EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES, GRAZ

Evaluation report:
Languages at the heart of learning programme (2016-19)

Contents

1. Introduction

The primary aim of this report is to evaluate the ECML programme *Languages at the heart of learning*, covering the years 2016-2019. At the same time, the report will provide an overview of these activities and while this is not comprehensive, it will capture the flavour of the ECML's work. Links are given, should readers wish to find out about specific aspects of the programme in more detail.

The evaluation report is structured as follows. **Chapter one** explains the mission of the ECML and gives general information on how the programme was evaluated. **Chapter two** provides an outline of the ECML programme, which includes the thematic priorities underlying it, and the types of activities offered within the programme; it further lists the activities and events offered within the four-year period. **Chapter three** explains how these activities and events aligned with the programme's thematic priorities. In **chapter four**, quantitative details of participation in ECML activities are listed to indicate the outreach achieved at an international level. **Chapter five** provides an overview of the ten projects which were conducted within the programme. This includes brief project descriptions, details of outputs and outreach, as well as evaluative comments by consultants. **Chapter six** summarises the results of the evaluations conducted among participants at ECML activities as well as the survey carried out among National Authorities in Member states. In the final **chapter seven**, conclusions from the evaluation report are drawn and the impact of the programme is discussed.

Mission and Strategic Objectives of the ECML

Any evaluation of the ECML's activities must take as its starting point the stated mission of the ECML and specific strategic objectives, which will in turn serve as evaluation criteria.

The Centre's mission, underpinned by the values of the Council of Europe, is to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching and support its Member states in the implementation of effective language education policies. At the heart of the ECML mission are specific strategic objectives which steer the aims, content and format of all of its activities. Some key objectives are:

- promotion of innovative approaches to language learning and teaching;
- collaboration and exchange among the various actors in the field;
- organisation of training of multipliers;
- collecting and disseminating examples of good practice.

It realises this mission by working with decision-makers in Member states to initiate and coordinate 4-year programmes based on national priorities in language education. Each programme is embedded in ongoing policy developments, with the overarching themes reflecting shifting perspectives and new challenges.

Adopted approach to evaluation

The central questions which the evaluation seeks to answer, therefore, are:

- how far has the ECML programme succeeded in addressing the priorities and needs of Member states on which it was based?
- how, and how well, do the specific activities of the 2016-2019 programme fulfil the key objectives which are at the core of the mission of the ECML?

To answer these questions, it examines four aspects of the programme:

- the **relevance** for Member states of themes dealt with in ECML activities as well as project outputs;
- the **quality** and **usefulness** of materials and resources for language professionals;
- the **outreach** that activities and resources have had across Europe and beyond - a quantitative evaluation of participation in ECML events and of dissemination of ECML resources;
- the **outcomes** of activities - a qualitative evaluation of how the programme has found uptake in the professional lives of teachers, teacher educators etc. at institutional, national or international level.

The sum total of data analysed according to these four parameters will together provide evidence of the **impact** that the ECML programme has had in Member states.

Data sources

The evaluation of the programme is based on three key sources of both quantitative and qualitative data:
- quantitative data compiled by the ECML secretariat relating to the outreach of activities, events and publications (chapter four);
- data gathered through questionnaires, reports and comments from ECML consultants, project coordinators and team members, as well as participants at project events (chapter six);
- data gathered through a comprehensive survey carried out among National Authorities in Member states 12 months after the completion of the programme (chapter six).

Whilst the evaluation report is, by its nature, retrospective, it will also fulfil a prospective function: by identifying success factors and challenges it will serve to guide future activities.

2. The ECML programme 2016-2019: *Languages at the heart of learning*

This aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with a detailed description of the 2016-2019 programme which is the subject of this evaluation report.

Programme Overview

Like most ECML programmes, this one consisted of two strands: development and mediation. The development strand focused on innovation projects, on creating new solutions to the challenges identified in Member states by producing resources which help to support and optimise language learning and teaching. It did so via innovation projects, sometimes complemented by think tanks - one-off events which seek to create a network of expertise from across Member states and advise the ECML secretariat on how to address key priorities in language education.

The mediation strand focused on increasing the outreach of the ECML's work by providing Member states with opportunities to access ECML expertise and to explore, adapt and implement existing ECML resources through Training and consultancy and national support events. Through conferences, webinars and by celebrating the European Day of Languages, the ECML opened up its activities to a wider public.
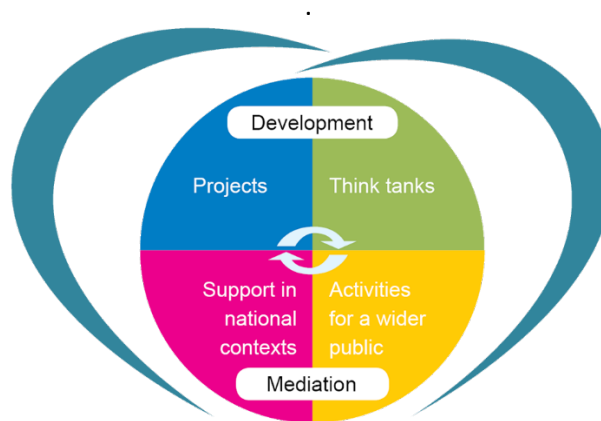
Figure 1: The structure of the ECML programme

Language education priorities in ECML Member states

The themes addressed by the programme were based on identified priorities in language education in ECML Member states as illustrated below:
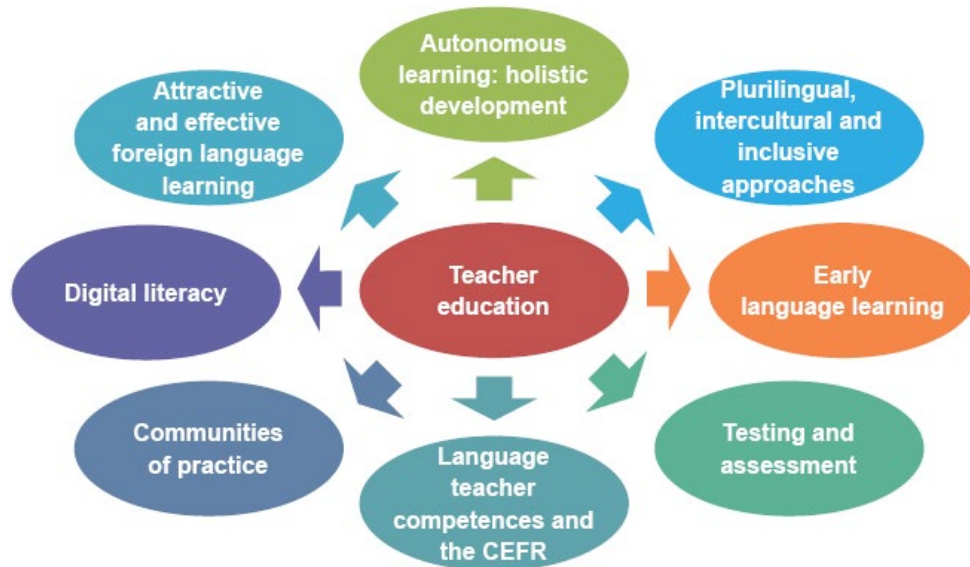
Figure 2: Thematic priorities

Development strand: Projects

The following projects were selected for the 2016-2019 programme following a Call for Project Proposals.

- A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use
- Action research communities for language teachers
- Developing language awareness in subject classes
- Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages
- Guide to teacher competences for languages in education
- Language for work: tools for professional development
- Learning environments where modern languages flourish
- Promoting excellence in sign language instruction

Development strand: Think tanks

While the projects listed above gave wide coverage to national priorities identified by Member states, the ECML secretariat and the Governing Board felt that certain areas would benefit from a stronger focus. It was therefore decided to hold a series of think tanks on the basis of which additional projects might be proposed. Three think tanks were held at the ECML which dealt with the following thematic areas:

- Whole-school approaches to the language/s of schooling
- Early language learning
- Language learning pathways

The think tanks resulted in two further projects being incorporated into the programme. These were:

- [A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling](#)
- [Inspiring language learning in the early years](#)

Mediation strand: **Training and consultancy** workshops (TaCs)

While all TaCs share the overall aim of disseminating good practice, as far as topics are concerned, each TaC is tailored to the specific needs of the country which requests an event. Building on the above-mentioned projects and those from previous ECML programmes, Training and consultancy events were offered on the following topics:

- A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning (CLIL)
- Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials (FREPA)
- Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility (PluriMobil)
- Quality assurance in language and citizenship courses (Adult migrants)
- Quality education in Romani for Europe (QualiRom)
- Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)**
- Supporting local networks in using an electronic European Language Portfolio
- Supporting multilingual classrooms (Young migrants) **
- Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning (ICT-REV)
- Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)

**These activities were held under the ECML-EU cooperation agreement 2017-2018. https://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/ECML-ECCooperation/tabid/1461/language/en-GB/Default.aspx

Mediation strand: Activities for a wider public

A variety of activities were offered by the ECML which could be attended or accessed online by the general public. Principal among these were:

- Colloquium: *Ensuring quality in language testing and assessment: the contribution of the CEFR*, 7 December 2016
- Colloquium: *Teacher education for linguistic diversity: the contribution of the ECML*, 13-14 December 2017
- 25th Anniversary Conference: *Languages at the heart of learning: 25 years of inspiring innovation*, 5-6 December 2019. This high-level conference celebrated the ECML's 25th anniversary by reflecting on the important contribution made by the Centre to the field of language education. It also showcased the results of the ECML's last programme and launched the new programme.

(For more information on how ECML programmes operate, please see here).

3. Alignment with national priorities in Member states

The table that follows shows how the activities held within the programme *Languages at the heart of learning* can be categorised vis-à-vis the national priorities identified by Member states (Figure 2, p.5). It should be noted that while only one thematic priority has been identified for each activity, some activities fall within more than one priority area. For example, the project 'Learning environments where modern languages flourish' is listed within the theme 'Attractive and effective foreign language learning'; however, it also deals with issues relating to 'Languages of schooling'.

Member state priorities and ECML activities

Priority	Projects	Think Tank	TaC	Other
Attractive and effective foreign language learning	Learning environments where modern languages flourish		A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning	
Autonomous learning; holistic development		Language learning pathways	Supporting local networks in using an electronic European Language Portfolio	
Communities of practice	Action research communities for language teachers Language for work: tools for professional development			25th Anniversary Conference: Languages at the heart of learning: 25 years of inspiring innovation
Digital literacy	Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages		Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning	
Early language learning	Inspiring language learning in the early years	Early language learning		
Language teacher competences and the CEFR	Guide to teacher competences for languages in education A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use		Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages	
Plurilingual and intercultural education			Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility Quality assurance in language and citizenship courses	Colloquium: Teacher education for linguistic diversity

Languages of schooling	A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling Developing language awareness in subject classes	Whole-school approaches to the language/s of schooling		
Inclusive approaches	Promoting excellence in sign language instruction		Quality education in Romani for Europe Supporting multilingual classrooms (Young migrants)	
Testing and assessment			Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference	Colloquium: Ensuring quality in language testing and assessment

*Note that the category 'Plurilingual, intercultural and inclusive, approaches' has been divided into three sub-categories: plurilingual and intercultural education, languages of schooling, inclusive education.

The high degree of match between activities comprising the programme *Languages at the heart of learning* and the themes prioritised by Member states which is clearly apparent in the above chart confirms that the programme was very successful in addressing these themes, both at the level of new developments (projects and think tanks) and in building capacity at national level through TaCs.

4. The outreach of ECML events and activities

Data compiled by the ECML secretariat show that in the period 2016-2019 activities enjoyed a broad outreach, as the following summary shows.

