



# **“Quality in Language Learning and the European Language Label” Transnational Report**

**Florence, Italy  
15 November 2013**

**Report**



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
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## Report on NELLIP Transnational Workshop

On Friday 15 November 2012, in the framework of the International Conference “ICT for Language Learning – 6<sup>th</sup> Edition” held in Florence, the Transnational Workshop “Quality in Language Learning and the European Language Label” took place. The Transnational Workshop was organized in the framework of the NELLIP project, the Network of European Language Labelled Initiatives, funded by the European Commission - Lifelong Learning Programme – KA2.

The Workshop started with an opening address by **Manola Peschieri**, Policy Officer and Coordinator of the European Language Label at the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, opened Transnational Workshop introducing the European Language Label. The title of the speech was “The European Language Label, 14 years of experience and future perspectives”.

Manola Peschieri explained that the European Language Label was originally designed to encourage new initiatives in the field of teaching and learning languages, to reward new techniques in language teaching, to spread the knowledge of their existence and thereby promote good practice. Encouraging high quality in language learning, the European Language Label plays a key role in recognizing, rewarding and giving national and international profile to projects that are innovative and effective in motivating language learners and highlighting new possibilities and new ways for teachers to support language learning. In her speech, Manola Peschieri explained the recent activities carried out in the framework of the European Language Label and briefly introduced the role the European Language Label will cover in the upcoming funding programming period 2014-2020. The intention expressed by the European Commission and synthesized by Manola Peschieri is to keep on working in the same direction marked in the last years. According to Manola Peschieri, an interesting initiative like the European Language Label should be further developed.

The Workshop continued with a presentation entitled “The NELLIP network, a European project to promote quality in language learning” held by **Elisabetta Delle Donne**, Pixel President and NELLIP Network coordinator.

Elisabetta Delle Donne briefly described the NELLIP project, whose activities are carried out in cooperation by 11 organizations, based in 9 different European countries. The project partnership includes: universities, schools, training organizations as well as adult education institutions. The aim of the NELLIP network is to promote quality in language learning through the application of the quality criteria used to award the European Language Label. The NELLIP project has five main objectives: to review projects that were awarded the label, to identify case studies, to report on best practices, to promote the networking among language learning initiatives that were awarded the label and to produce quality guidelines. Several activities were carried out in the framework of the NELLIP project: the database of awarded projects (with more than 400 initiatives selected), the database of case studies (with a description of the context, the objectives, the approaches and the results), the best practices (selected initiatives to be used as benchmarks to refer to in the planning of quality language learning projects that may successfully apply for the European Language Label),





the Transnational Report on the Implementation of the European Language Label (a comparative analysis of how the European Language Label is organized and managed throughout Europe), the Guidelines on quality in language learning. In addition more than 80 language learning providers decided to enter the NELLIP network.

After this introductory part, the workshops participants split up in 3 different thematic groups focusing on and discussing about specific aspects of language learning and teaching (quality, innovation and networking). The main results achieved were presented by the experts involved and jointly discussed.

### **Thematic Group 1: Quality in Language Teaching and Learning**

Richard Rossner (EAQUALS, UK) moderated the first thematic group, addressed to quality in language teaching and learning, and presented the main results achieved. In language teaching and learning, it is important to achieve a balance between learners' needs, teachers and trainers' requests and curriculum objectives. According to the group participants, each lesson plan has several elements in common with a project: definition of specific aims; involvement of partners; engagement in the project; take-up and sustainability. The presence of those elements guarantees a qualitative education. But it is equally important to assess quality, by measuring outcomes, trying out the deliverables, and seeking for end users' feedback.

