

ECML programme 2016-2019 “Languages at the heart of learning”



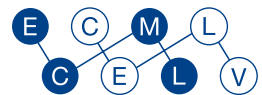
Highlights

LANGUAGES AT THE HEART OF LEARNING



LES LANGUES AU CŒUR DES APPRENTISSAGES

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
MODERN LANGUAGES



CENTRE EUROPEEN POUR
LES LANGUES VIVANTES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

About the European Centre for Modern Languages

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) is an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe. It was established in Graz, Austria in 1994. The ECML's mission is to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching and support its member states in the implementation of effective language education policies.

The ECML initiates and coordinates 4-year programmes which provide the framework for multilateral development projects, bilateral in-country capacity-building (ECML Training and consultancy), as well as a range of activities for a wider public.

What these highlights offer

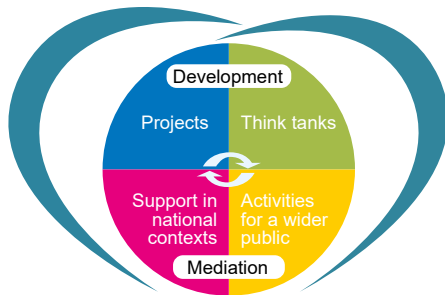
- A brief overview of the structure and content of the ECML 2016-2019 programme and of the adopted approach to its evaluation
- The key findings from the full evaluation report, together with sample quantitative and qualitative evidence to support these findings
- A summary of the main challenges and success factors to be taken into account in future ECML programmes

*"The resources provided on the ECML website are useful because they offer easy access to all language teachers and other professionals to **scientific** and **innovative** sources and material, helping and **inspiring** them in their every-day demanding work."*

*"The inventory of ICT-tools and open educational resources has created a buzz in the particular context of the pandemic crisis. Many teachers needed that input to adapt their teaching to the new digital context. In addition, because the resources are **innovative** and **motivating**, they have been **successful** with language professionals. This resource has definitely had an **impact** on language teaching by facilitating access and showing the field of possibilities."*



Overview of programme structure and activities: “Languages at the heart of learning”



The programme consisted of two strands: development and mediation.

- **The development strand** created new solutions to the challenges identified by Member states, usually via projects which were sometimes supplemented by think tanks.
- **The mediation strand** provided Member states with opportunities to access ECML expertise and to explore, adapt and implement existing ECML resources, through Training and consultancy (TaC) and national support events.

In addition, activities were offered to a wider public which enabled participants from all countries to take part in conferences, webinars and colloquia and to celebrate the [European Day of Languages](#).

Approach to evaluation

The evaluation report of the ECML 2016-2019 programme set out to answer the following key questions:

- How far did the programme succeed in addressing the priorities and needs of member states, on which it was based?
- How, and how well did it contribute to the overall mission of the ECML as defined by the following objectives:

- promotion of innovative approaches to language learning and teaching
- collaboration and exchange among the various actors in the field
- organisation of training of multipliers
- collecting and disseminating examples of good practice

The evaluation focused on projects and TaC activities, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data from three main sources – reports from programme consultants and from project and TaC coordinators, participant surveys following project and TaC events, and a wide-scale post-programme survey addressed to National Authorities in ECML Member states.

Key findings - categories

- **RELEVANCE:** the programme successfully addressed Member states’ priorities in language education.
- **QUALITY AND USEFULNESS:** new project outputs resulting from the programme, as well as resources from previous ECML programmes used in TaC activities, were considered to be of a high standard and practical.
- **OUTREACH:** The programme involved a large number of language professionals, both in terms of direct participation in programme activities and in follow-up activities at national level, such as the training of multipliers and the dissemination of good practice.
- **CHALLENGES:** These arose primarily from the complexity and range of tools produced within certain projects, resulting in possible information overload and inaccessibility.
- **OUTCOMES:** The programme has had a positive influence on individual professionals, at institutional and national levels and on the ultimate beneficiary, the learner.

Taken together, these categories provide evidence of the overall **impact** of the ECML programme on language education across Europe.

Key findings – sample evidence

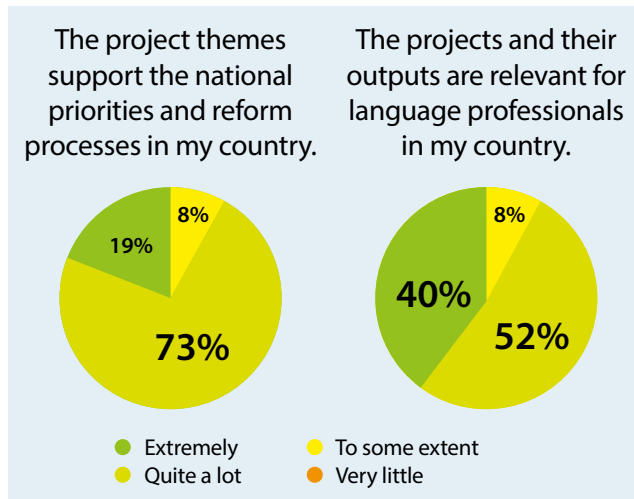
Relevance

Table A indicates a high degree of match between language education priorities as identified by ECML Member states and the activities within the 2016-2019 programme. Chart B on the next page goes further by showing that the completed projects and TaCs corresponded closely to the actual needs of both decision-makers and language professionals.

