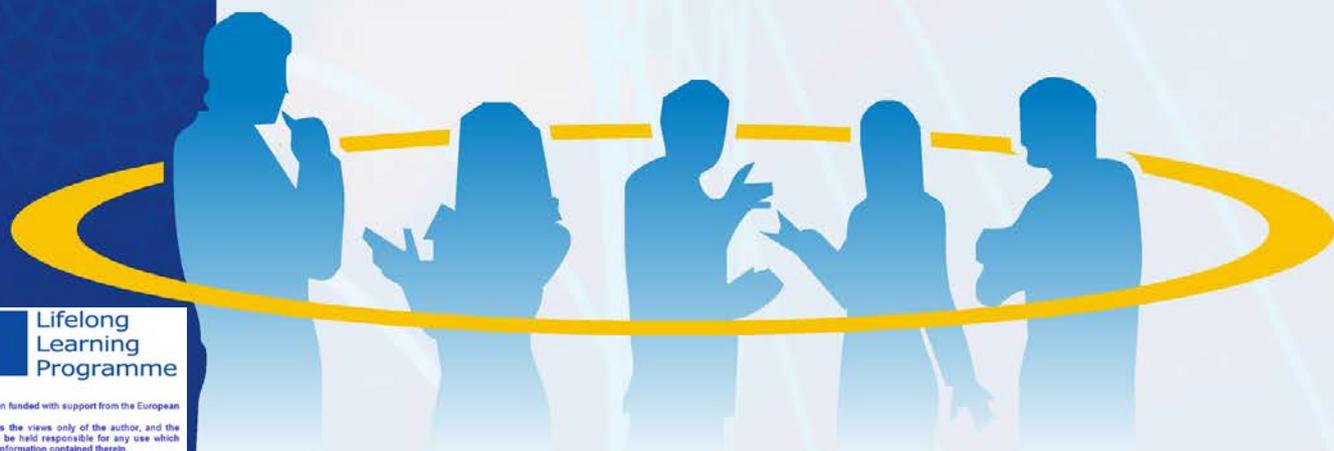




TRANSNATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL



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1. Foreword

The “European Language Label” (ELL) is the successful result of a pilot project called “European Label” launched by the European Commission (EC) in 1998 following the recommendations of the 1995 *White Paper on Teaching and Learning* (Objective 4: Innovative ways to learn languages). The initial aims were to identify and disseminate innovative projects in language teaching and learning at a European level. This project has shown great potential since the very beginning: even in its first year, nearly 150 projects were awarded the Label in the so-called “pioneer countries”. It was therefore entirely appropriate that in 2001 the decision was taken to create this Europe-wide initiative in its own right.

The Action Plan for language learning and linguistic diversity, approved by the Commission in 2003, proposed that the Label initiative be extended by “introducing in each country or region an annual prize for the individual having made the most progress in foreign language learning, and the best language teacher”. The aim of these two new activities (which were launched in about one third of the participating countries) was to acknowledge and publicise success stories related to language learning or teaching. The countries are free to define the nature of these awards: i.e. whether they are granted to renowned personalities acting as ambassadors for language learning or in order to recognize a particular contribution to languages and language learning.

Over the years the aims of the ELL have become more and more ambitious: the ELL now concerns every level of education and training, aims to highlight and reward innovative initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning in any phase of education and training, functions as a stimulus to exploit and disseminate results of initiatives in the field, and promote public interest in improving language skills as well. The increasingly ambitious goals of the ELL are therefore perfectly in line with the increasing significance of Multilingualism.

The importance of Multilingualism was already recognized in the 2002 conclusions of the European Council held in Barcelona in which the ambitious objective of “Mother Tongue + 2” was proclaimed: all citizens should have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills in two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. Since 2002, the ELL has contributed enormously to Multilingualism, with around 1900 projects and individuals awarded in the countries that have joined the initiative. These now number 33: 27 EU countries (Belgium involving three language communities: Dutch, French and German), Croatia (joining the European Union on 1st July 2013), + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

To find out more about these projects, you can consult the ELL database, which since January 2013 is available in all 23 EU languages. You can also find dynamic statistics per year and country, projects and individuals, as well as a “Label of the Day” section on each EU language page. This new multilingual database is the outcome of a two-year combined effort with the IT unit, underlining even more the importance of the ELL and the need to enhance its visibility.

There is a significant amount of work, engagement, commitment and enthusiasm behind the success of the European Language Label. Although implemented at national level, the European dimension of the projects has been fostered. It was therefore entirely natural, in 2012 – the year marking the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona objective – to highlight this dimension by creating the “European Language Label of the Labels” award, a competition organized at European level in which each country nominated one project among those awarded the label in the last decade that was considered the most appropriate to represent excellence and best practice. This award also meant EU recognition for all nominees by acknowledging the work done at national level to promote Multilingualism.



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The European Award Ceremony of the European Language Label took place during the conference "Multilingualism in Europe", a high-level event organised by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture around the European Day of Languages (26-28 September 2012) during the Cypriot Presidency in Limassol. This award also meant added value for the prestige and visibility of the ELL initiative.

2013 marks the end of the 7-year Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). The new 7-year programme that will bring us to 2020 contains recurrent keywords such as "innovative", "transferable", "creative", "original" – all criteria that have marked the ELL initiative since its very beginning, proving once again how extremely forward-looking and far-sighted the initiative has always been. We are very proud of the European Language Label and wish it many, many more successful years!

Manola Peschieri

Policy Officer and Coordinator of the European Language Label

European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture



2. Introduction

The aim of this report is to analyze the implementation, the achievements and trends of the European Language Label in Europe, taking into account 18 of the European countries involved in the initiative.

This report is based on the National Reports produced by the partners of the NELLIP network in the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, and UK.

Two approaches were used in the production of both the national reports and the transnational report.

Firstly, a top-down approach was adopted.

It was based on the involvement of the National Agencies in charge of the European Language Label in the 18 above-mentioned countries.

The aim of the top-down approach was to identify the steps taken in order to implement the European Language Label.

The first part of the report, based on the mentioned top down approach, includes: the identification of the institutions in charge of the European Language Label in the 18 countries, the description of the responsibilities assigned to those institutions, the organization of the Label campaigns, priorities and selection criteria, statistics about award-winning projects, and the evaluation and the follow-up of some of the award-winning projects.

Secondly, a bottom-up approach was adopted.

It was based on the involvement of the institutions that were awarded the European Language Label.

The aim of the bottom up approach was to follow up some projects that were awarded the European Language Label.

The second part of the report, based on the mentioned bottom-up approach, includes: the impact of the European Label on the award-winning projects, the dissemination and exploitation activities carried out by the project promoters, and recommendations made by the project promoters in order to improve the European Language Label initiative.

3. The European Language Label

The European Language Label is intended to highlight and reward innovative initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning as best practice to be disseminated at European level. The Label is open to all forms of education and training and aims to promote innovation in language teaching. By supporting innovative projects, the Label seeks to raise the standards of language teaching across Europe.