Projects

- Ten workshops were held, attended by 408 participants; eight network meetings, with 150 participants.

Think tanks

- Whole-school approaches to the language/s of schooling: 20 participants from 16 Member states, plus Canada, Portugal, UK
- Early language learning: 21 participants from Member states + Canada, Portugal, UK
- Language learning pathways: 21 participants from 16 Member states + Belgium

Training and consultancy

- ECML events: 64 activities in 28 Member states (Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, North

Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland); 2042 participants

- ECML-EU TaC events: 70 activities in 21 Member states (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia) + 5 non-Member states (Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom); 1994 participants

Activities for a wider public

- Colloquium: *Ensuring quality in language testing and assessment*. 66 participants from 25 Member states + 6 non-Member states (UK, Turkey, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Canada); 350 online followers (estimated)
- Colloquium: *Teacher education for linguistic diversity*. 57 participants from15 Member states + 8 non-Member states (Belgium, Canada, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom); 650 online followers
- 25th Anniversary Conference. 210 participants/29 Member states + 13 non-Member states (Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Italy, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, San Marino, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA): 1600 online followers

Publications for a wider public

- To commemorate its 25th anniversary the ECML published a volume of contributions by language education experts which reviews and showcases the achievements of the ECML and provides a state-of-the-art overview of topics which are at the core of its work.
  Newby, D., Heyworth, F. and Cavalli, M. (eds.) (2019) *Changing contexts, evolving competences: 25 years of inspiring innovation in language education.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
  https://www.ecml.at/Resources/ECMLPublications/tabid/277/ID/127/language/en-GB/Default.aspx
- European Language Gazette, 22 editions, number of subscribers increased from 7100 in 2016 to 8500 in 2019

Summary

Figures listed above show a very high level of outreach of events and resources. ECML organised events were physically attended by over 4500 participants whereas an estimated 2600 followed events online. Added to the 8500 subscribers to the *European Language Gazette* and the many language professionals who have accessed and downloaded project materials, these figures indicate a high degree of outreach both among Member states and beyond. Further evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, of the relevance and outreach of ECML activities will be presented in chapter five.

5. The ECML projects: outputs and outreach

This chapter will provide a brief overview of each of the ten projects which comprised the programme *Languages at the heart of learning*, accompanied by qualitative indicators relating to certain aspects. This will first focus on the projects' **outputs** – materials and resources developed by the team and made available on the project website for use by the intended target group. A second focus will be on the **outreach** of the project: examples, selected by project coordinators, of dissemination events, presentations, publications etc. which have helped to bring the project to a wider audience. Each entry concludes with a short **evaluation** by one of the two project **consultants**, Marisa Cavalli and Frank Heyworth.

Project 1: Action research communities for language teachers (ARC)

www.ecml.at/actionresearch

Project team: Christine Lechner (Coordinator) (Austria), Angela Gallagher-Brett (United Kingdom), Tita Mihaiu (Romania), Brynhildur Anna Ragnarsdottir (Iceland),

Project term: 2016-2018

Priority area(s) of Member states: Communities of practice, Language teacher competences and the CEFR

Brief description of project:

Action research facilitates the development of reflective classroom practice by linking professional networks, academic expertise and good practice in the language classroom. The project's central aims were to make approaches and techniques for action research widely available by establishing a community of practice, bringing together newly qualified teachers, experienced teachers, teacher educators and university researchers. Specific objectives were to design action research tools and to demonstrate how research can feed into practice, thus benefiting both teachers and learners.

Target Users: Language teachers in European classrooms, teacher educators

Main outputs of project:

- Getting into action research – the ARC-Spiral, cyclical presentation
- Checklist for action research projects in the language classroom
- A template for a 2-3-day workshop on action research to be used in development courses for language teachers
- How can I start my action research? Dialogue sheet for use in workshops
- Activities for exploring action research
- Success stories: Project descriptions and reports of good practice at schools and universities in more than 20 Member states
- A webinar in which the project team and colleagues speak about their experiences with action research in national contexts

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- "Action research as a means of transforming practice into a shared emancipatory space - La recherche-action comme moyen de transformation des pratiques dans un space d'émancipation partagé " (plenary lecture), Christine Lechner & Marianne Jacquin. ADLES Conference, Lausanne, Switzerland, 6.09.2018.
- "Developing voices and changing classrooms? The experience of language teachers an action research community of practice. ARC: an ECML Project", Christine Lechner, Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) Conference Montréal, 27.6.2019.
- "Practitioner Learning", Angela Gallagher-Brett & Christine Lechner, Workshop at CARN (Collaborative Action Research Network) & ALARA (Global Action Research Network) Conference in Split, 19.10.2019.

Publications

- Gallagher-Brett, A. (2019). Supporting and empowering language teachers through action research communities. In: Becerra-Gonzalez, N., Magedera, H. & Reimao, A. (eds.) *Innovative language teaching and learning: New trends in language teaching at university.* Dublin: Research-publishing.net. Available online: https://research-publishing.net/manuscript?10.14705/rpnet.2019.32.899
- Lechner, C., Jacquin, M., Zanin, R, and Mihaiu, T. (2019). ARC: Aktionsforschung für LehrerInnen. In: *Nachhaltige Bildung - Tagungsband zur VII. CARN D.A.CH-Tagung. Beiträge zur Fachdidaktik* (4) 2020. Habicher, A., Kosler, T., Lechner, C., Oberhauser, C., Oberrauch, A., Tursky-Philadelphy, M. Rauch, F., Schuster, A. (eds.) Wien: Praesens-Verlag: 202-230.
- Jacquin, M., Lechner, C. and Picenoni, M. (1019). Aktionsforschung - Recherche-action - Ricerca azione - Prescruraziun d'acziun. *Babylonia* 2/2019. Available online: http://babylonia.ch/de/archiv/2019/

Comment from the project consultant:

The ARC project team worked with great commitment and succeeded in creating a dynamic network and useful tools to guide teachers in the use of action research as a contribution to quality language education. The main achievements were in the provision of practical guidance to help teachers embark on action research as in integral part of their professional development. The project also succeeded in creating a network in which educators in secondary schools and in higher education collaborated.

Project 2: A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use (CEFR-QualiMatrix)

www.ecml.at/CEFRqualitymatrix

Project team: Enrica Piccardo (coordinator) (France), Anna Czura (Poland), Gudrun Erickson (Sweden), Brian North (Switzerland)

Project term: 2016-2018

Priority area(s) of Member states: Testing and assessment, Language teacher competences and the CEFR

Brief description of project:

The project aimed to promote effective language learning by supporting teachers and other language education professionals in engaging in curriculum renewal supported by the CEFR vision of teaching and learning. It provided a practical tool and suggested clear, coherent, and relevant procedures to facilitate planning, teaching and assessment. Furthermore, the project aimed to enhance reflective practices at the classroom, school and policy-making levels.

Target users: Practising teachers and other decision makers (principals, curriculum planners, and those responsible for language policies and education at different institutional levels)

Main outputs of project:

- A modular quality assurance matrix (QualiMatrix) that facilitates CEFR implementation at different levels, accompanied by an online tutorial
- Within the quality assurance matrix, a collection of piloted procedures organised in three sections (planning, teaching, assessment), cross-referenced to underlying quality principles
- A presentation of CEFR-related quality principles in language education
- A collection of resources explaining how CEFR may facilitate planning, teaching and assessment
- A collection of promising practices in CEFR implementation that show high leverage in relation to the improvement of language proficiency

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- Czura, A., & North, B. (2018, 12 September). *QualiMatrix: An online tool to support CEFR implementation: Hands-on workshop. National conference:* Assessment in Foreign Language Education, Jagellonian University, Krakow, Poland.
- North, B. (2019, 1. March). *Introducing the QualiMatrix tool to support CEFR-based innovation: Hands-on workshop*. ECML national support event, Day 2: A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use, Helsinki, Finland.
- Piccardo, E., & North, B. (2018, 8 June). *Hands-on workshop using the ECML 'Qualimatrix' tool, followed by plenary discussion.* National conference "Aligning Language Assessments in Higher Education with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): a Quality Assurance Approach". National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: 2017-18 Seminar Series. John Paul II Library, Maynooth University, Ireland.
- Piccardo, E. & North, B. (2017, July 23-28). *Key factors for successful innovation in language teaching: the QualiCEFR research project and QualiMatrix online tool*. AILA 2017 18th World Congress of Applied Linguistics, Innovation and epistemological challenges in Language education. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Publications

- Piccardo, E., North, B. & Maldina, E. (2017). *A quality assurance template to achieve innovation and reform in language education through CEFR implementation.* Proceedings of the 6th International ALTE Conference. Learning and Assessment: Making the Connections. Bologna, Italy, May 3-5, 2017 (pp. 96-103). Available at http://events.cambridgeenglish.org/alte2017-test/perch/resources/alte-2017-proceedings-final.pdf
- Piccardo, E., North, B., & Maldina, E. (2019). Promoting innovation and reform in language education through a Quality Assurance template for CEFR implementation. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics / Revue Canadienne de Linguistique Appliquée, 22*(1), 103-128.

Comment from the project consultant:

The aim was to provide an interactive tool enabling teachers and managers to reflect on their practice in relation to the CEFR, to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The tool encourages schools to use it as an integral part of their approach to teaching, not just for assessment. The interactive tool has been successfully created; it is a sophisticated combination of different interlinked elements which enable users to produce action plans, with tutorials and examples of practice. Schools which make use of the matrix will have a comprehensive basis for implementing the CEFR.

Project 3: A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling

www.ecml.at/roadmapforschools

Project team: Rebecca Dahm (coordinator) (France), Katri Kuukka (Finland), Selin Öndül (Switzerland), Nermina Wikström (Sweden)

Project term: 2017-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Languages of schooling

Brief description of project:

The aim of the project was to promote a whole-school approach by supporting the language(s) of schooling in both the formal and informal contexts of schools (e.g. extra-curricular activities/in the library, etc.). It enables school stakeholders to become aware of the importance of the language dimension across all subjects and offers concrete ways in which they can contribute to the development of the learners' competences in the language(s) of schooling. The Roadmap guides schools towards the development and implementation of a successful language strategy which provides tailored guidance for different players, by enabling them to become aware of their strengths and through the identification of levers for progress and improvement.

Target users: All of a school's stakeholders (head teachers, teachers, non-teaching staff, the wider community, parents and students)

Main outputs of project:

The Roadmap offers three elements to assist schools in setting up their self-constructed strategy plan:

- A self-assessment tool - enabling different stakeholders (headteachers, teachers, non-teaching staff, students and parents) to gauge where their school stands in relation to a number of evaluative statements
- A promising practices database containing promising practices from different countries that can inspire the school to work specifically on one of the areas they decide to improve
- A coordinator`s package which contains a set of different documents to support the schools when implementing the Roadmap (a step-by-step guide, a model letter to the parents, the PowerPoint for the presentation to stakeholders)

Outreach – examples:

Presentations:

- Conference presentation during the « Journée d'étude de l'ADEB "Les enjeux des dimensions langagières dans les disciplines enseignées. Pistes de réflexion et d'action", Rebecca Dahm, ESPE de Caudéran, Université de Bordeaux 2017
- A Whole-School Approach to provide Language-Sensitive Subject Teaching: a Means to improve Learning Outcomes of Vulnerable Learners? Presentation in ECER Conference, Nermina Wikström, Bolzano, Italy, September 2018
- Ein Wegweiser für Schulen zur Förderung der Schulsprache. Thementagung des Amtes für Volksschule und der Pädagogischen Hochschule Thurgau, Switzerland, Selin Öndül, Januar 2020

Publications:

- Dahm, R. (2018). *La/les langue(s) de scolarisation :une feuille de route pour les établissements scolaires*. Courriel européen des langues. Le magazine du point de contact du CELV en France, Novembre 2018 n°41.
- Dahm, R. (2019). *La/les langue(s) de scolarisation: une feuille de route pour les établissements scolaires*. Courriel européen des langues. Le magazine du point de contact du CELV en France, Décembre 2019 n°42.
- Kuukka, K. (2019). *Language aware teaching, Roadmap and ECML*. REXI-lehti. Magazine of The Finnish Association of Principals. (together with Anu Halvari and Paula Mattila)

Comment from the project consultant:

Deriving from a Think Tank, this project offers a framework for holistic reflection on the languages of schooling both at school level and for those engaged in school language policies. The self-assessment tool available online is innovative in that it allows different players (management staff, teachers, non-teaching staff, students and parents) to position the school in relation to certain dimensions of the language of schooling. Designed so that future users can define the strengths on which to build and the areas requiring improvement, it will be the subject of a Training and consultancy event in the new programme.

