



# **NATIONAL REPORT**

## **ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL**

**ITALY**





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## ITALIAN NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL

### 1 Introduction

The aim of the present report is to give information about the implementation of the European Language Label in Italy.

Two different approaches have been used in this report.

Firstly, a top-down approach aiming to identify the national actions carried out in order to implement the European Language Label. This first part of the report includes: the identification of the national institutions in charge of the European Language Label in Italy, the description of the specific responsibilities assigned to each of those institutions, the national organization of the Label campaigns, the national priorities and the selection criteria, the statistics about awarded projects, the evaluation and the follow-up of some of the awarded projects.

Secondly, a bottom-up approach aiming to carry out a follow up of projects that were awarded the European Language Label in Italy. This second part of the report includes: the impact of the European Label on the awarded projects, the activities of dissemination and exploitation carried out by the awarded project promoters, the recommendations coming from the awarded project promoters in order to improve the European Language Label initiative.

### 2 The European Language Label in Italy

The European Language Label initiative in Italy is implemented in order to “*improve the quality of educational and training pathways and materials for learning of foreign languages*”<sup>1</sup>.

The national aims of the European Language Label are:

- encourage new initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning for vocational education and training purposes. In particular, the focus is on the promotion of experiences in which the knowledge and use of one or more foreign languages have provided a specific added value to people’s professionalism;
- stimulate the interest of policy makers, training organizations and citizens, towards lifelong language teaching and learning. The main focus is on information addressed to trainers and trainees, as well as to policy makers at all levels, on successful language learning initiatives existing in Italy in the field of vocational education and training;
- developing the professional skills of teachers and trainers;
- offering Italian schools the possibility to focus on innovative projects in the multilingualism field;
- promoting schools’ European visibility and the transnational sharing of best practices.

In Italy, the implementation of the European Language Label and the development of specific actions, in accordance with the EU general strategies, is delegated to two different National Agencies as integral part of their mission. The two Italian National Agencies are:

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<sup>1</sup> ISFOL (2007), *Valorizzare l’insegnamento e l’apprendimento linguistico*



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- ISFOL, National Agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme - Sectorial Programme Leonardo da Vinci.
- INDIRE, National Agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme - Sectorial Programmes Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Preparatory Visits.

ISFOL (*Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori*, Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers) is a national research center acting on behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and recognized by the European Commission. Created in 1972, ISFOL works in different fields (labour, education, social policies) in order to contribute to increase the employment rate, to develop skills of human resources, to improve social inclusion. ISFOL works in close cooperation with other national and local Public Bodies (State, Regions and Local Authorities). ISFOL includes the National Agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme – Sectorial Programme Leonardo da Vinci and it is also Reference Point for EuropPass. ISFOL has been delegated the management of the Community contribution necessary for the management of activities aimed at the promotion of the European Language Label, as well as of the applicants' selection and awarding.

The target sector ISFOL National Agency works with, as far as the awarding of the European Language Label is concerned are:

- Vocational Education and Training
- Higher Education (for initiatives related to the acquisition of vocational skills)
- Adult education (for initiatives related to the acquisition of vocational skills)

INDIRE (*Istituto Nazionale di Documentazione, Innovazione e Ricerca Educativa*, National Institute of Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research) was created in 2001. It aims at developing the processes of innovation and research in the education field. INDIRE carries out the following functions: educational research and pedagogical counseling, school staff training, support in the realization of national teaching measures, cooperation with Regions and local authorities. INDIRE includes the National Agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme – Sectorial Programmes Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig.

The target sector INDIRE National Agency works with, as far as the awarding of the European Language Label is concerned are:

- School Education
- Higher Education (for initiatives related to formal and informal higher education)
- Adult education (for initiatives related to formal and informal adult education)

The activities to be carried out by the two National Agencies in the framework of the European Language Label include:

- promotion, information and dissemination of the opportunities and experiences offered by the European Language Label
- organization and publication of calls for tender
- selection and awarding of candidatures
- organization of the award ceremony
- monitoring and valorization of projects that were awarded the European Language Label (e.g. publications, promotion of participation in national and international events of awarded projects, implementation of European databases of awarded projects, development of specific web sites for the European Language Label etc.)

