

The European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe

Promoting excellence in language education



Our vision

A Europe committed to linguistic and cultural diversity, where the key role of quality language education in achieving intercultural dialogue, democratic citizenship and social cohesion is recognised and supported.



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Why quality language education matters	2
Languages and the Council of Europe	3
The ECML in brief	4
Thematic areas	6
Programme	10
Our networks	14
Making an impact	16
Services and resources	20
What makes us unique	22
European Day of Languages	24

Why quality language education matters

Contemporary European societies are characterised and enriched by linguistic and cultural diversity, by migration and mobility. However we only truly value and treasure these characteristics by recognising and responding to the associated challenges.

Language education is key: the provision of lifelong, quality language education supports not only educational and professional success, but personal development and a sense of self-worth, all of which help foster economic growth, democratic citizenship and social cohesion.



Languages and the Council of Europe



The Council of Europe values and promotes quality language education. Within the framework of the European Cultural Convention (1954), ratified by 49 states, it supports Europe's rich linguistic and cultural diversity via:

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

A minority language will only survive if it is used everywhere and not just at home. The Charter, therefore, obliges states* to actively promote the use of these languages in all domains of public life: education, courts, administration, media, culture, economic and social life, and transfrontier cooperation. The Council of Europe monitors that the Charter is applied in practice.

www.coe.int/minlang

The Language Policy Unit, Strasbourg, France

The Language Policy Unit (Strasbourg) implements intergovernmental medium-term programmes to support policy development in areas such as languages of schooling, the linguistic integration of adult migrants and plurilingual and intercultural education. It has published key tools such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR), the European Languages Portfolio (ELP) or the Autobiography of International Encounters (AIE).

www.coe.int/lang

The European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz, Austria

The ECML's role is to help its member states bridge the gap between policies and practice in language education.

www.ecml.at

*This only applies to states who have ratified the Charter

The ECML in brief

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) is an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe. It was established in Graz, Austria in 1994.

The ECML's mission is to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching and support its member states in the implementation of effective language education policies. It does so by working with decision-makers in member states and bringing together language experts to develop innovative, research-informed solutions to challenges in language education.

Through dialogue and exchange with relevant stakeholders and by drawing on the underlying values of the Council of Europe, the ECML is ideally equipped to act as a pioneering institution and a catalyst for reform in the teaching and learning of languages.

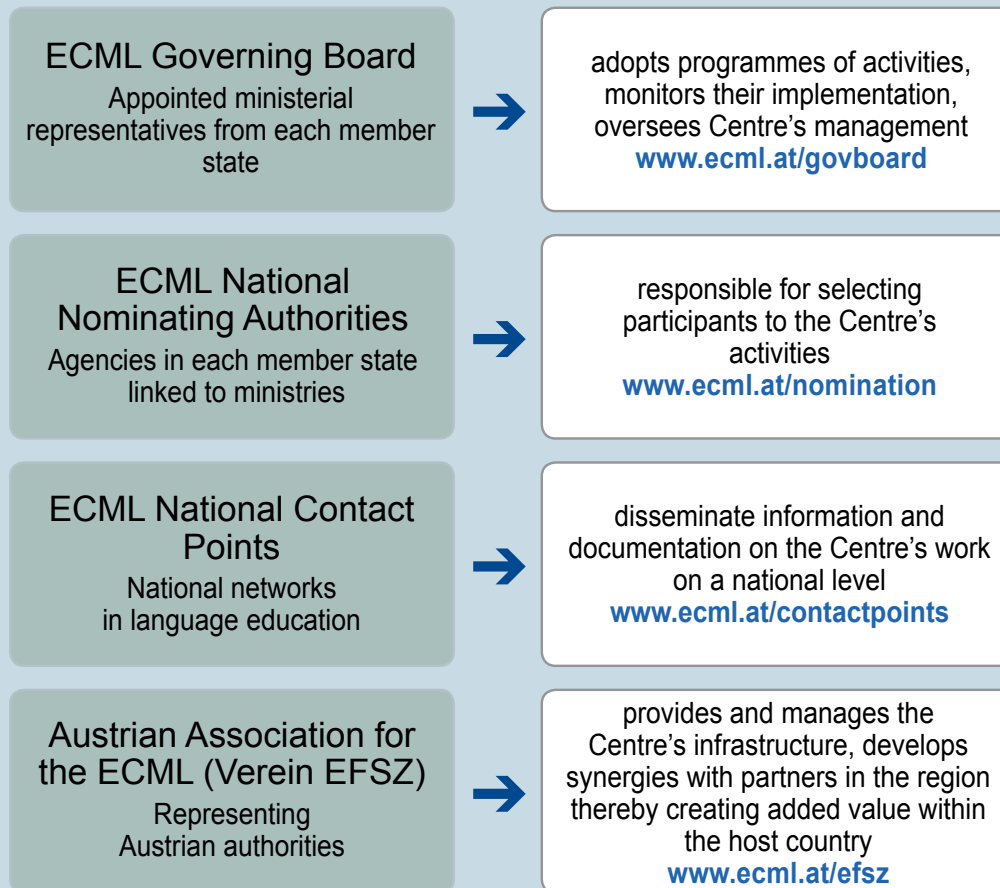
In cooperation with leading European specialists in the field, the ECML initiates and coordinates 4-year programmes which provide the framework for innovative projects and activities. These are embedded in ongoing policy developments and address key challenges, such as Languages for social cohesion (ECML programme 2004-2007), Empowering language professionals (ECML programme 2008-2011) or Learning through languages (ECML programme 2012-2015).