Project 4: Developing language awareness in subject classes (language in subjects)

www.ecml.at/languageinsubjects

Project team: Marita Härmälä (coordinator) Finland, Artashes Barkhanajya (Armenia), Jérôme Béliard, (France) Eli Moe (Norway) Susan Ballinger (Canada)

Project term: 2016-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Languages of schooling

Brief description of project:

In order to succeed, learners need to have a solid command of the language used in school subjects, which is different from the language used in everyday non-academic situations. Building on a previous ECML project 'Language skills for successful subject learning', this project aimed to provide subject teachers with practical procedures to identify the needs of their learners and to support them. The procedures developed enable teachers to reflect on different ways to include plurilingual and intercultural approaches in their teaching, approaches which learners can draw on and apply when learning new subject content.

Target users: Subject teachers and language teachers

Main outputs of project:

- Language supportive teaching materials and lesson plans
- Tools and materials for teachers of 12/13-year-old learners in different subjects, such as mathematics, history and science; these are organised into 3 steps: planning, teaching, learning
- Planning: background information, tools and tasks for defining objectives and content
- Teaching: scaffolding techniques and teaching tips
- Learning: checklist for language-sensitive teaching of non-language subjects, self-evaluation grids and case studies

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- Developing language awareness in subject classes: presentation at the 15th Annual Conference of EALTA, Bochum, Germany, 24 May 2018, Marita Härmälä, Eli Moe.

Publications

- Béliard Jérôme, « Comment augmenter la conscience linguistique dans les enseignements disciplinaires ? », in France Éducation international, *Courriel européen des langues, «25 ans d'éducation aux langues»*, Numéro 42, décembre 2019, p. 10.

- Härmälä Marita & Barkhanajyan Artashes (Finnish Education Evaluation Centre, Helsinki / National Polytechnic University of Armenia, Yerevan), « Les difficultés langagières des étudiants allophones en classes disciplinaires », *Revue française de linguistique appliquée*, Vol. XXIII-2, 2018, pp. 45-58, http://www.rfla-journal.org/de/infos_auteur/harmala

Comment from the project consultant:

One of the priorities of school systems is the role of the language of schooling in order to ensure high-quality and fair education for all. Building on a previous project, this project explored the linguistic dimensions of school disciplines (mathematics, history and science), especially for students speaking a different home language. A set of practices were identified to take these dimensions into account - identifying language needs, scaffolding techniques for students' language, using teaching materials and course plans tailored to 12–13-year-old learners; these will be the subject of follow-up in the new programme in order to implement these approaches in teacher education.

Project 5: Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages (e-lang)

www.ecml.at/elang

Project team: Christian Ollivier (coordinator) (France), Ulrike Szigeti (Austria), Catherine Jeanneau (Ireland), Katerina Zourou (Greece), Catherine Caws (Canada), Marie-Josée Hamel (Canada)

Project term: 2016-2018

Priority area(s) of Member states: Digital literacy

Brief description of project:

The e-lang project has developed, on the basis of the action-oriented approach of the CEFR, a pedagogical approach for the use of digital tools and resources in the context of language teaching and learning. The objective is to help learners become competent and autonomous language users and digital citizens. By focusing on "real-world" tasks, carried out online on participatory sites, the e-lang approach emphasizes the importance of social interactions in human communication and action. Teachers will be able to explore and familiarise themselves with this approach by using the available resources.

Target users: Teachers, teacher educators

Main outputs of project:

- A book *Towards a socio-interactional approach to foster autonomy in language learners and users*, which explores a possible evolution of the action-oriented approach and the tasks associated to it as presented in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). It introduces a socio-interactional approach to language teaching and learning and a new type of task to be implemented on the Web 2.0: real-world tasks.
- E-training platform (Moodle), a comprehensive guide which offers several modules to become familiar with the e-lang approach: didactic foundations of the project, real-world tasks, informal language learning, oral and written reception, oral and written production, oral interaction, as well as grammatical, lexical, phonological and intercultural competences
- A training guide for facilitating training sessions using the e-lang modules
- Webinar: Real world tasks, digital resources and autonomy, 12 October 2018

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- Caws, C., Hamel, M.J., Jeanneau, C., & Ollivier, C. (2018, mai 23). Journée d'étude et de formation e-lang. Université de La Réunion (France).
- Jeanneau, C., & Ollivier, C. (2019, janv. 29) Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages. Workshop held at the University of Limerick (Ireland) as part of the *National Forum for the enhancement of teaching and learning in Higher education.*
- Ollivier, C. (2019, juin 28). Les tâches ancrées dans la vie réelle : Des activités 2.0 pour mettre en œuvre une approche socio-interactionnelle en didactique des langues. Présenté au Congrès International Nebrija en Linguistique Appliquée, Madrid (Espagne).

Publications

- Ollivier, C. (2017). Im Leben verankerte Aufgaben für mehr Authentizität im Fremdsprachenunterricht. *Französisch Heute - Elektronische Interaktionen im Unterricht nutzbar machen*, *48*(2), 15-19.
- Jeanneau, C., & Ollivier, C. (2018). The e-lang Project: Towards a socio-interactional approach for language teaching and learning. *TEANGA, the Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics*, *25*, 154-169. https://journal.iraal.ie/index.php/teanga/article/view/59
- Ollivier, C. (2018). Le projet e-lang—Autonomie et ressources numériques. Courriel européen des langues, (41), 3-4. http://www.ciep.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/courriel-europeen-des-langues-novembre-2018.pdf

Comment from the project consultant:

This project takes an innovative approach to digital literacy in that it focuses on the acquisition of foreign languages in authentic interactions facilitated by technology and carried out through tasks rooted in reality. Of particular relevance in today's environment where distance education has become unavoidable, the project provides a theoretically sound educational framework (inspired by the conceptual part of the CEFR) and numerous resources that aim to train teachers in digital literacy and effectively exemplify the proposed approach. The follow-up of this project in the new programme expands this topic and addresses digital citizenship.

Project 6: Guide to teacher competences for languages in education

www.ecml.at/guidetoteachercompetences

Project team: Lukas Bleichenbacher (coordinator) (Switzerland), Anna Schröder-Sura (Gemany), Francis Goullier (France), Richard Rossner (United Kingdom)

Project term: 2016-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Language teacher competences and the CEFR

Brief description of project:

The aim of this project, and accompanying resources platform, was to provide an overview of frameworks and descriptions of language teacher competences which have been developed in recent years by international bodies or for use in specific national contexts. The platform enables users to quickly familiarise themselves with a significant number of these instruments and to examine more closely those that are potentially useful to them. In developing the resources platform, a key focus was to examine and to raise users' awareness of the ways in which initial and in-service teacher education contribute to the fundamental aims and values of the Council of Europe.

Target users: teacher educators and those developing teacher education programmes

Main outputs of project:

- A catalogue of frameworks and instruments for teacher competences
- Instruments in practice: practical examples of how various instruments in the 'Catalogue of instruments' can be used through fictitious vignettes and suggestions, as well as examples of ways in which teacher educators and teachers in different countries have used them

- A taxonomy of categories of teacher competences for languages in education, which consider the commonalities of relevant teacher competences across different disciplines including foreign languages, languages of schooling, subject teaching
- A summary of the project team's work on distilling from the frameworks and instruments reviewed the key areas of competence related to language teaching and languages in education
- A webinar, 'Towards a common resource', in which the team presents their approach to a number of the project's key questions (see project website)

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- 'Quel cadre de référence pour la formation des enseignants aux approches plurielles des langues et des cultures ? A. Andrade, M. Candelier, M. De Carlo, A. Schröder Sura. Congrès EDiLiC, Varsovie, Pologne, juillet 2017.
- 'Towards a Common European Framework of Reference for Language Teachers'. L. Bleichenbacher, R. Rossner. Eaquals International Conference, Prague, Czech Republic. April 2018.
- Plurale Ansätze in der ersten und dritten Phase der Lehrerbildung – Ausgewählte Ergebnisse mehrerer Fragebogenstudien und Perspektiven'. S. Melo-Pfeifer und A. Schröder Sura. 36. Romanistentag, Kassel, Deutschland. September 2019

Publications

- Bolitho, R. and Rossner, R. (2020). *Language Education in A Changing World – Challenges and Opportunities*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Bleichenbacher, L., Goullier, F., & Rossner, R. (2019). Le guide des compétences enseignantes pour les langues dans l'éducation. *Courriel européen des langues* 42, 9-10.
- Candelier, M. & Schröder-Sura, A. (2020). Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik und Kompetenzen von Lehrenden – Einige Ausbildungsangebote im Vergleich. In: Hülsmann, Ch., Ollivier, Ch. & Strasser M. (Hrsg.). Unter Mitarbeit von T. Bogensperger. *Lehr- und Lernkompetenzen für die Interkomprehension. Perspektiven für die mehrsprachige Bildung*. Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 141-158.

Comment from the project consultant:

Focusing on initial and continuing teacher education, an essential element for fostering innovation in language teaching and learning, this project lists and classifies the many tools (framework, catalogues, documents) that describe professional competences of language teachers which are available internationally. Presented on a platform which facilitates access to and clarifies these tools, it is highly useful for teacher educators and institutions. A variety of examples and contexts of use of these tools illustrate possible uses. A final document brings together categories of teachers' competences into a taxonomy which serves for reflection at a European level.

Project 7: Inspiring language learning in the early years (ILLEY)

www.ecml.at/inspiringearlylearning

Project team: Flore Schank (coordinator) (Luxembourg), Déirdre Kirwan (Ireland), Dana Musilova (Czech Republic), Ingeborg Birnie (United Kingdom), Jakob Patekar (Croatia)

Project term: 2017-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Early language learning

Brief description of project:

This project aimed to help teachers and other educators prepare young children to successfully face the challenges of a culturally and linguistically diverse world. It provides them with learning and teaching resources and strategies which take existing linguistic repertoires into account in order to (further) develop the linguistic and intercultural competences of both learners and educators. Based on research evidence, the project responds to the question "What makes language learning inspiring for young children?". Core thoughts on language learning along with practical examples are presented on the website.