The European Language Label, according to the Italian approach, is addressed to institutions who have developed innovative solutions for the promotion of language learning. Potential beneficiaries of the European Language Label include:

- local and regional organizations;
- trade-union associations;





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- employers associations (including chambers of commerce);
- vocational training organizations and centres (including language private schools);
- research centres;
- enterprises;
- universities;
- schools of any kind, public schools, private schools and officially recognized schools;
- volunteer organizations, non-profit organizations and ONG;
- other organizations active in the field of education and training.

### 3 The Label Campaigns

#### 3.1 Promotion

Among their activities, the National Agencies have to carry out a significant action of promotion, information and dissemination of the opportunities offered by the European Language Label. Different strategies have been used for this purpose:

- publication of information brochures, aiming at presenting the European Language Label. The brochures inform about the benefits offered by the European Language Label, inform about European policies on multilingualism and present some of the Italian projects that were awarded the European Language Label.
- publication of leaflets about the European Language Label. Their function is to provide general information about the objectives of the Label and to stimulate the submission of new candidatures. See, for example, the leaflet produced by ISFOL at: [http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd\\_label/dati/MATERIALI/depliant\\_it.pdf](http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd_label/dati/MATERIALI/depliant_it.pdf)
- publication of newsletters explaining all the activities carried out in order to realize the European Language Label within the national context. See, for example: [http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd\\_label/dati/newsletter.htm](http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd_label/dati/newsletter.htm)
- organization of seminars and conferences so as to disseminate the information about Italian projects and initiatives that were awarded the European Language Label. On the occasion of those informative events, the project promoters have the possibility to present each of their initiatives meet each other and to share their best practices.
- organization of fairs and best practices exhibitions for the presentation of Italian projects and initiatives that were awarded the European Language Label. For example, ISFOL organized in October 2008 a National Seminar on Best Practices in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme where a panel of projects that were awarded the European Language Label were presented: [http://www.programmallp.it/box\\_contenuto.php?id\\_cnt=495&id\\_from=1](http://www.programmallp.it/box_contenuto.php?id_cnt=495&id_from=1). Also, in October 2011 the Ministry of Education has organized a Fair of projects that were awarded the European Language Label: [http://www.labeleuropeolingue.it/it\\_web\\_tv.asp?idc=42](http://www.labeleuropeolingue.it/it_web_tv.asp?idc=42)
- publication of volumes and surveys. For example, Isfol, in cooperation with some experts in the education field, produced:
  - two volumes to valorize successful language teaching experiences. The first volume, entitled "Progettare la formazione linguistica con il Programma Leonardo da Vinci" ([http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd\\_label/dati/MATERIALI/pub\\_1.pdf](http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd_label/dati/MATERIALI/pub_1.pdf)) offers a complete background on the modern teaching practices, with a specific focus on: the knowledge of foreign languages in professional





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contexts, the quality of the projects, the production of innovative ideas in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. The second volume, entitled "Valorizzare le competenze linguistiche professionalizzanti" ([http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd\\_label/dati/MATERIALI/pub\\_2.pdf](http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd_label/dati/MATERIALI/pub_2.pdf)) has been published in 2006 with the main objective to examine new fields of application of language skills and to identify language teaching needs.

- The DVD entitled "The awarding of the 2010 European Label to the best experiences of language teaching and Learning in Italy" has the aim to promote the Italian experiences that were awarded the label in 2010. More information at: <http://www.labeleuropeo.it/premiazione/>
- The CD-Rom entitled "Ten Years with the European Language Label". More information at: [http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd\\_label/](http://www.labeleuropeo.it/cd_label/)

### 3.2 Calls for Tenders

The two National Agencies, launch every year two separate calls for tender for the European Language Label for each of the target sectors each National Agency works with. The deadline is usually at the beginning of June. The calls for tender provides information about the objectives of the Label, about the yearly European and national priorities, about the procedure for the presentation of the candidatures and provides guidance for the submission of the application form.

