

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES, GRAZ

4th meeting of the Professional Network Forum on Language Education
Graz, 7 February 2013

DGII/EDU/GRAZ(2013)14 – 27 February 2013

Meeting summary and action points

I. Opening of the meeting

<Appendix I: Agenda>

The meeting took place on Thursday 7 February 2013 at the ECML in Graz and was moderated by Waldemar MARTYNIUK, Executive Director of the ECML.

Representatives from 10 of the 14 current members of the Professional Network Forum attended the network's 4th meeting:

- AILA – Bernd Rüschoff
- ALTE – Ina Ferbežar
- CEL/ELC – Wolfgang Mackiewicz
- CercleS – Helena Šajgaliková
- EAQUALS – Peter Brown
- EPA – Johannes Theiner
- FIPLV – Terry Lamb
- ICC – Rob Williams, Eleonora Camoni
- OLBI – Marie José Hamel
- ECML – Waldemar Martyniuk, Susanna Slivensky, Michael Armstrong

On this occasion it was not possible for representatives from ACTFL, EALTA, EUNIC, IAM or the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe to attend the meeting.

II. Aims of the 4th meeting

<Appendix I: Agenda>

The main aims of the meeting were to:

- explore the idea of joint conference of the Professional Network Forum partners linked to the Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;
- exchange information on 'burning issues' in language education and latest developments in the partner networks.

III. Follow-up to action points agreed upon at the 3rd meeting in 2012

- The ECML has updated the PNF web pages and developed a new flyer;
- The revised memorandum of cooperation with the ECML covering the timeframe of the *Learning through languages programme – 2012-2015* was sent out to and signed by partners;
- Partners can become further involved in one or more of the projects within the programme in the following ways:
 - nominating participants to the workshops organised within the projects (5 workshops in 2013);

- as an associate partner in projects and targeted support initiatives (where there is a clear link between the aims of the project and the INGO);
- cooperating with projects as a dissemination partner, in particular for mediation projects (such as LACS II) – this could take the form of new ideas and/or collaboration on national events;
- in another mutually beneficial way agreed with the project/ECML training and consultancy for member states team and the secretariat.

Points still requiring further action:

- Develop the information exchange function of the Professional Network Forum through a more structured approach to communication:
 - joint promotion of conferences (via the ECML's International events calendar <http://www.ecml.at/interactive>);
 - promotion of individuals' expertise in his or her area of language education specialisation via the ECML's expert database <http://www.ecml.at/experts>);
 - contacts from ECML to PFN partners periodically (every 3 - 6 months) to publicise their events and key news/ information;
 - establishment of a joint newsletter coordinated by the ECML (and sent out by all partners) containing priority issues/events/products of the INGOs;
 - the establishment of reciprocal links between the ECML and INGOs websites (where these do not exist already) and, where applicable, linkage via social networks (for example: Linked In, Facebook, Twitter) and Wikipedia (for an example: see AILA page);
 - examine the feasibility of RSS feeds from INGOs to the ECML website;
 - the ECML will send out a communication on the 20 publications and websites resulting from the 2008-2011 *Empowering language professionals* programme.

The INGO Professional Network Forum page was the most frequently visited page on the ECML website in 2012. This was at least partially due to the links the members of the Forum had added from their websites to the page.

IV Recent ECML developments

- The ECML training and consultancy scheme for member states began as a pilot in 2012. To date activities within the scheme have focused on three areas:
 - [Developing online teaching skills](#)
 - [Supporting local networks of users of the European Language Portfolio through an e-platform](#)
 - [Constructing and validating language tests linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\)](#)

Five further projects were launched in 2013 within the Centre's 'Learning through languages' programme:

- European portfolio for student teachers of pre-primary education ([Pré-élémentaire](#))
- Literacies through Content and Language Integrated Learning: effective learning across subjects and languages ([CLIL](#))
- Collaborative Community Approach to Migrant Education ([Community](#))
- ECML publications for plurilingual & intercultural education in use ([PIU](#))
- Involving parents in plurilingual and intercultural education ([Parents](#))

For involvement within these or other projects within the ECML's programme the partners within the Professional Network Forum are invited to take up contact with the secretariat.

Together with the meeting summary, the partners will receive the Professional Network Forum flyer and the publications and summaries of the most recent publications of the ECML (all are available upon request as hard copies).

A meeting involving several of the original authors of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language is scheduled for May will examine possible initiatives and courses of action relating to the Framework.

V. Joint conference/event of the Professional Network Forum partners

A joint conference on education and its importance for Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law will take place within the framework of the Austrian chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers in spring 2014. This means that for the 3rd chairmanship running (Albanian, Andorran and Austrian) education will represent one of the major priority areas.