Structure of the ECML

The impact of the events of the Centre, initiated in Graz, reaches out to Europe and beyond. In each of the member states an ECML Contact Point promotes its activities and reinforces the dynamic network of the ECML at a national level.

This unique structure enables the Centre to serve as a European reference point for all who are interested in excellence in language education.



Thematic areas representing ECML expertise

Plurilingual education

Developing every individual's language repertoire and highlighting the social value of linguistic diversity lie at the core of ECML work. Plurilingual education challenges monolingual attitudes and embraces all language learning, e.g. mother-tongue/s, language/s of schooling, foreign languages, regional and minority languages. The ECML has a wide range of differentiated material in this area, suitable for all players from decision-makers to classroom practitioners.



Content and language integrated learning

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and bilingual education are increasingly popular across Europe. ECML supports CLIL teachers and teacher trainers not only to take account of and strengthen the language component in subject learning but to focus on the development of cognitive and academic literacies.

Early language learning

There is a growing trend across Europe to begin language learning in early primary or even in nursery. Professionals working at these levels require specialised training. The ECML offers a range of support materials and training modules to ensure that appropriate pedagogies, based on plurilingual and intercultural approaches, are embedded from the very beginning.

Employment and languages

Successful businesses recognise, value and develop the linguistic and intercultural skills of their employees. Past and present ECML projects focus on the importance of quality language training and seek to encourage both employees and employers to make more effective use of the multilingual and multicultural resources in the workplace.

Evaluation and assessment

Evaluation is not only about quality testing but about formative assessment, self-assessment and autonomous learning. ECML materials in this area largely draw on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and on the European Language Portfolio.

Migrant language education

Today Europe is home to millions of first, second and third generation immigrants as well as ethnic minority communities. The ECML has a number of publications and on-going projects dedicated to language education for migrants both at school and in the workplace, as well as advice and guidance for decision-makers and employers on how to benefit from this diversity.

Mobility and intercultural learning

Mobility programmes are essential if language learners and teachers are to further improve their language skills and develop their intercultural competences. The ECML provides resources to help learners and teachers make the most of mobility and ensure such programmes are truly meaningful.

New media in language education

The digital revolution has opened up enormous opportunities for language learning and teaching provided we combine technology with pedagogy. ECML training materials develop teachers' digital skills and critical awareness of online teaching resources so that these can be integrated effectively into classroom teaching.

“ With my undergraduate students, many of whom hope to become entrepreneurs, I hope to get them thinking about the value of languages (many still think that speaking English is enough!) and the types of systems that they might set up in their enterprises in the future to foster good practice in this area.

Silvija Andernovics, Riga Graduate School of Law, Latvia

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Signed languages

In most European countries signed languages are not used as languages of instruction. Work is currently being undertaken at the ECML to establish European standards for specifying proficiency levels for use in Deaf Studies so that teachers of signed languages, and in particular the profession of interpreters, can better respond to the needs of the community they serve.

Using the CEFR and the ELP

With the focus on the learner, the learning process and learning outcomes, these key reference tools of the Council of Europe have contributed to better quality language education across Europe and beyond. The ECML has significant expertise in supporting teachers and teacher-educators to understand the philosophy of learning, teaching and assessment on which these instruments are based, and to ensure their effective and efficient application in different learning contexts.



Programme

The ECML's programme is determined by its member states and reflects national priorities in language education.

How it works

The ECML operates 4-year programmes focusing on key educational issues requiring action.

The international project teams:

- cooperate with experts from over 30 European countries;
- provide training modules, guidelines and toolkits for teacher educators, equipping them to train others within their institutions and networks;
- provide training and professional development opportunities for multipliers;
- publish examples of good practice applicable in different contexts.



