



Analysis – BELGIUM



2010



Project partnership

Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V. // Germany	www.vhs-cham.de
BEST Institute for Vocational Education and Personnel Training Ltd // Austria	www.best.at
Hasselt University // Belgium	www.uhasselt.be
Business Foundation for Education // Bulgaria	www.fbo.bg
IAL CISL Emilia Romagna // Italy	www.ialemiliaromagna.it
Public Service Language Centre (PSLC) // Latvia	www.vmc.lv
ROC Nijmegen // Netherlands	www.roc-nijmegen.nl
Godalen Vocational College // Norway	www.godalen.vgs.no
Valladolid University General Foundation // Spain	www.funge.uva.es
PNM Language Services // United Kingdom	www.pnmlanguageservices.com
Careers Europe // United Kingdom	www.careerseurope.co.uk

Disclaimer:

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

Project number 143337-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-KA2-KA2NW – Grant agreement number 2008-4283 / 001-001

Lifelong Learning Programme, Transversal Programme, Key Activity 2 - Languages

This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Background	4
2	Introduction	5
3	The country situation	6
3.1	Introduction	6
3.2	Conclusions of conducted interviews	44
4	GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES	47
5	TRENDS and recommendations	65
5.1	Pedagogical recommendations	65
6	APPENDICES	71
6.1	Annex 1	72
6.2	Annex 2	75
6.3	Annex 3	77
6.4	Annex 4	79



1 BACKGROUND

The importance of multilingualism has been outlined in the communication of the Commission promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity (An Action Plan 2004 – 2006 (COM 2003)) and the Commission describes the ability to understand and communicate in more than one language as “a desirable life-skill for all European citizens” (European Commission 2005). It is said to

- encourage people to become more open to other people’s cultures and outlooks,
- improve cognitive skills and strengthen mother tongue skills,
- enable people to take advantage of the freedom to work or study in another Member State.

The enlargement of the European Union, the raise of mobility within Europe including migration to the EU, and the development and objective of a society based on knowledge influenced highly the issue of multilingualism and its importance. Currently about 450 languages are spoken in the European Union. For the European Union member states, especially for decision makers, there is a challenge to create a system of communication above barriers of foreign languages and cultures. Moreover the knowledge of foreign languages and cultures can positively influence the development of entrepreneurship, better working places, intercultural dialogue and international communication.

For these reasons, awareness raising and motivation enhancement to learn (foreign) languages are of paramount importance to each EU member state. This might not be new for most of us but there has still been some lack of motivation or lack of reasons for learning in particular referring to young, deprived learners.

Thus this project, YELL Young Europeans Love Languages, is a network whose main aim is to promote languages learning as a key competence for lifelong learning and therefore addresses formal but also to a greater degree non-formal and informal learning environments and situations (in education, cultural, social, sport institutions offering various ways of spending free time among young people) who can enhance language learning of this target group.

One of the first activities performed within the network was the research on the country situation on relevant aspects to improve the above described situation. This document is one of the main outputs of it.



2 INTRODUCTION

The YELL network prepared this report to provide project partners, trainers, teachers, tutors with a detailed analysis of the current language education policy and programs in the partner countries, i.e. in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the UK. It covers, inter alia, the following areas:

- situation of foreign language learning, what languages are taught
- education policy and programs,
- condition for reaching young people and motivating them to participate in learning languages outside formal education, including identifying and collection of best practices

Based on desk & field research, data has been collated and analysed. Associated partners and actors of local networks as well as relevant stakeholders who were invited to several meetings and workshops organized by project partners, as well as participants of the joint thematic seminar held in Vienna (July 7th, 2009) contributed to the elaboration of recommendations and good practices summarized in this document.

The following include the summary on the country findings regarding formal, non-formal and informal language learning issues (Part 1), Good Practices collated by project partners (Part 2) and a catalogue of recommendations of importance for the elaboration of other project results, such as the YELL Handbook.

This report can be downloaded free of charges from the project website www.yell-project.eu

3 THE COUNTRY SITUATION



Official languages:
 Dutch (~59%)
 French (~40%)
 German (~1%) Wikipedia: © LennartBolks

3.1 Introduction

Belgium is a federal state with about 10.5 million inhabitants and **three official languages**, notably Dutch (ca. 6.3 million native speakers), French (ca. 4.2 million native speakers) and German (ca. 75.000 native speakers).

The federal government has preserved only a few competences over education, among other things

- The prescription of the beginning and the end of compulsory education (in Belgium from the age of 6 to 18)
- The determination of minimum conditions to obtain a degree.

The actual competences for education rest at the Communities, more specific at the Dutch, French and German Communities. They have their own Minister for Education and they can organize their own education system.

This text only describes the education in the Dutch or **Flemish Community**.

The Flemish Minister for Education determines the organization of the education and the minimum final attainment levels of the various courses. The concrete interpretation of the course content is a competence of the educational systems.

3.1.1 Formal education in Belgium (Flanders)

The formal education is being organized and offered by regular institutes for education such as The Education for Social Promotion (both secondary as higher education), the Centers for Adult Education (CVO), higher institutes and universities, Secondary Education, Basic Education, Second Chances Education, education center SYNTRA/VIZO. The transfer of knowledge in the formal education mostly happens through a teacher. The degrees of the formal education or generally acknowledged of



by a Ministry. Besides, the courses in the formal education are characterized by a well-structured hierarchy of educational activities, whereby a degree or certificate is necessary to get access to the next level.

3.1.1.1 Figures and authorities

The Flemish primary education consists of over 2500 primary schools, with about 235.000 infants and 420.000 students. The part time education for Arts comprises 167 academies, with all together more than 165.000 students (125.000 youngsters and 40.000 adults).

In Flanders there are over 900 schools for regular secondary education, over 100 schools for secondary education for children with special needs and about 50 schools for part time secondary education, which have about 458.000 students. About 340.000 adults are enrolled in 120 centres for adult education and 29 centres for a course of basic education.

3.1.1.2 Structure of Flemish education

Educational systems

In Flanders there are three different educational systems:

- The public education is organized under the authority of the Flemish Community. The public education is forced by constitution to be undenominational. That means religious, philosophic and ideological convictions of all parents and students must be respected.
- The state endowed official education consists of municipal education, which is organized by local authorities, and the provincial education, which is organized by the provincial administration. The state endowed official education must be open for all philosophies of life.
- The state endowed private education is organized on private initiative (hence not by the authorities). The private education mainly consists of Catholic schools. However, there are as well Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox, Islamic... schools possible. Furthermore, there are method schools that are not tied to a religion, e.g. Freinet schools, Montessori schools and Steiner schools.

Organizing powers

An organizing power is responsible for one or more schools. One could compare such with the executive board of a company. The organizing power can assume the form of a government or a natural person.

The members of the organizing power are responsible for the proper functioning of a school. To fulfil that task, they recruit a management team and teachers. Both the principal and teachers are thus



subjected to the authority of their organizing power. An organizing power receives a budget from the Flemish Ministry for Education and elaborates a pedagogic project for the schools within its scope.

Out of practical considerations some organizing powers join and assume the form of an education umbrella. This representative association represents the organizing powers during negotiations with the government for example. It also takes over the tasks of the organizing powers, such as the elaboration of curricula or lesson timetables. The most important umbrellas are:

- The umbrella for public education (the umbrella converges with the system)
- Secretary for Education of local authorities in the Flemish Community (OVSG)
- Provincial Education Flanders (POV)
- Federation of Independant Pluralistisch Emancipatory Method Schools (FOPEM)
- Flemish Education Platform for Consultation (VOOP)
- Flemish Secretary for Catholic Education (VSKO)
- FOPEM, VOOP and the Federation of Rudolf Steiner schools in Flanders for their part join in the Consultation of Small Education providers (OKO).

Minister of Education

Within the Flemish government **the Minister of Education is responsible for practically all aspects of the educational policy, from kindergarten up to higher education.** The Minister of Education determines the policy concerning education. His administration helps him prepare, implement and evaluate this policy.

Compulsory education

Young Flemings are of school age from 6 to 18 years old.

Compulsory education means that parents are obliged to allow their children to learn. In Belgium there is however no compulsory school attendance. Hence, children don't necessarily have to go to school to learn. Education at home is also possible, but parents must organize and pay for that themselves. The inspectorate can always come to control if the child indeed gets an education. After two negative evaluations the child must be enrolled in a school.

3.1.1.3 Primary education

The primary education contains kindergarten and primary school. There is regular primary education and primary education for children with special needs.



Kindergarten

Kindergarten is accessible for children from the age of 2,5 up to 6 years old. Kindergarten is not obligatory, but is attended by almost all children in Flanders. In kindergarten children get an all-around education and their cognitive and physical development is encouraged. Since 1st September 1998 final attainment levels for each field of learning became effective. The development objectives describe what infants learn at school.

Regular primary education

Regular primary education is meant for children from the age of 6 to 12 and mostly encompasses six successive learning years. The regular primary education builds on the final attainment levels of kindergarten and works on the same basis of learning, connected where possible. Since 1 September 1998 the final attainment levels for the regular primary education became effective. These are minimum goals, which are found achievable by the government for children in primary education.

Primary education for children with special needs

Primary education for children with special needs is organized for children that temporarily or permanent need specific help. That can be because of a physical or mental disability, because of severe behavioural- or emotional problems or because of severe learning disabilities. There are no general final attainment levels for these children, but development goals.

At the end of the primary education these children, who achieved the goals of the curriculum, receive a certificate of primary education. Also in the primary education for children with special needs, the students can, in specific cases, obtain a certificate of equal value as in the regular primary education.

3.1.1.4 Secondary education

Secondary education is organized for youngsters from the age of 12 to 18 years old.

Regular secondary education

The full-time secondary education is organized as a unity structure since 1989. This unity structure encloses grades, education types and courses. Students only make a definitive choice of study in the third grade, so that they can be introduced to as many courses as possible in the first two orientation years. The majority of the classes in the first and second grade is basic education.

From the third year on there are four different education types:

- The General Secondary Education (ASO) focuses on a broad general education aiming at attending to higher education afterwards.
- The Technical Secondary Education (TSO) focuses particularly on general and technical-



theoretical subjects. After TSO the student can practice a profession or proceed to higher education. Also practical lessons are a part of TSO.

- The Secondary Education for Arts (KSO) combines a general, broad education with an active practice of arts. After KSO the student can practice a profession or proceed to higher education.
- The Special Secondary Education (BSO) is a practically-oriented type of education, where a student learns a specific profession in combination with a general education.

A student graduates when he successfully completes six years ASO, TSO, KSO or seven years BSO. With a diploma of the secondary education in his pocket the youngster basically has unlimited access to the higher education. Exceptions are studies medicine and dentistry, for which a student needs to sit for an entrance examination first.

Secondary education for children with special needs (BuSO)

The secondary education for children with special needs bends on youngsters from the age of 13 to 21 with a mental, physical or learning disability.

3.1.1.5 Higher education

The Flemish higher education is mainly shaped by the European developments concerning the Bologna process (1999). That is the process to come to a monolithic European framework for higher education. That has to make it easier for students and graduates to study or work in another European country.

Since Bologna the higher education offers courses within three cycles. Next courses are offered in the Flemish higher education:

- Bachelor education
 - Professional bachelors
 - Academic bachelors
- Master education
- Advanced studies
- Postgraduate and in-service training
- PhD

Bachelor education

The professional bachelor is first of all focused on a profession in practice. To graduate, in this case, means that the graduate has the necessary knowledge and skills to practice a certain profession (e.g. nurse or teacher) or a group of professions (e.g. social work). However, that doesn't mean that these



graduates can't continue their studies. By means of a transition year a graduate can go on to a master education. When the graduate first gains a few years of work experience, it is even possible to be admitted directly to master education based on the acquired competences (the so called "elsewhere acquired competences").

The academic bachelor is in fact not focused on the labour market. To graduate means in this case that the graduate is packed with the necessary knowledge and skills to start master education. That doesn't mean however, that there would be no place for these graduates on the labour market. There is also a demand for graduates of academic bachelors (e.g. IT-engineers).

Master education

The master education is offered by universities and colleges of higher education that are a part of an association. Master education is always academically-oriented, but some masters do have a professional orientation (e.g. doctor, engineer, pharmacist, translator, interpreter).

In master education, students acquire an advanced level of knowledge and develop competences of a general, a specific scientific or an artistic field. Students can therefore use that knowledge for an independent profession or groups of professions. To obtain a master degree the student has to write a master thesis.

To start master education the student must have a an academic bachelor degree. However, a professional bachelor can go through to master education by means of a transition course. Colleges for higher education and universities organise these courses autonomously.

Advanced education

After finishing their professional bachelor, students can enrol in bachelor-after-bachelor education. During this continuation course the student specializes in the competences acquired during his bachelor education.

Directly after master education, the student can take up master-after-master education, building further on the competences acquired during his master education.

Postgraduate and in-service training

The colleges for higher education also offer courses for obtaining a postgraduate- or in-service training certificate in the framework of permanent education. A postgraduate certificate is granted after a course of minimum 20 ECTS credits. These courses intend to broaden and/or deepen the acquired competences after a bachelor- or master education and this happens in the framework of advanced professional education. These certificates therefore get a formal meaning without the courses having to meet the prescriptions that apply for bachelor- or master education.



PhD

A university student can obtain the degree of ‘doctor’, the highest possible degree in Flanders, after public defence of a doctoral dissertation. The preparation of a doctoral dissertation, the “doctoral education”, trains the researcher, who contributes on an independent basis to the development and growth of his scientific field. The dissertation needs to prove the ability of the student to create new scientific knowledge in a certain field or beyond fields and must show that the student is able to publish his research results.

3.1.1.6 Adult education

Adult education is not related to the initial course of education. Course participants can obtain an acknowledged diploma, reference or certificate. Adults from the age of 18 or older and youngsters that finished compulsory education can enrol.