The European Language Label is coordinated by the European Commission, but it is managed by the Member States through National Agencies.

Projects are selected according to criteria agreed at European level. Annual priorities are also identified both at European and national level.

The European Criteria¹ for the award of the ELL are as follows:

¹ Source: European Commission, *Multilingualism*. [Http://ec.europa.eu/languages/european-language-label/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/languages/european-language-label/index_en.htm)

- Initiatives should be **comprehensive** in their approach. Every element of the language project - from students to teachers, methods to materials - should ensure that the needs of the students are identified and met.
- Initiatives should provide an **added value** in their national context. This means a tangible improvement in teaching or learning of languages, either in terms of quantity or quality. "Quantity" might refer to the project stimulating the learning of several languages, particularly those that are less widely used, whereas "quality" might refer to the introduction of an improved methodology.
- Initiatives should **motivate** students and teachers to improve their language skills.
- Initiatives should be **original** and **creative**. They should introduce previously unknown approaches to language learning, but also make sure they are appropriate to the students concerned.
- Initiatives should have a **European emphasis**. They should be adapted to Europe's linguistic diversity and make use of this advantage - for example, by liaising with contacts across national borders. The initiatives should actively improve understanding between cultures by promoting language skills.
- Initiatives should be **transferable**. They might potentially be a source of inspiration for other language initiatives in different countries.

The European priorities in 2012-2013² are:

- Language learning based on the new technologies
- Multilingual classrooms

National priorities may also be established in participating countries. National priorities have to be in line with the European ones. Some countries do not establish national priorities but just refer to the European ones. National priorities, established by some of the national agencies (in line with the European priorities specified above for the period 2012-2013), are:

- Austria
National priorities are established every year.
In 2012, however, the National Agency decided not to organize a Label campaign and instead to carry out an assessment and further evaluation of the projects that were awarded the label in the past years.
- Belgium
The Wallonia national agency applies only the priorities established by the European Commission.
The 2012 national priorities established by the Flemish National Agency focus on: disadvantaged people, language awareness, communication and intercultural skills.
- Bulgaria
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.
- Czech Republic
The 2012 national priorities were: multilingual classrooms, language learning in vocational education, language learning for disadvantaged people
- Denmark
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.
- Estonia

² Source: European Commission, *Multilingualism*. [Http://ec.europa.eu/languages/documents/prior12_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/languages/documents/prior12_en.pdf)

In the period from 2002 to 2012, national priorities were the same as the European ones. Only once, in 2005, a national priority was added: culture through a language.

- Finland
The 2012 national priorities were: diversification and improvement of language studies.
- France
National priorities are: innovation, consistency with specific needs and transferability.
- Germany³
The 2012 national priority was: digital media in language learning.
- Iceland
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.
- Ireland
The 2012 national priority was: languages for employability and competitiveness.
- Italy
The 2012 national priorities were: fostering of language learning for the promotion of employment, promotion of CLIL, promotion of mobility (including virtual mobility) and intergenerational dialogue in the field of language learning.
- Lithuania
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.
- Portugal
The 2012 national priorities were: to promote early language teaching up to secondary and VET under a multicultural perspective and language learning by the general public with particular emphasis on senior citizens.
- Romania
The 2012 national priorities were: social inclusion and encouraging participation in language projects from target groups at risk from a socio-economic point of view.
- Spain
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.
- Sweden
Although there are no national priorities, the Swedish National Agency identifies, every year, priority areas. In 2012 these were: European dimension, students motivation, quality improvement, innovation and inspiration to others.
- United Kingdom
Only the priorities established by the European Commission are applied.

³ In Germany there are three national agencies in charge of the European Language Label, each agency is in charge of the label campaign every three years. PAD - Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister Pädagogischer Austauschdienst - was in charge of the 2011 Label Campaign; BIBB - Bildung für Europa Nationale Agentur beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - organized the 2012 label campaign and DAAD - Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – will be in charge of the organization of the Label campaign in 2013.

4. National Agencies in charge of the European Language Label in the Member States

The European Commission co-finances the national Label campaigns through operational agreements, under the Lifelong Learning Programme, with the National Agencies.

The table below presents the European National Agencies in charge of the European Language Label award system. Only the agencies that have implemented a specific web site dedicated to the European Language Label are listed.

Country	Name of the National Agency	Link to the web site dedicated to the European Language Labels	Language(s) of the web site
Austria	Europäisches Spracheninnovationsiegel (ESIS)	http://www.oesz.at/sub_main.php?page=bereich.php?bereich=2-tree=6	DE
Belgium	Agence Francophone pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie	http://www.aef-europe.be/index.php?Rub=aef&page=405	FR
	Europese Programma's voor Onderwijs, Opleiding en Samenwerking	http://www.epos-vlaanderen.be/?CategoryID=582	NL
	Agentur für europäische Bildungsprogramme VoG	http://www.dglive.be/agentur/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1529/2585_read-38011/	DE
Bulgaria	Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC)	http://hrdc.bg/eulabel	BG / EN
Czech Republic	National Agency for European Educational Programmes (NAEP)	http://www.naep.cz/index.php?a=view-project-folder&project_folder_id=86&	CS / EN
Denmark	Styrelsen for Universiteter og Internationalisering	http://fivu.dk/uddannelse-og-institutioner/tilskud-til-udlandsophold-og-internationalt-samarbejde/tilskudsprogrammer/den-europaeiske-sprogpris	DA
Estonia	Archimedes	http://www2.archimedes.ee/hkk/index.php?leht=294	EE
Finland	Finnish National Board of Education	http://www.oph.fi/opetushallitus/kansainvalinen_toiminta/european_label	FI
France	Agence Europe-Education-Formation France	http://www.europe-education-formation.fr/label-langues.php	FR
Germany	DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst	http://www.eu.daad.de/eu/europaeisches-sprachensiegel/13005.html	DE
	PAD Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister Pädagogischer Austauschdienst	http://www.kmk-pad.org/	DE
	BIBB Bildung für Europa Nationale Agentur beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung	www.na-bibb.de	DE
Iceland	Rannís	www.rannis.is	IS / EN
Italy	Isfol	http://www.labeleuropeolingue.it	IT / EN
	Indire	http://www.programmallp.it/labeleuropeolingue/	IT
Ireland	Léargas	http://www.leargas.ie/programme_main.php?prog_code=7019	EN
Lithuania	Education Exchanges Support	http://www.smpf.lt/lt/programos/europos_kalbu_z	LT

	Foundation	enklas	
Portugal	Agencia Nacional ProAlv	www.proalv.pt: http://pt-europa.proalv.pt/public/PortalRender.aspx?PageID=862ce7b4-c924-40fa-8ec7-5554e9a19318	PT
Romania	Agentia Nationala Pentru Programe Comunitare in Domeniul Educatiei si Formarii Profesionale	http://www.anpcdefp.ro/programe/label/index.html	RO
Spain	Organismo Autonomo Programas Educativos Europas	http://www.oapee.es/oapee/inicio/iniciativas/sello-europeo.html	ES
Sweden	Skolverket	www.skolverket.se/label	SV / EN
United Kingdom	The National Centre for Languages	http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/valuing_languages/european_language_label1.aspx	EN

5. The Label Campaigns

5.1. Introduction

Label Campaigns are organized by the National Agencies in the Member States.

