: we will consider this recommendation further.
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<p>It invites the Scottish Government to consider the specific proposal made by Amnesty International Scotland that the Scottish Government should create an international human rights strategy.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>The Scottish Government is working closely with civil society partners, including Amnesty International Scotland, to achieve the “Better World” outcome identified in Scotland’s National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP). This includes co-ordinated action which “further develops Scotland’s capacity and influence in ensuring that human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled in the context of Scotland’s engagement at the international level”. The Scottish Government welcomes the proposal presented to the Committee by Amnesty, and believes that this could usefully be examined in the context of on-going activity by the SNAP Better World Human Rights Action Group. The Action Group is co-convened by Amnesty, the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Government.</p>
<p>The Committee recognises that engagement in EU or international networks can provide opportunities for Scottish third sector and civil society organisations to influence the development of policy in these arenas. It therefore calls on the Scottish Government to consider how support can be provided to organisations to encourage a discrete Scottish participation in EU and international networks.</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>The participation of third sector and civil society organisations in EU and international networks is an aspect that is highly pertinent to Scotland’s internationalisation agenda which seeks to build capacity to engage internationally and to influence the world around us to benefit the people of Scotland.</p> <p>The Scottish Governments own engagement, and that of Scottish organisations with the EU and European institutions, is vital to representing Scotland’s specific interests. That is why the Scotland Europa office in Brussels helps Scottish organisations foster successful European relationships, providing guidance on European policies and funding opportunities. It helps members to understand the funding programmes, identify opportunities and develop projects for European funding. Services include: regular updates on funding programmes and related policy developments; organising information events and workshops; networking and partner search opportunities; and liaison with UK national contact points and the European Commission. In addition Scotland House provides excellent conference centre facilities, offering an ideal location for hosting events with both a Scottish and European focus. The Government’s internationalisation agenda further means that the Scottish Government will support third sector and civil society organisations in their engagement with international networks by promoting necessary skills such as foreign language learning as well as by using its international networks and contacts to facilitate engagement.</p>

<p>The Committee believes that the opportunities for those in the creative sector to showcase their work and perform abroad plays an important role in promoting Scotland through cultural diplomacy. However, it was clear that all of these bodies were dependent on grants to be able to achieve travel, tour or engage in joint projects with international partners. For this reason, more provision of support to organisations to help secure EU or other forms of funding could be valuable.</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>The Scottish Government believes that the EU's funding programmes provide good opportunities for Scottish cultural organisations to develop and support their international activity. Not only are these programmes sources of grant finance, but they can also actively encourage the development of international links, indeed, the development of partnerships between organisations from different countries is very often an essential criteria for accessing EU programmes.</p> <p>Creative Europe is the EU's funding programme specifically aimed at cultural and creative organisations. It includes opportunities across the breadth of the cultural and creative sector with most of these opportunities requiring projects to have a strong international dimension to successfully secure funding. Creative Scotland now host two members of staff from the Creative Europe Desk UK, recently increasing from one, whose role it is to promote the programme in Scotland, publicise specific opportunities as they arise and support applicants to develop and submit applications. The Scottish Government has been in contact with Creative Scotland and the Creative Europe Desk UK to understand where we might add value to the existing support available to applicants to Creative Europe. It is welcome that uptake of Creative Europe in Scotland since its inception in 2014 has been good, but the Scottish Government is keen that Scottish organisations are able to take full advantage of this opportunity as well as other relevant sources of EU funding.</p>
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<p>The Committee also believes that Scottish Government funding for performing arts companies has been successful in promoting Scotland internationally and considers that funding for touring is extremely valuable. The Committee wishes to highlight one particular concern raised by Creative Scotland in relation to Scotland's digital infrastructure. Creative Scotland explained that this was still not strong enough and widespread enough for creative organisations to work collaboratively on digital platforms. The Committee considers that it is regrettable that the creative sector should be let down by infrastructure.</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>The Scottish Government is committed to delivering world class digital infrastructure and to ensuring infrastructure is appropriate to the needs of creative businesses in Scotland wherever they are based. As a vital first step, the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme is investing £410m public and private sector investment through two regional projects – Highlands & Islands (H&I), and the rest of Scotland (ROS). Together with commercial investment, at least 95% of homes and business premises across Scotland will have access to fibre broadband by the end of 2017 and 85% by the end of 2015/16. Commercial investment alone would only have taken Scotland to 66% coverage. To achieve these targets, DSSB intends to deliver fibre infrastructure to improve connectivity for over 750,000 premises – both residential and SMEs. Deployment, which will be taken forward in phases, is on track with over 455,000 premises passed by the new infrastructure. On average, the programme is connecting 7,000 new homes and businesses every week.</p> <p>We have also established Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) to support community-led projects in areas least likely to benefit from a superfast broadband solution under the DSSB programme. It aims to transform the way communities live, work and learn by empowering them to develop and deliver their own superfast broadband solutions.</p>