3.1.1.7 Higher vocational training (HBO)

Higher vocational training encloses courses for adults, the seventh specialization years TSO and KSO and the seventh grade Special Secondary Education. Characteristic for these courses is the close cooperation with the vocational sectors. The courses reserve an important role to learning at the workplace.

3.1.1.8 Lifelong learning

Institutions take more initiatives in the framework of lifelong learning to organize the education in a more flexible way.

3.1.1.9 ICT-integration

The idea of ICT-integration comes from the extra conveniences offered by ICT, when introduced in certain subjects. By doing so, it is believed that children will master basic ICT-competences by the time they finish primary school. Thus, the goal is to integrate ICT, so it can have an added value to the education.

The action program PC/KP

In 1998 the Flemish government started with the multiannual program PC/KD to encourage the use of computers and educative software at school. This project aimed at promoting innovation in the education by introducing ICT. In 2001 the program was adjusted for the first time to bring the objectives of primary and secondary education line with each other as much and as soon as possible in.



Since 2001 a new target group was set, notably children from the fourth year of kindergarten and the three first grades of primary school. The new objective was to provide a computer for every tenth infant within three years.

In 2002 the program was adjusted for the second time. Since then also three target groups from the permanent education became eligible for grants: the basic education, the part time education for Arts and the adult education.

The ICT-infrastructure program

Since 1 September 2007, new subject-exceeding final attainment levels for ICT were introduced in the primary education and in the first two grades of the secondary education. After all the social context asks for a specific interpretation of ICT-competence. Also in the basic education the ICT-training was revised in light of general basic competences.

It goes without saying that a decent and far-reaching modernization of the education should go hand in hand with an adapted auxiliary policy. To teach children, students and adults ICT-competences it is essential that schools have a decent ICT infrastructure. The PC/KD-project that ran from 1998 to 2002 and aimed at providing a basic infrastructure in all education institutions, was an important impetus to put ICT in daily action. Besides, the education institutes were expected to break into their budgets to do replacement investments. That only happened to a certain extent. Because of that a lot of Flemish schools threatened to end up in a situation, where the new final attainment levels and development goals had to be introduced at a time that a part of the infrastructure was already outdated. To anticipate this, the introduction of the new final attainment levels ICT and development goals coincided with an investment in modern ICT-infrastructure through the ICT-infrastructure program. A first instalment was paid in the academic year 2006-2007. The second instalment was provided for the academic year 2007-2008.

Table maximum subsidies for ICT-infrastructure per student (in Euros)

	2002 (PC/KD)	2006-2007 ICT-infrastructure program first instalment	2007-2008 ICT-infrastructure program second instalment
Primary education	16,44	20,95	7,493
Secondary education	10,53	23,28	8,447
Primary education for children with special needs	<i>No figures</i>	31,42	11,239
Secondary education for children with special needs	<i>No figures</i>	34,92	12,671

3.1.1.10 Welcoming class for foreign newcomers (OKAN)

The term ‘foreign newcomers’ is used to refer to students who came from abroad recently and landed in Dutch education. They are obliged to go to school, they often have a foreign nationality and left their native country for various reasons.

These foreign youngsters can appeal to welcoming classes for foreign newcomers. These classes take care of non-Dutch speaking students starting to teach them Dutch as soon as possible. This way they can integrate in primary or secondary education and choose a course that matches their competences. This helps them to better integrate in the new society.

The welcoming class initially focused on children, who came to Belgium by means of the system of reunification of the family. However, a big part of the foreign newcomers appeared to be children of refugees.

The group of foreign newcomers is very heterogeneous. Not only are they of different age, they also have different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The children also vary a lot in terms of schooling background. About 10% consists of students that went to a school from a strong education system. These children mostly come from the former Eastern bloc, Anglophonic colonies in Africa and the Far East. By contrast there is a second group of about 10% that has barely had any education and is not alphabetized in their mother tongue. Between those two groups there is a third group of children that has had education before and is alphabetized in their mother tongue, but they were



enrolled in an education system of minor reputation. This diverse middle group consists of children that come from French colonies in Africa and certain countries from the Balkans.

There is also a big diversity concerning the nationality of the children in welcoming class. Whereas in the early nineties most children came from Turkey or Morocco, most students in the welcoming classes now are from the Federation of Russia, Kazakhstan, the Balkans, former-Yugoslavia, Iran.

The welcoming classes in primary education differ from the welcoming classes in secondary education. Secondary school students get immersion Dutch classes during one year and then switch to regular secondary education. Primary school children are immediately integrated in regular primary education together with other children, but still benefit from separate language courses in a special class. In the academic year 2007-2008 1 673 OKAN-students were registered, of which 920 boys and 753 girls.

3.1.2 Languages in formal education in Belgium¹

3.1.2.1 Introduction

Belgium has three official languages: Dutch, French and German. Therefore it would be logical that the main focus of foreign language learning in school would be on the other two official languages, but that doesn't always seem to be the case. In Flemish schools, French does indeed take priority. However, German is only taught in certain programs. English is often obligatory for the majority of the students. In Wallonia, English is often even taught as the first foreign language. Dutch and German come second and third respectively. The strong focus on English can be explained because of its lingua franca status throughout the whole world.

Students decide which type of education they want to take up. Every type consists of fixed packages. Only in some schools students have a small degree of participation in the composition of their courses. For example Modern Languages students can choose between German or Spanish as their third foreign language. The intensity of the language courses depends on the chosen type of education. For those who choose to study Modern Languages, **English, French and German/Spanish** are obligatory subjects. In almost every type of education French is obligatory and English as well, be it to a lesser extent.

¹ This description focuses on language education in Flanders, with a sporadic reference to the situation in Wallonia and Brussels.



3.1.2.2 Primary education

Kindergarten

Since 1 September 2004 kindergarten is allowed to start with the education of a foreign language. However, this is merely a **language initiation**, where only separate words and popular children's songs are taught. The foreign language is always French. Every school is free to opt for such sensitization.

Regular Primary school

Since 1 September 2004 a new law on the obligatory education of French as a foreign language came into effect. It states that the education of one foreign language should be organized in elementary school from the **fifth grade on** (age of eleven), and that this foreign language must be **French**, at a three hour a week ratio.

In the Dutch-speaking region the first foreign language is always French. In the French-speaking region that language is **Dutch, English or German**. In the German-speaking region finally that language is French in de German-speaking schools and German in the French-speaking schools.

In the district of Brussels there are different instructions. The education of a foreign language can there be organized from the first year of elementary school, thus at the age of six. Since 1 September 2004 French is an obligatory subject, beginning **from the third grade** (age 8). In the third and fourth grade French must take up three hours per week in the school timetable, in the fifth and sixth grade five hours.

Recently some Flemish elementary schools started out with a language initiation for pupils of the third and fourth grade (age 8-9), so that they can have a smooth and efficient start in the fifth grade. These initiations are allowed as long as they are in French.

Final attainment levels for elementary education

The main aim for French in elementary school can be formulated in general terms as such: "*Children must develop a level of skills, which will make it possible for them to communicate in French at a limited level.*" (www.ond.vlaanderen.be)

Concretely it means that they

- can obtain simple information through written or spoken language
- can share and ask simple information through oral contact with Francophones.

That can only be achieved through the development of certain language attitudes, such as



- readiness to communicate
- daring to communicate with limited language skills

Primary education for children with special needs

There are eight different types of special primary education, each put together for children with specific needs. The primary education for children with special needs doesn't offer a general learning program, but provides an individualized curriculum. Only in type 8 French is incorporated in the school timetable.

3.1.2.3 Secondary education

The first grade of the secondary education must guarantee a broad general education. A too strong specialization in the second grade (age 14) is avoided. The amount of optional subjects is kept at a minimum.

In the academic year 2007-2008 137 942 students were registered in the first and second grade all together, of which 70 646 boys and 67 296 girls.

From the third to the sixth grade a large amount of subjects is being organized. The language package depends on the chosen course. In the academic year 2007-2008 145 135 students were registered in the third and fourth grade all together, of which 73 807 boys and 71 328 girls. For the fifth and sixth grade together 145 721 students were counted, of which 73 911 boys and 71 810.

Total amount of students in the secondary language education in Flanders

	1 + 2 GRADE		3 + 4 GRADE		5 + 6 GRADE		TOTAL		
	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls	total
FRENCH	65.073	64.785	63.522	67.636	63.077	65.875	191.672	198.296	389.968
ENGLISH	32.716	32.289	57.749	60.716	57.757	58.347	148.222	151.352	299.574
GERMAN	-	-	13.407	16.411	23.927	28.656	37.334	45.067	82.401
SPANISH	-	-	85	152	1.305	2.152	1.390	2.304	3.694

Source: *Statistisch Jaarboek 2007-2008* (www.ond.vlaanderen.be/onderwijsstatistieken)



In the District of Brussels (BHG) 88 992 students in the entire Secondary Education were registered in the academic year 2006-2007, of which 85% in the Francophone education and 15% in the Dutch education.

Final attainment levels Modern Languages

It is difficult to make a concise overview of the final attainment levels Modern Languages in the secondary education, for they vary depending on the grade and type of education. In each type of education again there are differences, depending on the chosen course.

ICT-integration

ICT-applications are gradually integrated in language lessons, although the intensity of ICT-usage depends on the teacher and, in general, the frequency of use is quite low. ICT-applications stimulate working independently, but since the learning process is still strongly guided by the teacher, this is often still a neglected aspect of language education at many schools. Moreover, there are few classrooms for language learning that are also functionally equipped with the necessary modern infrastructure. Also, the computer rooms are often not vacant for language courses.

In the area of student counseling the trend of modernization ensues, at least where it occurs, the usage of innovative and communicative working methods, which is a change for the better in order to realise the intended curriculum. The emphasis in language education often still lies too much on the language material, instead of on the student. Consequently, too little attention generally goes to guidance of students and remedial teaching. Differentiated language education barely occurs. To the fact that language education is often too little challenging and doesn't demand enough from the students in the area of attitudinal and cognitive skills, a lot of opportunities to create a broad general education are lost.

The usage of ICT to support acquisition of language competences in Dutch and foreign languages links up to the policy document *De lat hoog voor talen* (Aiming high at languages), formulated by Flemish Minister of Education Frank Vandenbroucke. Here, language competences are understood as integration of linguistic skills, functional linguistic structural knowledge and attitudes. In addition, special attention must go out to the possibilities of ICT for adaptability, individualization, differentiation and remediation.

General Secondary Education

French remains the first foreign language in secondary education. A minimum of three hours and a maximum of five hours of French are taught. That applies for every student. The exact amount of hours is determined by the subjects and the grade. Usually English is the second foreign language,



starting from the first grade (age 13). As a rule two or three hours are taken out for English in each grade.

Modern language students have German as a third foreign language from the third grade on. English and German occupy both three hours per week of the school timetable, for French, four or five hours are provided.

In the academic year 2007-2008, 64 607 students were registered in the third and fourth grade together, of which 29 380 boys and 35 227 girls. In the fifth and sixth grade together 53 979 students were registered, of which 23 797 boys and 30 182 girls.

In the district Brussels 88 992 students were counted all grades together in the academic year 2007-2008, of which 85% in the French education, and 15% in the Dutch.

Technical Secondary Education

The language subjects in Technical Secondary Education strongly depend on the chosen education. In most subjects, languages only take up a limited quantity of the total timetable, no more than two hours French and English per week. Secretarial and Language Education, where French and English cover three to four hours per week, not included. Next to French and English, German is included for two of three hours per week.

In the academic year 2007-2008 46 138 students were registered in the third and fourth year of Technical Secondary Education, of which 26 167 boys and 19 971 girls. In the fifth and sixth that was a total of 47 803 students, of which 27 017 boys and 20 786 girls.

Special Secondary Education

In the Special Secondary Education languages hardly get a chance or none at all. When a foreign language is being taught, it's always French and only one hour per week at the most. Current Minister for Education Frank Vandenbroucke wants to make at least one foreign language mandatory for the Special Secondary Education as well. That language could be French or English. The Minister stated that in his ambitious policy document 'Aiming high at languages', which announced the starting shot of initiatives concerning ten policy topics. In those initiatives, amongst other things, the importance of an early start of foreign language education is being stressed. According to Vandenbroucke there is still lots of room for improvement what concerns the transition from primary school to secondary school. "We expect every school to pursue a well thought out systematical language policy", said the Minister.

In the academic year 2007-2008 there were 31 611 students in the third and fourth grade of the Special Secondary Education, of which 17 265 boys and 14 396 girls. In the same year 40 645 students were registered in the fifth and sixth grade, of which 21 901 boys and 18 744 girls.



Secondary Education for Arts

In the Secondary Education for Arts, two foreign languages are being taught: French and English. The amount of hours per week is limited to two or three for French and two for English.

In the academic year 2007-2008 2 729 students were enrolled in the third and fourth grade of the Education for Arts, of which 995 boys and 1 734 girls. In the fifth and sixth grade a total of 3 294 students were registered, of which 1 196 boys and 2 098 girls.

Secondary Education for students with special needs

In the Secondary Education for students with special needs English and/or French is being taught to one type only (type 4).

Examples of sideline activities in the formal education

Carolingua (e-mail projects – learning in tandem)

The Interreg project Carolingua (Euregion River Meuse-Rhine) is developed to improve contact between students of neighboring, foreign-speaker regions. The project fits in the school context, where communication is guided by teachers. Candidate schools first have to choose a partner school by well-defined criteria.

An efficient and motivating learning method is learning in tandem. Each student has a foreign language speaking partner, with whom he/she exchanges letters or e-mails. The tandems can also attend to problems together or to assignments they receive during class. During the meetings the tandems can do activities together to gain a tighter bond.

They get the opportunity to set up cooperation projects with a partner school. The objective is to let the students communicate in the language of the partner region (French or German). The school has the opportunity to submit a creative project proposal within a well-defined framework. The focus lies on the contacts with foreign language speaking students, both live (meetings) and at distance (correspondence).

