



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

**PORTUGAL**





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

## **AUTHORS:**

**Mercedes Rico**

GexCALL Group (University of Extremadura), Spain  
*[mricogar@unex.es](mailto:mricogar@unex.es)*

*01 October 2012*



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This material reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

## INDEX

1 Introduction	P. 4
2 The European Language Label in Portugal	P. 4
3 The Label Campaigns	P. 6
4 Priorities	P. 8
5 Awarding the European Language Label	P. 8
6 Evaluation carried out by the NELLIP Team	P. 9
7 Impact and Exploitation of the European Language Label as assessed by the NELLIP Team	P. 10
8 Best Practices	P. 11
9 Recommendations	P. 11
10 Conclusions	P. 12
11 Bibliography, references and acknowledgments	P. 13



519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

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

### 1 Introduction

The European Commission's White Paper on Education and Training: "Teaching learning: towards the learning society" (1995), Objective IV, reflects the interest in encouraging language skills as a necessary vehicle for genuine European integration.

Following the agreement of the Ministers of Education of European Union countries, it was decided to create an award in each of the Member States for initiatives and best practices, local or national, in the field of education and learning of languages, which could then be shared throughout Europe. Thus was born the "European Label for innovative initiatives in language teaching and learning", which has been awarded annually in Spain since 1998.

In addition, community initiatives such as the European Year of Languages 2001 and the Action Plan for language learning and linguistic diversity 2004-2006 have contributed to the realization of this objective. Decision n. 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament established an action program in the field of lifelong learning in the European Union, including a new legal framework to be adapted to organizational actions covered by existing sectoral programs such as "Comenius", "Erasmus", "Leonardo da Vinci", "Grundtvig" as well as the "Jean Monnet" Program and European Label awards for the period 2007/2013.

*European Commission (1995). White Paper on education and training. Teaching and learning. Towards the knowledge society. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.*

### 2 The European Language Label in Portugal

#### 2.1. What is the European Language Label Award?

The European Language Label (ELL) is an award which encourages initiatives in the field of teaching and learning languages and is intended as a tool that can help teachers and learners become more aware of innovative initiatives in the field. The ELL aims to inspire teachers and learners to adapt innovative and effective ideas and techniques, in accordance with their own needs.

#### 2.2. When is it celebrated?

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports convenes the awards annually, usually between March and July, and establishes the conditions. The prize is called "European Label for innovative initiatives in teaching and language learning: an invitation to apply for the European Label."

#### 2.3. What are the Objectives?

The objective of the awards is to promote newly recognized examples of innovative practice in order to share experiences within the field of teaching and learning of languages.





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

#### 2.4. Categories

The European Language Label is open to four eligible categories:

Primary Schools (staff and pupils)

Secondary Schools (staff and pupils)

Post-Secondary/Tertiary Institutions (lecturers, administrative staff, students councils and organizations, faculties, departments and institutions)

Youth / Adult / Professional Organizations (voluntary organizations, local councils, companies, NGOs sport clubs, etc.)

#### 2.5. Modalities

Entrants may present their projects in the field of teaching and learning of foreign languages (Lifelong Learning Program or other areas). For a project that encompasses more than one institution, the application must specify the coordinating entity.

The projects submitted must:

- Be or have been implemented in the current year, in the case of awards for 2012, for example, in the academic year 2010-11 or up until the first semester of 2012.
- Transfer innovative experiences that promote the success in the teaching / learning of EU languages.
- They must prove that they are innovative, effective and transferable.

#### 1 - Global Initiatives

In a global initiative, students, teachers, methods and materials used in a given environment all form part of the response to the identified needs of students.

It is important that successful projects creatively use all available and appropriate means for improving teaching/learning. These means may include existing language resources, for example, the presence of native speakers or cooperation with local trade and industry.

2 - Successful initiatives should "add value" in the national context in terms of improved quantitative and /or qualitative teaching/learning of languages.

Projects must demonstrate that they can achieve a quantitative and/or qualitative improvement in language skills, for example, through the teaching/learning of several languages, in particular minority languages (quantitative aspect ), or through a significantly more effective methodology for enhancing the effectiveness of teaching (qualitative aspect).