<p>The Committee welcomes the degree of international engagement that already exists in relation to sport, but notes sportscotland's comments that "when it comes to grass roots sports development, that which takes place in schools and education, clubs and communities, the picture is less clear about what the appropriate role is for Scotland in international relationships which tends to be more opportunistic and ad hoc". The Committee considers that participation in sporting events at all levels internationally provides a valuable opportunity for intercultural learning and the opportunity to promote Scotland in the world.</p>	<p>33</p>	<p>The Scottish Government shares the Committee's views that sport is a valuable lever to promote Scotland on a global scene. In terms of using grass roots sport, we would encourage schools, sports clubs and sports governing bodies to build relations throughout the UK, Europe and more wider and explore funding streams to do so. For instance, as indicated in sportscotland's evidence to the Committee, the International Council for School Sport and Physical Education and the International Sport for All provide excellent connections to like-minded organisations; and Erasmus + (the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport), managed by the British Council through a national agency partnership, can provide funding across all sectors, including sporting organisations, to provide opportunities to study, work, volunteer, teach and train in Europe. sportscotland has indicated that it will add information on Erasmus + to their funding stream section on their website.</p>

<p>Throughout the Connecting Scotland inquiry, the Committee has heard from different sectors that encouraging an international outlook, particularly among Scotland's young people, is key to increasing international engagement. The Committee recognises that internationalisation has been included as a priority in Scotland's Economic Strategy, Scotland's International Framework and Scotland's International Policy Statement. While this inquiry has provided many positive examples of international engagement, it has also shown that in a time of constrained budgets, it is difficult for many organisations to commit the resources or to prioritise the promotion of international engagement. Nevertheless, the Committee is convinced that to the promotion of internationalisation is an important long-term investment, bringing economic, social and cultural rewards and providing Scotland with an opportunity to transmit its identity on an international stage.</p>	<p>34</p>	<p>See response to para 26 in report 1.</p>
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<p>The Committee has previously conducted an inquiry into foreign language learning in primary schools and made a series of recommendations relating to the promotion of language learning. This inquiry has reinforced the Committee's view that language learning, school exchanges, teacher exchanges and opportunities for Scottish students to study abroad play a crucial part in promoting internationalisation among the people of Scotland. The Committee therefore believes that it is crucial that all of these opportunities should continue to be developed in order that Scottish people feel empowered to engage in international environments.</p>	<p>35</p>	<p>The ambitious 1+2 language learning policy will benefit Scotland in many more ways than just being able to speak another language. Language learning is essentially about communication. In that context it forms an extension to the core generic skills of numeracy and literacy. The attached link shows the positive connections between language learning and literacy skills, and demonstrates how learning additional languages can play an important role in helping children and young people develop their literacy skills in their mother tongue: http://www.scilt.org.uk/Portals/24/Library/Leaflets/Literacy%20leaflet.pdf</p> <p>Language learning is life enhancing and increases our young people's ability to play a full part in our globalised world by heightening our understanding and adaptability to the world around us. They support a better understanding of international opportunities and a greater appetite and ability to seize them. Language skills are crucial to growing and internationalising our economy, as such the policy is aligned with the current Scottish Government International Framework. It is important for the nation's prosperity that young people are attracted to learning languages and that they become confident and competent linguists, well equipped with the skills and capacities needed in the new Europe and in the 21st century global marketplace.</p> <p>The Scottish Government is fully committed to the long term implementation of this policy, that is why we have invested £16.2m to date as we work with schools and local authorities to make progress enabling the learning of the first additional language to start from Primary One with a second additional language to be offered by all schools at the latest from Primary Five and an entitlement to language learning throughout the Broad General Education.</p> <p>We will continue to work closely with our key delivery stakeholders to encourage a change in attitude and to build public expectation of strengthened language learning as a normal and expected part of a broad, relevant school education. Recently we held a successful Parliamentary Reception on 24 September, attended by 130 people, to raise awareness of alignment with the purpose of Developing the Young Workforce and to help encourage a change in attitude to language learning and raised expectation from pupils, parents, higher education and employers.</p>
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<p>A key message that emerged from this inquiry related to the value of collaboration within and between sectors in promoting international engagement. The Connected Scotland initiative has been highlighted as a successful model of collaboration in this report, with the recommendation that the Scottish Government and its agencies should consider how they can further promote collaboration, networks and support to a range of organisations that could benefit from engaging internationally. The Committee believes that this will help provide an impetus to international engagement across Scotland.</p>	<p>36</p>	<p>See response to para 44 in report 1.</p>
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