The discussions of the members of the INGO Professional Network Forum were based upon an initial document prepared by Waldemar Martyniuk focusing on **the (re-)definition of quality education in contemporary mobile and globalised world and the role of language education for quality assurance in education.**

The initial suggestion for the format was that the event takes place in two parts:

- 1. General issue to be addressed by high level officials (Part I) :**
 - Quality in and of education – a challenge of and a strategy for the 21st century
- 2. Specific issues to be addresses in the expert debate (Part II):**
 - Education vs. training – the balance between knowledge, skills and attitudes
 - Education for growth, for jobs, for competitiveness vs. education for personal development, for social cohesion, democratic citizenship and intercultural dialogue
 - New (old) competences: need for a new literacy incl. use of ICT, more critical thinking and creativity
 - Open resource mobile education: the challenges and the opportunities produced by the ICT revolution
 - New role for teachers: mediators, consultants, leaders and role models
 - Need for inclusive approaches and de-compartmentalised, integrative education
 - Integrating the needs of the individual, the community/society, the economy, and the state in and for education
 - Support to the development of learners' linguistic potential/power at the core of education – the role of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz

Summary of comments

The following sections represent the INGO Professional Network Forum members' suggestions regarding the event and their proposed level of involvement.

Suggestions for the conference title

- The role of education in society (CercleS)
- Educational Quality Assurance counts (EAQUALS)

Focus /approach

- Take a strategic approach – set out a vision and provide some end points to show what has already been done and that it is possible to successfully achieve the vision (EAQUALS);
- The conference should seek to influence social governance – identify gaps and point towards potential ways of bridging the gaps;
- Be positive about what can be achieved in language education. The Council of Europe has a high-level vision and holistic approach to language education, as opposed to the Commission's more constrained approach. Place emphasis on supporting motivation and providing a learning space rather than being too mechanistic. Show what is achievable and that resources are available (EPA);
- Education can create a social divide where middle class pupils attend different schools to migrant children. Make politicians realise that if they do not take action social unrest is likely to occur. This situation is being further accentuated by the financial crisis;
- Use the conference as a forward-looking event, ensure that the focus is on issues that are very important to several countries and relate to fundamental values linked to education (CEL/ELC);

Structure /format

- Invert parts I and II and start with expert input on day one in order to give a basis to the discussion and make it easier to achieve objectives. Then address quality assurance in language education and present challenges in language education in an informed high-level debate among the participants on day two (EAQUALS);
- Ensure a good balance of (not too many) speeches, round table discussions and interventions/statements / questions from the audience to provide a lively format (ICC + OLBI);
- Make use of ICT: add a dynamic feature to the event through creative use of social networks and conferencing systems (such as Adobe Connect), offer live feeds video streaming with links via the partners websites, involve students (OLBI, ICC + FIPLV);
- Make the event different and innovative compared to other conferences for example by making a + video link to children close to school-leaving age (ie potential voters). Use language which is familiar to people rather than jargon. Use case studies which focus on innovation (AILA + EAQUALS).

Thematic issues

- Focus on areas where methodologies (such as CLIL) have contributed to wider change in other subject areas or where they can provide innovative stimuli to other fields;
- Language sensitive education. Teachers need to develop an approach which focuses both on subject content and language (AILA);
- Plurilingual education - CLIL with English is widely promoted – the theme becomes more provocative when it related to migrant languages - there should not be a hierarchy between languages (FIPLV);
- How do you skill a teacher to work in a multilingual environment
- Teacher education is a problem – people do a course and receive a certificate but then do not introduce changes – there needs to be follow-up to ensure that change takes place (ICC);
- Teacher education should also be addressed/revisited in the light of advances in new technologies, as well as methodologies such as CLIL and multilingualism/culturalism (OLBI);
- Education is also about testing - language testers face new challenges, such as how to:
 - test plurilingual competences;
 - ensure language sensitive testing;
 - avoid the misuse of the CEFR, in for example requiring B2 level for citizenship;
 - assess non-formal knowledge (ALTE).
- Human rights is an issue to be addressed. While the current focus is on mobility to fill in gaps occurring in the labour market, little or no account is taken of the needs of children whose families parents' relocate for professional reasons (CEL/ELC).

Possible case studies

- Example of Berlin where, increasingly, middle class children are being sent to private or religious schools and children with migrant backgrounds largely in the majority in many other schools. Berlin is also the only city to have state run bilingual schools (which are massively oversubscribed) where every subject is taught in two languages (ELC)
- Transnational teaching systems (Universities of Udine and Klagenfurt – Ferdinand Stefan) (EPA)

Participants

- Invite representatives of the other International organisations dealing with education (European Union, UNESCO, OECD);
- Try to reach out to the 'unconverted'. In order to do so the agenda should be provocative. The politicians, parents and other stakeholders that you do not see are the problem (ICC and FIPLV) Often governments do not know what they have signed up to (for example the Council of Europe Recommendation on Quality education) (FIPLV);
- Involve 'ordinary' people in the event such as teachers, students and parents (EAQUALS).