Both Calls for Tender every year are promoted through:

- presentation in public events organized and promoted by the National Agencies, together with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.
- publication on the websites of the following institutions: the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the National Agencies.
- Publication on the Lifelong Learning Programme web site managed by INDIRE National Agency: <http://www.programmallp.it/labeleuropeolingue/>

ISFOL National Agency, in particular, because its target sector is more difficult to reach, organize specific promotional activities including:

- sending of the documentation (call, application form, information brochures and leaflets) to a mailing-list of interested organizations;
- advertising on national press and on Internet search engines;
- production of Guidelines for Applicants to help candidates in the process for submitting the application form.
- publication on the Italian site of the European Language Label, created and managed by ISFOL: <http://www.labeleuropeo.it> and available both in Italian and English.

### 3.3 The selection of winning projects

The Italian National Agencies (ISFOL and INDIRE), which receive the proposals to be selected, have implemented a series of procedures aimed at guaranteeing an adequate assessment action:

- control of the eligibility criteria for the candidatures. This can be summarized in the two following steps: sending of the candidature by the deadline indicated in the call for tender; use of the candidature application form required;
- summoning of two Evaluation Committees appointed by each of the two National Agencies;
- organization and management, by each of the National Agencies of assessment days;
- drafting of the final minutes of the assessment session and of the list of the winning projects.

The Evaluation Committees, appointed by the National Agencies, represent the national expertise in the field of language teaching, learning and research. The Evaluation Committees also include representatives of the





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Cultural Institutes representing the languages most learnt in Italy: the British Institute, the Goethe Institute, the French Embassy and the Consejería de Educación of Spain.

### 3.4 The Awarding Ceremony

A winning projects awarding ceremony, is jointly promoted and organized by the two National Agencies in agreement with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education. The event takes place in Rome, yearly, in the second semester of the year. The objective of these events is to guarantee a full valorization and a greater impact of the experiences selected on the whole national territory, through:

- the official awarding of the selected projects
- the public presentation of the projects that received the award
- the promotion of networking among the awarded projects and their promoters.

## 4 Priorities

The European Commission proposes every year specific priorities for the European Language Label award . The yearly priorities aim to identify experiences that, for their specificity and for the results achieved, are clearly referred to a political and strategic framework for improving and promoting language teaching and learning.

For the 2012-2013 Campaign, the priorities defined by the European Commission are:

- language learning based on the new technologies
- multilingual classrooms

In relation to the first priority, *“technology influences many aspects of our lives, language learning included: computer and/or technology-assisted language learning and testing, blended language learning, virtual and distance learning have become very useful tools to teach and learn foreign languages efficiently. The creation and educational use of social networks also boosts the fostering of multilingual engagement and participation across boundaries, and represents a means to interact and to learn foreign languages. This innovative learning/teaching system should combine the inspiration and motivation of traditional classroom teaching and the flexibility of online or distance learning to create courses that are accessible and motivating for today's students, who develop their autonomy, interact by way of a computer with teachers "on the other side of the screen" and have fun in learning a foreign language”<sup>2</sup>.*

In relation to the multilingual classrooms, *“the phenomenon of multilingual classrooms has been constantly increasing. These classrooms are made up of students coming from different countries and not sharing a common mother tongue. Learners speak a variety of first languages, their behavior and cultures can be very different: this may create problems but can also be used as a focus of comparison and discussion. Herein lies the challenging task faced by teachers: they should adapt their teaching techniques in order to take this diversity into account and respect it, but focus on the main purpose, which is to provide learners with the best possible communication and grammar skills in the target language”<sup>3</sup>.*

The Italian Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education, in accordance with the objectives and the priorities selected by the European Commission, identified National Priorities that are relevant for the improvement of language learning in Italy.

For the 2012 Campaign, the national priorities in Italy for the ISFOL call for proposals:

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2011), European Label awarded to innovative projects in language teaching and learning

<sup>3</sup> Ibi



- foster language learning to enhance the insertion of youth in the labour market and for transnational mobility;
- foster language learning for the maintenance of employment and the progression of carrier of adult and people who are already inserted in the labour market;

For the 2012 Campaign, the national priorities in Italy for the INDIRE call for proposals are:

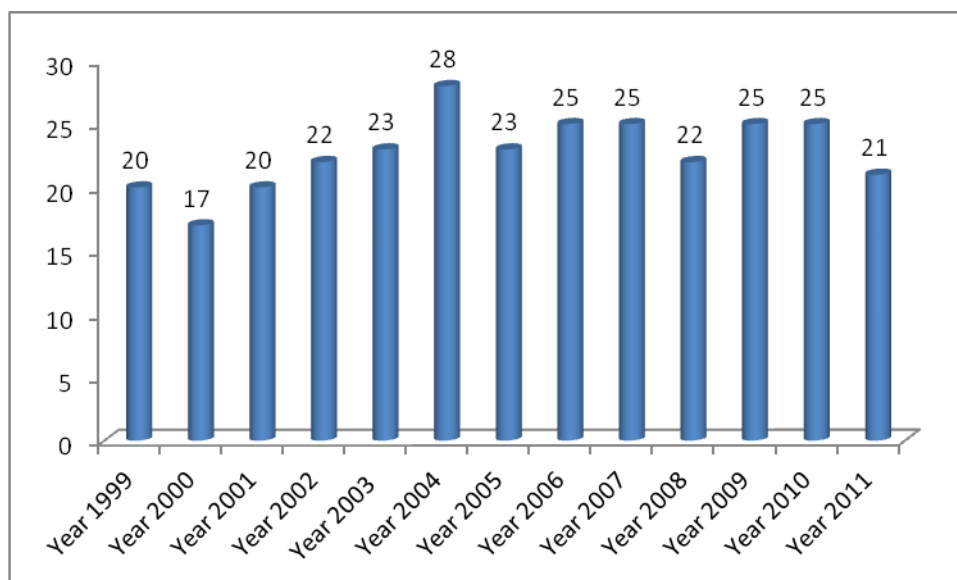
- employment of CLIL technologies;
- employment of foreign languages in order to improve real and virtual mobility;
- intergenerational dialogue in the field of teaching and learning foreign languages.

Selection criteria are also established. These criteria are fully consistent with the indications and the expectations set by the European Commission.

Selection criteria expect an awarded project to have the following characteristics: a comprehensive approach, provide a tangible improvement in the teaching and learning of foreign languages, motivate the students and the teachers, introduce previously unknown approaches to language learning, be adapted to Europe's linguistic diversity, be a source of inspiration for other projects.

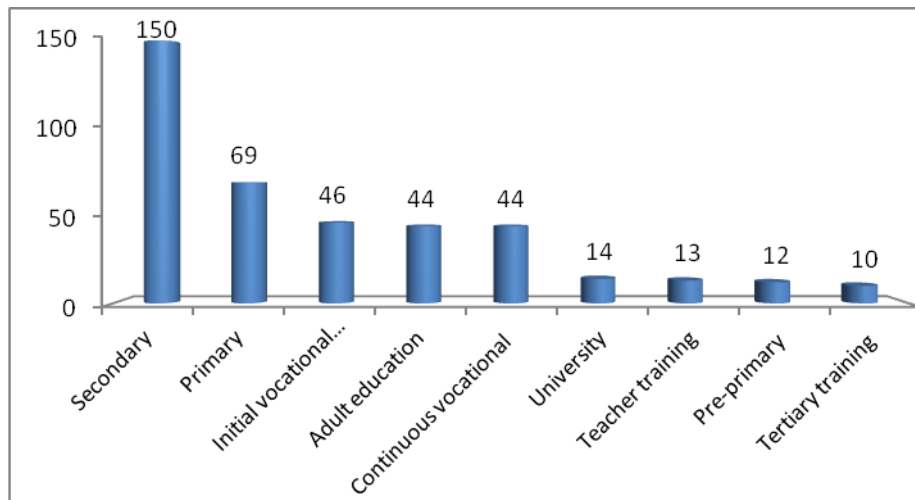
## 5 Awarding the European Language Label

In the first 12 years (1999-2011), 296 Italian projects have been awarded the European Language Label. The statistical data, collected by the NELLIP team, offer a synthetic image about some strategic points: the awarded projects year by year, the educational sectors, the themes for which they have been awarded, the most studied languages.