CLIL and Immersion classes

On the 10th of October the Council of the Euregion River Meuse-Rhine introduced the so called ‘Classes d’immersion’. Immersion classes are in fact a “language bath”, in which pupils from kindergarten on are being submerged. In Wallonia such classes were introduced to avoid that English would invariably be chosen as the first foreign language. The objective is that pupils master the language of their neighboring regions better in both a qualitative and a quantitative way.

This education format fits in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), also known as EMILE (Enseignement d’une Matière par Intégration d’une Langue Etrangère). Another term is bilingual education. In the German and French-speaking communities of Belgium there are some pilot



projects running in about 80 primary and secondary schools. Non-language subjects are being taught in a foreign language (e.g. in Wallonia in Dutch, English or German). The school management has the power to decide whether or not they introduce CLIL or not. The schools inspectorate controls these initiatives and to what extent teachers with the required language competences are being recruited or trained.

Basically, Dutch as education language is mandatory in Flanders, which makes bilingual education or CLIL impossible for the time being. In the past however some official measures and non-official initiatives have seen the light. In 1982 the regional integration centre 'Foyer' took off with multilingual programs in a number of schools in Brussels. Although the OETC-project (Education in own language and culture) focuses mainly on children of Italian, Spanish and Turkish origin, Belgian children aren't excluded.

A Fleming is traditionally known for his multilingualism, but also in Wallonia more and more attention is drawn on knowledge of foreign languages. On 30 August 2005, The Walloon government launched his Marshall-plan with "the launch of a language plan" as one of the key actions. This ambitious project of economic revival considers learning foreign languages as one of the levers for the realization of this plan.

'Klavertje Drie'

The Prince Filipfund, which took off in the framework of the King Boudewijnfoundation in 1998, stimulates the dialogue between the Communities. 'Klavertje Drie' is a project that receives financial support from the Prince Filip fund for collaborative programs between schools from the three Belgian Communities. This project doesn't only offer children and teachers the opportunity to get to know and understand their neighbors better, it also broadens their horizons. The project wants to encourage both regular primary and secondary schools and schools for children with special needs to organize exchange programs with schools from other Belgian Communities. The exchange programs can be both bi- and trilateral. The objective is to deepen language skills and to broaden one's horizons on culture by discovering each other's background and situation.

3.1.2.4 Higher education

The higher education offers a wide range of courses. Therefore it is difficult to sketch the language education at Flemish colleges and universities. Of course, the philology and applied linguistics departments are an exception, since they focus on language studies. Generally one could say that only in these specific subjects the higher C1 or C2 levels for foreign languages are being reached. Further,



in professional bachelors and economy studies a lot of attention goes to foreign languages. English and French are often obligatory, German and Spanish either obligatory or optional.

In the academic year 2007-2008 3 798 students were registered at a department philology of a Flemish university, of which 987 boys and 2 811 girls. In applied linguistics that figure was 2 790 students in total, of which 696 boys and 2 094 girls. These figures show a continuation of the trend that mainly women study languages in higher education.

The study weight of foreign languages in other higher studies in Flanders usually takes up only a small proportion of the total curriculum. In exact sciences they are completely absent; in human sciences they cover a limited amount of hours in the timetable. In professional training programs, such as engineering, languages only represent 1.25 to 6% of the curriculum. If a foreign language is taught, it is always English and technical jargon in particular. Faculties with a traditionally big focus on foreign languages are law and business studies.

Case study: Foreign languages at Hasselt University

The situation of foreign languages at Hasselt University can serve as an example for the situation at all Flemish universities. Viewed in the light of a reduced amount of contact hours for languages in the curriculum, more benefit is seen in **blended learning**. That is a modern view on education, where contact sessions and workshops are combined with home study and e-learning. Therefore, learning materials for e-learning are being used, that have been developed through linguistic research within the university. Students have three mandatory language subjects (French, English and a third foreign language, mostly German or Spanish). However, one can not take up language courses in each grade, and so the development of the student's language skills is interrupted.

Erasmus

The Erasmus program particularly aims at mobility of students of the higher education. They have the opportunity to complete a part of their curriculum and/or internship abroad, without thereby jeopardizing the foreseen study term to take their certificate, seeing a study period abroad is regarded as equal. The participating students don't pay a registration fee at the host institute. All courses are eligible for an Erasmus scholarship. Following countries participate: all 27 member states of the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Turkey. The section Erasmus of the Lifelong Learning Program (LLP) of the European Union puts a budget at the participant's disposal to promote the European dimension in the higher education.

Over the past few years in Belgium, one notices a decrease of the amount of students participating in an Erasmus exchange program.

3.1.2.5 Advanced study/Lifelong learning

A study of the University of Antwerp revealed that 250 000 Flemings older than 18, i.e. **about 5 %**, **learn a new language or try to improve one they already know**. Not less than 41 % does this by home study and 64 % follows a language course, mainly after work in the evening. The most popular languages are Spanish (46 %), French and Italian (both 26 %), traditionally popular for touristic reasons. But German (24 %) and English (19 %) are also frequently learnt languages. A quarter of the interviewees would even like to study a less widely-used language: Russian (3,5 %), Portuguese (3,5 %), Arab (2,6 %) or Swedish (2,4 %).

European research on language needs and problems of engineers and managerial staff (LEOMEP, 1998-2000) also revealed a **high participation rate in additional language training**; not less than 1 out of 3 respondents of the Belgian survey confirmed they had undertaken extra language training after their initial education. The most popular languages were French, English and German. 4 out of 10 respondents confirmed a language test (generally several foreign languages) was imposed on them at their recruitment. These data clearly indicate the gap between the portion of language training in higher education and the needs of the labor market.

3.1.2.6 Overview of language courses in formal education

Intended levels of competence

Age	Education phase	Grade	Type of Education	Language	Contact hours/week	Intended CFR level
3-6°	Kindergarten	-	-	-	-	-
6-10	Primary school	-	-	-	-	-
10-12	Primary school	-	-	French	3 (11%)	A1
6/8-13	Primary school for children with specific needs	-	Type 8	French	- **	
12-14	Secondary education	1 + 2 grade	General education	French English*	4 (12%) 0-2 (0-6%)	A2 A2
12-14	Secondary education	1 + 2 grade	General education	French*	0-2 (0-6%)	A1
14-18	Secondary education	2 + 3 grade	General Secondary Education	French English German*	3-5 (9-15%) 2-3 (6-9%) 0-3 (0-9%)	B1-B2 B1-B2 A2
14-18	Secondary	2 + 3	Technical	French	2-3 (6-9%)	B1

	education	grade	Secondary Education	English German*	2-3 (6-9%) 0-2 (0-6%)	B1 A2
14-18	Secondary education	2 + 3 grade	Specialized Secondary Education	French*	0-1 (0-3%)	A1
14-18	Secondary education	2 + 3 grade	Secondary Education for Arts	French English	2-3 (6-9%) 2 (6%)	B1 B1
13-21	Secondary Education for children with special needs	-	Education Type 4	French* English*	2-4 (6-12%) 0-2 (0-6%)	
18-?°	Higher Education	-	University/ College	Depends on subjects	-	

° Optional, not compulsory

* Possibly offered, depending on the chosen subjects

** The education for children with special needs doesn't organize a common learning program, but provides an individualized curriculum, which is adjusted to the specific needs and possibilities of each student.

3.1.2.7 Discussion of language levels

So far it was difficult to link the language skills of students to a CFR-level, because the final attainment levels of the secondary education were yet to be adapted to the CFR. A lot of work has been done in this field recently and the new final attainment levels are approved and will be introduced in 2010, which will make the **linkage to CFR-levels** easier and more transparent. For now such linkage is for the greater part a matter of interpretation and estimation. The given CFR-levels in the table are based on the results of a research under the authority of the entity Curriculum, in which current final attainment levels for the secondary education were linked to the CFR. Unfortunately, this research is only an occasionally useable reference up to now.

The already existing certified tests for the five competences of the CFR and the self evaluation tests, which are based on the level descriptions of the CFR, can be useful because of two reasons. First of all it works motivating for the learner to know which level his knowledge of a foreign language reaches. Secondly, these tests can serve as a point of reference for the evaluation of foreign language knowledge.



Another point of reference, be it only for French, is a report that was written after taking soundings of the level French in the first two grades of the secondary education. It states for one that more and more candidates for teacher trainings, that have studied Technical Secondary Education, don't reach the CFR-level B1.

3.1.3 Languages in non-formal language learning in Belgium

3.1.3.1 Introduction

The committee for Culture and Education wrote a report in 1999, in which the difference between informal and non-formal learning was formulated. The main difference between the two is that informal learning comes about unintentionally and in a passive way, whereas non-formal learning is the result of an individual and voluntarily action.

Non-formal learning was defined as “An educational activity, which is not structured and takes place outside the formal system.” A more operational definition, which is being used by OECD, is: “The non-formal sector comprises learning activities taking place outside this formal system, such as those carried out within companies, by professional associations, or independently by self-motivated adult learners”. According to the Committee for Culture and Education this definition is formally correct, but it doesn't take into account experiences of civil society or voluntary organizations.

The transfer of knowledge in non-formal education happens through a teacher. The certificates obtained in non-formal education are mostly not acknowledged by a ministry. They do have for instance an added value on the labor market or are demanded by an employer. Although a clearly structured program in non-formal trainings may exist, a ladder structure of gradual progression is lacking.

The formal and non-formal trainings can be full-time or part-time, can take place in the evening or during the day, within or outside working hours, at own initiative or compulsory.

3.1.3.2 Internet

Language contests

There are numerous websites, which offer language tools and activities for an equal diverse supply of languages. Such tools can be online dictionaries or specialized lexica, translation applications, language learning websites with multimedia, language tests, language quizzes, exercises, platforms for exchange and e-mail projects, social network sites, etc.



An important way of motivating youngsters to learn languages is introducing a creative play and competition element. In their striving towards a higher rank or profit, learners repeat the exercises or game questions again and again, and often they do that in their own free time.

One example is ‘**Tournoi Mondial de Français par Internet**’, the successor of ‘La Tour Eiffel’ – concours de français, which was launched in 1987 by Willy Clijsters, professor French at Hasselt University and chairman of DiWeF, an association for French teachers in Flanders. A small contest in Limburg grew into a well known contest throughout the whole of Flanders. In 2009 6 965 students from the secondary education (all courses) participated. La Tour Eiffel was renamed in 2000 to Olyfran Vlaanderen: “Les Olympiades du Français et de la Francophonie”. This annual contest consists of a written and an oral test.

In 2006 Olyfran went international. All questions that were developed for the contest throughout the preceding years were gathered on a website, where everyone can test his or her knowledge of the French language or where one can put up a local contest French. The virtual “Tournoi Mondial de français par Internet is an annual contest and has participants from all over the world (particularly student groups from secondary schools). (www.olyfran.com)

Websites for language learning

An example of a website for language learning is Lingoland. The objective of this European platform for children is to enable them to test early knowledge of a foreign language and to communicate with contemporaries from other European countries. Websites for foreign language learning for children already existed, but most of the time they were limited to one language and one country. A common European and multilingual website where children can learn a foreign language in a playful way didn’t exist. The main target group of the platform are children from the age of 6 to 12, that

- are already learning a first foreign language at primary school.
- live in a border region or a multilingual country and have contact with foreign languages.
- are foreign-speaker or grow up in a binational family.

Furthermore, the platform is meant for foreign language teachers of primary schools.

Another example are the Lingu@com web-based learning modules for less-widely used and taught languages and cultures such as Dutch, Romanian, Slovak and Turkish. These e-courses for beginners result from an EU-funded project (LLP, KA2 Languages) and use Text-to-Speech technology which converts any text into native speaker sounding audio. The use of the internet, Text-to-Speech technology and screen magnification increase the accessibility to learning methods, also for learners who have difficulty reading, who are dylexic or who simply prefer auditory learning. The modules allow for a playful way of learning a new language and make use of lots of different exercises and multimedia elements. Learners get acquainted with the culture linked to the target language thanks to



the presentation of authentic communicative situations and the use of authentic texts. Lingu@com characterizes by a contrastive didactic approach and is available for the following language combinations: SK-NL, RO-NL, TR-NL, FR-NL, NL-RO, NL-SK, NL-FR, FR-TR and TR-FR (www.commart.be).

Collaborative learning through Internet

The Internet offers important opportunities for authentic contact with a foreign language and the correspondent culture. Communication channels such as e-mail, chat, VoIP and fora are excellent means to practice language knowledge.

Learning in tandem is an example of 'open learning', where people with different mother tongues cooperate to learn more about the partner and his or her culture, to help each other improve their language skills and often, besides that, to exchange information about other topics, e.g. in the professional context.

Learning in tandem gives the students more autonomy in the learning process. A Dutch student, who is learning French for example, gets a 'buddy' in Wallonia that is learning Dutch. These team partners are being assigned with several tasks they have to complete together. They help each other and learn from each other. They e-mail very frequently and meet two or three times a year. The project "Buurtaaldidactiek Wallonië" (Didactics of neighboring languages in Wallonia), which is supported by the European Platform, was started in 2002 with four schools for advanced studies. That amount has grown to almost 40 and the reactions of teachers and students are remarkably positive for an activity that once again takes time and energy. The teachers clearly notice that students are much more motivated when they get higher marks. Also the University of Liege has shown this excess value. Students appreciate 'learning in a lifelike manner' and are surprised to discover another world for youngsters.

E-Zines

In Belgium it is very easy to read the current news in different languages because of the multilingual statute of the country. Besides, there exist online magazines that pay a lot of attention to language learning. Two examples are www.taalblad.be: an e-zine for foreign-speakers that describes the daily news in Dutch, and Actupress Mag (Animation centre for languages; www.animationlangues.be)

3.1.3.3 Language centers

In Belgium there are numerous language centers that organize language trainings for companies or private persons.