Target users: Pre-primary and primary teachers, as well as teacher trainers and those involved in both initial and continuing professional development

Main outputs of project:

- Six guiding principles for early language learning
- Inspiring stories about language learning in different contexts
- Resources and practical examples for inspiring language learning
- A 'myth or fact' quiz, FAQs
- Reading recommendations on the benefits, for young children, of learning languages

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- *Multilingual and Multicultural Learning- Policies and Practices*, Prague, Charles Univerzity, 14-15 December 2019
- *Challenges and possibilities in multilingual Early Childhood Education*, Tallin University, 25-26 September 2019
- *ILLEY - Inspiring Language learning in the Early Years and its implications for the implementation of 1 + 2 in Scotland*, Language Strategic Implementation Group (Scotland) , 21 January 2020

Publications

- Kirwan, D. (2019). ILLEY – Inspiring Language Learning in the Early Years: A tool for learning developed by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). *Leadership*. Issue 110/September 2019 p. 32. https://www.ippn.ie/index.php/supports/leadership/2019-2020
- Kirwan, D. (2019). ILLEY – Inspiring Language Learning in the Early Years : A new website from the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) *In Touch*. Issue 186/April 2019 pp.52,53. https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2019/06/InTouch_April2019.pdf

Comment from the project consultant:

The project team worked on the theme of "Inspiring language learning in the early years - why it matters and what it looks like for children aged 3 to 12". It sought "to provide resources and strategies which take linguistic repertoires into account to develop the linguistic and intercultural competences of learners and educators." The emphasis is on holistic, meaningful learning in which language development as part of social and intellectual growth. The success of the project is illustrated by the way in which it has managed to combine clear, accessible theory and principles with very practical and usable resources.

Project 8: Language for work: tools for professional development

www.ecml.at/Languageforwork2

Project team: Matilde Grünhage-Monetti (coordinator) Germany, Alexander Braddell (United Kingdom), Christophe Portefin (France), Kerstin Sjösvärd (Sweden)

Project term: 2016-2018

Priority area(s) of Member states: Communities of practice

Brief description of project:

This project fosters professional development in the field of work-related majority language learning for adult migrants and ethnic minorities. It has created tools and resources to support the professional development of teachers, teacher educators and other practitioners in this field. It built on and made use of the European learning network created by a previous ECML project, Language for Work – A European learning network for professionals supporting work-related second language development (2012-15),and aimed to make new approaches accessible to practitioners involved in work-related majority language learning. It created a professional development framework to help teachers implement these new approaches.

Target users: teachers of adult learners, teacher educators, policymakers, researchers from the field of vocational learning and skills

Main outputs of project:

- A resource bank with practical tools, research and policy material
- Competences for professionals supporting work-related language learning
- 35 examples of practice including instruction, e-learning, peer learning, coaching
- 2 "quick guides" in pdf format available in a wide range of languages: "How to help adult migrants develop work-related language skills"; "Communicating with migrants - Guide for staff in job centres and public services", available in Bulgarian, Croatian, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Gaelic, Italian, Romanian, Russian, Slovene, Slovakian, Swedish
- A networking platform to help professionals interested in work-related language learning share expertise and develop practice

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- 'Language for Work: a European answer to a global challenge –A network built on research and practice' (online lecture), Kerstin Sjösvärd**,** Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice (ALAPP), Trondheim, Norway, 16.09.2020
- 'New initiatives in Europe to support work-related language learning by low-skilled migrants: lessons for policy and practice' (plenary lecture), Matilde Grünhage-Monetti, Language and the UN, Language, the Sustainable Development Goals, and Vulnerable Population, New York, USA, 11.05. 2017.
- 'Language for Work – New approaches to work-related language learning' (plenary lecture), Alexander Braddell, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum, and Refugees, 'Integration Working Group Meeting – Language and Integration', Geneva, Switzerland, 16.05.2017

Publications

- Braddell, A., Grünhage-Monetti, M., Portefin C., and Sjösvärd, K. (2019). Aus der Praxis: Deutsch für die Arbeit – Ein Wegweiser mit praktischen Tipps, um erwachsene Zugewanderte beim Lernen der deutschen Sprache für die Arbeit zu unterstützen. In: Stein, M., Steenkamp, D., Weingraber, S. & Zimmer, V. (Hrsg.): *Ankommen – Willkommen? Flucht, Migration im Spiegel aktueller Kontroversen.* Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt Verlag: 412-428.
  Braddell, A. and Grünhage-Monetti, M. (a cura di) (2018). *Lingua e lavoro*. Torino: Loescher. http://www.erasmusplus.it/i-vincitori-del-label-europeo-delle-lingue-2018-per-il-settore-vet/ (The book was awarded the European Label for Languages /VET 2018.)
- Grünhage-Monetti, M. and Braddell, A. (2017). Integration … needs language, the language of the workplace: The contribution of work-related second language learning to the integration of adult migrants. In Beacco, J-C., Krumm, H-J., Little, D. and Thalgott, P. (eds) (2017), *The Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants, Some lessons from research / L'intégration linguistique des migrants adultes, Les enseignements de la recherche.* Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton / Council of Europe. https://rm.coe.int/the-linguistic-integration-of-adult-migrants-lessons-from-research-l-i/168070a67f

Comment from the project consultant:

This project was a continuation of a previous project on the same topic of Languages for Work, with an emphasis on how to help teachers meet the language needs of migrants and with providing guidance and advice to employers. The major success of the project is its outreach to the world of work. It successfully maintained and expanded the network created in the first project and created guides for employers and government agencies, as well as conducting seminars with employers, civil servants and trade unions. The relevance of these is attested by their translation into 16 languages.

Project 9: Learning environments where modern languages flourish (EOL)

www.ecml.at/Learningenvironments

Project team: Jonas Erin (coordinator) France, Lea Štiberc (Slovenia), Silvia Minardi (Italy), Kristin Brogan (Ireland)

Project term: 2016-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Attractive and effective foreign language learning; languages of schooling

Brief description of project:

By fostering learning environments where modern languages flourish, this project aimed to place languages at the heart of developments in education policy. Taking an approach which combined cultural aspects, structural conditions and personal factors it sought to provide insights into how learning environments can influence language learning. Its holistic perspective embraces all fields and levels of education and sought to enable key actors to develop sustainable connections across all learning environments.

Target users: teachers and teacher-trainers, also headmasters, inspectors and decision-makers

Main outputs of project:

The EOL website presents holistic pathways for individual classes and for schools to set up learning environments which can release educational potential, for and through languages. It includes:

- EOL matrix – a dynamic tool to create a language friendly learning environment in schools
- Moodle online professional development course
- Examples from EOL partner schools which can easily be transferred to other contexts
- Research within EOL

Outreach – examples:

Presentations

- Kristin Brogan disseminated a printed version of the EOL brochure during all EU project partner meetings. www.ittralee.ie/euprojects
- "Des environnements d'apprentissage optimisés pour et par les langues – Environnements et stratégies pour optimiser l'apprentissage du français », Présentation du projet EOL lors de la journée pédagogique des professeurs de français, Copenhague (9.11.2018)
- "La didattica delle lingue tra vecchi problemi e nuovi strumenti" (plénière), conférence organisée par Ufficio Scolastico Regionale Lombardia à Milan: "Il docente di lingua straniera nel 21° secolo. Quali nuove sfide?" à l'Institut Français de Milan, avec les représentants des instituts (British Council, Goethe Institut, IF, Cervantes); le 30 janvier 2020.

Publication

- Adaptation de l'outil « demOcRACY » issu du projet EOL dans les ressources pour le co-enseignement langues + discipline technologique https://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/ETLV/14/7/RA19_Lycee_Techno_ETLV_STI2D_1reTle_scientifiques_strategies_communication_orale_(disqueEOL)_V1_1171147.pdf

Comment from the project consultant:

Helping schools implement comprehensive language policies to create environments conducive to language learning was the general aim of this innovative project. With a considerable number of resources - of great variety and high quality - the project presents an approach which is holistic and original, dynamic and diverse. It enables schools to take into account organizational aspects and collaboration among educational teams in order to arrive at a unified language policy. A Training and consultancy event in the new programme will train actors in the field in the use of resources.

Project 10: Promoting excellence in sign language instruction (PROSIGN)

www.ecml.at/Pro-Sign2

Project team: Christian Rathmann (coordinator) (Germany), Tobias Haug (Switzerland), Lorraine Leeson (Ireland), Beppie van den Bogaerde (Netherlands)

Project term: 2016-2019

Priority area(s) of Member states: Inclusive approaches

Brief description of project:

Building on a previous ECML project 'Sign languages and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*', this project integrates sign language education into Council of Europe developments in language education, especially the *Common European Framework of References* (CEFR). Highlights are an adaptation of the CEFR levels to sign languages, a model of a signed version of the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP) and approaches to assessment in this field. All information is available in International Sign and in English.

Target users: sign language teacher educators and curriculum developers for sign language instruction, as well as teachers and learners of a sign language

Main outputs of project:

- an assessment guide with test examples for classroom based and other types of testing
- a *European language portfolio* (ELP) for sign languages learners
- a list of teacher competences and curriculum guidelines for teacher training
- sign language proficiency levels and background information about the CEFR

Outreach – examples:

Publications

- Hreinsdóttir Júla (2017), Interview on the Pro-Sign project and the Icelandic translation of the Pro-Sign publication. Published in Icelandic in the e-review "Málfríður" of STÍL (Association of Language Teachers in Iceland).
  http://skolavardan.is/malfridur/Samevropskur-tungumalarammi-fyrir-taknmal
- Leeson Lorraine and van den Bogaerde Beppie (2020), "(What we don't know about) Sign Languages in Higher Education in Europe: Mapping Policy and Practice to an analytical framework", in Darquennes Jeroen and du Plessis Theo, *Language diversity management in higher education*, *Sociolinguistica*, [vol. 34](vol. 34), no. 1, De Gruyter, p. 31-56, https://doi.org/10.1515/soci-2020-0004.

- Rathmann Christian, van den Bogaerde Beppie, Haug Tobias, Leeson Lorraine (2015), "The Common European Framework of Reference and Signed Languages: Results of the ProSign: Signed Languages for Professional Purposes project", *EFSLI Newsletter*, Summer edition July 2015, p. 12-13.

Comment from the project consultant:

The two ProSign projects have had a great impact in raising awareness of issues related to sign language education and integrating it into mainstream language education. An important aspect has been the creation of a version of the CEFR for sign languages and its inclusion of sign language descriptors in the 2020 revision of the CEFR Companion Volume. Pedagogic resources have been created to enhance sign language education and the professional development of sign language educators and interpreters. The comprehensive range of resources created in the project includes a version of the European Language Portfolio for deaf students and a guide to the assessment of communicative skills.

Conclusion

It will be seen from the above entries that projects which comprised the programme *Languages at the heart of learning* have provided a wealth of resources and have had a considerable outreach among language professionals. Resources include:

- Background information on project themes
- Practical guides/guiding principles/guidelines for teacher education and teachers
- Activities for teacher development/training modules
- Practical resources – examples of modules, lesson plans and activities for use in class
- Matrices, grids and checklists for analysing educational scenarios
- Instances of promising practice/inspiring stories showing the resources in use
- Surveys/self-evaluation/quizzes and games
- Videos and webinars
- Recommended reading lists

The activities embrace a broad range of target groups: while the majority of projects focus on language teachers and teacher educators, other groups addressed are researchers, curriculum developers, decision/policy makers, head teachers, subject teachers and parents.

In chapter six further consideration will be given to qualitative aspects of the projects, when an evaluation of outcomes and impacts of the ECML programme as a whole will be discussed.

6. Findings of the evaluation surveys

The previous two chapters described the outputs and quantified the outreach of the activities which comprised the programme *Languages at the heart of learning*. The focus of this chapter is the various surveys carried out by the ECML to evaluate both specific activities and the programme as a whole. The qualitative evaluation undertaken draws on two different types of data: responses from post-event surveys carried out by the ECML and data resulting from surveys carried out by National Authorities in Member states.