3 - Initiatives should be attractive in order to encourage all those involved in the teaching/learning of languages. To qualify for the label, projects must contain elements which increase motivation for teachers and students as well as make the working environment more attractive to students. Lack of motivation is one of the principal obstacles to be overcome if we want to improve the level of language learning for European citizens.

4 - Innovative initiatives in which original and creative approaches are developed. Innovation has to be understood in its specific context: what is innovative in one environment may not be in another.

For example, multilingual comprehension - the establishment of a competition aimed at developing comprehension skills in a foreign language may allow a greater number of people to communicate if they can speak in their language and listen and respond to another person to speaking in their language. This is likely







519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

to be most effective when there is a similarity between these languages. This may be considered innovation in some contexts.

5 - The initiatives must have a European dimension.

Projects selected for the award must take into account the reality of the European Union and its linguistic diversity, and use the opportunities it offers (such as transnational contacts) to improve understanding of other cultures through language learning.

6 - The initiatives must demonstrate innovation that is transferable to other situations.

Projects should stimulate interest and inspire other educational actors in the domain of language learning in other contexts and countries. Ideally they should be transferable and adaptable to, for example, the learning of other languages or for other age groups.

The general criteria for the European Seal are common throughout Europe, but each country may add their own requirements. For this competition the European Commission has set two new priorities: language learning based on new technologies and multilingual learning.

The European criteria:

1. Initiatives must have a broad and comprehensive approach in which the needs of the students have been taken into account and can be met.
2. Initiatives should add value in their national context, which means that will represent a real improvement in the teaching and learning process.
3. Initiatives should be motivating and demonstrate the ability to improve the language skills of teachers and students.
4. Initiatives must be original and creative.
5. Initiatives should emphasize the European dimension, adapting to its linguistic diversity and improving intercultural understanding.
6. Proposals must be transferable and provide a potential source of inspiration for initiatives in other languages and countries.
7. Proposals should be motivating for the entire school community and integrate the school and with its social context.
8. Proposals should demonstrate successful results for teaching and learning (surveys, graphics, photos, ratings, newspaper articles etc..)

### 3 The Label Campaigns

#### 3.1. Dissemination in Portugal

Press:

<http://noticias.universia.pt/destaque/noticia/2011/11/21/889768/ua-obtem-selo-europeu-as-iniciativas-inovadoras-na-area-das-linguas.html>

<http://www.correiodominho.com/noticias.php?id=64707>





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

Jacques Delors European Information Centre:  
[http://www.eurocid.pt/pls/wsd/wsdwcot0.detalhe?p\\_cot\\_id=7098#](http://www.eurocid.pt/pls/wsd/wsdwcot0.detalhe?p_cot_id=7098#)

Proalv National Agency:  
<http://pt-europa.proalv.pt/public/PortalRender.aspx?PageID=862ce7b4-c924-40fa-8ec7-5554e9a19318>

Web Pages:  
<http://www.esvv.net/site/index.php/as-noticias/87-ultimas-noticias/88-selo-europeu-para-as-linguas-2012>

Portuguese Government:  
<http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/os-ministerios/ministerio-da-educacao-e-ciencia/mantenha-se-atualizado/20120629-mec-linguas.aspx>

### 3.2 The competition

How to apply?

Complete the appropriate form, available online at the Agency website:  
[Http://www.proalv.pt](http://www.proalv.pt) existing internet.

All the necessary documentation to process the application must be delivered directly, in a sealed envelope to:  
National Agency for a program Gestão do ao Longo da Vida Aprendizagem  
Avenida Infante Santo, 2-4 °  
1350-178 Lisboa

### 3.3 The selection of winning projects

For projects to be eligible for European Language Label, they have to prove they are innovative, effective and transferable to other contexts. The initiatives should incorporate a new method or approach, or improve past performance. They should also demonstrate students' progress.

The projects that the jury, constituted for the purpose, considers meet all the criteria will be awarded the "European Label 2011". For the purposes set forth in Article 100. ° of the Code of Administrative Procedure, within ten working days the list of projects selected will be displayed until October 31, 2011, at the National Agency for the Management of Lifelong Learning and on the Internet at <http://www.proalv.pt>.

### 3.4 The Awarding Ceremony

Winners will receive a certificate and a plaque attributed to each of the project participants, and a plaque will be presented to the participating institutions.  
Later, the winning institutions may also incorporate into their letterhead and other documents the "European Label" logo, provided it is clear the year in which the award was made.