The number of centers that teach Western languages is very high. For more exotic languages that volume is rather limited. However, most of them are offered in one or more Flemish cities. Amongst others, these languages are Chinese, Arab, Finnish, Russian, Greek, Polish, Turkish, Romanian, and Hindi.

Animation Centre for Languages

The Animation Centre for Languages promotes putting foreign languages into practice. On the one hand this non-profit organization wants to fan interest in other cultures; on the other hand it wants to offer people the possibility to integrate more easily. It offers tools to stimulate a lively and creative approach of foreign languages. The Animation Centre for Languages tries to make language accessible for a public as large as possible.

Language training is organised around three main pillars:

- the offer of tools for language learning
- the sensitisation to foreign languages and cultures (e. g. organisation of 2 sensitisation campaigns per year, such as the "Language Feast")
- animation activities based on languages
 - organisation of playful workshops on demand (youth associations, schools): language is seen as a way of communicating, not as an end in itself
 - teacher training: how to animate language lessons

CLIL - De Horizon

Organization "de Horizon" was founded in 1996 by Annelies Peeters, language teacher and researcher at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in order to help French-speaking children from primary (and secondary) education to learn Dutch - often their 4th or 5th language - in a short period of time (initial target competence level A1). In only 2 years, the number of participants grew from 10 to 180 pupils. Later on, the organization was no longer funded by the Flemish Community but by the Brussels municipality Sint-Gillis and was renamed "Playful Dutch for non-native children". Dutch courses are given by volunteering teachers on Saturdays to children from 7 to (approx.) 14 years. Participants are children between 7 and 14 that often come from underprivileged backgrounds. They are mainly children of North-African Islamic countries. Their school language is French.

The classes are content and task-oriented. The used method is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL); disciplines such as mathematics and geography are taught in the foreign language (Dutch).



The teachers use a combination of self-developed work books with lots of images, games, music and interaction and existing material such (handbook, CD-ROM...).

3.1.3.4 Governmental initiatives

Huizen van het Nederlands (House of Dutch)

A basic Dutch course is a part of the obliged integration course for adult migrants in Flanders. Moreover, it provides a course social orientation, a program for career orientation and individual course guidance.

The House of Dutch organizes Dutch courses tailored to the needs and interests of migrants that speak another language. In Flanders and Brussels there are 8 Houses of Dutch (one in each province and three municipal Houses). The Houses of Dutch are separate non-profit organizations and cooperate with all who accommodate Dutch as second language (NT2).

The Houses of Dutch put foreign-speakers, who want to follow a language course Dutch, on the way. Concretely, that means that a consultant from The House of Dutch will have a conversation with the candidate-participant and take some tests. Together with the foreign-speaker he will look for the most suitable course.

Therefore The House of Dutch doesn't organize courses itself, but does have a complete survey of all NT2-courses that are being organized at its disposal. It doesn't send the course participant to one particular school, but informs him about all the possibilities that match his profile.

Dutch in Brussels

'De Rand' is a non-profit organization that was founded to support the Flemish character of the Flemish outskirts of Brussels. The Flemish Community, the province of Flemish-Brabant and the local social-cultural system are structurally represented in the board of directors. The non-profit organization particularly promotes languages and the reception and integration of foreign-speakers in the outskirts through, among other things

- the promotion of courses Dutch for foreign-speakers.
- the development of a guided offer for course-participants Dutch.
- sensitisation campaigns to speak more Dutch (at the grocery store, at sports clubs, at play yards).
- welcome events for migrants.



Conversation tables

In the District of Brussels several fora and ‘conversation cafes’ have been established to promote language learning. An example of such forum is Bru-Taal, which wants to rouse the interest of the inhabitants of Brussels from various origins to learn Dutch by organizing conversation tables and groups. The so called ‘Babelut-conversation tables’ are being organized nine times per week in several towns of District Brussels for people who like making contact and learn Dutch.

For those who already participated in one of the ‘Bru-Taal’ activities, they frequently organise trips in Brussels or Flanders. During these trips the participants can practice Dutch with Dutch-speaking volunteers and they become more acquainted with Flanders and Dutch initiatives in the District of Brussels. The trips pay special attention to culture, cities, nature, arts, history...

Community centre ‘De Rinck’ organizes a Dutch conversation group, which is guided by two native speakers, for those who already speak Dutch fluently and want to discover Brussels in Dutch. ‘Culture’ is the theme of the conversations. This group works by means of a cultural program with previews and subsequent discussions in Dutch. The coaches guide the group to stopping places, cafes and community houses of the Flemish cultural community. They look out for language outside the artificial atmosphere of class rooms. The meetings in the community centre take place every Thursday evening.

Language promotion and sports

Non-profit organization ‘De Rand’ supports various projects that promote the Dutch language in sports clubs in Brussels (1 out of 4 conversations in sports clubs in the outskirts of Brussels is held in Dutch). This way a dictionary with soccer terminology for foreign-speakers (with translation in 3 languages) was developed. (www.derand.be)

The sports federation for families developed a look- and read booklet (with instructions for use) for about fifteen clubs in the Flemish outskirts that offer gymnastics or swimming courses for small children. These booklets and instructions for use are actively used during sports activities. Small children that participate in one of these sports receive the corresponding booklet, so that they can practice with their friends and family as well. Thereby small children, parents and friends get into touch with the Dutch language in an active way.

Language promotion and youth activities

For the youth there are several initiatives to promote languages, such as the project ‘Taalspeler’ (Language player), which is a multilingual playground from the ‘Vlaamse Dienst Speelpleinwerk vzw’ (Flemish playground service). This non-profit organization sets up language holidays Dutch for



children that speak a foreign language, workshops Dutch for children from the age of 3-6 (tinker and play in Dutch) and school presentations for primary school pupils that speak a foreign language.

On the website www.taalblad.be learners and teachers can find all kinds of didactic material for learning and teaching the Dutch language, e.g. booklets with pictograms and an exercise CD with songs.

3.1.3.5 Language camps

The non-profit organization **Roeland** is a youth service for the improvement of communication skills of young Flemings in a foreign language through theatre and performance. The organization strives towards multilingualism of youngsters with attention to individual development and optimal functioning in an international and multicultural context.

To achieve that, Roeland organizes several projects, in which youngsters can participate as a team in their leisure time. Besides language camps and language holidays Roeland organizes during the year numerous initiatives for the improvement of linguistic skills, e.g. junior workshops French and English, youth theatre projects well known under the name of "Artscène", youth festivals French and English, language animation French and English, city trips to Liege, Lille and Namur, basic and specialized training for teachers and animators, publications for teachers, several activities for the promotion of the knowledge Dutch of foreign-speakers.

Roeland is recognized by the Ministry of the Flemish Community as a rural youth service, by the city of Ghent as an initiative for youth work and by the province of East-Flanders as a provincial youth service.

Private language school **Ceran** was founded in Spa in 1975. There are seven centers in Europe, notably in Belgium, Spain, France and the UK. Ceran offers language courses for three different target groups: adults, youngsters aged 18 to 22 and youngsters from the age of 10 to 18. The instructed languages are Dutch, French, English, German, Japanese and Spanish. Ceran's intensive language education for adolescents is meant for language enthusiasts aged 18 to 22 with a basic knowledge of the target language. During these language courses the practically-oriented part is combined with pleasant cultural and sports activities. During the school holidays youngsters from the age of 10 to 18 can go to a residential language camp to improve their French, German, English, Dutch or Spanish. A language camp is open for absolute beginners, but it can also be supplementary to formal education.

The non-profit organization **Wiams** was founded in 1964 and organizes Dutch, French and English language trainings for youngsters aged 6 to 18. These trainings take place during the Easter and



summer holidays and they last 8 days during the Easter holidays and 8, 10 or 13 days during the summer holidays. In addition there are also French, Dutch and English trainings for youngsters from 6 to 12 years old. These trainings also take place during the Easter- and summer holidays and they always take 7 days.

3.1.3.6 Sports and language camps

Bloso

‘Bloso’ is entitled for the financing of the Flemish sports federations, of the provincial and municipal sports services and of the sports service of the Flemish Community Commission (VGC). Another assignment of ‘Bloso’ is the promotion of sports. It tries to encourage as many Flemings as possible - in particular youngsters - to practice sports on a regular basis. That happens through sensitisation activities and promotion campaigns, but also by bringing youth in contact with as many various sports as possible. In order to do so ‘Bloso’ cooperates with partners such as the Flemish sports federations and their clubs, the provincial and municipal sports services, the Foundation Flemish Top-sports School, etc. One of the activities of ‘Bloso’ is the organization of trainings for domestic and foreign sports federations and clubs. In the ‘Bloso’ centers trainings for top athletes and talented youngsters are being organized, just like trainings for foreign top athletes. In that way young sportsmen from various countries come in contact with each other and thus with each other’s languages and cultures. Furthermore, ‘Bloso’ organizes language- and sports camps for youngsters. The goal is to acquaint children from the age of 5 to 12 with their second official language in a playful way. The structure consists of seminars, games and music, which are put together by child psychologists and language tutors. In a pleasant and spontaneous atmosphere the children can develop their interactive competences and enthusiasm for the language. For the older children the exercises for written competences are also taught in a playful way. A camp encompasses two hours for languages each day alternated with sports.

Adeps

‘Adeps’ is the Walloon equivalent of ‘Bloso’.

Sports clubs

Young football players can participate in language-sport camps at football club KRC Genk and combine language learning (French, English) with football.



3.1.3.7 Language and top-class sport

Top-class sport is an international occurrence and sport clubs from the higher competitions recruit foreign players in high numbers. Several sport clubs organise language trainings (Dutch or French) to integrate those players as much as possible with the club and society and to make fluent communication possible.

3.1.4 Languages in informal language learning in Belgium

3.1.4.1 Introduction

Informal learning was defined in the report of the Committee for Culture and Education as such:

“Learning that goes on in daily life and can be received from daily experience, such as from family, friends, peer groups, the media and other influences in a person’s environment.”

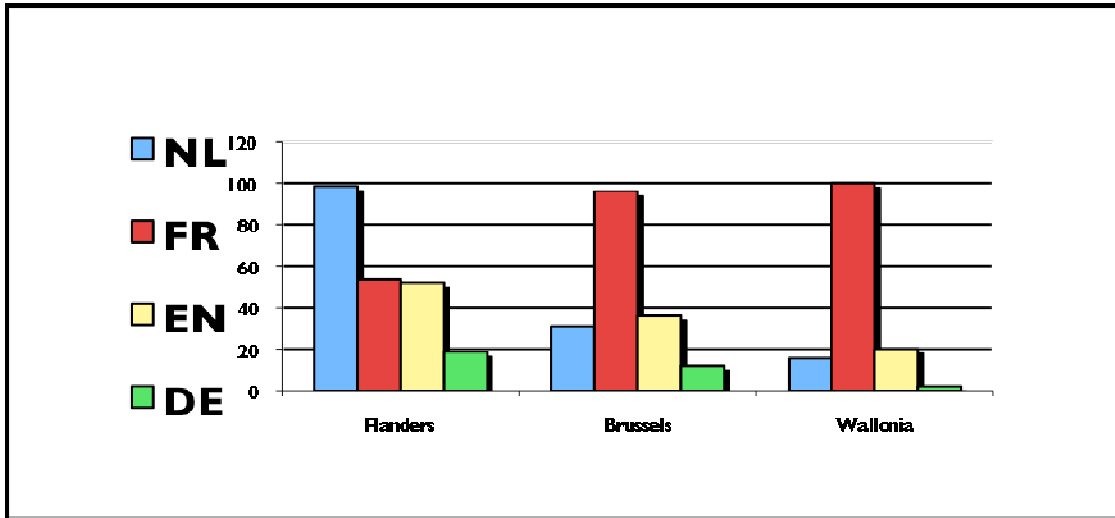
There are differing opinions about what can be understood by informal learning. On the website of the Flemish Department for Environment, Nature and Energy the following is written about informal learning:

“Informal learning happens spontaneously in daily life. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning doesn’t necessarily mean ‘conscious learning’; the things people learn through the media for example.” A good example is the acquirement of English, which happens in a natural, unconscious way through the high volume of input from English and American television programs and movies.

Informal learning is not offered by an institute or organization, in contrary to formal and non-formal learning.

At the end of 2005 **26% of the Belgians didn’t speak any foreign languages (EU25 44%), 74% (EU 56%) knew at least one, 67% (EU 28%) minimum two and 53% (EU 11%) three or more.** The three foreign languages that are most commonly known are English (59%), French (48%) and German (27%). With these percentages Belgium scores higher than the European averages. In general, a Fleming is well aware of the importance of a sound knowledge of foreign languages and participates in various initiatives to improve his knowledge of foreign languages.

Percentage of Belgians claiming to speak Dutch, French, English and German in Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels



Bron: Eurobarometer 2006. Berekeningen: Jonathan Van Parys & Sven Wauters, FUSL

3.1.4.2 Leisure activities

Film

The bulk of movies in the Flemish cinemas is mainly Anglophone. Movies aren't voiced-over, but subtitled and moreover often in two languages: Dutch and French. Also French, German, Spanish, Italian, oriental, etc. movies are subtitled, most of the time in two official state languages.

Television and radio

Also the spectrum of television series in Belgium is mainly made in Anglophonic countries and they are subtitled. The same goes for popular music that is played on Flemish radio stations. In addition, a lot of Flemish artists prefer to sing in English.

In such way Flemings come a lot in contact with English in their free time and subsequently gains passive knowledge of the language.

Migrant associations

Certain migrant communities in Flanders have an active social life. They meet each other at various social activities, such as films, sports, gastronomy. These events are often occasions where they can use and maintain their mother tongue, although the knowledge of the language of origin decreases generation after generation.

Tourism

Flemings love to spend their holidays abroad. Popular destinations are France, Spain and Italy. They find it normal to manage in the language of the local population or in English, French or German.



Conversely, Flemings believe it is normal that visitors from other countries can't speak Dutch and they will communicate with tourists in a more frequently used language, mainly English, French and German.