In addition to multilateral projects, the ECML offers bilateral support, tailored to the specific needs of the target group, through its Training and Consultancy for member states.

www.ecml.at/languagesforsocialcohesion

www.ecml.at/empoweringlanguageprofessionals

www.ecml.at/learningthroughlanguages

“ Language learning has been on the agenda of Austrian parents' associations through several years and the [ECML] project's intention and experience will inspire the ongoing national debates.

Johannes Theiner, Austrian and European Parents' Association

”

How to get involved

In the preparatory stages of each programme professionals in language education are invited to submit project proposals or express interest in cooperation. Selected projects are then supported by the ECML over the full programme term. Programme activities include network meetings and workshops in Graz where participants from all member states are invited to contribute to collaborative work. ECML participants act as 'ECML ambassadors' in their country, not only disseminating the work of the ECML among colleagues and national networks, but considering ways in which the work can be adapted to and enhanced by national developments.

How to benefit from programme activities

Professionals working in language education can contact project teams and follow the activities on the dedicated ECML programme website where regular updates are featured.

Language experts use this unique European platform to produce practical resources for key target groups such as for teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum developers and decision-makers.



Taking part in an ECML workshop

Individuals with a special interest in the subject area of a particular project are invited to take up contact with the ECML National Nominating Authority in their country (www.ecml.at/memberstates) so that they can be considered for participation in the corresponding project workshop.

Information on upcoming ECML events including workshop participant profiles can be found at www.ecml.at/calendar.

Programme evaluation

Continuous improvement is a key concern of the ECML. The Centre applies an evaluation scheme which promotes reflective practice in project management. The evaluation data serves as an indicator of the overall impact of the ECML programme on language education in Europe.



Training and consultancy for member states

This ECML activity format strengthens the Centre's cooperation with ministries and decision-makers in member states by responding in a targeted and bilateral way to specific national needs. The following themes for training and consultancy are currently available:



Plurilingual education

- Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials (FREPA)

The education of adult migrants

- Quality assurance in language and citizenship courses for adult migrants

Online technology for lifelong language education

- Supporting local networks of users of the European Language Portfolio through an e-platform
- Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning*

Testing and assessment

- Relating language examinations to the Common European Reference Levels of Language Proficiency*

* As part of a cooperation between the ECML and the European Commission

www.ecml.at/trainingandconsultancy

“ The training and consultancy format of activities meets national needs perfectly, allowing us to deal with specific topics that may have direct impact at national level.

Eva-Maria Schädler, Schulamt des Fürstentums Liechtenstein

”

Networking

By tapping into international and European networks as well as national networks in member states, the ECML is in constant dialogue with all those involved in language education, be they ministry representatives, researchers, inspectors, education administrators, teachers, teacher trainers, parents or community workers. In this way the ECML acts as a platform for gathering and disseminating information, for stimulating discussion and mutual learning, for the forging of new and enriching partnerships. The ECML is the only European institution in the field of language education to operate on so many different levels.

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress;
working together is success.” *Henry Ford*

Austria: host country of the ECML

To support the work of the ECML the host country has established the Austrian Association of the ECML, which operates at the interface between the Council of Europe and the Austrian authorities. In this way, extensive networks and synergies are developed with partners at local, regional and national level thereby creating added value within Austria.

www.ecml.at/verein

“ In Canada, beyond the teaching of the two official languages, French and English, many initiatives support the official dissemination and teaching of indigenous languages and international languages or heritage languages. Therefore, FREPA [A Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures] fits naturally in the Canadian context that promotes the consolidation of a second language and openness to plurilingualism.

*Laura Ambrosio, Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI),
University of Ottawa, Canada*

”

Professional Network Forum

The Professional Network Forum on Language Education is made up of 15 international associations and institutions that share common values and have complementary expertise in the field of language education. Under the auspices of the ECML, the members of the Forum have agreed to share their know-how and have committed themselves to working together on areas of common interest in the service of language education.



ACTFL

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages



AILA

International Association of Applied Linguistics



ALTE

Association of Language Testers in Europe



CercleS

European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education



EALTA

European Association for Language Testing and Assessment



EAQUALS

Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services



EFNIL

European Federation of National Institutions for Language



CEL/ELC

Conseil Européen pour les Langues / European Language Council



EPA

European Parents' Association



EUNIC

European Union National Institutes for Culture



FIPLV

Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes



IAM

International Association of Multilingualism



ICC

International Certificate Conference e.V.