ECML's post-event evaluation

The analysed data is based on three types of survey conducted by the ECML among event participants. These were:

- post-event survey, project workshops
- post-event survey Training and consultancy (TaC) events
- 6-month impact survey, project workshops and network meetings

The first two surveys were distributed to participants in the final session of workshop or TaCs. In the case of the 6-month survey, participants had time to incorporate into their responses their experiences of engaging with the project and making use of its resources in their respective educational context.

Programme evaluation survey in Member states

This survey was distributed to National Authorities – Governing Board members, National Contact Points and Nominating Authorities – 12 months after the completion of the programme. Its overall aims were to gather evidence, on the one hand, on whether and how the programme has fed into and impacted on national policies and reform processes in Member states and, on the other, to document how the events organised and resources developed in the framework of ECML projects and Training and consultancy activities have supported the work of language professionals at a local level. National Authorities were asked to cooperate in completing the survey and to submit together a single survey for each member state. In addition, it was suggested that they might gather information from language professionals working in their country: local experts and practitioners such as teacher educators, researchers, teachers, possibly including former project team members and workshop participants, local organisers of TaC events etc. The survey was completed by representatives from National Authorities in 26 of the 33 Member states of the ECML, with all three National Authority instances well represented.

Criteria for analysing the evaluation surveys

Some questions in the surveys took the form of closed (Likert scale) questions, which provided quantitative data; however, the majority consisted of, or included, open-ended questions, which yielded a wide range of insights from language professionals concerning the ECML programme.

Whereas some of the questions aimed to gather specific feedback on the ten projects carried out between 2016 and 2019 or on the Training and consultancy events offered by the ECML during that period, other questions in the survey for National Authorities related to the ECML programme as a whole.

The focus of all evaluations was on **processes** – personal, social, educational and political - which were fostered among language professionals in the course of ECML's projects and activities at a personal, institutional or national level. These processes were analysed and evaluated according to the four criteria referred to in the Introduction to this report: **relevance** of themes and outputs, **quality** and **usefulness** of resources, **outreach** of activities, **outcomes** of the programme in Member states.

Results of the evaluation survey

At the conclusion of all project-related and TaC events, participants were asked to make a general evaluation of the event using a Likert scale. The results of all events were as follows:

Table 1: General evaluation of events

	ECML workshops	TaCs
1. I am fully satisfied with the event.	52.00%	54.95%
2. I am satisfied with the event.	41.29%	36.09%
3. I am partially satisfied with the event.	5.9%	8.47%

4. I am not at all satisfied with the event	0.8%	0.48%

These findings show that the general level of satisfaction at events is high: responses in the categories 'fully satisfied' or 'satisfied' amounted to 95.87% for workshops and 91.05% for TaCs, suggesting that the combination of themes, teams, content and organisation of events achieved wide acceptance among participants. While this general evaluation gives a useful snapshot, in order to understand what factors comprise this 'satisfaction', it is necessary to examine the survey data according to the categories referred to above.

Relevance of themes, activities and project outputs

Since the themes of the programme *Languages at the heart of learning* were selected on the basis of priorities identified by national authorities, it could be assumed that the topics of the ECML events would have a high level of relevance as far as decision makers were concerned. The question remained, however, whether these themes were considered relevant by language practitioners – teacher educators, teachers etc. - attending ECML events. This was the focus of the following question:

Table 2:
ECML event question: I think this event is relevant for my country as it addresses current needs in language education.
TaC question: I am convinced that learners in my country can benefit from the implementation of the presented approaches and materials.
(The wording of the question differed in the two surveys)

	ECML workshops	TaCs
Strongly agree	47.71%	53.67%
Agree	49.36%	43.46%
Disagree	1.72%	2.07%
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0.18%

The above data clearly indicate not only that the national priorities survey was accurate in identifying relevant themes but also that the selection of projects was highly appropriate. As expected, the 'strongly agree' category is slightly higher among TaC participants since the topic of TaCs was specifically requested by the member state in which they took place.

Question three of the NA survey looked at two aspects of relevance: a) whether projects supported national priorities and reform processes, b) whether they were relevant for language professionals.

Table 3: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Extremely	Quite a lot	To some extent	Very little
The project themes support the national priorities and reform processes in my country.	5 (19%)	19 (73%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)
The projects and their outputs are relevant for language professionals in my country	10 (40%)	13 (52%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)

It is interesting to note that the second question shows an even greater satisfaction, with 40% agreeing 'extremely'. This indicates that both the ECML and National Authorities very much have their 'finger on the pulse' of language professionals and have delivered a programme that corresponds to grassroot needs.

While the above questions concerned the projects as a whole, the following question sought feedback on specific projects: National Authority representatives were asked to select five projects which are

particularly relevant for language professionals in their context. The table shows the number of times a project was identified in the selection and the percentage of countries who selected this project:

Table 4: Choose up to five projects which are particularly relevant for language professionals in your context.

	No.	%
Action research communities for language teachers	11	42%
A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use	15	58%
A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling	10	38%
Developing language awareness in subject classes	12	46%
Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages	17	65%
Guide to teacher competences for languages in education	12	46%
Inspiring language learning in the early years	13	50%
Language for work: tools for professional development	8	30%
Learning environments where modern languages flourish	12	46%
Promoting excellence in sign language instruction	8	31%

It is interesting to note that all ten projects received multiple mentions from National Authorities, which suggests that the project topics catered for a range of different professional target groups and their needs. (Detailed feedback information on the quality and usefulness of specific projects will be found in the later discussions.)

A further question focused on Training and consultancy activities (TaCs). Whereas the projects which comprise the programme are available to participants in all Member states, in the case of TaCs, each member state selects specific topics relevant to their county. Respondents were asked to state which of the TaCs on offer had been selected and to explain why these topics were chosen.

Table 5: TaC topics chosen by Member states

	No.	%
A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning (CLIL)	10	38%
Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials (FREPA)	7	27%
Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility (PluriMobil)	4	15%
Quality assurance in language and citizenship courses (Adult migrants)	0	0%
Quality education in Romani for Europe (QualiRom)	4	15%
Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)	15	58%
Supporting local networks in using an electronic European Language Portfolio	2	8%
Supporting multilingual classrooms (Young migrants)	12	46%
Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning (ICT-REV)	11	42%
Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)	2	8%

It should be pointed out that the above table shows the number of events referred to in the 26 survey responses, not the number of times a TaC event was held. As stated in section three of the evaluation report, more than 130 TaC events were held during the four years of the *Languages at the heart of learning* programme.

In addition to listing those TaCs selected, respondents were asked in an open-ended question why these themes had been chosen. The reasons stated revealed several communalities among Member states, summarised below.

One set of reasons for the choice of a specific TaC event, highlighted by several respondents, was that its topic and resources provided support for key aspects of current language education policies and practices in a member state. Some of these related to developments focusing on **national language policies**, such as representing priorities in a national strategy or the role of the topic in national curricula reforms – for example, revision of state examinations (RELANG). Others reflected general **innovative trends in education** – promoting language learning from an early age or increasing use of ICT to support language learning (ICT-REV). A further aspect of relevance concerned **societal changes**; the Young Migrants TaC was considered 'highly relevant as our classrooms are increasingly diverse as regards the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds'. These backgrounds included 'newly arrived immigrants' – for example, in Sweden - as well as established communities who speak a different home language from the language of schooling – for example, in Estonia, where Russian-speaking students 'are increasingly choosing Estonian-medium schools.' A further TaC theme focused on a specific ethnic/linguistic group: students from Romani communities; these activities and resources aimed to foster both cultural awareness and language skills of learners.

Another common set of reasons for selecting a TaC activity was connected to the **practical value** of its activities. In these cases, the selection was promoted by the need for the training of teachers, the overall aim being to 'promote pedagogies' related to a specific topic. Some needs cited by respondents were the 'challenges faced in implementing CLIL' and the need for a 'methodology for integrated modern languages pedagogy'. At the core of these activities were 'training and practical resources'. This was the principal motivation of the request for the TaC ICT-REV: 'this workshop was requested with the aim to present several useful tools to teachers and equip them with skills of combining appropriate pedagogical principles and technology'. Other TaCs - E-ELP and EPOSTL - were selected to provide support for teacher educators in using portfolio approaches.

One positive feature of the TaC programme which several respondents referred to was the fact that events could be organised to target specific language professional groups, depending on the topic on offer, and thus provided **professional support**. Some of various target groups selected in one member state were 'teachers of languages and other subjects, teacher trainers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, policy and decision-makers'. In another, it was "heads of languages involved in mobility programmes". Bringing together professionals working at a similar level or in a similar area played an important role in facilitating cooperation and encouraging **networking** within these groups. For example, one of the reasons for choosing the CLIL topic was stated as 'to support and inspire the network of CLIL teachers in the Netherlands'. Another respondent reported that the Young Migrants TaC 'created the foundation for the cooperation among teachers of minorities in Albania'.

Although not specifically asked about the **outcomes** of the TaCs in this question, several respondents added comments on this important aspect. One said that 'the training offered and the materials of the PluriMobil project were of great practical value'; another: 'the activity helped raise awareness of the benefits a multilingual classroom helps to provide'; a further comment, 'it assisted the life-long professional development of language teachers implementing a plurilingual approach'.

Whilst this survey question focused on the contribution of the TaC events, some respondents took the opportunity to comment on support measures that Member states themselves can initiate in order to maximise the effectiveness and sustainability of the TaC activities held in their country. In several countries, TaCs are not seen as one-off events but form part of a coherent series of activities. One model from Denmark provides a series of TaC-related measures: a) a pre-workshop preparatory activity, such as on online survey, to align the needs and expectations of participants to the workshop; b) the workshop with ECML experts, preceded by discussion of aspects such as participants' experiences and needs; c) a post-event, follow-up activity such as an online seminar, to establish a national network of professionals; d) further development via locally initiated projects, financially supported by the Danish National Centre for Foreign Languages. Similarly, the Slovene respondent listed a variety of support measures, including national workshops, piloting and implementation in schools of materials, collection of examples of good practice.

Project outputs – quality and usefulness

The next criterion extends beyond relevance and adds a practical element: whether practitioners can make use of the resources developed. Participants at both project workshops and TaCs were asked to comment on this aspect.

Table 6: The presented approaches and materials are useful for my work.

	ECML workshops	TaCs
Strongly agree	40.36%	51.15%
Agree	55.50%	44.07%
Disagree	3.06%	3.47%
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0.44%

It is interesting that 'strongly agree' figures more strongly among TaC participants. This might be explained by the fact that project workshops participants were evaluating what was in most cases work-in-progress since projects were still in the process of development, whereas in TaCs participants were evaluating a finished product.

Whereas respondents to the post-event surveys were evaluating a specific project, the questions posed in the relevant section of the NA survey, focused on the outputs of the ten projects which comprised the programme *Languages at the Heart of Learning.* To answer these questions required respondents (National Authority representatives and language professionals with whom they consulted) to familiarise themselves with the resources provided by each project and to evaluate them. The first question related to the projects as a whole.

Table 7: Indicate your degree of satisfaction with the quality of the project resources as a whole.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Undecided
How satisfied are you with the quality of the project resources?	16 (62%)	10 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The high level of satisfaction evidenced in the above table is elucidated in the comments which respondents were invited to submit on the quality of resources, an offer taken up in ten cases. The high degree of satisfaction is summarised succinctly in the general comment: 'The project resources are of good quality and they are research-based'. Four respondents referred to the **practical usefulness** of the resources; for example, 'a lot of practical information; wide range of practical tools which can be used in the classroom'. A further positive aspect mentioned was the **range of resources** provided on the websites - 'ECML project outcomes offer a broad range of approaches and resources that are different in complexity and take into account different user-groups' - as well as the **content of the resources** on offer: 'Free access to videos and webinars expands the scope of projects.'