### **Thematic Group 2: Innovation in Teaching and Learning**

Anca Colibaba (EuroEd, Romania) and Maria Erotokritou (Hellenic National Agency, Greece) moderated the second thematic group, dedicated to innovation in teaching and learning. Anca Colibaba synthesized the main results achieved. First of all a definition of innovation, intended as an improvement and as a planned change, based on a real and practical intention to achieve it. According to the participants involved, it is necessary to search for a specific method conducting to innovation in teaching and learning. In this case, technology and ICTs – if well explained - may represent the best tools to be used in order to foster innovation, which can be measured in terms of impact. When innovation is used in connection with well definite priorities – at international, national or local level – the impact is performative. However, when facing innovation, a loss is inevitable because it is not possible to anticipate all the possible risks. But – according to the participants - it is possible to make innovation sustainable and to use it as a guarantee tool in the framework of teaching and learning initiatives.

### **Thematic Group 3: Networking among Language Learning Experts**

Alan Bruce (Universal Learning System, Ireland) and Lorenza Venturi (Italian National Agency, Italy) moderated the thematic group dedicated to networking, which is necessary for language learning and teaching. According to the participants in this thematic group, networking is important because it is built on a dialectical approach, on an enlightened selfishness, on critical reflection and curiosity which usually help in overcoming isolation. Networking means talking, linking, creating formal and informal associations, using social media as additional tools to share contents and ideas. In order to carry out networking activities it is important: to be proactive, to demonstrate interest in others' ideas and opinions, and to share best practices. Good networking is looking at best practices, is

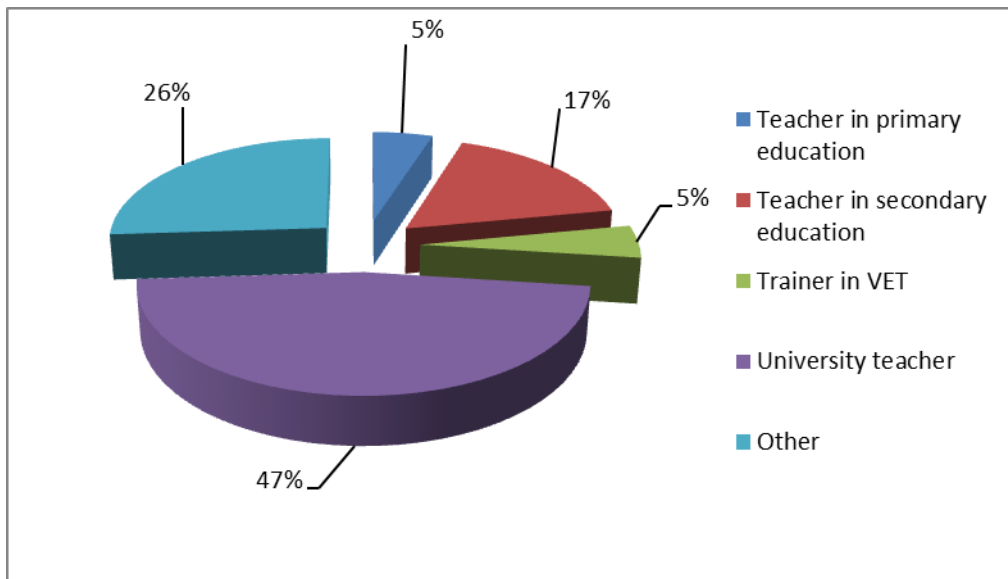


creating a net of motivated people and is looking forward to obtain practical answers: project promoters and National Agencies should take advantage from it.

The results achieved in the framework of the practical sessions were jointly discussed. Workshop participants were provided with an Official Certificate, attesting their participation in the Workshop and their active involvement in the NELLIP Network activities.