Table A:



Chart B:



Quality and usefulness

Chart C indicates the degree to which practitioners working in language education considered approaches and resources presented at TaCs and developed in projects to be applicable in their own contexts, while the high level of satisfaction evidenced in Chart D suggests that the key ECML objective of ‘promotion of innovative approaches to language learning and teaching’ was well supported.

Chart C:

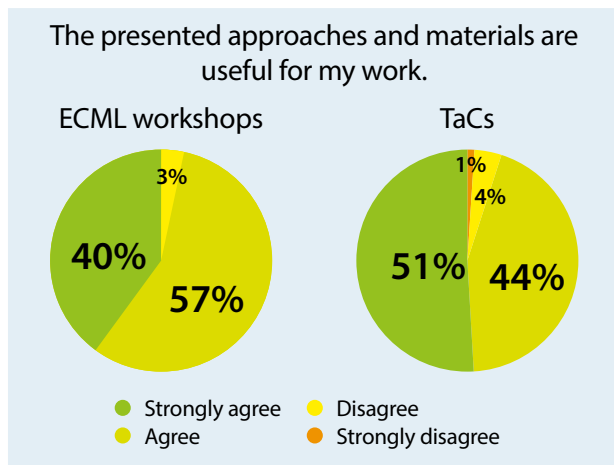


Chart D:

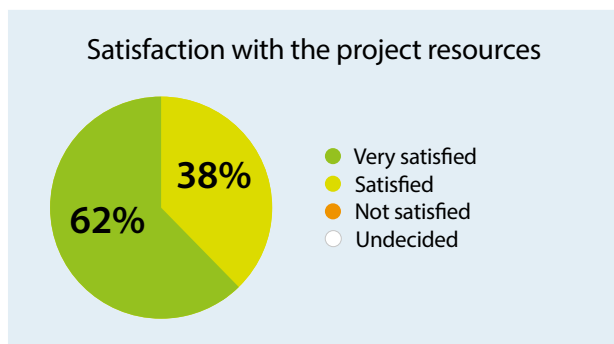


Table E presents the rich array of 2016-2019 project outputs, tailored in both content and format to a range of different target groups.

Table E:

Range of output types	
1	Practical guides/ guiding principles/ guidelines for use in teacher education
2	Examples of practice/ promising practice/ inspiring stories/ lesson plans
3	Activities for teacher development/ training modules
4	Survey/ self-evaluation tools/ quizzes and games
5	Language/subject teacher competences
6	European Language Portfolio (ELP) with user guide (sign languages)

Range of target groups	
Learning providers	1
Researchers	2
Head teachers	2
Subject teachers	2
Decision-/Policy makers/ Managers	3
Curriculum developers	3
Teacher educators	8
Language teachers	8

“The range of materials caters for multiple needs - teacher trainers in order to reflect on the teacher-training programmes, novice teachers - in order to reflect on their training within a clear framework, practising teachers - in order to reflect on their current teaching practices.”

“At the level of practice, the project offers very useful and concrete instruments and resources for implementing the CEFR in the teaching activities, from planning to teaching and assessment.”

Outreach

Table F shows that 2016-2019 programme activities enjoyed a broad outreach; Chart G provides evidence that in addition to implementing what has been learnt at workshops in their own educational settings, language professionals are making important contributions to one of the ECML's key objectives of training of multipliers and disseminating examples of good practice.

Table F:

Activity type	Quantity	Number of participants	Additional online participants
Project workshops (Graz)	10	408	
Project network meetings (Graz)	8	150	
Think tanks (Graz)	3	62	
TaC events in 28 countries	64	2042	
TaC events (EC co-funded) in 21 countries	70	1994	
Colloquia	2	123	1000
25 th Anniversary Conference	1	210	1600
Newsletter "Gazette"	22 editions 7100 subscribers in 2016 8500 subscribers in 2019		

Outcomes

Chart H provides concrete evidence of how ECML projects and TaCs have impacted on individual professionals working in the field of language education, on schools and teacher education programmes (institutional level) and on reform processes at national level.