Several comments referred to the **structure of the programme website** and means of accessing projects. Clearly, time and effort is required to 'acquaint oneself with the projects and navigate through the subsections on project pages'; however, several respondents expressed the view that the ECML website was successful in facilitating access to the project resources: 'a very clear layout of the provided resources; clear information how to use and implement them'. Concerning the coherence between projects of the website, whereas one respondent saw this as positive – 'links to other theme-related projects' another expressed reservations about the lack of an overview of projects and made the following suggestion: 'It might be useful, where possible, to offer comprehensive compendiums for each project (for instance, a pdf-file that, once downloaded, would take the user through the materials)'.

One point of criticism of the resources on offer that was made by four respondents concerned their complexity, believing that 'some resources are quite difficult to understand'. One stated that there was a 'need to make the project materials accessible to teachers in a simple way'. Another feared that the 'struggle to understand the content may sometimes be a deterrent'.

Having commented on the project resources as a whole, respondents were then given the opportunity to evaluate projects individually. The first stage of this project-specific evaluation entailed selecting five projects whose resources the respondent, and colleagues and language professionals with whom they consulted, found particularly useful. The results were as follows:

Table 8: Choose up to five projects whose resources are particularly useful for language professionals in your country.

	No.	%
A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use	9	35%
A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling	4	15%
Action research communities for language teachers	7	27%
Developing language awareness in subject classes	9	35%
Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages	15	58%
Guide to teacher competences for languages in education	5	19%
Inspiring language learning in the early years	12	46%
Language for work: tools for professional development	8	31%
Learning environments where modern languages flourish	9	35%
Promoting excellence in sign language instruction	6	23%

It should be stressed that the raw scores in the table do not, as such, provide information on *how useful* a project is – it is not the case that the higher the number of responses, the more useful is the project. Various factors relating to the project topic might have played a role in the selection. For example, clearly a topic such as 'digital literacy' is 'useful' for a broad range of teaching contexts, whereas the 'usefulness' of topics such as 'sign language instruction' or 'language for work' is limited to specific sectors of language education.

As a supplementary, open-ended question, respondents were asked to explain a) why the resources provided on the website are useful, b) what challenges professionals might face in using these resources.

Concerning the first part of this question – why the resources are useful - an analysis of the comments submitted shows that most fall into the categories referred to in discussions of the TaC activities. These are:

- contributing to **national language policies** and **reforms**
- in line with **innovative trends in education**
- reflecting **societal changes**
- providing activities which have **practical value**
- providing **professional support** for specific groups (teacher educators, testing experts, curriculum designers, teachers etc.)
- facilitating **networking**

As far as the challenges professionals might face in using these resources are concerned, respondents interpreted this topic in two different ways. Some respondents referred to challenges arising from the nature of the project resources – their design, accessibility, usefulness etc., their comments thus being evaluative. Other respondents referred to general challenges, not arising from the resources as such but connected to the topic of the project; for example, the need for the provision of teacher education

in connection with innovative approaches or better technical support for teachers when incorporating digital media.

In the following, an illustrative selection of comments made on each project will be presented, categorised according to the above headings. Most comments referred to the part of the question relating to why projects are useful since there were relatively few evaluative comments on challenges in implementing project resources. While it was beyond the scope of this report to include all of the very perceptive comments made by respondents, it is hoped that those selected will reflect the general tenor of views.

A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

> At policy level the project's resources can be capitalized upon within the curricular reform process for high school level (grades 9-12) and for subsequent design of national examinations.

Providing professional support:

> The resources have been the main support for preparing the new competency-based curriculum for languages, for training teachers, designing tests and national exams.

> The resources provide a clear framework and reference point for policy makers, teacher trainers and teachers alike as they demonstrate a practical approach to the CEFR.

Practical value:

> At practice level, the project offers very useful and concrete instruments and resources for implementing the CEFR in the teaching activities, from planning to teaching and assessment.

> The resources provided on the ECML website are useful because they offer easy access to all language teachers and other professionals to scientific and innovative sources and material, helping and inspiring them in their every-day demanding work.

Challenges:

> Making sure that they [users] tailor the vast amount of information covered by the resources to their needs.

A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

> The project and its resources relate directly to several issues in our national curricula, regarding the value base and conception of learning, as well as the key aim of the cross-cutting element of language education: all students need to be approached in language aware ways by all teachers and other relevant staff.

Practical value:

> This project will help schools to find out what knowledge the students have in L2 which will help the schools to work with the right tools.

Providing professional support:

A project that can be extremely supportive if school development is the concrete goal. The whole school approach that is developed in the project and the hands-on coordinator's package are extremely helpful and very well-thought through.

Challenges:

Problems, if any, may arise as the tool is rather complex with a variety of different elements – it's no quick fix.

Lack of support from directorates.

Action research communities for language teachers

In line with innovative trends in education:

In times when "evidence" is key in developing teaching practice, students, teachers and professional researchers can all profit from this approach.

Practical value:

The project website is very rich in practical examples and guidelines on how to work with an action-research approach step-by-step in the classroom. It is easy to navigate the website.

The project's resources are especially useful to teachers in order to assess and self-assess the teaching and learning process.

Providing professional support:

Project results can be very helpful when training instructors to research their own teaching with uncomplicated tools.

This project has been inspiring, and we invited experts working in this project for a Training and consultancy.

Approaches and resources are being referred to and used in teacher education programmes.

Facilitating networking:

The project can be capitalized upon to develop further initiatives in the field of AR at county and local level in order to address particular contextual needs.

Challenges:

The resources need to be presented within a seminar explaining the meaning and relevance of action research in order to help teachers grasp this concept and integrate it in their practice and avoid possible pitfalls.

Developing language awareness in subject classes

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

The [national] policy is to encourage subject teachers of national minority schools to contribute to students' linguistic proficiency.

In line with innovative trends in education:

> In the context of reform of education towards a more cross-curricular approach and project-based teaching, this resource is relevant as support to language teachers in adopting this approach.

> It is of high importance to support any language learning in each subject class not only in language classes. Teachers need to support students in acquiring their first language/language of schooling, as well as supporting foreign language learning.

Practical value:

> The resources include a series of examples on practical procedures to help professionals to identify students' language needs in your subjects, a list of different scaffolding techniques is provided.

Providing professional support:

> The clear step-by-step approach, however, is very helpful for users that approach this subject for the first time.

Challenges:

> Lack of experience in cooperation with other subject teachers and knowledge of curricula of other subjects can be a challenge in incorporating this approach to their teaching, but this resource can definitely showcase some methods and examples of materials that can be used.

> A challenge is to adopt the provided plans to the national curriculum of the respective subject.

Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

> Resources provided in ECML website alongside with other resources are being widely promoted by the Ministry and subordinated agencies to improve teachers' digital skills.

In line with innovative trends in education:

> Given that online resources, virtual classrooms and social networks are increasingly used in teaching in general, the products of the projects Digital Literacy for the teaching and learning of languages, e-ELP and ICT-REV help foreign language teaching in combining appropriate pedagogical principles and technology.

> Very relevant resources in the pandemic but were also before and will probably be after the COVID distant teaching and learning.

Practical value:

> Through real-world tasks, they [students] can engage in activities taking place beyond the classroom and learn to fully take into consideration the social interactions that determine action and communication.

Providing professional support:

A comprehensive guide for teachers on how to use a new approach to language learning and teaching and how to incorporate the use of digital tools.

The teachers will be able to explore and familiarise themselves with this approach by using the didactic framework presented in the publication.

Facilitating networking:

The project could be extended to other school disciplines.

Challenges:

The level of digital competence of teachers themselves can be a challenge for using these resources for their professional development and later for incorporating the approach in their work.

Challenges that the teachers and students might face are more related to the rather poor IT equipment.

Demands a lot of (theoretical) reading.

Professionals might find covering all the resources rather time-consuming. However, it does not diminish their value.

Guide to teacher competences for languages in education

Practical value:

Offers a comprehensive guide to teacher competences for language in education.

All these tools and dimensions of language teacher competences can be useful for the teacher self-assessment and strengthening their teacher competences and professional learning opportunities.

Providing professional support:

The range of materials caters for multiple needs - teacher trainers in order to reflect on the teacher-training programmes, novice teachers - in order to reflect on their training within a clear framework, practising teachers - in order to reflect on their current teaching practices.

The resources are useful in designing teacher training activities, particularly within initial teacher training in order to improve and update the education provided to future language teachers.

Challenges:

Teachers might need support in recognizing and adapting the tool for the use in the context in which they work.

Inspiring language learning in the early years

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

Albania is trying to extend early language learning to pre-school children. The resources helped the working group in preparing the curriculum for this age group.

Very useful when from 2014/15 to 2017/18 we were integrating earlier start of foreign language learning in the Slovenian school system.

Practical value:

The project page has a great many practical materials that can easily be put to use (inspiring practice, treasure chest of activities).

Very practice-oriented, a box of ready-to-use tools very well chosen for the target group.

Resources provided on the ECML website can help young children to develop their linguistic and intercultural competences.

[Resources] take account of the linguistic repertoires of children – the different languages they encounter at home, at school and in society – so that they can engage successfully with linguistic and cultural diversity.

Providing professional support:

We just had a major shift in the provision of the compulsory 1st foreign language with all pupils now starting their studies from the 1st grade. The resources came just in time to support teachers and teacher educators in updating and renewing pedagogies.

Challenges:

The difficulty might be in transferring these materials to the national context where adaption is needed.

The challenge is how to help teachers of primary education to find and utilise the materials.

Language for work: tools for professional development

In line with innovative trends in education:

> A topical area of language education where the demand for relevant resources is only increasing.

Reflecting societal changes:

> This is a big topic for us. Being a small country, the work market abroad is quite attractive for many young adults. Preparing them for the working life in a foreign language makes a lot of sense.

Practical value:

> A quick guide to work-related language skills provided in many language versions* incl. Slovak provides practical support of linguistic integration of adult migrants.

Providing professional support:

> It is being distributed to specialists involved in workplace language learning. The use currently made of the quick guide is part of a larger set of activities at the Integration Foundation in Estonia.

> Resources provided on the ECML website are useful for fostering professional development in the field of work-related majority language learning for adult migrants and ethnic minorities.

Facilitating networking:

> The guide was translated into Slovene*, a questionnaire to identify the needs of employers and migrant employees in Slovenia was piloted last year, this year more respondents will be approached.

Challenges:

> Some parts of the tools/resources need to be adopted to the national context.

> The problem is: how do we engage the regular blue-collar workers who in practice are responsible for the linguistic guidance of the immigrants in their midst.

* Note: Currently 16 different language versions of the Quick Guide 'How to help adult migrants develop work-related language skills' are available.

Learning environments where modern languages flourish

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

> One of the priorities in the Danish National Strategy for Foreign Languages from 2017 is the elaboration of local foreign language policies/strategies in municipalities and educational institutions. We find the project inspiring, and we can see connections between the resources in the EOL project and this local priority.

Reflecting societal changes:

The number of children of different ethnic backgrounds increases in the Slovak Republic, that is why it is important to prepare schools for this process. Support of whole-school approach is provided within the project.

Practical value:

The project offers a wealth of tools that address a clear need: helping schools develop comprehensive approaches to their language offers with the understanding that language education is integrated, and languages are not isolated subjects.

The resources are underpinned by sound research findings & verified in impressive case studies.

Is a very concise and easy-to-implement approach to a more complex perspective of the learning environment.

Providing professional support:

Resources provided on the ECML website are useful because they present holistic pathways for individual classes and schools to set up learning environments. It can be useful because the website offers tools for the development of whole-school language projects to support and strengthen cooperation and professional development of all actors involved.

