



EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES
CENTRE EUROPEEN POUR LES LANGUES VIVANTES

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Second medium-term programme of activities 2004-2007

Project C5 -

ELP implementation support (impel) -

Exchange of experiences, examples of good practice, support tools

Central Workshop report 2/2007

(Graz, Austria, 29-31 March 2007)

Project team:

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Aims of the Project

This project was designed to support the implementation of the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP) in the member States of the Council of Europe, through the following activities:

- Gathering and analysing information on experience and issues in day-to-day management of ELP implementation projects
- Developing and testing sets of planning, monitoring and feedback tools
- Initiating a cascading process by making these tools available to project managers to facilitate and support ELP implementation projects
- Disseminating information, expertise and experience in support of ongoing and future projects

The expected outcomes of the project are:

- A shared understanding of the complexity of the ELP implementation processes
- Sets of tools and examples of planning, monitoring and feedback via a website
- A core group of experienced experts capable of advising the managers of other ELP implementation projects
- A certain number of qualified people taking on responsibility or preparing to take on responsibility for regional, institutional or national implementation projects at an operational level.

The objective of the central workshop

In accordance with the aims of the project, the objective of the central workshop was to familiarise participants with different ELP implementation strategies in their contexts, to set up a network of colleagues for continuing dialogue after the workshop, to examine examples of implementation in order to identify important elements for their own practice, to develop an action plan adapted to their own situation, and to test the tools developed by the IMPEL project.

Participants

The central workshop was attended by 32 participants, including the project team, from a total of 26 countries, including 24 member States of the ECML: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany (2), Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, the Netherlands (2), Norway, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Spain, United Kingdom (2), Sweden, Switzerland (4). Participants reflected a wide variety of backgrounds: several have been involved in ELP implementation at the national or regional level for a number of years (8 are members of the ELP contact network of the Council of Europe). A number are responsible for organising the preparation phase of implementation, while others are engaged in producing an ELP. Roughly a quarter of the participants had not yet been directly involved in an ELP implementation project, but are employed in the training of language teachers.

Topics and problems discussed at the central workshop

The central workshop was led by the project team and discussed the following topics and problems:

- Brief introduction to the IMPEL project (Hans Ulrich Bosshard)
- Key questions about implementing the ELP (Rolf Schärer)
- Towards an action plan for implementing the ELP (Dick Meijer)
- An ELP implementation case study was presented to each working group: Lombardy and Italy (Gisella Langé), Thuringia/Germany (Gabriele Tänzer), Netherlands (Dick Meijer)
- Obtaining and securing resources (Gisella Langé)
- Tools for training teachers in the use of the ELP: summary of the results of the ECML C6 project “Training teachers in the use of the European Language Portfolio (ELP-TT)” (Dick Meijer)
- Follow-up and evaluation of ELP implementation (Hans Ulrich Bosshard)
- Presentation of the website concept (Rolf Schärer) and practical work with the electronic project description tool (Gabriele Tänzer, Michael Tobisch, Hans Ulrich Bosshard)

The presentations are available on the IMPEL project site:
http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/impel/html/IMPEL_E_mat.htm.

Working methods

Before the workshop, participants received an intranet address and user guide. They were also requested to input on-line descriptions of their projects. The 'alpha version' of the site was intended to operate on a trial basis, to ascertain the desirability of developing a definitive and, if possible, interactive site.

During the workshop, each topic/problem was presented in a plenary session and examined in working groups with a maximum of nine participants (one French-speaking and two English-speaking groups). The working groups remained unchanged during the first two days of the workshop to encourage a more thorough exchange of experience. Each group was led by two members of the project team. Following the working group meetings, summaries were drawn up in the form of posters which were exhibited in the plenary room for viewing by all participants. They were briefly commented on at a plenary session at the end of the day. On the third day, participants had the opportunity to work in small groups of their choice, with colleagues in similar situations, or alone on their action plans or project descriptions. Project group members were available as resource-persons.

Output

Participants were asked for their opinions on key points, relating them to their own experiences. They then compiled a set of activities targeting different partners, and questions for the general discussion. The working groups were invited to discuss how to work with limited resources, for example. a) by seeking funding, b) by concentrating on human resources or c) by making the most of available materials and tools. The topic of follow-up and evaluation was examined in the form of case studies for the different groups based in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. Participants were able to work individually with their action

plans and take the opportunity to draw up their own on-line project description. As a result, 23 project descriptions were added to the IMPEL website by the end of the workshop.

The final general discussion covered the following subjects:

- the importance of trainer training and ELP research
- participants drew up a long list of requirements; which the project group will try to take account of as far as possible

The vast majority of participants favoured an interactive website allowing downloading of supporting material, exchanges of experience with colleagues, and supplying personalised information.

The participants and the project group enjoyed three days of thorough experience sharing and work. Participants' reactions were positive and encouraging to the project team. The team hopes that participants will carry on working to implement the ELP with renewed vigour and new ideas.

Next steps

At the last meeting on 19 and 20 April 2007 at ECML in Graz, the project team completed and finalised the tools taking account of participants' suggestions, and uploaded the material onto the IMPEL project website. Over the coming months, it will examine in depth the question of an interactive website with the ECML management and the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division. It will also discuss the possibility of a new project within the context of the ECML's third medium-term programme.

Hans Ulrich Bosshard, IMPEL co-ordinator
27 April 2007

Appendix: Documents available on the IMPEL site

1. Workshop programme
2. Glossary of terms used in the IMPEL project
3. Workshop presentations (PowerPoint and summaries):
 - a. Introduction to the IMPEL project (Hans Ulrich Bosshard)
 - b. Key questions about implementing the ELP (Rolf Schärer)
 - c. Towards an action plan for implementing the ELP (Dick Meijer)
 - d. Obtaining and securing resources (Gisella Langé)
 - e. Follow-up and evaluation of ELP implementation (Hans Ulrich Bosshard)
 - f. Resources and follow-up in the Netherlands (Dick Meijer)
 - g. Tools for training teachers in the use of the ELP: summary of the results of the ECML C6 project “Training teachers in the use of the European Language Portfolio (ELP-TT)” (Dick Meijer)
4. Case studies and examples of project descriptions:

A case study on ELP implementation was presented for each working group:

 - a. Lombardy and Italy (Gisella Langé)
 - b. Thuringia/Germany (Gabriele Tänzer)
 - c. The Netherlands (Dick Meijer)

Two examples of project descriptions; these electronic questionnaires were completed on-line on the IMPEL project intranet site (alpha version of an interactive site):

 - d. ELP implementation in Switzerland (Hans Ulrich Bosshard)
 - e. ELP implementation in the Russian Federation (Rolf Schärer)
5. Council of Europe documents
 - a. Report on the ELP seminar of the Council of Europe at Vilnius, 2006
 - b. List of ELP validated by the Council of Europe, grouped by educational level