Most countries, among the 18 member states involved in this report, organize the European Language Label campaigns every year.

There are, however, a few countries organizing the Label campaign every two years. These are: Belgium and Iceland.

In the framework of each label campaign, a public call for projects is announced at national level to seek applications for the European Language Label award from organizers of innovative projects and initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning.

Label Campaigns provide information about: the objectives of the Label, the annual European and national priorities, the selection criteria, the application procedure. They also provide guidance on the submission of the application.

Label Campaigns are organized at different moments of the year in each of the member states. Therefore deadlines for applications vary from country to country. In 2012, for example, in the United Kingdom the deadline for applying for the Label was 4 March 2012, in Ireland 30 March, in Slovakia 18 April, in the Czech Republic 5 May, in France 15 May, in Italy 1 June, in Sweden 20 August etc.

Each National Agency may decide whether only institutions are eligible to apply for the European Language Label or if also individual persons may apply. The national agencies of the following countries have decided that not only institutions but also individuals may apply for the Label: Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

5.2. Promotion

The Multilingualism web site of the European Commission has a specific section dedicated to the European Language Label (http://ec.europa.eu/languages/european-language-label/index_en.htm). These web pages present the Label as well as the European criteria for awarding it. A link to the list of the national agencies responsible for the implementation of the label is also provided.

The European database of projects that have received the European Language Label since 1999 is available on-line. The database has recently been implemented and improved. It is now available in 23 languages. The database can be searched according to different criteria: year of the award, country, educational sector, pedagogical theme, and target language of the projects. These filtering criteria can also be combined. In 2012 the European Commission published a booklet entitled “*The European Language Label, Empowering People*”. The best projects that were awarded the Label are presented and thoroughly described.

The National Agencies undertake a significant action of promotion, information and dissemination of the opportunities offered by the European Language Label. The main strategies used for this purpose are:

- Publication of brochures, leaflets.
Brochures and leaflets presenting the European Language Label are published by the National Agencies in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, and UK.
The brochures provide information about the benefits offered by the European Language Label and present some of the projects that have been awarded the European Language Label. The brochures also aim to stimulate applications.
- Publication of newsletters.
These are published by the national agencies in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, and Italy. Newsletters provide information about the European Language Label, its benefits and the procedures for application within the national context.
- Publication of volumes, surveys and yearly reports.
These are published by the national agencies in Austria, Finland, and Italy.
The publications include: statistics and analysis regarding the number of applications submitted every year, the distribution per target groups, as well as a full list and descriptions of the winning projects.
- Advertisements and press releases.
Advertisements and press releases are published in the national and regional press and television, as well as in the specialized educational press. These are published by the national agencies in Estonia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Finland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
The internet is also used for promotion too in some cases. In Lithuania, for example, the strategy used to promote the European Language Label is to upload information about the winning projects in a very popular news portal: on this web site, users are asked to vote for the best project.
- Availability of web pages dedicated specifically to the European Language Label.
Specific web pages focusing on the Label have been set up by most of the national agencies (please check section 3 above for the list of the addresses of the national agencies' web pages dedicated to specifically to the European Language Label).
The dedicated web pages are hosted on the web site of the national agency, or on a separate specific web site. These web pages provide information about the objectives and benefits offered by the European Language Label. Some also provide information about European policies on multilingualism and give access to national databases of projects that have won the European Language Label; others offer a selection of the best winning projects, or publications on the label. Some of these web pages are available in two or more languages.
The web pages presenting the Label developed by national agencies are rather different from one another in terms of quantity, quality and updating of contents.
- Promotion on social networks.

Some of the national agencies, for example Sweden and Romania, promote the information on the European Language Label on their social network's pages. A Facebook Group named the European Language Label Community is available at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/European-Language-Label-Community/215139538561808>.

- Organization of and participation in seminars, fairs, conferences and workshops.
These are organized by the national agencies in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Spain, Sweden, and UK.
The aim of the events is to disseminate the information about projects and initiatives that were awarded the European Language Label. On the occasion of these events, the project promoters have the opportunity to present each of their initiatives, to meet each other and to share their experiences.
Organization of preparatory seminars addressed to potential European Language Label applicants
These are organized by the National Agencies in Belgium and Spain. In the framework of these seminars potential applicants for the European Language Label receive all the necessary information in order to complete their applications.
- Promotion through the labelled projects and initiatives from previous years. This strategy is used, for example, by the national agencies in Bulgaria and Czech Republic.

5.3. Selection of winning projects

National agencies have implemented a series of procedures for assessing applications for the ELL award:

- Checking the eligibility of applications. This can be summarized in the two following main steps: submitting the application by the deadline indicated in the call for application and using the application form required.
- Appointment of evaluation committees. Members of evaluation committees represent national expertise in the field of language teaching, learning and research. In the Member States, evaluation committees often comprise: school inspectors, representatives of teachers' unions, language teaching experts, publishers of textbooks for language teaching, representatives of local public bodies, representatives of national agencies, representatives of the relevant ministries, etc . The evaluation committee, in each Member State, often includes one or more experts from other countries, for example, representatives of cultural institutes of other countries.
- Organization and management of assessment days.
- Visit of the pre-selected projects by one member of the evaluation committee. The visit is only organized by some of the national agencies (e.g. the UK national agency)
- Drafting of the final minutes of the assessment meeting and of the list of winning projects.

It is interesting to notice that in the UK and Sweden most winning projects are not co-funded by the European Union; in Italy the background is completely different, as most winning projects are co-funded by the European Union. For the other countries, about half of the awarded projects are the result of funded, initiatives and half are not.

5.4. The Award Ceremony

The objective of this event is to guarantee a full valorization and a greater impact of the projects selected from throughout the country, through:

- the official public award of the ELL to the selected projects,
- public presentation of the projects that have received the award,

- the promotion of networking among the awarded projects and their promoters.

The Label ceremony is usually held between September and December throughout Europe, so as to bring all participating countries into line and have comparable data at the same time. It has to be underlined, however, that, as mentioned above, in some countries the Label campaign – and consequently the award ceremony - is organized every year and in other countries it is organized every two years.

Some of the Member States combine the Label ceremony with some other event of national interest — seminar, conference or exhibition — on the theme of language learning. For example, in France, the award ceremony is usually organized to coincide with the main language related event organized in the country. In the UK it takes place on the European Day of Languages (26th September) or as close to that date as possible.

In some countries, there have been joint award ceremonies. For example, in 2009, the award ceremony organized by the German National Agency took place in Bonn and the German-speaking Community of Belgium participated, along with their Ministry of Education and representatives of their award-winning projects. Two years later, the cooperation was extended and Austria was included: the awards to the German, Austrian and Belgian (German-speaking Community) projects were presented in Vienna, in Austria. The reason for this is to emphasize the European-wide nature of the awards, to enhance their visibility and the Label's transferability.