3.1.4.3 Working or studying in a foreign environment

Work- and education training for volunteers

The non-profit organization 'Bouworde' is a rural youth association with following objectives:

- To educate and alert youngsters (up to the age of 30) to the social reality.
- To give youngsters the opportunity to express their solidarity by cooperating with effective projects in Flanders, abroad in Europe or elsewhere.
- To motivate youngsters to become world citizens – in the full meaning of the word – by exchanging cultures, ways of life and ideas.

This way 'Bouworde' wants to respond (in a social way) to a culture of individualism and to a competitive and sensation-oriented society.

'Bouworde' is a youth association based on volunteer work that tries to fight poverty and life-threatening insecurity by offering help to build and improve housing. It organizes among other things 'build camps', which is a unique combination of youth holidays, group traveling and volunteer work. A 'build camp' frames in a project for underprivileged people in the Third or Fourth World. Participants cooperate to improve the living conditions of the local population. Obviously, they come in contact with the language and the culture of the host country.

BTC (Belgian Technical Cooperation) is the Belgian agency for development aid. This cooperation is supported by the Belgian government in order to help third World countries in their fight against poverty. Apart from their public services, they also take up out various projects from national and international organizations that aim at a sustainable and human development. BTC manages more than 200 projects in about 20 countries all over Africa, Asia and South America. The agency employs 650 people, of which 180 work at the head office in Brussels and the remaining 470 are based in countries where BTC has set up projects and programmes. BTC has 17 country agencies abroad.

BTC was founded in 1998.

Service clubs

The service club **Marnixring** intends to serve the Dutch language- and cultural society by, among other things, disseminating and promoting Dutch and the Dutch culture. Marnixring wants to help



everyone that is willing to disseminate and promote the Dutch language – beyond the party politics – to achieve their goals.

Every year the **Rotary clubs** and –districts from Belgium sponsor between 150 and 250 students of the secondary education that want to discover another region in the world. The length of their stay abroad is basically one academic year, because participants redo their final year in high school in another country. However, some Rotary clubs and –districts also support shorter exchanges of a few weeks or months. All exchange programs are meant for youngsters aged 16 and up, whether or not children from Rotarians. They stay in a host family or in a youth hostel. The goal of the exchange programs is to give youngsters the chance to explore foreign countries, cultures and languages and to enhance their international understanding.

The foreign language they learn depends on the native language in the country of stay. Because of the lingua franca status of the English language, a lot of participants learn both English and the local native language. Obviously, English is the only language of communication in English-speaking countries.

Participants live with a host family, which implies that the learning method is an example of immersion (any activity with a constant in- and output of a foreign language). After one academic year abroad they return with a solid knowledge of the native language of the host country.

Participating in an exchange program abroad for almost an entire year is often a huge and new experience for the youngsters. Most of them have never been away from their friends and families for such a long time. Homesickness is a problem that a lot of our participants encounter. Rotary staff members try to encourage them to overcome that, and not uncommonly they do adjust after a short difficult period and in the end some of them would even want to stay longer. One of the keys to dealing with homesickness and restrains to speak a foreign language is social pressure. Friends will help a person feel more comfortable in a new situation and they will have a positive influence on the well-being of the youngster. In order to make contact and friends the participants will have to try and communicate in a foreign language.

As a rule, the exchange program gets a lot of signs of interest from youngsters and mostly they put themselves up for candidacy spontaneously. However, recently the interest seems to decrease. Rotary presumes that one of the main reasons for that are the long journeys to the farthest corners of our globe a lot of families make. In the past years the world has become a smaller place. Therefore, a lot of youngsters don't need an exchange program to gain experience abroad. Often their parents take them there.



The three most important incentives for participating are the following. They want to broaden their horizon and feel that a long stay abroad is a good way in doing so. Secondly, a lot of youngsters having finished high school want to catch their breath and choose for a sabbatical year, in which they can gain experience abroad. The third driver is the opportunity the exchange program provides to ameliorate language skills. Especially English and Spanish are popular languages.

Exchanges

An exchange to a foreign region is the best way of learning a language in an authentic context and using it actively. Learning a language is often not the main objective of an exchange and so it happens in a spontaneous way.

AIESEC is an international platform for youngsters to discover and develop their talents, so that they can have a positive influence on society. AIESEC organizes among other things an exchange program, that offers more than 3500 students and school leavers the opportunity to live and work abroad. Each year over 50 Belgian students go abroad within this framework for an internship and each year Belgium receives more than 100 interns from abroad. Over 50 partner companies and – institutes support AIESEC in its activities.

An **au pair** (mostly a youngster) lives in a host family, where she enjoys board and lodging in exchange for small daily chores. By participating in the domestic life of a host family abroad the au pair can perfect her knowledge of languages and broaden her general knowledge. Of course the au pair will become more acquainted with the host country as well. Both the au pair and the host family must meet certain conditions.

3.1.4.4 Workshops for children

The **Child Museum in Brussels** offers children between 4 and 12 years old the opportunity to get to know themselves and others better in a playful way. The unique character of the Child Museum lies particularly in the content of the exhibitions and in the improvement of self-knowledge. The Museum is convinced that self-knowledge is essential for the development of emotions of the child. It can help the child to develop its individual identity and to become an openhearted and tolerant person. The Museum has included several themes such as coexistence, communication, fear, self-confidence, the richness of our five senses, imagination and change. During the school holidays the Child Museum organizes several bilingual activities, e.g. trainings, workshops, storytelling events...



3.1.4.5 Youth associations

Every year the **Brotherhood of Taizé** (France) organizes a meeting for youngsters. During this meeting tens of thousands youngsters from all over Europe come together for five days to celebrate, sing, pray, talk and welcome the new year in a special way. Participants stay in a host family, which is a pleasant way of coming in contact with the local population and having a taste of a foreign culture. Each day numerous activities and workshops are held. There is the possibility to explore the city and the environment.

The **World Youth Days** (WYD) are international meetings that are being organized by the Catholic Church. 100 000 participants, particularly young catholic believers attend these events. The WYD are held every three years. The host country is, in turns, a European country and a country from another continent.

The **World Jamboree** is a four-yearly international scouting camp. It is an enormous event for about 40 000 boy- and girl scouts from all over the world. The program consists of sundry activities, such as shows, workshops about the environment, sciences and culture, contests, discussion groups and concerts. The target group of the World Jamboree is boy- and girl scouts from the age of 14 up to and including 17 years old. In 2007 Scouting celebrated its centenary worldwide with a Jamboree in the UK.

Euroform is a similar international meeting, but then organized by another youth association called Chiro.

3.1.4.6 Other

The castle complex of Alden Biesen in Bilzen, province of Limburg, belongs to the Flemish government and serves as a cultural centre nowadays. Several events such as conferences and cultural events are being staged by authorized public servants, other societies or public servants and other societies together. One of these events is the **international Alden Biesen storytelling festival**. In April 2009 the 14th edition took place.

The target groups of the festival are mainly primary and secondary schools and in a lesser degree students from a higher institute for education and from evening classes. Also people, who are doing a teacher training, come to gain inspiration to master the narrative art. Alden Biesen is the biggest storytelling festival of Europe. 13 000 visitors came to the last edition, most of them from Flanders. From about 100 participating schools, only 4 were from Wallonia. Besides the program for schools, Alden Biesen also welcomes the public at large: children, adolescents and adults. The content of the stories and the storyteller is always chosen in consideration of youngsters and their age.



The events for youngsters under the age of 16 are always in Dutch. Occasionally, bilingual events in Dutch and French or Dutch and English take place for this target group. Adolescents aged 16 and older can choose to participate in events in Dutch, French, English and German. Alden Biesen is one of the very few festivals who also aim at adolescents as a target group. A big part of adults from evening classes study Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. Hence, some events are in these languages.

The difficulty level of the used language depends on the age and the obtained level of the foreign language of the participants. Alden Biesen is a unique festival because of the variety of languages offered. That is no coincidence, because it links up with the multilingual culture of Flanders. Most narrative festivals only occur in the native language of the country and sometimes as well in English, but never in several foreign languages.

Most of the time the initial motivation of the youngsters is quite low, because they don't know what to expect and a lot of them fear that their language skills are not high enough to understand the stories. Afterwards we almost always get positive reactions. They realise that their passive knowledge of the foreign language is much bigger than they thought it would be. That has a very motivating effect. Also during other events for youngsters from Belgium and other countries, we notice that the language skills of Flemish (and Luxembourgian) youngsters are mostly the highest of all participants.

3.1.5 Motivation for language learning

3.1.5.1 Foreign languages in business

Both in Flanders and Wallonia, companies have contacts with partners that don't speak Dutch and/or French respectively, which is of vital importance in business community. This was demonstrated by several essays from Hasselt University, in which specific research in the provinces Limburg and Flemish-Brabant was done.

Almost all companies investigated communicated in foreign languages. 70.8% of the companies in Limburg did so at least once a week and 54.6% at least once a day. In Flemish-Brabant it was at least once a week in 98% of the companies and once a day in 73.5%. The logical consequence is that about 75% of the Flemish companies get their returns from non-Dutch regions. 20.8% of the companies in Limburg and 34.3% in Flemish-Brabant get most of their returns from these foreign regions.

In Limburg 7 out of 10 companies are in touch with Francophone partners; in Flemish-Brabant even 86.2%. Concerning contacts with German-speaking partners, statistics show 38% and 31% respectively; with Anglophonic partners 30% in Limburg and 33.3% in Flemish-Brabant. About 15% of the companies admitted that orders had been lost because of a lack of knowledge of foreign languages (especially French and German). Almost 20% said some contacts had worsened because of



the same reason. Moreover, 60.4% of the companies in Limburg confirmed that knowledge of foreign languages is a trump card during negotiations. Almost all companies agreed that knowledge of foreign languages will become of even bigger importance in the future.

European research confirmed these findings. The ELAN research (2006), which investigated the linkage between language skills, cultural competence and exporting performance in the 29 European countries, found that **a significant amount of business is being lost to European enterprise as a result of lack of language skills**. On the basis of the sample, it is estimated that 11% of exporting European SMEs (945,000 companies) may be losing business because of identified communication barriers. Analysis of the findings from the survey identified a **clear link between languages and export success**. Four elements of language management were found to be associated with successful export performance: having a language strategy, appointing native speakers, recruiting staff with language skills and using translators and interpreters. 62 % of the Belgian companies represented in the study confirmed they hired personnel with specific language skills due to export needs. Only 28 % hired native speakers.

About half of the total sample of companies has offered language training to their personnel and 42% expect to see their demand for additional expertise in languages increase over three years.

3.1.5.2 Knowledge of foreign languages at a job interview

58,6% of the vacancies demand knowledge of foreign languages. During a job interview this knowledge is often tested, in particular for French and to a lesser degree for German and English.

3.1.5.3 Foreign languages in tourism

An urgent need for knowledge of foreign languages also emerges in the tourist sector. A research on tourism in Limburg estimates that 95% of all hotel guests don't speak Dutch. French is mostly the language of communication, followed by German and English. But also Italians, Spaniards, Poles and Japanese visit Limburg, however less frequently.

Out of all tourists in general 21.6% don't speak Dutch. Also here French is mostly the language of communication, followed by German and English. In the tourist sector foreign languages are almost exclusively spoken and only rarely written.

A research by STC, which occupies itself with the observation of the labor market in Limburg, came to the conclusion that there is an urgent need for knowledge of foreign languages. That's why language courses were started up in several cities for staff members of tourist agencies.



3.1.5.4 Foreign languages in leisure activities

The majority of Belgians choose a holiday destination where the local population doesn't speak Dutch. France is the most popular destination, followed by Spain and Italy. So also in leisure activities Belgians attach much importance to the knowledge of one or more foreign languages.

Much Belgian cities have a twin town in another European country. Through such partnership inhabitants of these cities get in touch with Germans, French, Italians, Spaniards, etc.

3.1.5.5 Growing popularity of English

English has to thank its growing popularity to a number of agents. First of all, the youth is aware of the high importance of a decent knowledge of the English language, because it is the current lingua franca. However, that is not the only reason. Much has to do with the many American and English films and television series that are being broadcasted. In Flanders **nothing is voiced-over, but subtitled instead**. The consequence is that Flemish youngsters master the English language in a passive, informal way. Besides, especially American and English music is very popular with young people. Thus, all forms of multimedia are dominated by English. Contact with the English language is not an example of short and intensive immersion, but a **constant and frequent input**. The combination of this input with English lessons in school, starting from the first year in high school, proves to be a successful learning method.

3.1.5.6 Barriers for French²

Decreasing popularity

85% of the students finds a decent knowledge of French important. On the other hand 43% of the students experiences French as unpleasant. The approach should be more attractive and less traditional.

Language initiations in primary education showed that the motivation of these students is however high. In the first and second grade of the secondary education a lot of teachers start again from square one, which implies a huge effort to catch up, particularly where vocabulary and grammar are concerned. That doesn't strengthen their love for their French courses. A surprising comment came from a teacher from the District of Brussels, who also found a lack of motivation from her Francophone students. That resulted in an indifferent attitude that in particular affected the writing competences. A research by Kemps et al. connects this with a poorer score for writing skills. Students

² Source: Entity Curriculum, Flemish government, "Conferentie na de peiling Frans, lezen, luisteren en schrijven", secundair onderwijs, 1^e graad A-stroom (evaluation of French language competence after the first 2 years of secondary education), Oct. 2008



also overestimate their competences. Migrant children on the other hand have more difficulty with English than with French. They are less in touch with English and more motivated to learn French.

The basis of French is more difficult than the basis of English, which makes tangible progression slower. However, there are also other barriers. French is still mostly approached as a school subject instead of a living language. The teaching of grammar and vocabulary still happens fairly theoretically and perfectionist French teachers contribute to the perception of students that French is difficult and boring.

