



NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL

DENMARK



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SWEDISH NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL

1. Introduction

This national report of the Swedish European Language Label award consists of a summary of the projects awarded with the European Language Label, features of successful projects and information on the procedure of the European Language Label award in Sweden. In this report you will find statistics on awarded projects, educational areas and languages. You will also find recommendations for future applicants from award winning promoters.

2. The European Language Label in Sweden

The European Language Label award in Sweden is implemented in order to encourage language learning, increase understanding and awareness of different cultures, as well as, meeting the labour market in Europe. The ELL is awarded by the national agency **Skolverket**. When deciding on the award winners a group with members from the national agency, the department of education, the international programmes of education, Utbildningsradion (educational radio), the teachers' unions, the national agency for higher education, the municipalities of Sweden and the European commission is appointed. In addition to the members from the above mentioned instances there is always also a member from another European country's jury participating.

The ELL can be awarded to all school forms in Sweden, but not for higher education.

The goals of the national agency through the European Language label project are: to contribute to development in language learning and new ways of thinking around implementation and planning in language learning. The awarded projects should be able to serve as good examples and as inspiration.

The Swedish national agency promotes the idea of introducing language learning early on in life and it being a part of lifelong learning. The Swedish national agency in cooperation with the European Commission has created prioritized areas regarding the aims of, and the content of, the ELL applications. The application can contain one or more of the prioritized areas.

The prioritized areas are:

- a description of how to spread knowledge and/or experience about the work done within the actual project.
- Work with language portfolios
- Multi-lingualism and linguistic diversity
- How to incorporate ICT and the web as a learning tool
- A cultural and social way of looking at language learning
- Lifelong learning

- SPRINT (Language and content integrated learning and teaching)
- Language learning for business and work life or created in cooperation with work places and businesses.
- Language teaching created for vocational upper secondary studies
- Early language learning

When the one or more of the prioritized areas of content are met there are further criteria that need to be met in order to obtain the European Language label in Sweden. The criteria used for selecting the award winning projects are the same for all European countries. The European criteria are:

1. Comprehensive approach. Every element of the language initiative should ensure that the needs of the students are identified and met.
2. Added value. Initiatives should provide a tangible improvement in the teaching and learning of languages in their national context.
3. Motivation enhancement. Initiatives should motivate the students and teachers to improve their language skills.
4. Innovation. Initiatives should be original and creative. They should introduce previously unknown approaches to language learning.
5. European emphasis. Initiatives should be adapted to Europe's linguistic diversity and make use of this advantage.
6. Transferability. Initiatives should potentially be a source of inspiration for other language projects in different countries.

The group with members from the national agency, the department of education, the international programmes of education, Utbildningsradion, the teachers' unions, The national agency for higher education, the municipalities of Sweden and the European commission revise the applications and decide on one or more award winner of the European Language Label. The award winners are then invited to Stockholm to receive the award.

The European language label is awarded within the school sector, the adult education sector as well as the vocational sector. This means that several instances in society have the possibility of gaining from it. The award can bring forth ideas and methods that are used in one sector, which is applicable in several other sectors. The beneficiaries of the European Language Label can therefore be said to involve many more than the actual schools/teachers/students.

3. The Label Campaigns

3.1 Promotion

The Swedish national agency provides information on the European Language Label Award on their website. They present winners from 2001 and onwards and there are also instructions on how to apply for the award, as well as, deadlines. When attending conferences and meetings the people involved in the ELL present projects that have been awarded the language label and they also encourage people to apply. In Sweden there is an organization called LMS (teachers of modern languages) which creates and distributes a magazine called *Lingua*, four times a year. The magazine usually provides information on the award winning projects and interviews each year. During the last years the Swedish national agency has produced information leaflets which presents "last years winners" and they hand them out as promotion as well. In the leaflet the project, its aims and its results are presented.

3.2 Call for tenders

The Swedish national agency calls for applications on their website. The deadline is usually at the end of August. The application form is designed by the national agency and it allows the promoters to give detailed descriptions on the purpose and aims of the project, a detailed project description, the head master's comments as well as the teachers' comments, information on what has been attained/gained from the project, the plan on carrying out the project and also how it has been implemented in the student and parent group as well as within the teacher group. The application form also provides an opportunity to inform on how the project has been supported in the municipality and how the project promoters are working to spread the idea of their project to other schools in the municipality and in the rest of the country.

In short, on the application form you have every opportunity of giving detailed information about your project and its objectives and results. On the national agency's website you can also find the guidelines and requirements for attaining the European Language Label award.