The coordinators of the winning projects - throughout Europe - receive an official certificate and the right to display the logo of the European Language Label, with an indication of the relevant year, on the information materials related to the initiative (e.g. web site, brochures etc.).

In some countries, the award of the Label, besides providing the winners with the mentioned certificate, is combined with national prizes.

The prizes offered at national level are:

- Austria
A financial award of 750 euro.
- Belgium
The Wallonia National Agency awards purchase vouchers for pedagogical and educational computer based materials.
The Flemish National Agency awards a glass trophy and cash prizes (i.e. 1000 euro, 600 euro and 300 euro to the first three finalists).
- Bulgaria
The Bulgarian Agency provides additional awards for the first three places in the competitions (400 euro for the first finalist and 150 euro for the , 2nd and 3rd finalists).
- Czech Republic
Financial awards.
- Denmark
A travel grant: the grant is intended to support travelling abroad to gain new knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of language teaching in Denmark. It can be used as a support to attend conferences, study visits, meetings and training abroad.

- Estonia
Financial awards: the amount depends on the number of winners and does not usually exceed 1000 euro.
- Finland
Financial awards: for the Label 2000 euro. For the two Honorary Certificates, 750 euro, for the Language teacher of the year 1000 euro, for the Language learner of the year 750 euro.
- France
A trophy.
- Germany
Financial prize of 500 euro for every project awarded.
- Italy
A desk and wall brass plate with the inscription of the awarded project.
- Iceland
Educational token award, like books or software material.
- Ireland
An engraved crystal trophy and, where the budget permits, prize money may be awarded.
- Lithuania
Trophy and the title of "*The Language Ambassador of the Year*".
- Portugal
Desk brass plate and a wall brass plate with the inscription corresponding to the contest and the awarded project.
- Romania
No further award is offered.
- Spain
Financial awards: 4.000 euro as cash prize for the first best project, 2.000 euro as a cash prize for the second best project and 1.500 euro as a cash prize for the third best project.
- Sweden
Financial award of up to 3.000 euro (25.000 SEK). In 2012 three projects were awarded 2.350 euro (20.000 SEK) each.
- United Kingdom
Financial award of 2.360 euro (£2,000) which in 2012 was sponsored by the Mary Glasgow Language Trust. As well as individual language prizes which can be cash or resources sponsored by cultural partners and publishers, in 2012 that was for example 470 euro (£400) cash for the best German project, 600 euro (£500) worth of resources for the primary winner from Eurotalk, 600 euro worth of resources from other publishers split between all winners, Italian and Spanish resources for individual projects etc.

6. Overview of European Language Label awards

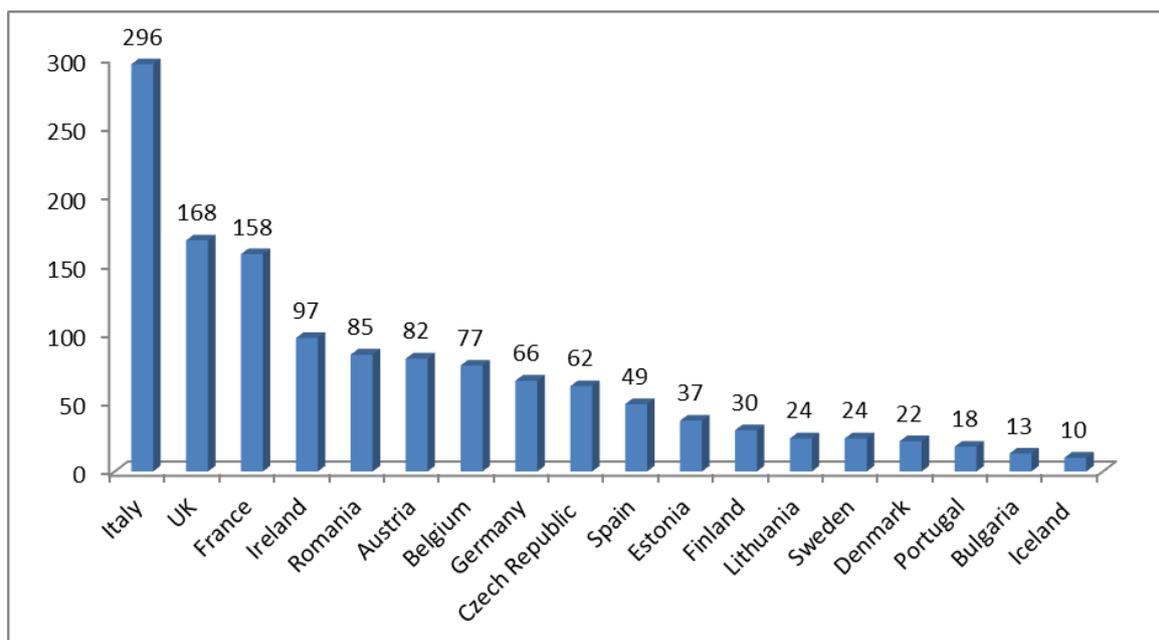
In the first 13 years of existence of the European Language Label (1999 - 2011), a total of 1770 projects have been awarded the Label. This data comes from the official European database⁴.

It should be emphasized, however, that this data, acquired in December 2012, is not final, as some of the national agencies are currently inserting and updating the data on the winning projects since 1999, and therefore the total number may change in the next months.

For up-to-date information, it is best to check directly the European database at: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>.

It has to be noted, however, that also on the official European database, the information on the number of winning projects is, in the case of a few countries, incomplete. This is because some projects that were awarded the European Language Label were not uploaded on the database by the national agencies, or because they had to be removed due to the fact that their description was not available in English.

According to the data available in December 2012, a total of 1318 projects have been awarded the Label in the last thirteen years, in the 18 countries that were analyzed by the NELLIP team in the framework of this report. As it can be seen from the graph⁵ below, the highest number of awards has been made respectively by: Italy, United Kingdom, France, Ireland and Romania.



Labeled projects by country in the period 1999-2011⁶ in the 18 countries covered by this Report (statistical data acquired in December 2012)

As far as the number of awarded projects per year is concerned, the graph⁷ below shows that the highest number of awards - in the 18 countries analyzed in this report- were made in 1999.