Moreover, young Flemings hardly come in contact with French any more. In extracurricular situations youngsters mostly speak English to communicate with foreign-speakers. However, the majority of pedagogic experts agree that French will maintain an important role in Flanders. One stimulating measure could be that Flemish media have greater thought for French culture and entertainment, which happens too little at present.

Not only the secondary education suffers from a drop in the level of language skills for French. Also for the adult Flemings a similar trend has been ascertained. In trainings for candidate teachers a decrease of the level French is clearly noticeable as well.

Methodological changes

It is certainly not the intention to give rise to a competition between French and English. Bringing Flemish youngsters more in contact with the French world on the other hand is a better solution. That can happen through various cultural events and projects, such as a French culture week, trips to Wallonia, exchanges with French schools, the introduction of French websites, task-focused education, etc. Another possibility for the Technical and Special Secondary Education is introducing immersion education. Through vocation-technical courses in the target language students experience the benefit and utility of the foreign language in their occupation immediately. This would definitely have a positive influence on the motivation of these students for French.

A few concrete changes have been put forward to overcome the obstacles for French. According to some, a forum could be created where teachers can exchange didactic material and experiences. Teachers themselves tend to give preference to the introduction of a language portfolio, so students are aware of their progression.

There is no consensus about specific methods for French. Explaining everything in French without attention for specific problems of Dutch-speaking students is perhaps aiming too high. There seems to be a real need for adapted material for less skilled students. Very often they get an exercise book that is nothing more than a decoction of the version for General Secondary Education, without the individual character and specific needs of those students being taken into account.

44.3% of the teachers French in the first and second year of the secondary education communicates more often in the mother tongue than in French during the lessons. As far as English is concerned, that



percentage is much lower (17.4%). Students, who indicate that their teacher speaks French during the courses, prove to have better reading skills. Communication in the target language would increase the concentration and the respect for the teacher. Another consequence is that these students have a bigger vocabulary.

Implementation of CFR

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CFR) is not at all known in many schools at present. Only when the new final attainment levels, which will be linked up to the CFR, will be incorporated in the new exercise books, teachers will notice the implications. Trainers of candidate teachers, teaching methodologists and publishers on the other hand already are familiar with the CFR

3.2 Conclusions of conducted interviews

Language is seen as a way of communicating, not as an end in itself

Informal and non-formal language learning providers consider language as a communication tool. The important thing is to speak and to understand, not to master the grammar perfectly or to reflect on language.

Youngsters are challenged to express themselves actively in the foreign language. The material and methods used are adapted to their fields of interests and needs

By discussing topics within the field of interest of the youngsters, language learning providers can stimulate them to engage in communication during classes or other activities. The choice of language material and methods is chosen following the interests of the specific target groups, which increases the youngsters' motivation for foreign languages. The use of modern media in foreign languages is very useful (popular music bands, films, youth books etc. from other countries).

Use of modern media!

Existing Internet tools such as language learning websites should be used as innovative methods for language learning. Several of the interviewed language learning providers make use of modern media such as websites, social networking sites, video clips, chats and fora. Such media can offer a platform for youngsters to communicate with contemporaries from other countries and provide possibilities of authentic contacts with the target culture.

Valorisation of passive knowledge: “you know more than you think!”

Two good examples are the Aldenbiesen storytelling festival and the Animation Centre for Languages.

Guy Tilkin from Aldenbiesen says that young participants to the storytelling workshops are very sceptic at first, because they don't know what to expect from storytelling and because they doubt if their knowledge of a particular language is sufficient to participate in the activities. Afterwards they respond very positively, because they realize their skills are better than they thought. This boosts them to continue putting effort in foreign language learning.

Amaryllis Luyten from the Animation Center for Languages reacted in the same way: “When participants have doubts at first (“languages are not for me”), the playful methods and practical use of the languages (language mistakes are not important, the most important thing is to communicate) allow them to build up confidence and they turn out to be able of much more than they expected.



Activities in small and multicultural groups

During activities it is important that the groups are not too big, so that each participant has the opportunity to have his input. Of course it is an advantage if a group consists of people with various ethnic backgrounds. When a group is multilingual, a common language of communication needs to be found, and participants are forced to use a foreign language actively. A multicultural group is instructive and interesting. Each participant can learn more about not only a foreign language, but also about the cultures of the other participants.

Immersion in native speaker environment; adapt language usage to competence level of youngsters

Learning a language by (full) immersion in a native-speaker environment has proven to give very good results. A lot of the language learning providers use the immersion concept, by sending their participants abroad or by teaching other subjects/organising recreational activities in another language. Often, teachers and participants are asked to speak only the foreign language during all activities. The presence of foreign language native speakers is crucial but in some cases, their language use needs to be adapted to the competence level of the learners.

Provide activities that require different levels of competence

When setting up creative language learning activities it is important that the difficulty level of these activities are adapted to the competence level of the specific target groups. Pupils need to be motivated on the basis of their already acquired language competence and should be offered sufficient new stimuli for the improvement of their language skills. At the end of the activities, it's also important that language learners are conscient of the progression they made.

Activities should also cover all linguistic competences. Not each single activity has to focus on all of them, but a package could be elaborated, where all activities are complementary to each other. Listening competence can be stimulated by listening and discussing popular foreign music or by events such as the Aldenbiesen storytelling festival. Communicative interaction can be trained through exchanges or debates. Writing skills can be improved through learning in tandem with a foreign partner. These are only a few of the many possible activities, events or methods.



Involvement of youngsters in choice of activities

As we discussed before, youngsters are more likely to engage in lessons and activities that match their interests. They focus more on the content than on the packaging and meanwhile they are learning and practicing the foreign language. Youngsters are more actively involved and will be eager to participate in activities that they love doing. Therefore, it is advisable that students have their say to a certain extent as to which activities are scheduled.

Use of language in daily life, in informal contexts, no pressure of “learning” and “correctness”

The key for success in learning languages is to remove barriers that keep a student from actively engaging in conversations in a foreign language. One of those barriers could be that the student feels uncertain about his level and is troubled by a low self-esteem. Therefore it is important to stress that making mistakes is not so bad, that it is an inevitable part of the language learning process. In other words, a relaxed and informal context should be created, where the student doesn't focus on language learning as such, but more on the content of communication.

Sensitisation and involvement of parents in language learning

It is very important that parents understand the importance of language learning and support their children in doing so. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage parents to let their children participate in non-formal or informal activities for language learning and to encourage to learn languages themselves.

Formulas with competition element, games

Playful and competitive games or contests sharpen the motivation of youngsters for foreign languages. For them the goal is not only learning the language, but rather the competition itself. Nonetheless, they are learning in the meantime.

Stimulation of teamwork

Teamwork is, like competition, a good formula to get youngsters more motivated to learn languages. In combination with a competitive element, teamwork proves to be very successful. The traditional individual learning method could partly be replaced by a social activity, which makes students more likely to communicate.



4 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <1>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

ActuaPress Mag & Fl@sh

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

English, Dutch, French
Pdf documents
available by subscription, not available freely

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

reading listening writing speaking
 other (please specify):.....

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,...)

"ActuaPress Mag" (English, Dutch, French): monthly magazine with news in 3 languages, with exercises, vocabulary lists, audio CD (interviews native speakers).
"Fl@sh": weekly press review of target culture, in target language
For learners of EN, NL and FR having a good knowledge of the foreign language but wanting to practice their reading and listening skills and stay in touch with the foreign culture.
Advanced level

Objective(s)

To offer people having a good knowledge of the target language the opportunity to practise their reading and oral skills and to be in touch with the target culture.

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

Centre d’animation en langues, amaryllis.luyten@gmail.com
<http://www.animationlangues.be/content.php?hmID=20&smID=61&ssmID=114>

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

Contents are not available for free

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 2

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

ActuaPress is a language learning tool using modern ICT. It is attractive because it offers authentic foreign language texts and audio reflecting the current reality of the foreign culture and language but is at the same time adapted to the needs and competences of foreign language learners (with vocabulary aids and exercises).

The tool can be adapted to other foreign languages and other cultures.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <2>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Storytelling festival of Alden Biesen

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Languages: Dutch, French, English, German

No specific learning material is used.

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

listening

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,...)

Biggest storytelling festival of Europe. Storytellers from all around the world tell all kinds of stories in their native language, but they adapt their language use to the competence level of the participants.

The event takes place in the historic castle complex of Alden Biesen, BE.

Age group: Youngsters are divided in two age groups:

- under 16
- 16 and older

Level: The difficulty level of the used language depends on the age and the obtained level of the foreign language of the participants. The difficulty level of every event is adapted to the language skills and to the age of the target group.

Profile: Almost all participants are young Flemings, only occasionally from Wallonia.

Objective(s)

To make youngsters aware of their level of language skills (which is often higher than they estimate themselves) and to bring them in contact with foreign languages and storytelling.

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

Contact person: Guy Tilkin, Landcommanderij Alden Biesen, BE

guy.tilkin@alden-biesen.be



Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

--

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 1

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

This learning concept is transferable to other languages and other contexts/places.

One of the biggest trumps of the Alden Biesen storytelling events is that people of all ages can be reached. Storytelling can happen in the mother tongue for target groups that have no foreign language skills. In order to participate in an event in a foreign language, one needs to master the foreign language to a certain extent; different difficulty levels are possible. Alden Biesen is a very interesting example of good practice, especially in combination with foreign language learning in the formal education.

The school program is very useful for students because at the Alden Biesen events they find out that their passive knowledge of a foreign language is much higher than they estimated before. The storytelling events give an impetus for students to carry on learning foreign languages because they are a confirmation of the results they have already achieved. Students find out that their efforts are being rewarded.

Guy Tilkin of Alden Biesen says youngsters are mostly very sceptic about the events at first, but afterwards they are almost always very positive about the experience. That is partly due to the confirmation of their knowledge, and partly because of the entertainment of storytelling.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <3>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

De Horizon

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Languages: Dutch

Learning method: CLIL

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

listening

speaking

writing

reading

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,...)

‘De Horizon’ was founded in 1996 and aims at teaching Dutch to children from French-speaking primary schools within a short time span and in an motivating and playful way. Volunteers teach them different school subjects in Dutch on Saturdays. They use a variety of tools attractive to children, games, activities that require physical interaction, music, short and varied tasks.

Age group: Pupils from primary school (age: 6-12 years old)

Level: The intended level is A1 (Breakthrough stage, CFR)

Profile: Pupils from French-speaking primary schools, children of mostly North-African immigrants

Objective(s)

To teach Dutch to immigrant children going to French-speaking schools in an intensive but playful basic course; to improve their chances of a successful school career, to develop their (extrinsic + intrinsic) motivation to learn foreign languages.



Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

De Horizon/"Playful Dutch for non-native children"

Contact person: Annelies Peeters

peetersliesje@hotmail.com

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 1

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

The CLIL methodology (with native speaker teachers) can be implemented in all kinds of countries and contexts, of course also inside the formal education system. It is applicable to any language.

An interesting combination of self-made and existing language learning tools is used, using different media (text, images, audio). We will try to get a list of recommended tools on the market and of motivating teaching techniques for children.

The method has proven to be very successful, since pupils expressed themselves in a very enthusiastic way about the courses and about Dutch language in itself. Their results at school improved significantly and the parents were very happy with the results.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <4>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Dutch for football clubs - Football glossary
Dutch for daily life – Pictogram books (De Rand)

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Target language: Dutch, source languages: FR, EN, DE
Pdf documents downloadable from website

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

speaking

listening

other (please specify):.....

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,..)

1. Image dictionary for football teams in the Flemish periphery around Brussels having a lot of non-Dutch speaking players. Designed for foreign language speaking football players living in Brussels. Specific vocabulary. The football glossary’ grew into a comprehensive list of more than 500 words and phrases. It is distributed to all clubs in the Vlaamse Rand around Brussels.
2. Pictogram books for foreign language newcomers: vocabulary and dialogues/expressions for everyday activities and leisure. Among the themes are shopping (clothes, vegetables and fruit, bread, newspapers, gifts, flowers, café, restaurant, post office, bank, (public) transport, pharmacy, hairdresser...), living, cleaning, the human body, the doctor, the dentist, the hospital, the police, the library, theater, sports, free time), culture, tourism , pets...

Non-profit organization ‘De Rand’ mainly promotes the use of Dutch language in the outskirts of Brussels and has a role in the welcoming and integration of foreign language newcomers. It also organizes theatre and poetry productions in Dutch for non-Dutch speaking, language courses, conversation groups where adults can meet informally and speak about all kinds of subjects in Dutch (intermediate level), language-play camps for 5 to 12 year old children (language immersion) during summer of after school. It supports the production of language stimulation tools for trainers of sport



clubs or cultural associations with tips on how to use Dutch with foreign sportsmen and -women and youngsters.

Objective(s)

- Promoting the Dutch language in Brussels (daily life, sports clubs...)
- Welcoming and helping foreign newcomers to integrate

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

Non-profit organisation De Rand

www.derand.be

karen.stals@derand.be

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

IPR to be discussed with authors

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 1

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 2

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

The football glossary is a language learning tool which is very easily adaptable to other languages. It can also be adapted to other sports, but of course quite some work on producing/collecting images and inventorising the key vocabulary would be needed.

The pictogram books can also be adapted very easily to other languages.

The tools have proven to be effective because they address very concrete vocabulary needed in the daily reality (living in a Dutch-speaking community, doing sports as professional or recreational activity) of the target groups. Because it concerns the vocabulary they need very often, the tool motivates the newcomers and sporters to use Dutch while shopping, at the café, while doing sports instead of their mother tongue.

The attractiveness also lies in the use of attractive images; no translations are used, the images speak for themselves.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <5>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Plan-langues

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Languages:
 Dutch, French, English, German and Spanish
 Sensitization activities: up to 20 languages
 Learning method:
 "Plan langues": popular songs sung in English (or other languages) are pronounced by native speakers and simultaneously translated into French (learners' mother tongue), broadcasted on important francophone radio channels (Pure fm, Classic 21). The songs, and interviews with the performing artists (video), are also published on the website, and in the newsletter Le Soir, and there are pages on Facebook and MySpace with subtitled interviews with artists.
 Texts of songs and translations and videos are available on the website.
<http://web.me.com/Planlangues/document/home.html>

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

listening
reading

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,...)