3.3 The selection of winning projects

Each year a jury is appointed to decide which project/projects should be awarded the European Language Label award. The ELL is awarded by the national agency *Skolverket*. The jury consists of members from the national agency, the department of education, the international programmes of education, Utbildningsradion (educational radio), the teachers' unions, the national agency for higher education, the municipalities of Sweden and the European commission. In addition to the members from the above mentioned instances there is always also a member from another European country's jury participating. The jury is presented with the applications and after an initial evaluation, the projects are assessed according to the criteria for the European Language Label award. The applicants can also get a visit to their school from the jury or parts thereof.

When the jury has agreed on the winner/winners, they are informed and then invited to Stockholm to receive the award. The award giving ceremony is held once a year.

4. Priorities

The Swedish national agency does not put up yearly priorities for attaining the European Language Label. Instead they present prioritized areas and your project should meet one or more of them. There is emphasis on social and cultural aspects on language learning, ICT and multi-lingualism are other prioritized areas. The Swedish national agency promotes the idea of introducing language learning early on in life and it being a part of lifelong learning. The Swedish national agency in cooperation with the European Commission has created prioritized areas regarding the aims of, and the content of, the ELL applications. The application can contain one or more of the prioritized areas.

The prioritized areas are as listed in section two. Since the Swedish national agency does not put up yearly national priorities they open up for more diversity in the applications. The criteria from the European commission are constantly considered. The national agency enables more projects to be considered with this method of working. If there were actual frames of topic to work within and apply by, some projects might have never been known or awarded. That would have been a loss. Sweden is a small country and by allowing the possibility of variety in the projects that apply for the ELL there is a greater chance of finding and awarding interesting projects.

5. Awarding the European Language Label

In the years 2001 to 2010, 24 Swedish projects have been awarded the European Language Label.

YEAR	AWARDED PROJECTS
2001	3
2002	1
2003	2
2004	5
2005	1
2006	1
2007	3
2008	3
2009	3
2010	2

Fig. 5.1 Source: <http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/amnesutveckling/sprak/sprakutmarkelse/vinnare>

Of the 24 Swedish projects that were awarded with the European Language Label 17 are within the School sector. 5 of the 24 Award winning projects are concerning Adult education and 2 are awarded within the vocational sector.

Fig. 5.2



One conclusion one can draw is that the majority of the awarded projects come from schools. The number of initiatives awarded are more than three times as many as the second biggest category; the adult education.

The target languages of the award winning projects in Sweden differ. The most frequent target language is English, followed by Swedish and modern languages. In Sweden there are actually two different subjects which treat Swedish. The two subjects are Swedish as a second language (SVA) and Swedish (SV). Both subjects are integrated in the Swedish category. The other second biggest group of target languages is the one called modern languages. In the Swedish school your choices of languages in grades 6 and up are known as modern languages. The modern languages include French, German and Spanish. In the upper secondary school your choice is greater and you can choose between several more languages to study.

Fig 5.3

ELL awards	SV/SVA	EN	MOD	MOTHER	OTHER
2010	1	1	1		
2009	1	2			
2008	1	1	2	1	
2007	1	3	2		
2006	1			1	
2005			1		1
2004	1	3	1	1	
2003	1	1		1	
2002	1	1			
2001		3	1		
TOTAL	8	15	8	4	1

Mod= French, German and Spanish

One part of the Swedish school system that is also represented in the European language Label awards statistics is the mother tongue teaching. Every child with at least one parent from another country than Sweden has the right to learn their mother tongue in school. There is a large group of mother tongue teachers in Sweden and for example in the case of Flemingsberg pre-schools they cooperate with Swedish teachers as well as with the library in one award winning project.

Several of the ELL winning projects can actually be said to have a non-applicable target language, because you can implement it in studies of any language. This is transferability and the majority of the Swedish Language label award winners can actually be used in several languages.

6. Evaluation and follow up

The European Language Label is an important factor in assessing and awarding language learning projects. Since the award winners are chosen by a jury it provides a proof of quality and method in the selected award winning projects.

The Swedish national agency makes a leaflet with information on the award winning projects which is handed out to people in the educational area of work, at conferences, for example. Representatives from the national agency have also participated in international conferences where Swedish award winners have been presenting their projects. Representatives from the national agency also participate in national conferences as well as keeping in touch with award winners.

In the Nellip project we have matched the current political priorities from the European commission with the European Language Label award criteria in Sweden to the presented projects of the web portal. In cooperation with a representative from the Swedish national agency 12 projects were selected to be presented as case studies. From the 12 we selected, 11 were completed. The 12th selected project has not been possible to complete the case study on. The promoters of the 11 selected case studies have been interviewed either on the phone, in person or via e-mail. Several of the presented projects were interviewed on more than one occasion, this is particularly true regarding the ones interviewed in writing.