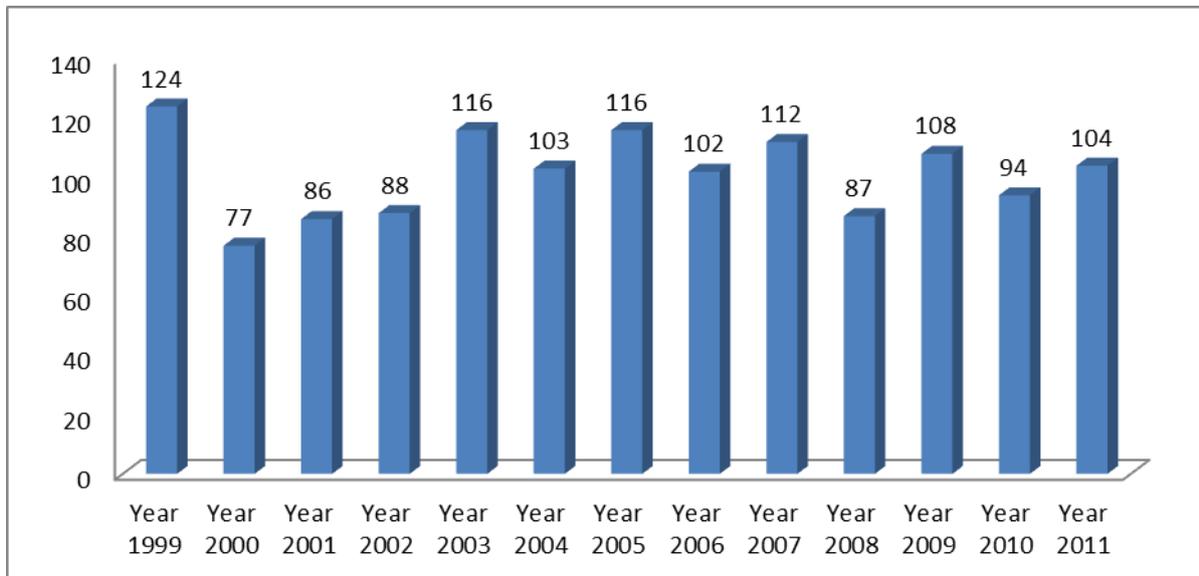
⁴ Source: European Commission, Multilingualism. Project database of the European Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>. Data acquired in December 2012.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Id.

In recent years the total number of awarded projects has been very similar, i.e. between 87 and 108 projects. This may also be related to the decision by some of the national agencies, for example the one in Austria, to limit the number of winning projects



Labeled projects by year in the period 1999-2011 in the 18 countries covered by this Report (statistical data acquired in December 2012)

The graph⁸ below shows the educational sectors the winning projects relate to in the 18 countries covered by this Report.

Most of the winning projects focus on the school education sector. A total of 1016 European Language Labels were awarded to projects addressing the school sector including secondary school (653 winning projects) and primary school (363 winning projects).

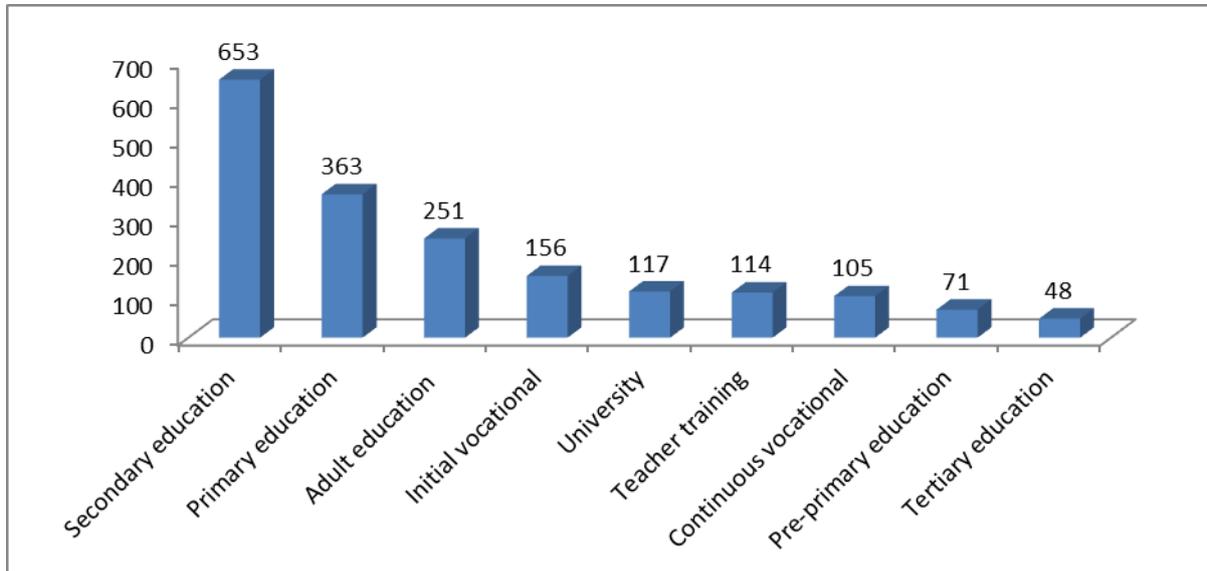
The second highest number of awards was for projects that focused on the vocational education and training sector. A total of 301 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the field of both initial (156 awards) and continuous (105 awards) vocational education and training.

The third highest number of awards was for projects in adult education (251 projects were awarded the European language Label).

The fourth highest number of awards, 117 in total, went to projects in higher education. It is interesting to compare the number of projects awarded the European Language Label in the school education sector (1016) and in higher education (117). The number of winning projects in the higher education sector is only about one tenth of those in the school sector, presumably because the number of applications was far lower.

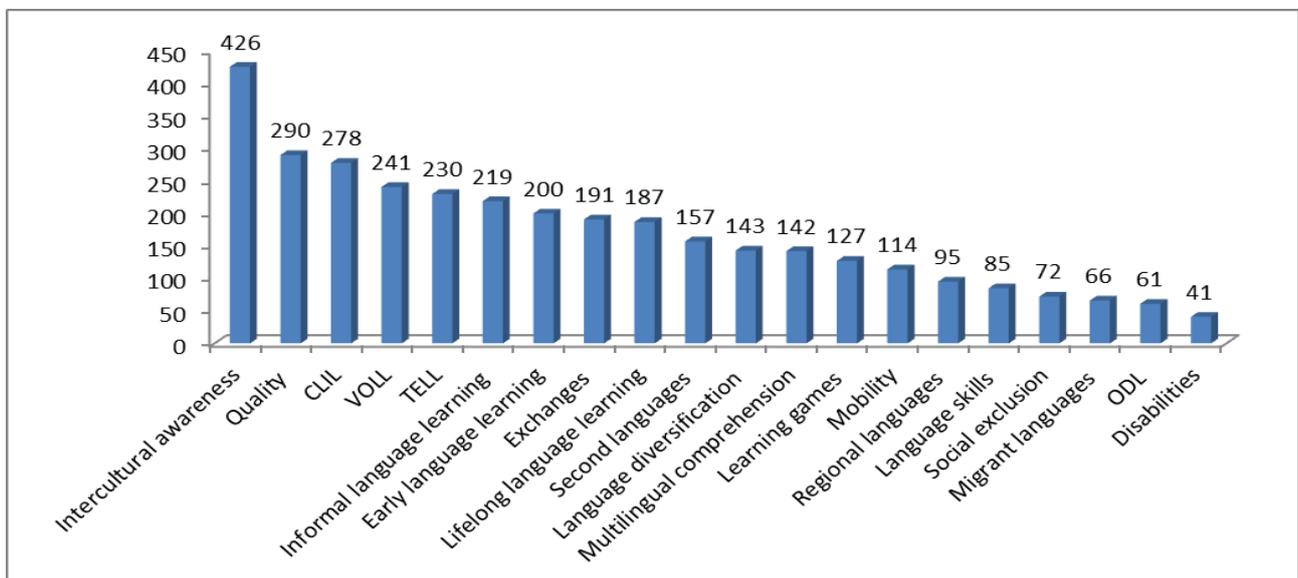
Even fewer winning projects focused on teacher training (114 projects), continuous vocational training (105 projects), pre-primary education (71 projects) and tertiary training (48 projects). These sectors are under-represented sector as compared to those mentioned above.