Initial suggestions for speakers

- Graham Fraser, Commissioner for Official Languages (Canada) (OLBI)
- Jim Cummins (University of Toronto) on valuing linguistic potential (AILA)
- David Owen (University of Barcelona) on terminology (CercleS)
- Baroness Jean Coussins (House of Lords) (FIPLV)

- Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for the European Union (FIPLV)
- Try to identify a 'rising star' from the next generation of politicians who could end up being a future leader (EAQUALS)

INGOs preferred dates for the conference

- Not early March (CEL/ELC)
- Not April (ALTE + AILA)
- March and May (AILA+ EAQUALS), May (ICC)

INGO involvement

- OLBI (following discussions with colleagues in the Institute) could offer the following forms of assistance:
 - to organise a symposium on the 'Canadian Immersion model' (k-12 and post-secondary) with speakers such as Danielle Moore, Roy Lyster, Fred Genesse and Jim Cummins;
 - to lead and/or be involved in two round tables: on 'ICT/CALL in education' and one on 'Social cohesion/identity and mediation' with other PNF/ECML programmes colleagues as participants. Questions for these round tables could be posted in advance on the event's website so participants/civil society have a chance to interact;
 - to participate in a round table on 'Empowering parents/educators through associations' would be very pertinent. Such a round table would be of interest to namely two Canadian associations: CASLT (Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers) and ACPI (Association des professeurs d'immersion);
 - to invite the Canadian Ambassador to the Council of Europe.
- ALTE interested in offering a speaker (will discuss the conference at the ALTE Board meeting in April);
- AILA could contribute and suggest speakers on language sensitive education / multilingualism and ICT / linguistic landscape (can respond after discussions with General Secretary (late March));
- CercleS could provide speaker on translation and terminology (indicated above);
- EPA – Johannes Theiner could present parents' view personally and bring in the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning and the Association for Teacher Education in Europe;
- ICC would be interested in the ICT area and learning platforms and the role of teacher as mediator and how this impacts on teacher trainer. ICC could also provide assistance in how to formulate the strand. Could propose a speaker in April;
- EAQUALS would be interested in finding topics and speakers and could assist in the logistical organisation (could confirm interest by the end of February);
- FIPLV could offer general support and would be interested in the issues of the holistic development of the child, the voice of the child in policy and 'deep professionalism'. FIPLV could also offer to gather feedback on ideas and disseminate via its forums and website;
- CEL/ELC Higher education is the main area of interest, also teacher education and assessment in formal and non-formal education. Will report on the INGO discussions at the next meeting of the European Commission's languages in education training group and discuss involvement and potential speakers at the CEL/ELC Board meeting in March.

Other ideas

- The proposed exhibition could be relabelled as a bazaar/ market place with a more interactive focus (EPA);
- Use a classical quotation that people can relate to highlight the event (for example Aristotle's comparison of an idea and a coin) (EAQUALS);
- Establish a web platform which prepares participants and informs them prior to the event as well as showcasing evidence relating to the desired outcomes. Promote the work of the ECML and other partners and provide key reports, surveys, case studies, video materials and testimonials relating to the biggest issues in teaching.

Relevant documents and websites

- [Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education](#)
- [Council of Europe Recommendation on ensuring quality education](#)

- [EUNOM report](#)
- [Survey lang](#)
- [Language Rich Europe](#)
- [Eurobarometer](#)
- [European profiling grid](#)
- [Teaching Portfolio](#)
- [Graz Declaration](#)

Ursula Newby, General Manager of the Austrian Association, thanked the members of the Professional Network Forum for their valuable input in helping to prepare this event. She indicated that she would be happy to pass on the results of the meeting to the Ministries preparing the conference (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture and the Foreign Ministry).

The conference will also be one of the points on the agenda of the ECML Governing Board at its meeting on 14-15 March.

Conclusion of the meeting

The members of the INGO Professional Network Forum formally thanked Waldemar Martyniuk and the ECML secretariat for the organisation of the event.

The partners also expressed their sadness at the passing of John Trim, the former Director of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages projects and initiator of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In closing the meeting Waldemar Martyniuk reminded the members of John Trim's words when reflecting on the CEFR and its impact during his last visit to the ECML in July 2012 - that it was important to be brave, not to not give up, even if immediate results proved discouraging, and to go global - beyond the boundaries set by Europe.