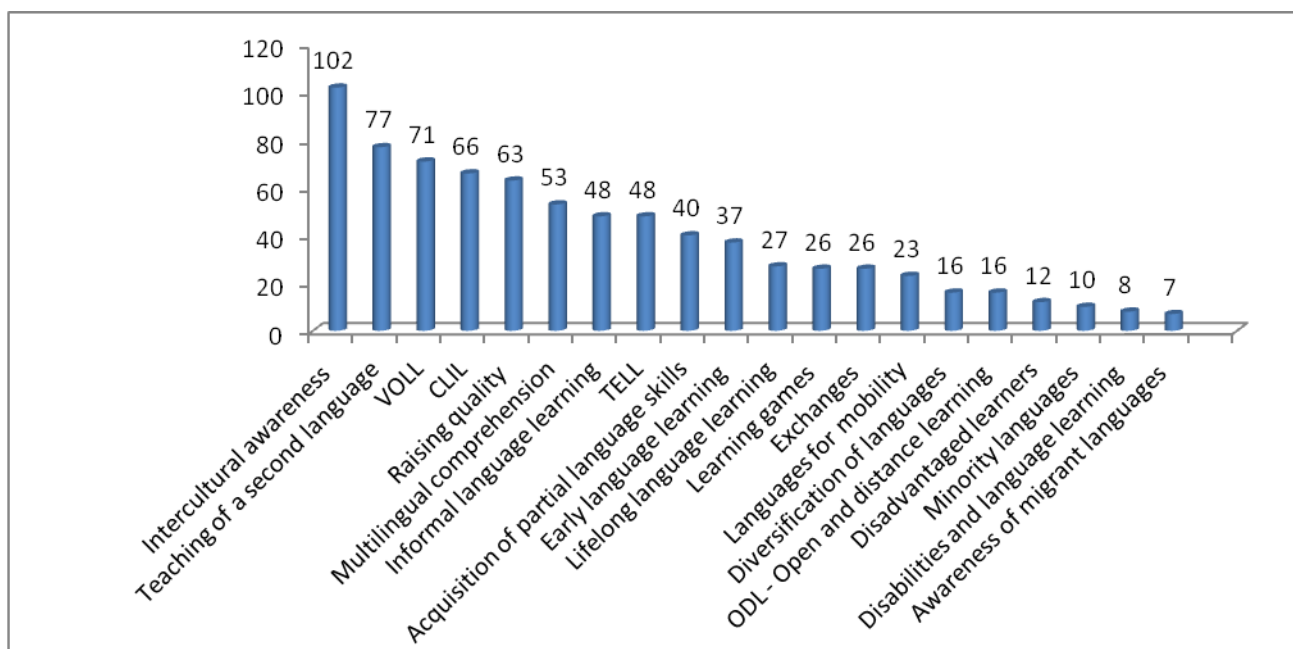
Source: European Commission, Languages (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>)

In the last 12 year, in Italy an average of 24 projects were awarded the European Language Label yearly.



Source: European Commission, Languages (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>)

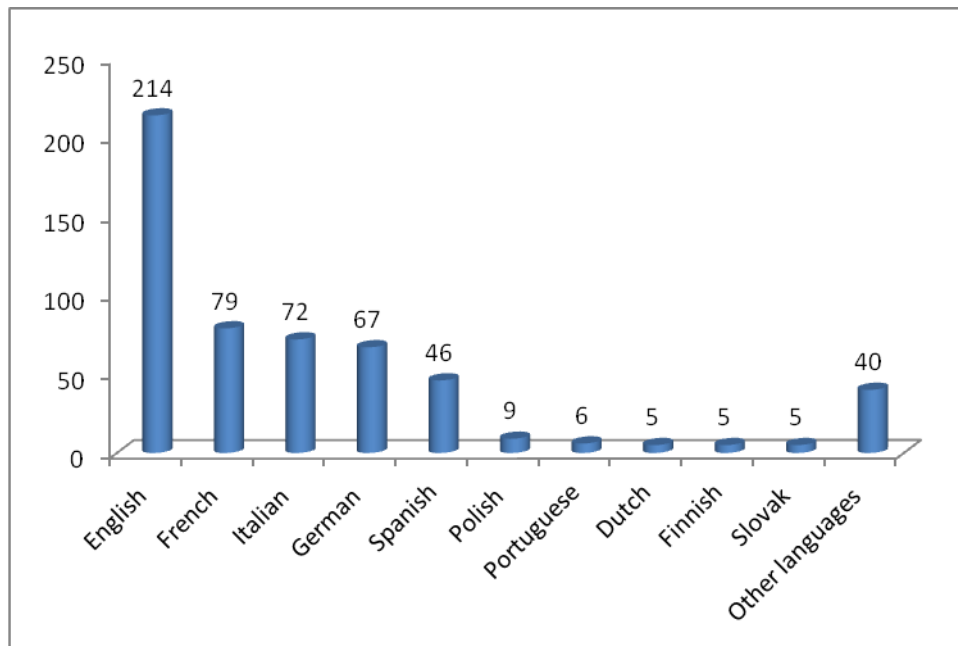
This graphic shows the distribution of the awarded projects. Most of them belong to the compulsory education, with an important number of projects addressed to secondary (150) and primary education (69). Several projects have also been addressed to initial vocational training (46), adult education (44) and continuous vocational training (44). Pre-primary education (12), tertiary education (10), University (14) and teacher training (13) scored the lowest results in terms of awarded projects.