⁸ *Ibid.*



Labeled projects by educational sectors in the period 1999-2011 in the 18 countries covered by this Report (statistical data acquired in December 2012)

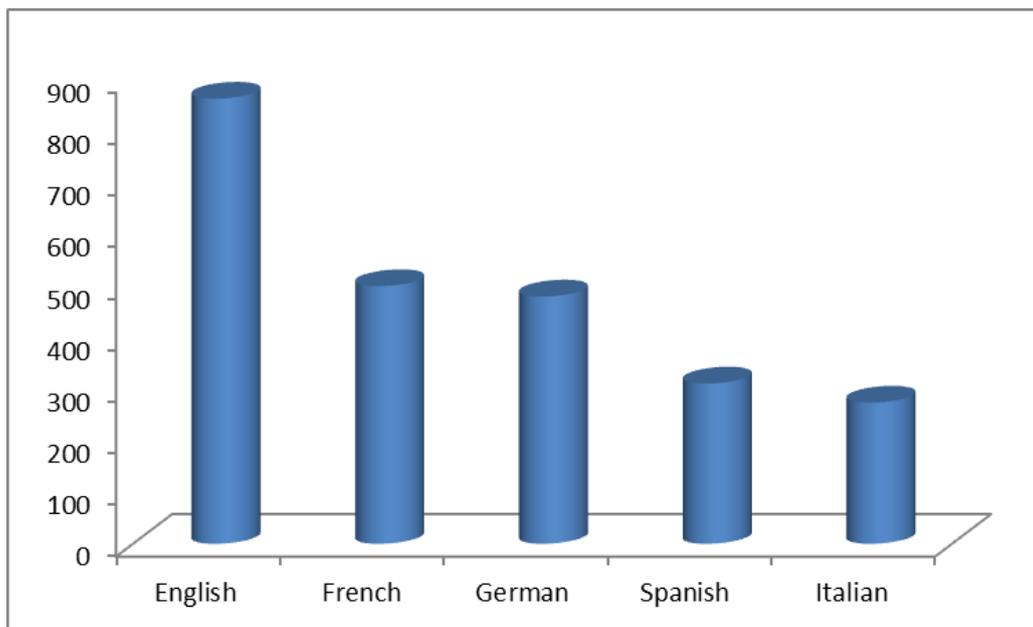
The graph⁹ below shows the main thematic areas of the winning projects. The majority of projects deal with intercultural awareness (426), quality issues (290), CLIL (278), VOLL i.e. vocationally oriented language learning (241), TELL i.e. technology enhanced language learning (230), as well as informal and early language learning (219 and 200 winning projects respectively).



Labeled projects by thematic area in the period 1999-2011 in the 18 countries covered by this Report (statistical data acquired in December 2012)

⁹ Id.

Finally, the graph¹⁰ below shows the languages the winning projects addressed in the 18 countries analyzed by the NELLIP team. Unsurprisingly, most of them focus on: English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. A further analysis shows that several national projects are addressed to the “neighbor language” for historical, geographical and lexical reasons (e.g. Lithuanian projects addressing the learning of Estonian). Finally, the national language plays a strategic role as a support language when teaching a foreign language, or as a main element for the social inclusion of foreign/immigrant people. However, some countries such as the UK do not accept applications concerning projects relating to the national language.



The languages most frequently focused in labeled projects in the period 1999-2011 in the 18 countries covered by this Report (statistical data acquired in December 2012)

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the statistical data reported here were those available on the European Database for the Language Label in December 2012 when the updating of the database by the National Agencies was in progress.

The European database at: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/label/index.cfm> should be consulted in order to access up-to-date statistical information.

7. Evaluation carried out by the NELLIP Network

7.1. Assessment of Statistical Data

Based on the statistical data referred to above, some general observations can be made about the 18 countries analyzed by the NELLIP team:

- The highest number of European Language Labels were made respectively by: Italy, United Kingdom, France, Ireland and Romania.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

- The majority of awarded projects focused on compulsory education, i.e. primary and secondary schools. The second highest number of projects awarded the European Language Label were those addressing the vocational education and training sector.
- Adult education performed well in the Northern European countries (e.g. Sweden, Norway, and Germany) in line with the attention given in these countries to the welfare system, while fewer projects in the field of adult education were awarded the European Language Label in Southern Europe.

It would be desirable to secure greater involvement of the higher education and in-service teachers training sectors in the European Language Label, because, as key players in the field of language learning, they are under-represented compared to the other sectors.

It is interesting to underline the consistency among the thematic areas of the projects that were awarded the European Language Label and the current European political priorities in the field of language learning indicated by the analysis carried out by the NELLIP¹¹ team on the basis of the official documents¹² published on the European Commission's web site.

European language policies aim to protect linguistic diversity and promote knowledge of languages. The key documents related to Languages policies are:

- *New framework strategy for multilingualism (2005)*
- *Online consultation on multilingualism (2007)*
- *EU strategy for multilingualism (2008)*
- *Inventory of EU actions in the field of multilingualism (2008)*
- *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment (2008)*
- *Strategic framework for cooperation on education and training (2009)*
- *The Council's Conclusions on Language Competences to Enhance Mobility (2011)*

These key documents outline the current political priorities of the European Commission in the field of language learning.

Below an analysis of the numbers of winning projects that are consistent with current – as in 2012 - political priorities for language learning.

- Political priority: the enhancement of quality in language learning.
290 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the area of *raising quality*.
- Political priority: language learning for specific purposes.
241 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the field of *VOLL, vocationally oriented language learning*.
- Political priority: new approaches to language teaching and learning.
230 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the field of *TELL . technology enhanced language learning*.
- Political Priority: recognition and validation of language skills acquired through non formal and informal learning
219 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the area of *informal language learning*

¹¹ Source: The NELLIP Portal at: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/PP_index.php

¹² Sources: European Commission, Multilingualism, at: http://ec.europa.eu/languages/library/key-documents_type_en.htm

- Political priority: supporting mobility for language learning.
191 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the field of *language exchanges* and 114 projects in the field of *languages for mobility*.
- Political priority: teacher training.
157 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the in the field of *teaching second or foreign languages*.
- Political Priority: promotion of multilingualism.
142 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the area of *multilingual comprehension*.
- Political Priority: the promotion of less widely used languages.
95 projects were awarded the European Language Label in the area of *cultural awareness of regional/minority languages*.