The promoters of the projects which we performed case studies on were also involved in the creation of the actual case study and they gave feedback before we posted the information on the Nellip portal.

The case studies presented from Sweden have certain similarities in that they are transferable into any other language, basically. Therefore the target language isn't as critical as would be if we selected projects that could not be transferred into another language. This we believe to be an important factor in the success of a language project together with the concept, method and innovation. To gain motivation in students is another aspect which all of the projects have as a key factor.

7. Impact and exploitation of the European Language Label as assessed by theNELLIP Team

When receiving the European Language Label award several of the project winners presented as case studies stated that their project and their school get recognition. There are a number of conferences, national and international, that you can participate in as a result of the ELL award. In Sweden, all winners are invited to the national agency in Stockholm to receive the award, as well as a financial contribution to the project. Yearly you can find articles in language teaching magazines about the ELL winners in Sweden. The winner often gets recognized in the local papers as well. School leaders generally spread information to peers. Another reported outcome is invitations to other schools to present the project. The representatives from the national agency also present the European Language Label award at conferences and seminars. Another reported outcome is an increased level of cooperation between European countries as well as further education for language teachers. Cooperation between schools, where the promoter gets invited to speak at different schools is nother reported outcome, so the European Language Label (according to our interviews) can be said to:

- increase awareness of the methodology and the project
- increase the level of cooperation between peers
- project promoters gain recognition
- enhance possibility of european collaboration

8. Recommendations

The 11 case studies presented from Sweden had the following recommendations when asked about what they would recommend for future applicants:

- Plan you project carefully. Be prepared to answer questions around why, how, when and to motivate your reasons.
- Applying for the ELL as soon as you know that your project is working and that the pupils are encouraged. When applying give clear examples and specify.
- Bring forward examples of how your project makes a difference for teachers and/or students.
- Simplicity in a method is nothing bad. It makes it easier for others to take after and use in their own ways.
- It is important that good teachers and teaching methods get confirmation and encouragement. It is also important that these methods are shared with others.
- Projects should have a basis in research. You have to try your material or teaching method for a long time so that you can make improvements before applying for the ELL.

The recommendations vary a bit, but encouragement, examples of how and why, as well as transferability to other schools and projects seem to be mutual aspects presented. The European Language Label in Sweden is not that widely known and to more widely advertise it would be a recommendation.

9. Best Practices

The best practices from Sweden have been selected due to their project content, transferability and longevity, to mention a few. 3/4 best practices are still running, and some projects have been active for over 10 years. The features that we find important to reach success with your language projects are:

- authenticity in use
- connection with the pupils' interests/choices
- transferability
- differences in environment/equipment such as rooms, use of computers and the internet.
- motivation enhancement

All of the above mentioned features are found in the Swedish best practices. Regarding authenticity, it is treated in different ways in the different projects. But the similarity is found in ways of using the language in a natural setting.

The thematic areas are based on the pupils' interests and this provides an opportunity to work with language in different relevant areas. If it is real communication you gain a lot, such as motivation and interest. The aspect of relevance is clear here as well. Once you find your language studies useful and know in what ways they can be used, you are more keen on learning.

The feature transferability is presented in all four best practices from Sweden. All projects are possible to transfer into any given language, which makes them interesting and possible to promote in other countries and other schools.

In the best practice studies from Sweden, you also find the possibility of using other locations than a classroom. It is not impossible by any means to do several of the activities in a classroom, but the projects describe how and where you can use other locations or materials. One of the best practices uses video conferences, which can be done anywhere. Another project used the school's kitchens to cook and learn languages at the same time.

The last feature – motivation enhancement, was slightly dealt with above. To provide a successful project in any language studies this must be counted as an important factor. When the pupils/students are motivated the chances of optimizing their personal achievements are greater.

10. Conclusions

The conclusions that can be drawn from this national report are that the Swedish award winning projects chosen as case studies and best practices are very transferable. This provides an excellent opportunity to present and promote them to schools and other educational providers in different countries. Several of the projects do not need external financing to be done which is also a good promotional point.

In Sweden, the national agency does not put up yearly topics or areas that should be awarded. It is our belief that this promotes various interesting projects to apply for the European language label award. Instead, the

European commission's guidelines are constantly current and all projects should meet the criteria listed there, or at least parts of them.

One conclusion drawn is that the majority of the award winners in Sweden are from the school sector. It may be useful to promote the European Label specifically to other educational sectors, to get them even more involved. The projects described as case studies and best practices can be used within any educational sector.

11. References

The Swedish national Agency – European Language Label info

<http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/amnesutveckling/sprak/2.353/sprakutmarkelse-1.83494>