Source: European Commission, Languages (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>)

This graphic shows the main themes of the awarded projects. The greatest number of projects deals with the intercultural awareness (102) and the teaching of a second language (77). Vocationally oriented language

learning projects (71) obtained a good number of awards. In accordance with the national priorities, the multilingual comprehension (53) and the CLIL approach (66) obtained a consistent number of awarded projects.



Source: European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>)

This graphic shows the main languages Italian awarded projects are addressed to. English represents the main language, followed by French, Italian (support language teaching a foreign one / Italian as L2), German and Spanish.

## 6 Evaluation carried out by the NELLIP Italian Team

The NELLIP Network has the aim to promote quality in language learning through the implementation of the quality criteria used to award the European Language Label.

The European Language Label represents an important tool to assess and award quality language learning initiatives at national level. The Label aims to contribute to the implementation of the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning.

European language policies aim to protect linguistic diversity and promote knowledge of languages. The most recent key documents on language learning are: *The Council's Conclusions on Language Competences to Enhance Mobility (2011)*, *Languages for Jobs, providing multilingual communication skills for the labour market (2011)*, *Strategic framework for cooperation on education and training (2009)*, *EU strategy for multilingualism (2008)*, *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment (2008)*, *Inventory of EU actions in the field of multilingualism (2008)*, *Online consultation on multilingualism (2007)*, *New framework strategy for multilingualism (2005)*. From those key documents, it is possible to understand the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning.

The main aspects the current policies on language learning focus on are:

- the enhancement of quality of language learning
- evaluation of performance of language teaching
- teachers training
- new approaches to language teaching and learning
- supporting mobility for language learning
- the promotion of multilingualism
- language learning for specific purposes
- tools for monitoring progresses in language learning
- recognition and validation of language skills acquired through non formal and informal learning
- implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)
- promotion of links between VET qualifications and CEFR
- promotion of less widely spoken languages

By matching the quality criteria used to award the European Language Label and the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning (i.e. those mentioned above), the Italian team of the NELLIP Network selected, in close cooperation with ISFOL (vocational education and training area) and INDIRE (school education area), relevant language learning initiatives among those that were awarded the European Language Label. Among all the awarded initiatives identified by the Italian team of the NELLIP Network, the Italian National Agencies have selected 12 relevant Case Studies. The objectives and results of the selected case studies are consistent with the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning. The promoters of the selected case studies have been interviewed by the Italian team of NELLIP in order to collect more information about the methodology applied.

Among the mentioned current political priorities, the ones mostly referred to by the national Agencies in the selection of the case studies focus on the promotion of: new approaches to language teaching and learning, language learning for specific purposes, recognition and validation of language skills acquired through non formal and informal education. Those principles are also consistent with the annual priorities defined by the European Commission, with a specific reference to the ones for 2012.

As far as the typologies of applicants of the selected case studies are concerned, schools cover the greatest number of applications to the European Language Label in Italy, followed by vocational education and training (VET) organizations.

In relation to the target group, the NELLIP team identified four different sectors of reference among the awarded projects:

- School Education,
- Higher Education,
- Adult Education
- Vocational Education and Training.

According to this further classification, the higher number of awarded projects belongs to the School Education sector, followed by the Vocational Education and Training sector. Few awarded projects belong to the Higher Education sector, and even fewer were addressed to a target group composed by adult learners.