Updated partner presentations

New presentations were received from CEL/ELC, EAQUALS, ICC and OLBI. These have been uploaded to the [Professional Network Forum](#) page. Other contributions received from partners containing details of updates or burning issues will also be uploaded to this page.

Forthcoming events

- EPA – European citizenship initiative no.8 'A high quality European education for all' launched by the European school in Brussels
- AILA – conference in June in Dublin (details to follow)
- The French Association of Applied Linguistics will host a major conference in Nancy in November
- AILA 2014 will take place in August 2014 in Brisbane, Australia
- ICC – the annual ICC conference will be held on 9-10 March in Sofia, Bulgaria
- ALTE will hold its 43rd bi-annual Meeting and Conference on language assessment and multilingualism on 17-19 April at the University of Salamanca, Spain
- EAQUALS The EAQUALS International Conference will be held on 18 - 20 April 2013 in Dublin
- FIPLV – the next FIPLV world congress will be held in Canada in 2014
- OLBI will hold a major conference on advanced language learners in Ottawa on 24-25 April 2014
- The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers will hold its 'Languages without borders' conference on 18-20 April in Winnipeg
- The ECML will hold workshops in Graz on the following themes in March and April:
 - "Language descriptors for migrant and minority learners' success in compulsory education" on 7- 8 March;
 - "Signed languages for professional purposes" on 15-17 April;
 - "Languages in corporate quality" coordinated by Wolfgang Mackiewicz (CEL/ELC) 24-26 April 2013.

Professional Network Forum members are welcome to nominate participants to these events (for further details see <http://www.ecml.at/calendar>).

APPENDIX I

4th ECML Professional Network Forum on Language Education
(Graz, 7 February 2013)

Agenda

09.00 – 09.15	Opening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to ECML • Introduction of participants • The purpose and the agenda of the meeting
09.15 – 11.00	Session 1: “PNF conference 2014” – the concept and partners’ involvement and contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the draft concept • Areas, themes and formats for partners’ involvement • Discussion
11.00 – 11.15	Coffee break
11.15 – 12.30	Session 2: “PNF conference 2014” – forward planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming and planning for preparatory actions and activities • Discussion
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
14.30 – 16.15	Session 3a: “Update on network partner activities” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief statements by all partners on the latest developments in their organisations
16.15 – 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 – 17.30	Session 3b: “Update on network partner activities” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on developments and outlook on activities of the Council of Europe and the European Union • Update on the ECML programme of activities 2012-15 “Learning through languages” and the involvement of the PNF partners • Discussion
17.30 – 18.15	Closing statements
19.00	Dinner offered by the Austrian ECML Association (http://verein.ecml.at/)

APPENDIX II

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES, GRAZ

ECML Professional Network Forum on Language Education
4th meeting (Graz, 7 February 2013)

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Appendix III.

Background to the Professional Network Forum

Encouraged by its Governing Board, the ECML seeks to intensify its relationships with institutions and associations with similar aims working in the field of language education and assessment.

Following on from the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2008 by the ECML and the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI) of the University of Ottawa, the Centre has developed a generic bilateral cooperation agreement which outlines the modalities of the desired cooperation and formalises the commitment to work together. The objective of the agreement is to ensure synergies at institutional level in the pursuit of common goals through the exchange of expertise, information and documentation, the attendance at partner events and the cooperation in joint activities.

The first agreements were signed for the duration of the ECML's 3rd medium-term programme "*Empowering Language Professionals*" (2008-2011) by a number of leading INGOs having participatory status with the Council of Europe: the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CercleS), the, the Evaluation & Accreditation of Quality in Language Services (EAQUALS), the European Association for Language Testing in Europe (EALTA), the International Certificate Conference (ICC), the International Federation of Modern Language Associations (FIPLV), and the Conseil européen pour les langues / European Language Council (CEL/ELC).

The initiative to set up a Professional Network Forum on Language Education allowing leaders of INGOs to meet once a year under the auspices of the Council of Europe at the ECML in Graz emerged from this context. Three new members joined the Forum in 2011: the European Parents Association (EPA), the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) and the International Association of Multilingualism (IAM). In 2012 the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) became a member of the Forum following a successful joint conference on the theme of 'Making frameworks useful' held at the ECML in July.

The Professional Network Forum was set up in order to provide a platform for experts for cooperation and exchange of the latest developments, as well as for synergetic activities. The purpose of the ECML was in particular to intensify the links with NGOs and civil society considered as important partners in the Centre's activities.

The Graz Declaration on language education "Quality education for plurilingual people living in multilingual societies" signed 2010 by network partners serves as a rationale for the current ECML programme of activities *Learning through languages: promoting inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education* 2012-2015.