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

## 4 Priorities

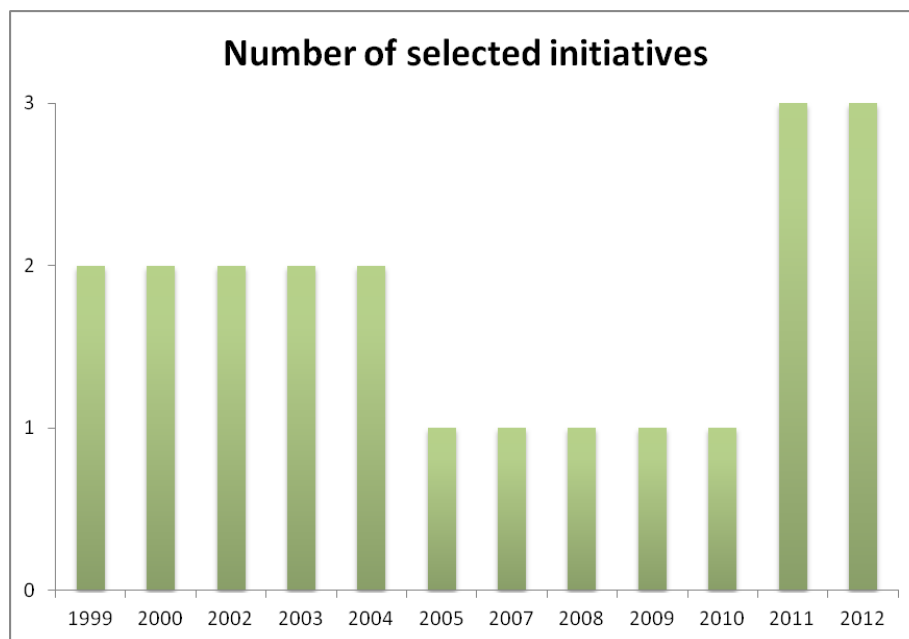
The following are the priorities for the European Label in 2011:

- The language learning community;
- Language skills for professional purposes.

The priorities at the national level are intended for the teaching of Portuguese for immigrant integration and/or language training for the workplace, in non-formal and informal settings.

## 5 Awarding the European Language Label

The evolution of the award of European Language Labels in Portugal is shown in the following table:

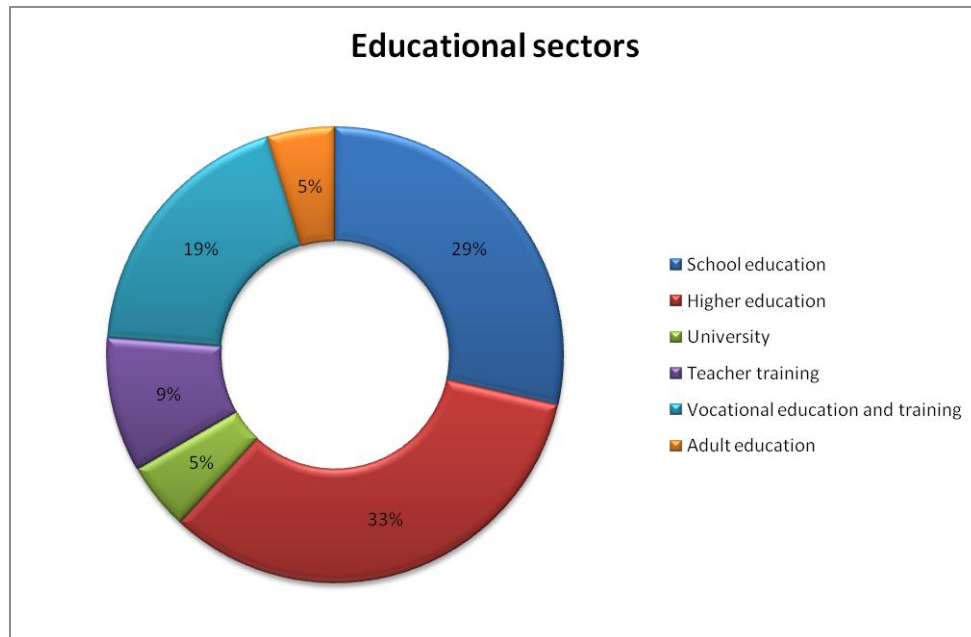


<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW



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

As seen in the table, there is a relative homogeneity in educational sectors in which labels have been assigned, but in the year 2012 it can be seen that vocational education features among the winning initiatives, specifically an initiative that aims to help the integration of immigrants in Portugal through language learning.