Due to the inconsistency of available data, it is not at present possible to assess how many of the projects that were awarded the European Language Label are in line with the following political priorities:

- tools for monitoring progress in language learning
- evaluation of performance in language teaching
- implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)
- promotion of links between vocational education and training (VET) qualifications and the CEFR

7.2. Case Studies

The NELLIP network identified, in cooperation with the National Agencies in charge of the European Language Label, Case Studies among the projects that were awarded the Label.

The selection criteria was mainly based on the consistency of the awarded projects with the current political priorities¹³ of the European Commission in the field of language learning.

A total of 201 case studies¹⁴ have been identified.

These were selected as they were considered by the National Agencies good practice projects. The objectives and results of the selected case studies are also consistent with some of 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 NELLIP national teams, in order to collect more information about the methodology applied. The results of the 201 interviews carried out are available on the NELLIP Network web portal at the Case Studies section¹⁵.

Among the current political priorities mentioned, the ones mostly referred to 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 two annual priorities¹⁶ defined for the European Language Label by the European Commission, with a specific reference to the ones for 2012-2013.

¹³ Please see: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/PP_index.php

¹⁴ Please see the NELLIP Network Portal at: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_lista.php

¹⁵ Please see: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_lista.php

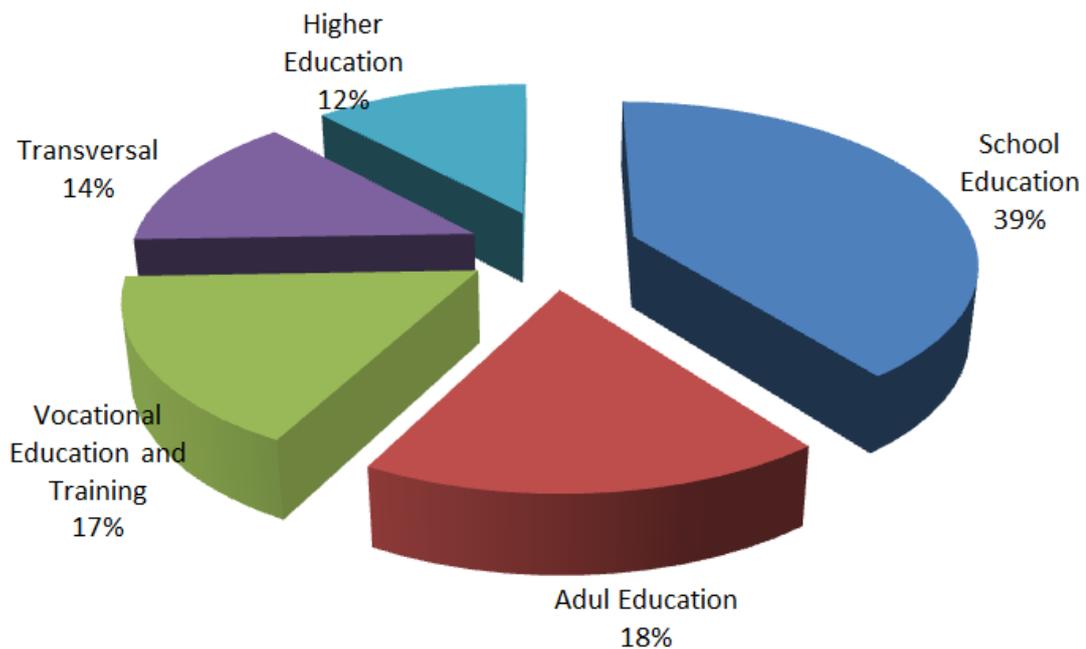
¹⁶ Please check page 7 of this report.

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.

The following graph¹⁷ represents the distribution of the 201 case studies according to the educational sector. The majority of case studies relate to the school education sector (39% of the total case studies), followed by the adult education (18%), and vocational education and training sectors (17% of the total case studies). Few of the case studies are related to the higher education and to transversal sectors (i.e. address more than one sector at the same time).

Once again, the data collected demonstrates the need to focus on the greater involvement of the higher education sector, so as to make it aware of the benefits and opportunities related to the European Language Label award.



The NELLIP case studies by educational sectors

¹⁷ Source: NELLIP Network Portal at: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_lista.php

8. Impact and Exploitation of the European Language Label as Assessed by the NELLIP Team

8.1 Impact

The analysis of the 201 case studies¹⁸ in the 18 European countries involved in the NELLIP network, and the interviews with the coordinators of the 201 selected projects, yielded insights into the motivation of the institutions applying for the European Language Label. The case studies also analyzed the impact of the European Language Label on the winning projects.

8.2 Expectations

Most of the awarded coordinators decided to submit their application to the European Language Label in order to:

- obtain official and European recognition of the project's quality;
- ensure greater visibility to the project and the organizations;
- increase motivation of staff involved in the development of the project;
- enhance the sustainability of the project;
- share a good practice;
- create transnational partnerships and cooperation.

8.3 Expectations met

The European Language Label meets the following promoters' expectations because achieving the award had a number of benefits.

- It signaled official European recognition of the project's quality.
The European Language Label is used as a quality label to demonstrate the value of the initiative.
- It promoted the visibility of the project and of the coordinating institution.
In Austria, Sweden and United Kingdom, the media show an interest in the winning projects. Some of the Austrian and Romanian promoters of the projects awarded the Label are now providing guidance and support to organizers of future projects.
Finally, for some of the Romanian schools, having the European Language Label logo displayed on their web site, helped to acquire more student enrollments as their families were interested in European cooperation and the logo was for them a demonstration of the European commitment of the school.
- It enhanced the motivation of the project promoters, and increased motivation of staff involved in the development of the project, as their work and commitment received European recognition.

8.4 Expectation partially met

The European Language Label award only partially meets the following expectations of promoters.

- It partially enhanced the sustainability of the projects mainly because a labeled project may have better follow-up opportunities in terms of access to public funding. Some of the labeled projects

¹⁸ Please see the NELLIP Network Portal at: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_lista.php

indeed successfully applied for further European / national public funding. For example, in Italy some of the labeled projects were funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme – Leonardo da Vinci – TOI (transfer of innovation). However, most of the awarded projects struggled to continue to exist after the end of the funding period and the Label did not contribute to the identification of further funding to continue the activity (apart from the public funding mentioned above). No interest was expressed by the language learning industry (e.g. publishers) in the winning projects that were selected for the case studies (i.e. the best ones).

- It partially contributed to the sharing of good practice mainly in the framework of official national and transnational events (for example fairs to promote good practice in the field of language learning) organized by either the national agencies or the European Commission. However, apart from these official events the promoters of awarded projects felt that the opportunities for sharing good practices were limited.