Chart H:

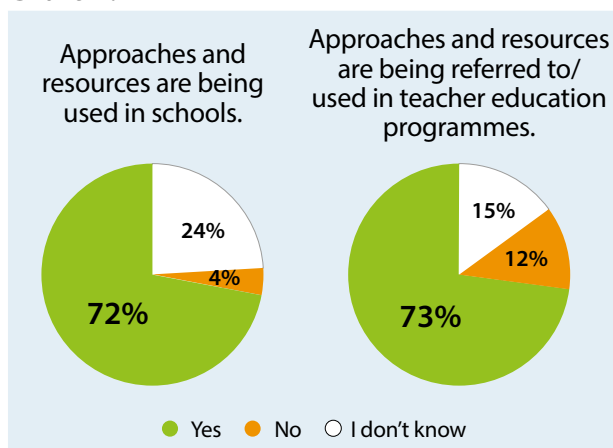
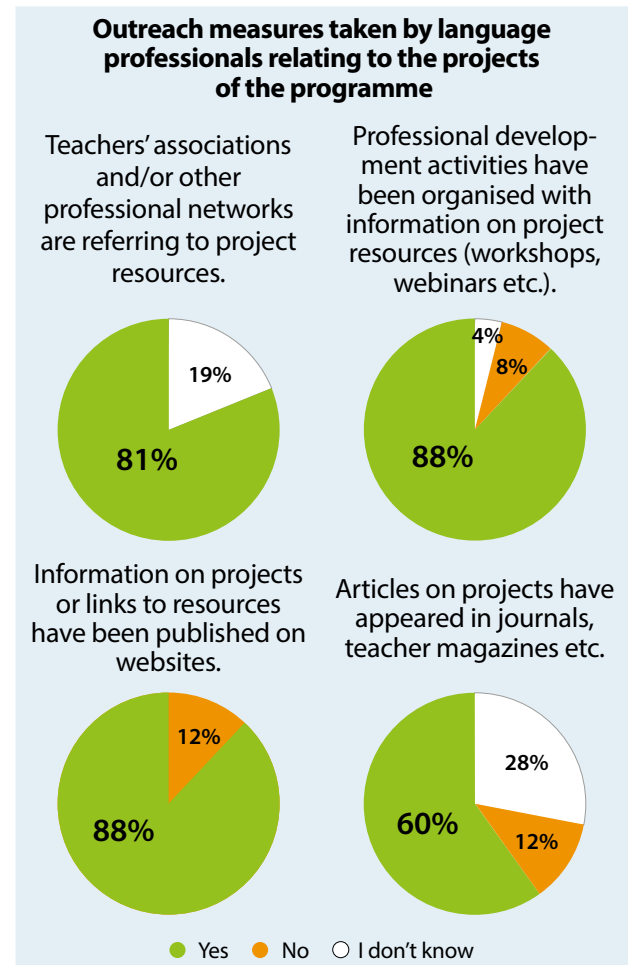


Chart G:



The way ahead

The evaluation report of the ECML's 2016-2019 programme can help orientate future ECML programmes through the identification of challenges and success factors.

Addressing the challenges

"A general challenge for all resources and project materials is the practicability and how to best adapt them to the local context/disseminate them locally. We can see ECML's resources as an inspiration, a view of how other professionals tackled challenges similar to the ones that we also have. There is, however, a need for further development, adaptation, sometimes translation/simplification if we want to ensure a wider usage in a local context."

Challenges identified through the evaluation report all relate in different ways to ECML online resources. Possible ways to address these challenges include:

- Ensuring entry pages provide a clear overview of the tools contained within the resource website
- Providing user-friendly guides to help end-users navigate resource websites

- Identifying key aspects of resource websites which lend themselves to translation into other languages, increasing accessibility and acting as incentives for further exploration of the various tools
- Organising webinars to present new resources
- Ensuring opportunities for implementation and adaptation of project resources through Training and consultancy activities in the subsequent programme

ECML activities and resources...

"The resources have been the main support for preparing the new competency-based curriculum for languages, for training teachers, designing tests and national exams."

"[Resources] take account of the linguistic repertoires of children – the different languages they encounter at home, at school and in society – so that they can engage successfully with linguistic and cultural diversity."

...contribute to **national language policies** and **reforms**

...reflect **societal changes**

"The project and its resources relate directly to several issues in our national curricula, regarding the value base and conception of learning, as well as the key aim of the cross-cutting element of language education: all students need to be approached in language aware ways by all teachers and other relevant staff."

"Very practice-oriented, a box of ready-to-use tools very well chosen for the target group"

...provide activities which have **practical value**

...are in line with **innovative trends in education**

...facilitate **networking**

"People who were nominated to participate in project workshops also disseminated information on specific projects – whether locally in their schools, at regional or national events for teachers, at their workplaces and in their networks (for example, teacher trainers at universities, specialist working in government agencies at their events etc.)."

...provide **professional support** for specific groups (teacher educators, testing experts)

"These resources assisted the life-long professional development of language teachers implementing a plurilingual approach."

Using success factors as guiding principles

Patterns identified in the data provide useful indicators of both why and how the ECML's 2016-2019 programme has contributed to quality language education in Member states. These indicators or success factors, highlighted above, together with the relevant qualitative comments from the various data sources, must therefore act as guiding principles for future ECML programmes.

“A rich programme covering all areas of language education. A holistic approach, sometimes general and reflective, sometimes concrete and inspiring that brings discussions, reflections and changes in practices.”

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Promoting excellence in language education