## 6 Evaluation carried out by the NELLIP Portuguese Team

What criteria were selected tags?

The research group is an interdisciplinary group Gexcall based in a public university composed of linguists, mathematicians, computer scientists and graphic designers. This interdisciplinary approach has enabled a better understanding of the cases analyzed. When evaluating the best practices among the initiatives awarded by the European Language Label, this research group has followed a scientific and analytical procedure based on researching, analyzing, selecting and cataloging the best practices in order to share the results with the scientific community.

The first step was the analysis of all winning initiatives in Portugal over the last 10 years (1999-2011), the "NELLIP WP1 Project - Case Studies" phase. After this analysis we concluded that we could not meet the objective of selecting 24 labels, as only 18 labels were awarded in Portugal up until the beginning of 2011.



519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

Then each group member shortlisted between 2 and 5 initiatives (a total of 12) in response to a series of previously agreed selection criteria - innovation, dissemination, creativity, interest, universality and multilingualism and all the information was collated.

Unfortunately, of the 12 selected initiatives, we have not received many response from the initiative coordinators due to difficulty contacting them, bureaucratic problems, lack of information, and a certain level of disinterest. Furthermore, many participants are no longer employed in the institutions in which the projects were developed.

Therefore the completion of the third phase, the choice of the 4 best practices, has been limited by the above circumstances - only 3 of the 12 selected labels completed the survey. Therefore these three formed the basis of the selection phase NELLIP WP1 Project - Best Practices. In order to complete the report initiative coordinators were contacted again and interviewed by telephone and email. In addition to the interview, information from the press and in scientific publications was reviewed. The three Portuguese initiatives, or Case Studies, are available at the following link:

[http://nellip.pixelonline.org/CS\\_lista.php?tla=&sec=&cou=26&yea](http://nellip.pixelonline.org/CS_lista.php?tla=&sec=&cou=26&yea)

The tacking practices completed are as follows:

- Study projects and results completed\* Screening / selection
- Interviews with coordinators
- Analysis of diffusion: newspaper articles and scientific production

The evaluation and monitoring has been conducted in by the research group GEXCALL in conjunction with stakeholders from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, in the case of Spain, and the National Agency PROALV, in the case of Portugal.

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

Coordinators and members involved in most of the selected good practices, have contributed the following ideas as a result of the impact the award has had at professional and personal level:

- Invitations to present the project in Lisbon in 2009 after which followed an invitation to participate in national and international conferences that allowed international projection of the school and the project.
- Contribution to personal motivation to improve each year.
- The award of the ELL was an incentive to pursue their goals and try to find new ways of motivating students.
- Benefits of having received the ELL: recognition and further exposure; improved confidence in the project initiative, interest from international contacts, more opportunities to be involved in further projects at an international level.
- A pilot project to begin in 2013 to introduce the project at tertiary level with the aim of developing multilingual degree courses within the University of Porto.





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

## 8 Best Practices

As mentioned above, the best practices in Portugal have been selected in collaboration with the National Agency PROALV.

Of the initiatives selected the use of ICTs, multiculturalism, multilingualism and language learning for professional and occupational purposes can be highlighted:

- In general, these projects enrich the quality of language teaching promoting new approaches in the field of teaching/learning (eg CLIL methodology, the use of new technologies).
- Highlight the ability of teachers or groups of teachers for innovative actions with limited resources but with a high level of imagination and optimism. This point is of vital importance in times of crisis, when funding is limited, teachers who can demonstrate successful innovation, as demonstrated in the cases analyzed, are increasingly relevant. Initiatives such as the European Label project empower entrepreneurship and reinforce the idea of a connected Europe and working towards the same goals.
- At the same time, it should be noted that many of the best practices that in Spain and Portugal came from rural or marginal institutions. This highlights the universal and democratic character of innovative practices that enhance access to global information, thanks to the use of technology by teachers, and reduce social and regional inequalities.
- It is interesting that most of the case studies have been carried out by teachers across disciplines, allowing a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that has been key to their success. This increasingly in demand feature technological and creative input tailored to the target audience and its needs.