OLBI

Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute of the University of Ottawa

Making an impact

Supporting our target groups:
Sample resources

For decision makers



The European Language Portfolio – A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects

The guide explains how to use the European Language Portfolio to support the learning and teaching of all foreign languages at all levels in a school. Case studies carried out in ten countries illustrate different approaches to ELP use.

<http://elp-wsu.ecml.at>, available in English and French



Relating language examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) – Highlights from the Manual

A user-friendly introduction to the process of linking examinations to the CEFR, supporting professionals with a stake in quality language testing who are not necessarily experts in testing and assessment.

<http://relex.ecml.at>, available in English and French



QualiTraining – A training guide for quality assurance in language education

Materials and activities to help put quality principles and procedures into practice. The publication is relevant both to individuals and teams/institutions in different contexts (primary and secondary education, university, language organisations).

<http://qualitraining.ecml.at>, available in English and German

For teacher trainers



European portfolio for student teachers of languages – A reflection tool for language teacher education (EPOSTL)

Provides an overview of didactic competences needed by teachers and a tool for self-assessment for student teachers and practising teachers. It includes checklists, as well as a dossier to prompt reflection.

<http://epostl.ecml.at>, available in Arabic, Croatian, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Russian and Spanish; adapted versions in Japanese



CARAP/FREPA – A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches

Presents a comprehensive list of descriptors (Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes) for plurilingual and intercultural education and opens ways for implementing pluralistic approaches in classrooms of all subjects.

<http://carap.ecml.at>, full versions available in Arabic, English, French, German, Italian; compact versions in other languages are available on the website



Regional/Minority languages in bi-/plurilingual education: languages from near and far

Classroom activities and didactic tools to promote linguistic diversity as well as plurilingual and pluricultural education. A teaching kit offers practical examples and recommendations for educational policy-makers.

<http://ebp-ici.ecml.at>, available in French

All publications can be downloaded free of charge at www.ecml.at/publications



Pathways through assessing, learning and teaching in the CEFR

The guide assists teacher educators to better understand the principles of the CEFR and to help teachers to link these principles with classroom practice.

<http://ecep.ecml.at>, available in English and French

For teachers



Plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in content-based teaching: A training kit

The training kit shows how the languages and cultures present in the classroom can be developed as a cross-curricular resource at primary and secondary level. It offers twenty-six content-based didactic units in English, French and Spanish for classroom use.

<http://combat.ecml.at>, available in English and French



Using the European Language Portfolio

The website promotes the pedagogical benefits of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) and facilitates its use in practice. Contents: downloadable examples of validated ELPs; information on how to use the ELP; practical materials in a range of national languages.

<http://elp.ecml.at>, available in French and German



Developing online teaching skills – Bite-size training for language professionals

The training kit for language teachers includes bite-size activities for online language teacher training, suggestions for reflective activities and collaborative tools for sharing 'self-training' experiences.

<http://dots.ecml.at>, <http://moodle.dots.ecml.at>, available in English and German



Enseignement précoce des langues par des contenus disciplinaires – Une approche interculturelle transdisciplinaire et basée sur l'autonomie de l'apprenant

Offers modules based on subject content for teaching and learning foreign languages in primary schools, including worksheets for students and teaching guidelines for primary teachers.

<http://eplc.ecml.at>, available in French and German



Guidelines for task-based university language testing

Shows how languages for specific purposes can be tested in the university context using a task-based approach, how such an approach to language testing can be applied in different ways and how task-based language tests are devised and administered.

<http://gult.ecml.at>, available in English and French



Promoting plurilingualism – Majority language in multilingual settings

Shows how plurilingualism can be fostered in majority language teaching in secondary schools, offers concrete examples for teacher development and strategies for change management, and is complemented by video classroom examples on the website.

<http://marille.ecml.at>, available in English and German



FREPA – Online teaching materials database

Offers teaching activities to develop intercultural and plurilingual competences at all levels of learning.

<http://carap.ecml.at/teachingmaterials>

“

I am currently piloting the proposed tools in this project in my own school.

”

Michelle Vella Gobey, St. Joseph School, Blata I-Bajda, Secretariat for Catholic Education, Haz-Zebbug, Malta

The resource centre

In addition to its reference library focusing on the methodology of language education visitors to the ECML can access the following special collections:

European Language Portfolios

The Council of Europe introduced the European Language Portfolio as a means of helping language learners to keep track of their language learning as it happens and to record their achievements and experience of using other languages and encountering other cultures. The ELP aims to foster the development of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. The ECML resource centre hosts a collection of over 80 ELPs validated by the Council of Europe, probably the largest collection in existence.



Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The result of over twenty years of research, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) was designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and

curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency. It is used throughout Europe but also in other continents – a collection of the CEFR in 39 languages, together with supporting publications and materials, is hosted in the ECML resource centre.

The John Trim Collection

The collection, consisting of over 3000 resources, reflects John Trim's groundbreaking work with the Council Europe on language education between 1971 – 97. Under John's guidance the Council of Europe's work became the single most influential factor in the reforms in course design, textbook authorship, testing and examinations, and teacher training that occurred throughout Europe. Among many highlights of the collection are the studies related to the development of the Threshold Levels and the Common European Framework of Reference. The collection represents a potential treasure trove for researchers!

Online / distance services

Information on expertise involved in ECML activities, national contacts, resources and developments

www.ecml.at/memberstates

All ECML project outputs are available both on the dedicated publications website as well as on the individual project websites

www.ecml.at/publications

www.ecml.at/programme

Annual calendar of activities of the ECML

www.ecml.at/calendar

International events calendar to promote events related to language education in Europe and beyond

www.ecml.at/

[internationaleventscalendar](http://www.ecml.at/internationaleventscalendar)

Experts database to promote expertise in specific areas of language education

www.ecml.at/expertsdatabase

Online library catalogue (bibliographical records)

www.ecml.at/librarycatalogue



The ECML in figures

In 2013 alone...

997

language professionals
took part in capacity
building activities
directly financed by the
ECML

92%

of survey respondents
“agreed” or “strongly
agreed” that the ECML
event they participated
in has contributed
to developing
their professional
competence

90%

of survey respondents
assessed the relevance
and clarity of the
professional content of
ECML publications as
“good” or “excellent”

139

language education
events were supported
by the ECML

80%

of survey respondents
evaluated the design,
up-to-dateness and
usefulness of ECML
publications as “good”
to “excellent”

5.6million

page views of the
ECML’s web platform

750

new subscribers to the
European Language
Gazette

91%

of survey respondents
“agreed” or “strongly
agreed” that the ECML
event they participated
in has highlighted
quality aspects of
language education
that they will promote
in their professional
environment

625

events organised in
45 countries were
registered in the
European Day of
Languages events
calendar

1.5million

page views of the
European Day of
Languages website

Why the work of the ECML matters

1

The ECML addresses **priorities in language education** identified by member states through developing practical project outputs, adaptable to different learning environments.

2

The ECML operates **at the cutting edge of developments** in areas such as content-based language education, pluralistic approaches to education, the application of ICT and testing and assessment.

3

The ECML offers **training and consultancy** and tools for competence and capacity-building at national level.

4

The ECML serves as a **European platform** for gathering and sharing knowledge, good practice and innovation.

5

The ECML builds and maintains sustainable **Europe-wide networks** of teacher educators, teachers, researchers and INGOs working in the field of language education.

6

The ECML provides rich and intellectually-challenging **professional development opportunities** for multipliers through international workshops, conferences and training activities.

7

The ECML offers **free access to all ECML publications** and online resources which are easily adaptable to different professional and learning environments.

8

The ECML **operates simultaneously on multiple levels**: with ministries, with language experts, with national institutions and international language organisations.

What makes us unique

European Day of Languages

Since 2001 the European Day of Languages (EDL) has been celebrated on 26th September every year, throughout Europe and beyond.

It is a day to

- alert the public to the importance of language learning in order to increase plurilingualism and intercultural understanding
- promote the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe
- encourage lifelong language learning

The European Day of Languages is coordinated by the Council of Europe: the European Centre for Modern Languages (Graz) and the Language Policy Unit (Strasbourg). National Relays support the EDL in over 40 countries distributing promotional materials and promoting the Day.

The website is available in 26 languages: <http://edl.ecml.at>



Journée européenne des langues

Keep in touch

Updates on the ECML and on the Council of Europe's work,
as well as on national developments in the field of language education

Newsletter

*The European
Language
Gazette*

www.ecml.at/gazette

Facebook



[www.facebook.com/
ecml.celv](http://www.facebook.com/ecml.celv)

Twitter



[www.twitter.com/
ECMLCELV](http://www.twitter.com/ECMLCELV)

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Promoting excellence in language education

MEMBER STATES OF THE ECML*

Albania	Liechtenstein
Andorra	Lithuania
Armenia	Luxembourg
Austria	Malta
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro
Bulgaria	Netherlands
Croatia	Norway
Cyprus	Poland
Czech Republic	Romania
Denmark	Serbia
Estonia	Slovak Republic
Finland	Slovenia
France	Sweden
Germany	Switzerland
Iceland	"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
Ireland	
Latvia	

* as of Jan. 2014

www.ecml.at