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As regards the linguistic aspect, English and Italian are the commonest languages of the projects that were object of the case studies (80% of the total amount of the case studies).

English is confirming itself as the main lingua franca and is the most studied both at school and vocational education and training level.

The importance of learning Italian is mostly addressing the needs of immigrants who have chosen to work in Italy and should therefore develop the necessary vocational language skills.

The other target languages of the projects that were the object of case studies are: French, German and Spanish (40% of the total).

## 7 Impact and Exploitation of the European Language Label as assessed by the NELLIP Team

### 7.1 Impact

The analysis of the case studies allowed to understand the motivations at the base of the applications for the European Language Label. Most of the project promoter decided to submit their application to the European Language Label in order to:

- ensure a greater visibility to the project
- obtain an official and European recognition
- guarantee a better sustainability of the project
- share a good practice
- create transnational partnerships
- identify further fundings to continue the activity

Less common motivations are: strong belief in the project, opportunity to grow in a European context, desire to create a transnational contacts.

The case studies' analyzed the impact of the European Language Label on the awarded projects.

The European Language Label had a good impact on the awarded projects for the following reasons.

The Label contributed to the visibility of the awarded project. The awarding of the Label enhanced the motivation of the project promoters. The Label also contributed to the sustainability of the awarded projects: a labeled project has more follow up opportunities in the framework of further related activities or projects (e.g. some of the projects successfully applied for further European /national public funding).

In addition, the official recognition acquired was often used by the project promoters as a quality label to demonstrate the value of the initiative.

The awarded project promoters, however, claim that the label is not sufficiently known even in the field of language education and that they feel that several language experts still are not aware of the existence of the European Language Label and of its meaning. Therefore all the time the label's logo was used it was necessary to also state its meaning.

The impact of the European Language Label was weaker for the promoters whose objectives were to create transnational partnerships and identify further funding to continue the activity (beyond public funding). It is interesting to notice that the opportunity to create transnational networks is still rather poor for the promoters of initiatives awarded with the European Language Label, this is an aspect that should be taken into account especially considering that we are dealing with a European label.



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Also, the interest in the Label of the language learning industry seems to be limited, as none of the awarded projects that were selected for the case studies (i.e. the best ones) managed to find business investors interested in their initiative.

## 7.2 Exploitation

With the purpose of spreading the information about the projects that were awarded the European language Label, a number of solutions were implemented. The project promoters of the awarded projects put the Label logo on all the documents (brochures, publications, promotional leaflets) related to the project. Most of all the project promoters produced an official press release, obtaining the attention of local and national newspapers, TV shows, and magazines. Some of the project promoters also organized and participated in specific seminars and conferences with the purpose to inform about the project and the Label awarded.

## 8 Best Practices

Among all the awarded projects, some have been selected in cooperation with the two Italian National Agencies as Best Practices. The selected initiatives can be used as examples and benchmarks to refer to in the planning and development of quality future language learning projects and initiatives that have the necessary characteristics to successfully apply for the European Language Label.

Best Practices projects not only meet the quality criteria adopted in the awarding of the European Language Label but are “special” in terms of: successfully addressing the needs of specific target groups, quality actions carried out, quality of results achieved, sustainability of the project, contribution in terms of innovation and originality, transferability of the project.

A detailed analysis of the selected Best Practices projects underlines that the main impact of the European Language Label on Language Learning initiatives is related to a contribution to the visibility of the projects. The awarding of the Label also enhanced the sustainability of the projects: for example, several projects selected as examples of best practices developed into “Transfer of Innovation” projects (funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme – Leonardo da Vinci – TOI) or are still being exploited in several European countries.

## 9 Recommendations

The projects promoters of the Italian projects that were awarded the label and that were object of the case studies were asked to provide recommendations to future applicants for the European Language Label according to a peer to peer approach.

Also, they were asked to provide their feedback to those who intend to exploit the award of the Label (i.e. the Italian National Agencies and the European Commission), this was done according to a bottom up approach.

According to the promoters of the awarded projects, in order to develop a quality language project that can successfully apply for the European Language Label, it is necessary to start from a direct involvement of the target group: the project can be a successful one if it addresses real needs. The final beneficiaries should be involved in the definition of the project objectives and activities so that the expected results will be consistent with their expectations. During the phase of development of the language project, promoters advice to focus on some of the criteria used to award the Label, for example innovation and the transferability.