The non-profit organization Animatiecentrum voor Talen (Animation Center for Languages) was founded in 1977 by Jean-Pierre Gailliez. The organization was certified as a Center of Permanent Education of the French-Speaking Community of Belgium. The Animation Center for Languages won the 'European Language Label' in 1999 and 2005 for its innovating projects in the field of language education.

The Animation Center for Languages mainly focuses on practising a language.

Age group: youngsters and adults
 Profile: very wide ethnic diversity (Flemish, Walloons, migrant communities of Brussels)
 Basic knowledge of the language



Objective(s)

Animation Center for Languages strives to put languages at the disposal of a very large audience and to better communication between the language communities of Belgium. It promotes the active use of foreign languages.

It offers language learning tools to the large public in Belgium and organizes language sensitization campaigns, such as the “annual feast of languages”.

The plan-langues was launched after a 1984 survey revealed that very few people understood the general meaning of very popular songs. The Centre d’Animation en Langues secured the collaboration of Radio 21 and the newspaper Le Soir in order to carry out a project supposed to last just a few months... 23 years later, the Centre d’Animation en Langues has already produced over 1000 Plan-Langues and has encountered hundreds of artists!

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

Centre d’animation en langues

Contact person: Amaryllis Luyten

amaryllis.luyten@gmail.com

<http://www.talenanimatie.be/>

<http://web.me.com/Planlangues/document/home.html>

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

Rate : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 1

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 2

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 1

Please specify:

The plan-langues is a language learning tool that is particularly attractive for youngsters, since it uses music and the lyrics of popular songs in foreign languages. It is directly in touch with the youngsters world and fields of interest. The initiative is a collaboration with important and young radio channels and it makes use of all the modern media: video clips, a website, pages on facebook and myspace.

It is an excellent tool to acquire passive language skills and to have a taste of the foreign culture.



It can be easily transferred to other source languages (translation of the songs) and target languages.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <6>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Tournoi Mondial de français par Internet

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

On-line contest with multiple choice questions (short communication scenarios) + feedback:
www.olyfran.org
Target language: French
Source languages: Dutch, French, English, German, Spanish, Italian

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

writing

reading

speaking

other (please specify):.....

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,...)

Tournoi Mondial de français par Internet is an online language contest French based on multiple choice questions with participants in team from all over the world. There are six level groups. Teams chose their difficulty level themselves. There is no age limit but 15 years is generally the starting age. Every student in one form of education or the other is free to participate.

Objective(s)

The main objective is to reach as many people who love the French language as possible and to let them participate in a free and fun contest.

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

www.olyfran.be
Contact person: Martine Verjans, Hasselt University, martine.verjans@uhasselt.be

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

--

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 1

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

The website is a language learning tool and also a learning concept.

It is certainly possible to put up a likewise contest for other languages. The target group of Tournoi Mondial is very big, since youngsters from all over the world and of various ages participate. The method however is probably only interesting for youngsters, as adults might prefer a more traditional method.

The effect of the contest has proven very successful.

The competitive element of the contest is unique and stimulates people to put more effort in the language learning. Also the team aspect helps in this.

The contest is for free and all you need to participate is a computer with connection to the Internet.

The contest is highly accessible, which is an important added value.

For literal adaptation of the questions (e.g. target language), IPR issues would have to be arranged



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <7>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Lingu@com – e-learning modules & Lingu@Tor – authoring software for language exercises

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Source languages: Dutch, French, Slovak, Romanian, Turkish
Target language: (for learning) Dutch, French, Slovak, Romanian, Turkish
Web-based courses; can be purchased and downloaded via www.commart.be

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

writing

reading

listening

speaking

other (please specify):.....

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,..)

Lingu@com are web-based learning modules for the learning of less often chosen foreign languages such as Dutch, Slovak, Turkish or Romanian. They are courses for young adults at the beginners' level and make use of rich multimedia possibilities and language and speech technologies. Each learning module consists of more than 300 interactive and playful exercises and also contains theory pages explaining the grammar, vocabulary, idioms and cultural specificities of the foreign language, feedback windows and an electronic dictionary tailor-made for the A1 and A2 levels of the CEF. A text-to-speech engine converts any text selected by the learner into native speaker like audio. The student can also record his/her own voice. Thanks to the text-to-speech and the screen magnification, the modules are also accessible to learners having difficulty reading, or suffering from dyslexia.

Objective(s)



The main objectives are to convince young adults to learn foreign languages, and not only the very popular languages such as Spanish and English, and to provide attractive and highly accessible learning possibilities outside of formal learning.

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

www.uhasselt.be/tst-id - www.commart.be

Contact person: Anouk Gelan, Hasselt University, anouk.gelan@uhasselt.be

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 2

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

The Lingu@com modules are language and culture learning tools that can be used by individual learners for self-study as well as by educational institutes/associations, in combination with classes or an e-coach. Learners receive scores for each exercise as well as detailed feedback on errors. They can listen to synthetic voices pronouncing their own typed text and they can record their own voice, which has a motivating effect. Thanks to the text-to-speech technology, users can experiment with live-generated native speaker speech (not previously planned) and can freely practise pronunciation. The flexibility of the learning packages, giving the student the choice to focus on practising (consulting theory only when believed necessary) or rather to study the theory and to make exercises whenever the need be. This gives the learner the opportunity to make his own choices in learning and to be more conscious of what he/she is learning and why.

The Lingu@Tor authoring software with which the e-modules have been developed is an interesting and user-friendly language teaching tool that can be used by teachers or educators having no programming skills whatsoever for making creative internet exercises. The platform is open to any language and to any difficulty level/target group. Exercises can be published on any website or can be used off-line (using an internet browser).

Young people like to work with the computer and multimedia and attractive practise material is highly motivating for them. They can even make exercises themselves. The authoring tool contains 20



different exercise types, among which several very playful formats, and scores are provided for each exercise made.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE NO.: <8>

TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Artscène – youth theater in foreign languages

Availability (Language(s), link, IBN,...)

Source languages: Dutch, French

Target language: (for learning) French, English, Dutch

Aspect of language learning covered (please tick whatever is applicable)

writing

reading

listening

speaking

other (please specify):.....

General description (include level and age group, information on specific target group if any,..)

Artscène, an initiative of the Flemish non-profit organisation Roeland, is a theater project that can be organised in secondary schools during a whole school year. One or several language teachers get assistance from a comedian/theater animator to set up a number of drama workshops for a group of pupils in a foreign language. These activities ultimately lead to the performance of a play at the Artscène festival (and possibly also at an international youth play festival).

Objective(s)

The main objectives are:

- to give pupils the chance to express themselves in a foreign language in a pleasant, dynamic and creative way
- to motivate youngsters for foreign languages through the approach and contents used, motivating them indirectly for cultural tolerance and exchange
- to bring together teachers that already organise theater training or want to do so,
- to help those teachers by providing assistance from a theater coach,



- to put youngsters and teachers in contact with theater professionals,
- to bring together pupils and teacher at an international theater festival

Link/ Contact (organisation, Internet address, email if possible)

<http://www.roeland.be/en/artscene/>

Contact person: Barbara Eichperger, vzw Roeland, barbara@roeland.be

Remarks (pedagogical recommendations, IPR, other)

RATE : 1=very/high 2=quite (high) 3=rather not/low 4= not at all

Adaptability: Is it possible to adapt or transfer the example of “best practices” to our project? 2

Effectiveness: What was/has been the effect of the implementation of the best practice? 2

Attractiveness: What is attractive in the best practice example? (E.g.: methods, innovation, motivation of learners etc.) 2

Please specify:

Dramatic expression is an ideal means to learn foreign languages since it increases motivation and enthusiasm. This project gives pupils the chance to express themselves in a foreign language in a pleasant, dynamic and creative way. The collaboration between a language teacher bringing in his experience in foreign language didactics, and a comedian, with his specific drama experience (not always evident for a teacher) has proven to give very fruitful results.

It is not difficult to set up such a project in another country or for other foreign languages. Starting point is to set up a collaboration with a drama coach or performer, who can provide theater workshops for a group of youngsters together with the pupils' teacher or monitor. The participation in an international theater festival can be a nice reward for the youngster and an extra motivational factor.



5 TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presence of foreign language in media: music, internet, film, television: no dubbing

There are various reasons why Flemish youngsters traditionally stand very strong when it comes to knowledge of foreign languages. We already stressed the advantage of a multilingual society. That is consolidated by other features that are typical for Flanders. Belgium is one of the countries where all television programs and films are subtitled, in the cinema both in French and Dutch. Also through popular English and American music young Flemings constantly come into contact with the English language. That frequent and intense input of English provides a very important contribution to the often obligatory lessons English in the secondary education.

This applies as well for other foreign languages, but the majority of television programs and films come from Anglophone countries and so the input of English is bigger than of other foreign languages.

Some of the good practises we examined make use of subtitling (or oral translation) for their activities and language learning tools. They also try to bring the foreign culture, and thereby language into popular media in very various ways.

MORE TRENDS, SEE GOOD PRACTICES

5.1 Pedagogical recommendations

Communicative approach to language teaching:

communication is important, not grammatical correctness

Formal language education in Flanders is often too much to the book. Soundings in secondary education revealed that students do understand the importance of a foreign language such as French for their personal development and future career but they perceive the subject as boring. Teachers of French seem to be too perfectionist and focus on grammatical correctness rather than on the ability to express oneself in the foreign language.

Pushing youngsters to communicate actively – task-oriented education

The objectives of language courses should shift from a purist-oriented approach towards a communication- or task-oriented approach. Students should be more stimulated to act and to manage in most situations in the target language. When they understand the purpose of the learning activities (the practical utility), pupils will be more motivated.



When final attainment levels for languages in formal education are aligned to CFR, handbooks should be adapted and teachers can evolve accordingly.

Up until today it has been difficult to link the current final attainment levels for languages to the CFR, because they are not geared up to each other. The new final attainment levels have now been developed and should be introduced in the education in the next academic year. For now only trainers of candidate teachers, teaching methodologists and publishers are already familiar with the CFR. Teachers should get more acquainted with the new final attainment levels, and a more communication-oriented approach to language teaching, once they are ready for implementation.

Pupils can be motivated for languages at a very young age and through tools that stimulate a playful and creative use of the language (dialogues, stories, songs...)

Language initiation can already happen in kindergarten and early in primary education. In some Flemish schools young children are brought in contact with French at a very young age, be it on a very modest level. The objective is not to teach them French in an intense way, but merely to sensitize them. This can happen in a playful and creative way by using stories, popular songs, games...

But also youngsters will be more motivated to learn and use foreign languages if they are approached with popular modern music, films, other multimedia, games...

Implementing alternative language learning methods

Intensive immersion classes have proven to be very successful, but the question remains if this method is realistic for all students from all types of education. In some contexts, alternative language learning methods such as CLIL can give very useful results, e.g. in Technical and Special Secondary Education.

5.1.1 Structural Recommendations

Improving transition from primary to secondary education

Language initiations French in Flemish primary education show that the motivation of the children is initially high. In the first and second grade of the secondary education a lot of teachers start again from square one. That doesn't put the subject French in a good light with students. Obviously, there is a need for a better transition from primary to secondary education. Secondary education should start there, where primary education stopped. To ensure a better transition, the CFR-levels can help a great deal. Primary education can aim at the breakthrough stage (A1), while secondary education can start with the objectives to master the A2-level.



Frequent and authentic contacts with foreign language and culture (also teachers) through exchanges, collaboration projects, extra-curricular language activities

Belgium has the advantage of being a multilingual and multicultural country, but the understanding between the different Communities has proven to be difficult. To benefit from this multilingual and multicultural society, it is important to understand our neighbours. Both goals can be reached at the same time with exchanges, collaboration projects, city visits... Schools from different Communities and from the neighbouring regions (Euregio Meuse-Rhine) can collaborate together to fully exploit the benefits of the Belgian and euregional multilingualism.

Schools and organisations organizing such initiatives or participating in European projects should be encouraged/rewarded

To make European youngsters more competitive on the global labour market, they should be stimulated to learn foreign languages. Learning each other's languages and studying each other's cultures is a sine qua non for European integration. In order to do so, schools and educational providers should be stimulated to offer their students as many opportunities as possible to come into contact with foreign cultures and languages and to practice and to learn languages in authentic situations. Language learning will become more effective.

School direction should support languages: material and ICT infrastructure, collaboration over disciplines

Since 1998 a lot of investments in ICT-infrastructure were made in the Flemish primary and secondary education. Still, too rarely ICT is integrated in the subjects at school, including foreign languages. ICT should not only be perceived as a subject on its own, but should surpass the borders of each subject individually. ICT-integration in foreign language learning provides innovative and attractive learning methods, which can bring variety and innovation to language learning. Teacher training in the didactic use of ICT is crucial.

Create platforms for sharing of existing innovative and creative material (available but not known sufficiently by teachers)

A lot of interesting, innovative material for language learning exists, but teachers don't always know how to find them. Therefore a forum where teachers can exchange lesson material and experiences, such as the YELL Virtual Documentation Centre, would be very useful.

5.1.2 Recommendations for Raising Awareness/ Reaching the Target group(s)

Stress importance of languages and cultures for economic reasons



Research has shown that a high percentage of Flemish companies have a large share of the returns from business with other countries. To maintain these fruitful contacts it is important for companies to have employees that speak fluently one or more foreign languages.

Also in tourism the knowledge of foreign languages is a key-element. Belgium is a small country and the Dutch language isn't widely known in Europe and beyond. That means that if Flanders wants to continue to be attractive for tourists, it needs to have a working population with great knowledge of various foreign languages.