8.5 Expectation not fulfilled

The European Language Label did not meet a relevant expectation of project promoters that were selected for the case studies. This is related to their willingness to establish transnational partnership thanks to the award of the label. The Label indeed did not contribute to the creation of transnational partnerships.

The opportunity to create transnational networks is still poor for the promoters of initiatives awarded the European Language Label; this is an aspect that should be taken into account especially considering this is a European Label.

It has to be noted, however, that Sweden and Lithuania are exceptions, as the promoters of the selected case studies state that there was a slight increase in transnational cooperation initiatives following the award of the Label, as they were invited to join European projects by other promoters.

9. Recommendations

The coordinators of the 201 projects that were awarded the Label and that were the subjects of the case studies in the 18 countries involved in this report, were asked to make recommendations for future applicants to the European Language Label. The purpose was to promote a peer to peer approach, where successful applicants for the European Language Label provide suggestions to future applicants on how to develop a quality project that might successfully apply for the European Language Label.

Also, the promoters of projects that awarded the Label were asked to provide their feedback to the bodies in charge of the Label (i.e. the national agencies and the European Commission).

9.1 Strengths of the European Language Label

The strengths of the European Language Label emerging from this report include the following elements.

- It provides an official and European recognition of a project's quality. It is considered as an assessment and confirmation of the quality of the initiative.
- It ensures a greater visibility for the project and the institutions. For example, following the awarding of the label the coordinating institution may receive more students' enrollments
- It enhances the motivation of the project promoters and of the staff involved in the project.
- It enhances the sustainability of the projects mainly because the Label contributed to the successful development of the project into new Transfer of Innovation projects (funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme – Leonardo da Vinci – TOI). However, most of the labeled projects struggled to continue after the end of the funding period. There are exceptions, though: for example, a few Italian projects are still continuing and are being built on in several European countries.

- It contributes to the sharing of good practice developed in winning projects, mainly through national and transnational events (for example fairs in the field of language learning) organized by either the national agencies or the European Commission. Apart from these official events, the promoters of labeled projects felt that the opportunities for sharing good practice were limited.

9.2 Weaknesses of the European Language Label

The weaknesses of the European Language Label identified in preparing this report include the following elements.

- It is not sufficiently well known even among language learning providers and experts.
- The label's logo is often not recognized even by experts in language learning. This may also be due to the fact that different logos are used in different countries and contexts.
- It is not sufficiently clear what the benefits of receiving the European Language Label are
- It provides very limited opportunities to create transnational partnerships. This is an aspect that should be taken into account considering that we are dealing with a European label.

9.3. Recommendations for further development of the European Language Label

The following recommendations for further development of the European Language Label focus on:

- Ensuring greater visibility of the European Language Label among, first of all, language learning providers and experts. This could be done, among other things, implementing the following initiatives.
 - A targeted information strategy based on, for example, the presentation of the European Language Label at international events on language learning.
 - The publication of articles on the European Language Label in specialized press both in print and online.
 - Providing greater visibility for the European Language Label on the web site of the European Commission.
 - The inclusion of a link to the European Language Label pages in the main menu of the Home Pages of the national agencies' websites.
 - Asking organizations who won the ELL to include a link to the European Language Label page on their own website.
 - Ensuring only one logo for the European Language Label at transnational level.
 - Making use of the social networks developed specifically by/for language learning providers.
 - Developing a European Language Label library at European level containing the most relevant products that are still used by the institutions that developed them and/or by other institutions or target groups (it would involve defining what constitutes a "relevant" product, checking at least which labeled project websites are still functioning). This may be a further implementation of the existing Project database of the European Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning ([Http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm)).
- The identification of strategies to make the acquisition of the European language Label more appealing for language learning experts, language teaching organizations and language departments.
- Raising awareness about the European Language Label's meaning and impact. In order to do this the information about the European Language Label should also include:

- A clear description of the quality criteria attached to the Label;
 - The benefits related to receiving the award. In relation to this, the 201 case studies¹⁹ developed by the NELLIP Network might be used to exemplify best practice as far as the benefits of the European Language Labels are concerned.
- Offering coordinators of projects that were awarded the European Language Label opportunities for transnational networking, exchanges and the sharing of experiences. This can be done, for example, through the organization of annual transnational events where the sharing of best practice in project design and implementation is encouraged, as well as transnational networking among the project promoters. The NELLIP network is also contributing to this objective as it is currently establishing a transnational network of promoters of projects that were awarded the European Language Label.
 - Raising awareness within the language learning industry (e.g. specialized publishers) about the quality attached to the European Language Label so as to encourage them to contribute to the further development of the labeled projects.

9.4 Development of high quality projects that can successfully apply for the European Language Label

According to the promoters of the awarded projects, in order to plan and implement a high quality language project that can successfully apply for the European Language Label, the following elements should be taken into account.

- Start with direct involvement of the target group. The project can only be successful if it addresses real needs. The final beneficiaries should be involved in the definition of the project objectives and activities so that the intended outcomes are consistent with their expectations.
- Take into account what exists already, i.e. do not re-invent the wheel, but rather build on and further develop existing quality products and methods for language teaching and learning (for example making reference to projects that were awarded the European Language Label).
- Concentrate on the innovative aspects of what is being developed and on how the project will make a difference for teachers and students.
- Take into account some of the criteria used in awarding the Label, for example innovation and the transferability when developing the language project.
- Prepare a clear description of the product or method for the benefit of the end users, stating clearly who the product/method is aimed to, what its objectives are, what the benefits for users will be etc.
- Carry out a piloting and assessment of the deliverables produced and implement corrective action that takes into account the feedback of those involved in the piloting.
- Involve public bodies and organizations that can support the project's sustainability.

10 Conclusions

By matching the quality criteria used in awarding the European Language Label and the current European political priorities in the field of language learning²⁰, the NELLIP team in cooperation with the relevant national agencies selected examples of good practice in language learning initiatives that had been awarded the European Language Label.

¹⁹ Please see the NELLIP Network Portal at: http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_lista.php

²⁰ Source: European Commission, Multilingualism, at: http://ec.europa.eu/languages/languages-of-europe/index_en.htm

The analysis of the selected case studies demonstrates that most of the project coordinators 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.

The main strengths of the European Language Label are the following.

- It enhances the motivation of the project promoters.
- It is considered as a confirmation of the quality of the initiative.
- It contributes to the visibility of the awarded projects.
- It may contribute to the sustainability of the awarded projects.

The main weaknesses of the European Language Label are related to the following elements.

- The Label is not sufficiently known and recognized, not even among language learning providers and experts.
- The benefits of receiving the European Language Label are not clear to potential applicants.
- The Label has provided, so far, limited opportunities to create transnational partnerships.

A strategy for the further development of the European Language Label should therefore be based on the following initiatives.

- Enhancing the visibility of the European Language Label, first of all, among language learning providers and experts.
- Raising awareness about the European Language Label's meaning and potential impact.
- Improving opportunities for transnational networking, exchanges and sharing among coordinators of labeled projects.
- Ensuring use of a single – recognizable - logo for the European Language Label.

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