The strengths of the European Language Label as it results from this report are that, it:





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- has a good impact on the awarded projects because it contributes to their visibility
- enhances the motivation of the project promoters,
- is considered as an assessment and confirmation of the quality of the initiative.
- contributes to the sustainability of the awarded projects: a labeled project has more follow up opportunities in the framework of further related activities or projects (e.g. some of the projects successfully applied for further European / national public funding).

The weaknesses of the European Language Label as it results from this report are that:

- it is not sufficiently known not even among language learning providers and experts.
- it is not sufficiently clear what are the benefits of receiving the European Language Label
- the label's logo is not recognized and sufficiently known even by experts of language learning. This is also due to the fact that different logos may be used in different countries and contexts.
- It provides very limited opportunities to create transnational partnerships. This is an aspect that should be taken into account especially considering that we are dealing with a European label.
- it is not relevant when identifying further funding to continue the activity (beyond public funding), for example, none of the awarded projects that were selected for the case studies (i.e. the best ones) managed to find business investors interested in their initiative.

Recommendations for an effective further implementation of the European Language Label are based on:

- The promotion of the visibility of the European Language Label among, first of all, language learning providers and experts. This could be done with, among others,
  - a targeted information strategy, based on, for example, presenting the ELL in international events on language learning,
  - publication of articles on the ELL on specialized press both on paper and online etc.
  - provide more visibility to the European Language Label on the web site of the European Commission
  - make use of the social networks developed specifically by/for language learning providers
- The identification of strategies to make the acquisition of the European language Label more appealing for Language Learning experts
- Rising awareness on the European Language Label's meaning and impact. In order to do so the information about the European Language Label should also include:
  - a clear description of the quality meaning of the label.
  - the benefits related to awarding. In order to do so, the case studies developed by the NELLIP Network might be used to present best practices as far as the benefits of the European Language Labels are concerned.
- Only one single logo should be used for the European Language Label at transnational level.
- The offer to the promoter of projects that were awarded the European Language Label of opportunities for transnational networking, exchanges and sharing. This can be done, for example, with the annual organization of transnational events where the sharing of best practice developed by the awarded projects is promoted as well as transnational networking among the project promoters. The NELLIP network is also contributing to this objective as it is currently implementing a transnational network of promoters of projects that were awarded the European Language Label.
- Rising awareness about the quality meaning of the European Language Label in the Language Learning industry (e.g. specialized publishers) so as to encourage them to contribute with private funds to the further development of the awarded.



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## 10 Conclusions

By matching the quality criteria used to award the European Language Label and the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning, the Italian team of the NELLIP Network selected relevant language learning initiatives that were awarded the European Language Label. Among the initiatives identified by the NELLIP team, the Italian National Agencies have selected relevant Case Studies, these are the best projects that received the European Language Label whose objectives are consistent with the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning.

The analysis of the selected Italian projects and case studies demonstrates that most of the project promoter decided to submit their application to the European Language Label in order to ensure a greater visibility to the project and obtain an official and European recognition. Other reasons are related to the willingness to promote the project's sustainability and to share the good practice developed at level.

The main strengths of the European Language Label as it results from this report are that, it has a good impact on the awarded projects because it contributes to their visibility, it enhances the motivation of the project promoters, it is considered as an assessment and confirmation of the quality of the initiative. Also the ELL contributes to the sustainability of the awarded projects: a labeled project has more follow up opportunities in the framework of further related activities or projects (e.g. some of the projects successfully applied for further European / national public funding).

The main weaknesses of the European Language Label as it results from this report are related to the fact that this label is not sufficiently known and recognized, not even among language learning providers and experts. Also, the benefit of receiving the European Language Label are not clear for potential applicants and, so far, the label has provided limited opportunities to create transnational partnerships.

The further implementation of the European Language Label should therefore be based on:

- The promotion of the visibility of the European Language Label among, first of all, language learning providers and experts.
- Rising awareness on the European Language Label's meaning and potential impact.
- The use of one single – recognizable - logo for the European Language Label at transnational level.
- The promotion of opportunities for transnational networking, exchanges and sharing among awarded projects.

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