Stress importance of languages and cultures for personal reasons (broadening the horizon, a challenge)

The world has become a smaller place. There are countless opportunities for youngsters to broaden their horizons, both at home and abroad. An experience abroad often brings about an advanced knowledge of a foreign language and better understanding of foreign cultures.

Stress importance of foreign languages other than English

Up until today Flemish companies have remarkably more relations with Francophone partners than with Anglophone, despite the lingua franca status of the latter. Also German partners are important for the Flemish economy. The percentage of business with them is about the same as with Anglophone partners.

European youngsters live in a rich multilingual and multicultural community. Contacts with other cultures will raise their awareness of this reality and can motivate youngsters to learn the language of neighboring countries.

Importance of language initiation at a young age

While children are still in their so called critic phase, they learn the fastest. Therefore it is important to start teaching children foreign languages at a young age. That can happen first through sensitization and raising awareness on language differences.

In Flanders children are obliged to learn French from the fifth grade in primary school on. Early language initiations can help them to have a more fluent start with these courses.

5.1.3 Recommendations regarding Implementation into existing Measures

Promote other foreign languages than English

English has a positive image with youngsters. That is certainly not the case for some other foreign languages such as French. One of the reasons is an outdated and traditional approach in the formal



education. But besides that, French doesn't get a lot of attention in extracurricular activities. Our neighbours speak French, but most Flemings know little to nothing about them. There seems to be an invisible border between the Communities. For example, Flemings can watch both Dutch and French television, but the absolute majority never tunes in on a Walloon channel. The broadcasting companies could promote each other's language and culture more, for example by making joint programs that appeal both to Walloons and Flemings.

Anglophone multimedia find their way to the Flemish market easily, so why can't Francophone or Germanophone do the same? Government, companies and organizations should promote others cultures and languages more. This doesn't mean however that there should be a competition between two or more foreign languages. Bringing Flemish youngsters in contact more intensively with the Francophone world on the other hand is a better solution. That can happen through various cultural events and projects, such as a French culture week, trips to Wallonia, exchanges with French schools, the introduction of French websites, task-focused education, etc. A possibility for the Technical and Special Secondary Education is to introduce immersion education. Through vocation-technical courses in the target language students from border regions experience the benefit and utility of the foreign language in their occupation immediately. This would definitely have a positive influence on the motivation of these students for foreign languages.

Promoting integration of foreign youngsters through playful and extracurricular activities

Youngsters of foreign origin often encounter linguistic and cultural obstacles that keep them from fully integrating in our society. Playful and extracurricular activities could encourage them to learn Dutch and other foreign languages, so that they can obtain a degree and stand a better chance at the labour market. Non-profit organizations such as 'De Horizon' and 'De Rand' offer task-oriented classes or activities and other tools to stimulate a lively and creative approach of foreign languages.

5.1.4 Other Recommendations

Attention to school language (when not mother tongue of children)

Foreign newcomers encounter language barriers, which they have to overcome in order to integrate in their new society. Youngsters first need to master the native language of the host country, before they can actually participate successfully in regular education. Language learning is a slow and complex process, but migrants don't have the time to learn the new language in the traditional way. An intense and task-oriented approach is needed.

Improving language skills of candidate-teachers



Research has shown that the foreign language skills of candidate-teachers are sometimes low. Some come from the Technical Secondary Education and don't reach the level B1 of the CFR.

Teacher training should provide the candidate teachers with attractive, modern and creative language teaching methods and offer possibilities of getting into contact with the target language such as exchanges, visits to the target culture, foreign language websites. They should also be motivated to engage in extracurricular language learning activities.



6 APPENDICES

- **Definition of Key Terms**
- **List / Contacts of relevant educational and education policy organizations in the partner country**
- **Bibliography**
- **Questionnaire Templates and Interview Guidelines**

6.1 Annex 1

6.1.1 Definitions of Key Terminology

Educational Levels

The LLP scheme foresees the following education levels (and codes)

ISCED 2PV	Lower secondary or second stage of basic education - level 2 - pre-vocational programmes
ISCED 2VOC	Lower secondary or second stage of basic education - level 2 - vocational programmes
ISCED 2GPV	Lower secondary or second stage of basic education - level 2 - general and pre-vocational programmes
ISCED 2VPV	Lower secondary or second stage of basic education - level 2 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes
ISCED 2A	Lower secondary programmes designed for direct access to level 3, in a sequence which would ultimately lead to tertiary education (i.e. entrance to ISCED 3A or 3B)
ISCED 2B	Lower secondary programmes designed for direct access to level 3C
ISCED 2C	Lower secondary programmes designed for direct access to the labour market
ISCED 3-4	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education - levels 3-4
ISCED 3-4VOC	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education - levels 3-4 - vocational programmes
ISCED 3PV	Upper secondary education - level 3 - pre-vocational programmes
ISCED 3VOC	Upper secondary education - level 3 - vocational programmes
ISCED 3GPV	Upper secondary education - level 3 - general and pre-vocational programmes
ISCED 3VPV	Upper secondary education - level 3 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes
ISCED 3VPV-SCH	Upper secondary education - level 3 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes - school based
ISCED 3VPV-WRK	Upper secondary education - level 3 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes - work based
ISCED 4PV	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - pre-vocational programmes
ISCED 4VOC	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - vocational programmes
ISCED 4GPV	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - general and pre-vocational programmes

ISCED 4VPV	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes
ISCED 4VPV-SCH	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes - school based
ISCED 4VPV-WRK	Post-secondary non-tertiary education - level 4 - pre-vocational and vocational programmes - work based
ISCED 4A-B	Post-secondary non-tertiary designed to provide direct access to level 5

6.1.2 Good Practice

In this project we understand as good practice any innovative - in at least one of the partner countries - measure, approach, material, information or similar for raising the motivation of young people to learn foreign languages and to improve the implementation of language learning in attractive forms (particularly in informal and non-formal settings) which is adaptable and attractive and which thus may be of added value to be used or transferred in this project.

The research of good practices can be done via desk and field research and will cover several steps, inter alia: Collation (using the template for good practice examples), rating (applying the foreseen criteria), selection (for further data processing in later work packages).

6.1.3 Learning types

Regarding Learning types the Glossary of CEDEFOP (2000) and the Communication of the European Commission (2001) ³ give the following definitions regarding:

Formal learning is defined as learning that occurs within an organised and structured context (formal education, in-company training) and that is designed as learning. It may lead to a formal recognition (diploma, certificate). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective.

Non-formal learning refers to learning which is embedded in planned activities that are not explicitly designated as learning, but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

Informal learning is defined as learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is often referred to as experiential learning and can, to a certain degree, be understood as

³ CEDEFOP (2000) Glossary, in Making Learning Visible (Thessaloniki, Cedefop) and European Commission (2001) Communiqué Making a European Area of Life-long Learning a Reality, (Brussels)



accidental learning. It is not structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time and/or learning support and, typically, does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but in most cases, it is non-intentional (or 'incidental'/ random). (CEDEFOP (2000) Glossary, in Making Learning Visible (Thessaloniki, Cedefop) and European Commission (2001) Communiqué Making a European Area of Life-long Learning a Reality, (Brussels))[1]

6.2 Annex 2

LIST / CONTACTS OF RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL AND EDUCATION POLICY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PARTNER COUNTRY

Organization	Main Tasks/	Objectives (of the organization)	Contact data
Ministry of Flemish community, department of education, Brussels	Development of education policy in Flanders and providing all information related to Flemish education		Hugo Vanheeswijck hugo.vanheeswijck@ond.vlaanderen.be
non-profit organisation "De Horizon", Sint-Gillis (Brussels)	Task-oriented classes (CLIL) Dutch	Helping French-speaking children from primary (and secondary) education learn Dutch	Annelies Peeters peetersliesje@hotmail.com
Centre d'Animation en langues - Animatiecentrum Talen, Brussels	Organise foreign language learning activities and sensitisation campaigns Offer tools to stimulate a lively and creative approach of foreign languages	Promoting putting foreign languages into practice; making languages accessible for a large public	Amaryllis Luyten amaryllis.luyten@gmail.com
OLYFRAN, association loi 1901, Parijs-Diepenbeek	Organisation of Tournoi Mondial de français par Internet: online language contest French	Reaching as many youngsters as possible to play with the French language and Francophone culture and compete through a global contest	Martine Verjans martine.verjans@uhasselt.be
Landcommanderij Alden Biesen, Bilzen	Cultural centre of the Flemish Community. Organisation of historical and European activities + congress centre and cultural and tourist	Bringing youngsters in contact with storytelling and foreign languages	Guy Tilkin guy.tilkin@aldenbiesen.be

	attraction Organisation of the international Storytelling festival		
non-profit organisation "De Rand", Brussels	Courses Dutch and language learning activities for foreign-language speakers; Sensitization campaigns; Welcome events for migrants	Supporting the Flemish character of the Flemish outskirts of Brussels; Promoting languages and welcoming and integration of foreign-language speakers	Karen Stals karen.stals@derand.be
private language school "Ceran", Spa	Organisation of residential language camps	Improving foreign language skills of youngsters	Marion Meurant marion.meurant@ceran.com
non-profit organisation "Rotary Foundation", Hasselt	Offering grants for students in an exchange program	Offering youngsters the chance to gain an experience abroad, to broaden their horizon.	Jean-Marie Evers Tel.: (0032)(0)11.22.60.48
Student organisation "La Junta" of Lessius Hogeschool, Antwerpen	Organization of extra-curricular activities Spanish	Promoting the Spanish language and culture	
Alliance française, Verviers	Association for the dissemination of French language and culture		Georges Delhougne
non-profit organisation "Roeland", Youth Service promoting language skills	organisation of drama festivals 'Artscene, youth theatre in foreign language', French and English summerschool and workshops for primary school children, publishing of bilingual magazine	Promotion of foreign language skills	Jacques Eichperger jacques@roeland.be



6.3 Annex 3

Bibliography

6.3.1 A) Literature

Entiteit Curriculum; Conferentie na de peiling Frans; lezen, luisteren en schrijven; oktober 2008

Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission, EURYDICE, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe, ISBN 92-79-00580-4, Eurydice, 2006,

Clijsters, W., TNP3 / SUBPROJECT 2: Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European labor market (national report on Belgium); LIMBURGS UNIVERSITAIR CENTRUM; updated 13.03.2007

Verjans, M., Leonardo's Multilingual Engineers Project, volet 1+2, Université du Littoral - Côte d'Opale. Dunkerque, 1999

6.3.1.1 Links

www.ond.vlaanderen.be

www.lne.be

www.edublogs.be

www.statbel.fgov.be

www.eurydice.org

www.aiesec.be

www.animationlangues.be

www.olyfran.com

www.bloso.be

www.bouworde.be

www.btctb.org

http://gov.wallonie.be/code/fr/action_prio.pdf.

www.hogeronderwijsregister.be

www.huisnederlandsbrussel.be

www.kbs-frb.be

www.kindermuseum.be

www.lingoland.net

<http://assembly.coe.int>

www.vcm.be

www2.renvlaanderen.be

www.epos-vlaanderen.be



www.derand.be

www.marnixring.org

www.pkn.nl

www.reismicrobe.be

www.rotary.belux.org

www.bru-taal.be

www.scouting2007.be

www.wallonie-juni2007.wetpaint.com

www.alden-biesen.be/paginas/culttoeractiviteiten/index.php

www.huizenvanhetnederlands.be

www.cilt.org.uk/research/projects/employment/elan_finalreport.pdf

Carolingua Resultaten 2004-2007



6.4 Annex 4

6.4.1 Example questionnaire template

Questionnaire 1 (informal learning environment)

The EU co-funded project “YELL - Young Europeans Love Languages” aims at raising the motivation of young people to learn foreign languages by offering an attractive and joyful learning environment outside formal education.

To find out more about the country situation, the project partner, *<name of your organisation>*, is running a field research. Your input will be of value and your answers will be treated with absolute confidentiality.

Please, return the questionnaire to (via.....) by

Please let us know your opinions on the following issues:

1. Please describe your organisation and in which framework young adults learn/practice languages in your organisation.
2. Please describe the participants regarding gender & diversity (age, gender, ethnic background, ...) or any other characteristics you would like to mention.
3. Which foreign languages do they learn/ practice?
4. Do they use specific materials, practice at particular events/ environments,... Please specify:



5. Have you noticed specific needs young language learners have and if so what are they?

6. Have you identified drivers to learn/ practice languages there? Please specify:

If you are interested in learning more about the final results in YELL, please, give us your contact data (which will be treated strictly confidential)

My name:..... My email adr.:

Thank you for your contributions.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein





Example Questionnaire template (non-formal learning environment)

The EU co-funded project “YELL - Young Europeans Love Languages” aims at raising the motivation of young people to learn foreign languages by offering an attractive and joyful learning environment outside formal education.

To find out more about the country situation, the project partner, *<name of your organisation>*, is running a field research. Your input will be of value and your answers will be treated with absolute confidentiality.

Please, return the questionnaire to (via.....) by

1. Please describe your organisation and in which framework young adults can learn/practice languages?

2. Which foreign languages do you offer/ teach? (If you offer different levels, please specify.)

3. Which innovative materials do you use/ where does the language learning (mainly) take place?

4. Please describe the participants regarding gender & diversity (age, gender, ethnic background, ...) or any other characteristics you would like to mention.

5. What do you think are the drivers for young learners to learn foreign languages and how do you motivate them?

6. Are there specific needs of young learners from your point of view? If so, in what way do you address them?

7. After completion of the language learning, do/can the participants acquire a certificate?

If you are interested in more information on the final project outcomes, please, give us your contact data (which will be treated strictly confidential)

My name:..... My email adr.:

Thank you for your contributions.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein



Disclaimer:

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

Project number 143337-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-KA2-KA2NW – Grant agreement number 2008-4283 / 001-001

Lifelong Learning Programme, Transversal Programme, Key Activity 2 - Languages

This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.