This is the European spirit that will lead us to towards becoming a better society through collaboration to achieve our common goals.

## 9 Recommendations

From the contact with coordinators and project developers several recommendations can be emphasized:

- They want to continue working to develop tools for teaching / learning that reflect an interdisciplinary, cooperative/collaborative and constructivist approach.
- They demonstrate interest in the initiatives for developing good teaching practices undertaken by the European Union.
- They want to develop the teaching of languages in light of other methods employed in various institutions in order to motivate both teachers and learners for a rich and varied educational processes.





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

Some suggestions offered by coordinators of the winning initiatives include:

- Publish the criteria to be met by candidates for European Label awards well in advance as they are different each year and these criteria are of great help when planning the structure of the project to be submitted.
- Increase dissemination of these experiences through media interviews, participation in conferences or publishing articles in journals.
- Develop quick tips on how to plan and develop quality learning experiences for language learning based on initiatives that have achieved a European Label award.
- Conduct training for teachers using based on the experiences of award winning initiatives.

Most relevant aspects for future ELL award participants:

- That participants involved in innovative and creative projects know that what they do is what needs to be done, to feel the excitement for and pride in their project. It is a means to demonstrate the great quality work taking place in education to improve language teaching and learning.
- That the important thing is not the European label itself, but the ideas and projects presented and how they work in the classroom to achieve the learning objectives.
- Obtaining a European label is not easy but not impossible, so we must have confidence in our work and the fact that there are institutions and individuals working with interesting and innovative ideas, therefore we should be open to share experiences and projects and learn from collaboration with others.
- In the European context it is beneficial for collaboration to be based on a multidisciplinary philosophy that incorporates local and global perspectives. This way different views and perspectives can be taken into account in the solution of common problems. The work of local initiatives must be open to engagement with other groups throughout Europe.
- By taking into account the needs of the target audience, appropriate services can be provided and learning becomes easier, as they will be the centre of attention of the initiative.
- To work from a collaborative and interdisciplinary perspective, being aware of quality initiatives that can be found on the website of the ELL program, as this allows for continuous learning through contact with excellent projects.

## 10 Conclusions

Gexcall research group, an innovative and multidisciplinary group within the University of Extremadura, together with the Government of Portugal, Ministry of Education and Science, and the National Agency PROALV, have selected the language learning initiatives that have been awarded the European Label for innovative initiatives in the area of Teaching and Learning of Languages. After several months of study, selection, and analysis, we present the best practices, but not without some limits due to the lack of response from the award-winning Portuguese entities - only three projects returned the documentation. The principal reason behind the low response rate was the fact that many initiative participants are no longer employed at the institution in which the project took place.





519129-LLP-2011-KA2-KA2NW

In addition to the support we have received for the coordinators we have also received letters from other institutions demonstrating their interest in the project and desire to benefit from the results of the analysis in order to enrich their teaching practice. They include:

- LOA - Learning from/with One Another, Escola do Secundária Frei Rosa Viterbo Escolas regrouping of Satao
- Open the window, High School Rio Tinto
- STEPS - Support for Teaching in Primary Schools Inglés, Faculdade de Letras (Universidade do Porto)
- Livres Courses Centre, Lisbon
- Governo de Portugal, Ministry of educação e ciency
- National Agency PROALV

The main advantages of the European Language Label contained in this report are: to improve the visibility of the selected projects and to encourage prospective applicants to apply for the award - too many projects do not come to light as the participants are unaware of its existence. In this way we aim to provide more opportunities for language learning. This study of the initiatives has also served as a form of quality assessment.

## 11 Bibliography, references and acknowledgments

### Acknowledgments

- Bottom of Form
- LOA – Learning from/with One Another, Escola Secundária Frei Rosa Viterbo do Agrupamento de Escolas De Sátão
- Open the window, Escola Secundária de Rio Tinto
- STEPS – Support for Teaching English in Primary Schools, Faculdade de Letras (Universidade Do Porto)
- Centro de Cursos Livres, Lisbon
- Governo de Portugal, ministério de educação e ciência
- Agencia Nacional PROALV