Thanks to TrEOL, institutions can have appropriate and fruitful discussions in order to improve the place of languages and thus maximize the educational potential.

Facilitating networking:

[The resources provide:] Online professional development courses - examples of EOL project partner schools - training courses.

Challenges:

The wealth of materials also poses a certain difficulty for potential users – working through the materials and having the time and skill to make the most use of them.

The difficulty here lies in the fact that the work must be done at the level of the whole institution and requires the investment and reflection of each one. The management of the facility must therefore manage the project so that positive changes can be generated. Individual approaches are not enough.

Promoting excellence in sign language instruction

Contributing to national language policies and reforms:

The [Slovene] Ministry of Education, Science and Sport established a working group which aim is to prepare an action plan for the integration of SSL into the school system. […] Information about the ECML web-site Promotion excellence in sign language instruction was given to all group members. The ECML document Teacher competencies for sign languages in education was downloaded and published together with other relevant documents for the use of the working group.

Practical value:

The translated descriptors have found use in the teaching and learning of Estonian sign language.

Providing professional support:

> Estonian sign language needs further support, including in terms of its instruction and assessment. The resources developed at the ECML as well as within the new Companion Volume can be helpful in this.

> The project is relevant for the special integrated education system in Romania and its results can be used to support both teachers and curriculum developers for sign language instruction in improving the quality of sign language teaching and learning by relating the process to CEFR.

> The project resources are guiding the working group made up of representatives of three Ministries and the Albanian National Associations of Deaf in preparing methodologies and supporting materials for school use.

> A big step has been taken towards a Czech sign language framework. We see it as necessary to support sign language in all possible ways so that it´s more 'tangible' and becomes part of our everyday lives.

Challenges:

> The difficulties that professionals might face mainly relate to the current lack of overlap between CEFR specialists and Estonian sign language specialists.

This section will conclude with two general comments made by National Authority representatives, which summarise the general tenor of many comments. The first relates to the usefulness of projects:

> The resources provided on the ECML website are useful because they offer easy access to all language teachers and other professionals to scientific and innovative sources and material, helping and inspiring them to their every-day demanding work.

The second, to a challenge that faces language professionals when making use of ECML project resources:

> A general challenge for all resources and projects' materials is the practicability and how to best adapt them to the local context/disseminate them locally. We can see ECML's resources as an inspiration, a view of how other professionals tackled challenges similar to the ones that we also have. There is, however, a need for further development, adaptation, sometimes translation/simplification if we want to ensure a wider usage in a local context.

Outreach of projects and TaCs

In their post-event questionnaire, participants both at project workshop and TaC were asked about their intentions to disseminate and promote the content and resources presented. The answers were as follows:

Table 9: This event highlighted quality aspects of language education that I will promote in my professional environment.

	ECML workshops	TaCs
Strongly agree	45.85%	47.51%
Agree	48.04%	46.90%
Disagree	4.18%	3.79%
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0.44%

However, these responses were purely predictive and expressed good intentions. For the evaluation of actual outreach, the responses from the 6-month evaluation are of more relevance, since they focused on the measures already taken by workshop participants in the period following an ECML event. In order to explore promotional measures further, three questions, each focusing on a different type of promotion, were included in the survey. The results are shown in table 10.

Table 10:
In my professional environment I am now promoting quality aspects of language education that were introduced at the event.
I have become more active in networking with the professional community.
I am more actively involved in reform processes in my professional environment.

	promoting quality aspects	active in networking	involved in reform processes
Strongly agree	39.30%	18.42%	25.24%
Agree	52.57%	59.64%	60.06%
Disagree	7.12%	18.58%	11.34%
Strongly disagree	0.31%	0.31%	0.31%

As would be expected, since this is a pre-requisite of participation at an ECML event, participants seem to have been very active in promoting quality aspects. The importance of promoting approaches in professional environments is illustrated in this comment made by a participant in the EOL project:

> "I presented the project results to the school community and the school administration. (…) The school head and teachers found the ideas from the ECML workshop interesting and stimulating. They underlined the fact that they raised their awareness of many factors which have direct and indirect impact on effective teaching/ learning processes."

There is ample evidence in participants' comments of networking at a national level. A participant of the ProSign project provided the following information:

> "I made a promotion video about ProSign and the ELP in our national sign language with subtitles, which was shared with and spread by our national sign language teachers' organization."

The fact that so many participants are 'involved in reform processes' can be seen as very positive, since it indicates that those participants selected by national nominating authorities to attend workshops not only have the potential to influence reform processes but in fact do so. A participant in the Language in subjects project reported:

> "I have informed the relevant stakeholders involved in the development of the curricula for Mathematics and History about the language descriptors that were prepared by the ECML and I have given them the relevant material for use in their own work."

The final question to be discussed provides a snapshot of the type of promotional outreach activities which workshop participants are engaged in (compare coordinators' examples of outreach in chapter five).

Table 11: If you have answered (strongly) agree to the above, which of the following (multiple answers possible)?

Activities undertaken	Percentage

I have informed a wider public on the project / event (conference presentation, journal article, information on a website, etc).	58.10%
I have made further contributions to the work of the project.	20.07%
I have integrated ideas learnt during the event into my work practice.	68.75%
I have promoted ideas learnt during the event to be integrated into language policies on a regional or national level.	27.17%
Other	12.26%

The above results provide an extremely positive picture of promotional measures undertaken by participants.

However, the six-months window which these questions cover, is a relatively short period to evaluate outreach. It should also be taken into account that, in the case of workshop questionnaires, most projects were still in the process of development. A fuller, and more reliable, picture of outreach measures emerges from the answers from respondents who completed the NA survey since, on the one hand, a period of at least 12 months had elapsed since the completion of projects and, on the other, answers referred not just to individual projects or events but to the whole spectrum of ECML activities.

The first - open-ended – question in the NA survey was directed to one specific National Authority representative, the National Contact Point (NCP): what measures have you taken to promote the programme '*Languages at the heart of learning*'? It is beyond the scope of this report to list the many examples of measures listed by NCPs. In the following, a short summary of types of measures will be given.

Many NCPs report a close cooperation with other institutions which have access to language professionals, and which are therefore in a position to provide an additional means of promoting the ECML programme. Several referred to universities, whose websites play an important role in promoting ECML projects and activities.

A particularly important role is played by cooperation with language teachers' associations, usually related to a specific foreign language – teachers of German, teachers of French etc. – who, in several Member states, publish information about the ECML programme on their websites or provide a platform for promoting ECML projects at national conferences.

NCPs further report targeting information at specific professional groups and fostering networks to promote the ECML programme; these operate on different levels. For example, NCPs may make use of networks of decision-makers, which may include ministry advisers, consultants, regional authorities, university departments etc. In several counties NCPs will draw on the expertise and experiences of participants and coordinators of ECML projects and TaCs.

The survey responses revealed a variety of means for publishing information about the ECML programme. In most countries, information relating to ECML matters is available through official websites of Ministries of Education or related institutions (national language institutions, research centres, regional education boards etc.). In some cases, dedicated website devoted to the ECML is available.

In addition, information is often sent by email to interested professional groups. This may consist of regular circulars, newsletters, distribution of the *European Language Gazette*, etc. or it may target specific aspects of the ECML programme: call for project proposals, announcement of the publication of project resources, advertising the European Day of Languages etc. Wide use is also made of social media, especially Facebook. Some Member states make use of a special journal which provides a focus on ECML matters.

NCPs reported organising, hosting or participating in a variety of ECML-related events. These included initiating training workshops, presentations at annual conferences held by national teachers' associations etc., providing support for professional development follow-up workshops held by participants of a TaC event, an important means of fostering peer networking among teachers.

While the previous question focused on measures taken by the NCP, the next question related to outreach measures taken by language professionals in the member state. Respondents were asked to state whether they had encountered any of the following measures:

Table 12: Outreach measures taken by language professionals relating to the projects of the programme

Outreach measures	Yes	No	I don't know
Information on projects or links to resources have been published on websites.	23 (88%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)
Professional development activities have been organised with information on project resources (workshops, webinars etc.).	23 (88%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)
Teachers' associations and/or other professional networks are referring to project resources.	21 (81%)	0 (0%)	5 (19%)
Articles on projects have appeared in journals, teacher magazines etc.	15 (60%)	3 (12%)	7 (28%)
Other (please specify in the box below)	see below		

Other measures taken by project participants included sending out materials produced in seminars to schoolteachers and, last but not least, implementing what had been learnt at workshops in their own educational setting.

In a further question, NCPs were requested to provide further details of measures taken by language professionals. Being for the most part based in ministries or other official institutions, NCPs were in a position to give information on measures that National Authorities had implemented. However, it was more difficult to provide details of activities that language professionals were engaged in. As one respondent pointed out: "we don't have a formal assessment of these activities or any tools to monitor the process". In some countries, however, a close monitoring of activities clearly does take place. The respondent from Ireland listed examples in all the categories of the above table; the Slovene respondent provided a long list of activities, which included training activities, articles and radio interviews.

Even in the absence of a formal monitoring process, all respondents were able to provide details of at least one of the measures listed in table 12. As far as websites which published information on ECML projects are concerned, these were mainly websites of language-specific foreign language teachers' associations or websites dedicated to language teachers. Two examples are the Foundation Tempus in Serbia (https://jezici.obrazovanje.rs) and Digital pe educred.ro (https://digital.educred.ro) in Romania.

Professional development events were largely initiated by participants or coordinators of ECML projects in a variety of ways:

> People who were nominated to participate in project workshops also disseminated information on specific projects – whether locally in their schools, at regional or national events for teachers, at their workplaces and in their networks (for example, teacher trainers at universities, specialist working in government agencies at their events etc.).

One respondent reported a large-scale dissemination project: "After the RELANG workshops, school advisors and University professors organized dissemination events for English, French, German, and Italian schoolteachers all over the country".

In conclusion, it is clear from the responses on promotion measures that a wide range of activities are undertaken both by NCPs and language professionals. It might be recommended that in future NCPs could provide a more structured monitoring of these various activities, which would no doubt facilitate further dissemination and contribute to the maximising of outreach.

Although the questions discussed above are not directly concerned with the evaluation of the ECML programme, clearly the number, nature and quality of outreach measures taken both by National Authorities and by language professionals who have been involved in ECML activities, or wish to take greater advantage of ECML resources, will have a bearing on the impact and uptake of the programme in a member state. It goes without saying, however, the outreach measures depend to a large extent on the resources available in a member state and the infrastructure which the NCP can call on to support this work.

Outcomes of projects and TaC events

The final factor to be discussed is that of outcomes - concrete evidence of how the ECML projects and TaCs have positively influenced the working lives of language professionals. Whilst it is relatively easy to document examples of promotional measures, it is far more difficult to measure and evaluate this aspect. On the one hand, the uptake and implementation of approaches is a long-term process – to quote one workshop participant, 'the benefits will be expected in the future'; on the other, evidence of impact is multi-faceted and often anecdotal.

The 6-month survey examined two aspects of professional competence:

Table 13:
I feel more competent to address current needs in language education in my country.
I am using approaches and materials discussed at the event.

	feel more competent	using approaches
Strongly agree	43.24%	28.74%
Agree	51.63%	56.55%
Disagree	2.96%	9.97%
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0.44%

As might be expected, the score for actually using approaches is lower than in the first category, reflecting the various challenges encountered by teachers when implementing innovation. A further open-ended question sought to document outcomes arising from participation in an ECML event: *If you have evidence that the presented approaches and materials benefit the learner please specify in the space below your findings.*

Some comments from participants were:

> *"Evidence from my own use of the approaches suggested by ILLEY are positive with regard to pupil engagement, motivation and achievement. The response from teachers and educators to whom I have presented ILLEY has been very positive. Increased insight on the part of teachers, teacher trainers can only benefit the pupils / students for whom they are responsible."*

> *"In the course of engaging teachers in action research projects, teachers collected questionnaires from students on the impact of learning vocabulary strategies. Students reported that spending time learning these strategies contributed to their learning and*

autonomy. Teachers also reported that they felt engaging in Action research contributed to their professional development which in turn benefits the learners."