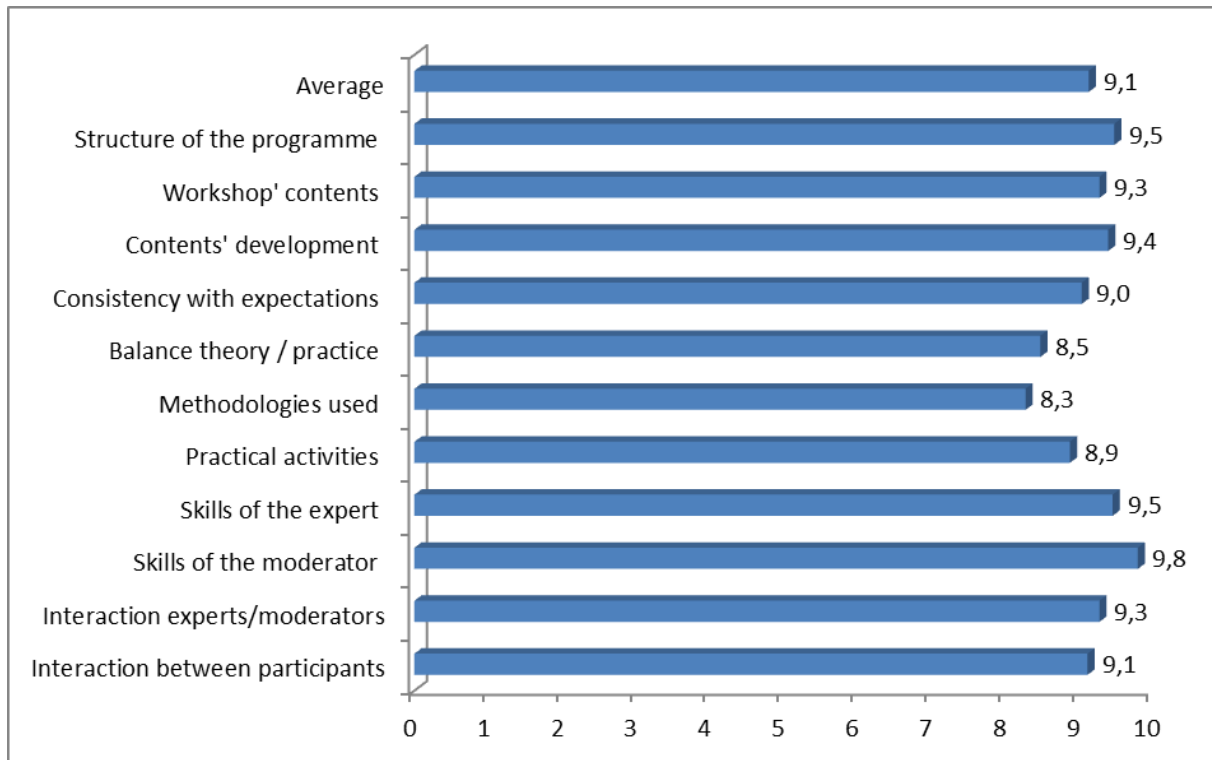
All the participants expressed their interest in this activity and filled in the evaluation questionnaire.

With reference to the professional details of the participants:



most of them (47%) were University teachers expert in language teaching. Teachers in secondary education were also well represented with the 17% of the total amount of the participants. Teachers in primary education and trainers in VET represented 5% of the attendees. The Workshop was indeed addressed to all the categories directly or indirectly involved in language learning and teaching: that is why the “other” category was also well present during the Workshop.

With reference to the level of satisfaction of the Workshop participants, the results were very positive.



The workshop participants highly appreciated the skills of the moderators (9.8 / 10) and of the experts involved (9.5 / 10). The structure of the workshop obtained a positive mark with 9.5 out of 10. What is important during a workshop is the level of involvement of the participants. On the occasion of the NELLIP Transnational Workshop participants were highly involved thanks to a good interaction between experts and moderators (9.3 / 10) as well as between participants (9.1 / 10). Balance between theory and practice has been well evaluated (8.5 / 10). Contents were appropriate (9.3 / 10), consistent with the initial expectations (9.0 / 10) and well developed (9.4).

The result is an excellent average mark of 9.1 / 10.