The survey for National Authorities sought to examine two general areas of outcomes by means of open-ended questions. The first, concerned the influence of the programme on national reform processes; the second, its influence on language education.

In answer to the survey question 'Can you briefly outline any cases where the projects and TaCs of the ECML programme 2016-2019 have had, or are likely to have, an influence on reform processes in your country', most evidence of positive outcomes provided by respondents referred to TaC activities, rather than projects. No doubt, the main reason for this is that a relatively short time had elapsed between the completion of projects in 2019 and the distribution of the impact survey; the resources were therefore relatively new and the window for uptake small. TaCs, on the other hand, may have been held at an early stage of the 2016-2019 programme, allowing more time for dissemination of their results and resources; moreover, in most cases they represented a follow-up of projects and TaCs which were on offer in previous ECML programmes. As such, the potential for impact was far greater and indeed several examples were provided of how its themes had impacted on reform processes.

A further point should be made to explain why in the details of indicators of impact on national reform processes certain topics figure more strongly than others. This concerns the nature of the project topic and the resources provided. Clearly, a TaC topic such as RELANG, which provided a concrete set of tools for specific processes which are determined at national level (curriculum and examination design etc.) has a far greater potential to have a direct influence on national reform processes than most other themes, whose impact is more likely to be apparent in the university seminar room or in the language classroom.

Nevertheless, that fact that a considerable number of respondents from a variety of Member states referred to the contribution of RELANG is testimony to its quality and provides evidence that the project does not just have the potential to influence reform processes but has actually done so!

Several respondents confirm the positive role the RELANG activities have played in curricular reform, at national or school level. Two examples from Romania and Norway:

> The 2016 RELANG national seminar had a positive impact on the development and implementation of the new modern languages curriculum for gymnasium (grades 5-8). The coordinators of the modern languages working groups for curriculum development were among the participants of the seminar and the resources provided within the seminar as well as the activities carried out promoted and inspired curricular innovation. During the 10 ensuing months, the national curriculum for modern languages grades 5-8 was drafted, discussed, revised, completed according to the national methodology and then approved by the Ministry of Education.

> RELANG has had a decisive impact on the Norwegian system as foreign language education programmes now refer to the CEFR in the evaluation criteria. This addition had been requested by the teachers, but without success in the past. The CEFR is now recognized and integrated, which will facilitate a common understanding of the level expected of students during their education.

Another which was reported to have positively influenced curriculum design is the ECML project/TaC FREPA.

> Slovenia has launched the first phase of updating and redesigning the curriculum, language curriculum as well. Plurilingual and pluricultural competence figures among the aims and objectives of foreign language teaching and learning. FREPA descriptors will be used in the process of redesigning the FL curricula.

A further area of impact on national reform processes relates to high-stake examinations, with several respondents stating that RELANG had directly influenced national reforms. One commented:

> The project 'Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)' helped a lot in improving the structure of National Exams in foreign languages; increased the professional competences of item writers and test developers.

Whilst the above examples relate to specific instances of reform – curricula and examinations - other respondents referred to the impact of ECML activities in supporting general trends in language education; for example, a move towards placing greater emphasis on plurilingual education or increasing the offer of various CLIL approaches. It was added that 'ECML projects help us provide documents, resources and guides to better engage in this type of conversation and training'. Two respondents listed changing approaches in language education in her country, all of which receive support through ECML resources:

> There's a change in the approach to language education: Language is a tool not a final objective; learning processes are done through, rather than in a language; command of the language is assessed through particular skills and competences not just knowledge (CEFR).

> […] teachers´ digital literacy, curriculum revision and implementing more language awareness into it, raising the awareness of CEFR importance and the companion volume, the role of mediation in language teaching and learning.

The second area of outcomes on which the survey requested information concerned the influence on language education in general, both at the level of school language learning and of teacher education. The first, closed, question was: *Do you have evidence that the ECML projects and TaC events are having an impact on language education in your country? Possible indicators are listed below. Please tick the relevant box.*

Table 14: impact of ECML projects and TaC events in Member states:

	Yes	No	I don't know
Approaches and resources are being used in schools.	18 (72%)	1 (4%)	6 (24%)
Approaches and resources are being referred to/used in teacher education programmes.	19 (73%)	3 (12%)	4 (15%)
Other (please specify in the box below)	(see below)		

Despite the relatively short period of time between the completion of projects and the survey, a large majority of respondents confirmed the positive influence of ECML activities within their educational systems. Two open-ended question (15 and 16) further asked respondents to specify indicators of impact. A number of responses offered examples of outcomes resulting from specific projects or TaCs in both teacher education and in school settings, some of which are the following:

Inspiring language learning in the early years (ILLEY):

> The ILLEY project had a positive influence by putting plurilingualism on the agenda to support inclusive education at the primary school level.

> At our College, we have circulated the [ILLEY] materials for use in initial teacher education programmes and also with projects we work on with schools.

Learning environments where modern languages flourish (EOL):

The implementation of the EOL project in French high schools; Transfer of the EOL matrix to other fields: research and school innovation.

Action research communities for language teachers (ARC):

ARC resources are being used in language teacher education in Ireland.

One respondent reported that a variety of ECML project resources are used in teacher education: 'PEPELINO, FREPA and EPOSTL are used in pre-service teacher training'.

Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning (ICT-REV)

The Inventory of ICT Tools and Open Educational Resources has created a buzz in the particular context of the pandemic crisis. Many teachers needed this input to adapt their teaching to the new digital context. In addition, because the resources are innovative and motivating, they have been successful with language professionals. This resource has definitely had an impact on language teaching by facilitating access and showing the field of possibilities.

This final comment from a respondent indicates not only the usefulness but also the topicality of ECML resources. The trio of adjectives – "innovative", "motivating", "successful" – provide, in a nutshell, a fitting stamp of approval for these resources.

Additional comments

In the last evaluative question of the National Authorities survey, respondents were invited to submit any additional comments they might wish to make on the programme *Languages at the heart of learning*. Since in the course of the survey several opportunities had been given to give feedback on different aspects of the programme, only a few comments were submitted in this section. Two comments proposed improvements that could be made to themes offered by projects and TaCs.

The role of democracy as the absolute key element in language education could have been more prominent - let's keep on working for it.

Lack of projects dealing with foreign language teaching in vocational education and training, especially foreign languages and profession specific subjects (at the moment only general subjects like mathematics and history are dealt with).

Other respondents took the opportunity to summarise positive aspects of the ECML programme, already referred to in specific question of the survey.

A rich program covering all areas of language education. A holistic approach, sometimes general and reflective, sometimes concrete and inspiring that brings discussions, reflections and changes in practices.

The programme addresses themes that were and continue to be relevant in the national context. The materials used can assist language education specialists in Estonia and the opportunities to join workshops at the ECML and invite TaC events has broadened the understanding of international perspectives on language education, with the view of developing local practices further.

Concluding remarks on the survey results

The Evaluation Survey for National Authorities played a crucial role in supplementing and expanding on the information and data provided from workshop and TaC coordinators and participants in the

post-event questionnaires. By giving representatives of each member state the opportunity to give their individual voice to their experiences of and views on the programme *Languages at the Heart of Learning* it provided a range of national perspectives which gives valuable feedback on the programme and which will feed into the development of further ECML work. In addition, since it was conducted a year after the completion of the programme, National Authorities and language professionals who contributed to the survey were in a position to give a more comprehensive picture of outreach measures and a more informed assessment of outreach and outcomes than was available from data deriving from post-event questionnaires.

Finally, the ECML would like to express its thanks to the representatives from National Authorities and the language professionals who devoted a great deal of time and effort to completing the survey.

7. Conclusion: the impact of the ECML programme

This report has discussed the programme *Languages at the heart of learning* and provided evaluative indicators of its activities based on the criteria of the **relevance** of its themes and outputs for Member states, the **quality** and **usefulness** of its resources for teachers, teacher educators, curriculum designers etc., the **outreach** of its programme through dissemination measures and the **outcomes** for language professionals in the context of the overall mission and strategic objectives of the ECML. As stated in the introduction, these factors taken together provide evidence of the **impact** that the programme has had, and continues to have, in Member states, both at a national and international level. Put simply, if the themes are relevant for language professionals, who are provided with resources that are of high quality and which are of practical use, if the resources are made accessible to a wide range of potential users, who then incorporate approaches and resources into their professional life, then it can be said that the ECML programme has achieved a high degree of impact.

Chapter three showed that consultation processes with Member states prior to the programme concerning themes and choice of projects ensured a high degree of relevance for Member states. This was confirmed by language professionals participating in projects and TaCs in the results of the surveys presented in chapter six, which also stressed the usefulness of project resources. A further indication of relevance and usefulness of resources is the large number of requests for TaC events from Member states.

The considerable outreach of ECML activities as a whole was documented in quantitative terms in chapter four. In chapter five, examples of presentations and publications by project teams indicated their strong involvement make resources available to a wider audience. This is complemented by the many measures undertaken by project participants to promote content and resources, which makes an important contribution to increasing outreach.

The very positive outcomes of the projects and TaC events is evidenced in the statistical data of participants' responses in chapter six, which shows overwhelming approval of themes and content of projects and TaCs. The important role that ECML activities have played in developing the professional competences of participants is clearly apparent. The six-month impact survey also provides initial evidence of measures undertaken by project participants to foster what will hopefully be a strong, long-term impact of the programme.

The clearest and most comprehensive evidence of the positive impact of ECML projects and TaCs can also be found in chapter six, in which the findings of the survey carried out among National Authorities in Member states are summarised. These findings on the one hand enforce and confirm the evidence which was already apparent from the analysis of the questionnaires carried out among project and TaC coordinators and participants, but also provide a considerable bank of evidence of the high degree of relevance and usefulness of ECML activities within specific Member states. Extensive comments from national representatives indicate how the themes pursued by the ECML not only support national priorities but reflect innovative trends in education and societal changes in general. A wide range of examples indicate how project resources provide support to language professionals and are of considerable practical value. In addition, participation in the programme has proved an important means of encouraging networking between those involved in ECML activities and other language professionals such as teachers' associations and research institutions. Finally, ample evidence is provided of the positive impact that the ECML has at grassroot level both in schools and in teacher education institutions.

Clearly, success factors and challenges identified in the course of the evaluation can play an important role in guiding future ECML activities. Some of those identified are the following:

Success factors:
- Identifying themes important for Member states and selecting projects on this basis was an important aspect in ensuring the relevance of topics. Measures might be taken to ensure that a broad range of language professionals are consulted when planning activities.
- Those activities which responded to practical needs of teachers and teacher educators were considered particularly successful by language professionals. Future projects may wish to give closer consideration to this factor.

Challenges
- Ensuring that the work of the ECML is available to language professionals is essential to ensuring the effectiveness of the programme. Structures for disseminating the work of the ECML and maximising its influence within Member states may need further exploration.
- The wealth and, in some cases, the complexity of some of the tools and resources available on project websites would seem to require additional measures to be undertaken in Member states to make resources more accessible to language professionals, e.g. workshops in which resources are presented and measures on implementing and adapting resources to specific contexts suggested.