



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Language Policy
Politiques linguistiques

Intergovernmental Conference

**Quality in the linguistic integration of adult migrants:
from values to policy and practice**

Strasbourg, 3-4 June 2014

REPORT

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Strasbourg, 2014

www.coe.int/lang-migrants

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council of Europe, with 47 member states, 28 of which are also members of the European Union, is the continent's guardian of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Council of Europe's intergovernmental co-operation programmes in the areas of education, language and culture aim to support member states in the promotion and transmission of these shared fundamental values, which are the foundations of a tolerant and civilised society and indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion. In his Foreword to the recent Language Policy Unit's publication¹ "The linguistic integration of migrants: from one country to another; from one language to another", the Secretary General, Thorbjørn Jagland, pointed out that, while Europe is today a continent of diversity, it is not enough just to acknowledge the existence of diversity; social justice or social harmony can only be achieved through the process of social cohesion. Languages are essential for building social cohesion, intercultural understanding and respect for diversity.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the European Cultural Convention, whose article 2 is concerned with the teaching and learning of one another's languages and cultures in order to enhance communication and deepen mutual understanding. In the intervening decades the Language Policy Unit's intergovernmental programmes have been carried out in this spirit based on the common principles and shared values referred to above. In celebrating that landmark convention it was appropriate that this third intergovernmental conference, held in Strasbourg on 3rd and 4th June 2014, should consider how to enhance support for inclusive, human rights-driven policies and practices with regard to the linguistic integration of migrants.

The conference was entitled "Quality in the linguistics integration of adult migrants: from values to policy and practice", reflecting the Council of Europe's concern for ensuring that Member States' policies in respect of language proficiency requirements and language provision for adult migrants, on the one hand meet high quality standards, and on the other are consistent with the Council of Europe's key values, especially in the area of human rights, and reflect its constant concern with social inclusion, social cohesion, respect for diversity and human dignity.

The conference was notable for three important features that made it different from the previous intergovernmental events on linguistic integration of adult migrants (LIAM) in 2008 and 2010. First, one of its main aims was to bring to the attention of participants the work done by the Council of Europe since 2010, most notably the resources to be found on the newly created LIAM website, as well as a key report and recommendation on the use and impact of the testing of migrants' language proficiency, prepared by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and a new Council of Europe Guide² on LIAM. Secondly, there was reporting back by representatives of Member States on the piloting of two of the Council of Europe's tools specially designed for LIAM, a new European Language Portfolio and a self-assessment handbook for course providers. Thirdly, it involved a Round Table of

¹ ISBN 978-92-871-7871-8. Council of Europe / Language Policy Unit, 2014

² *Guide to policy development and implementation*

representatives of cities in four Member States which provided insights into the important work being done at local level to encourage migrants to participate fully in local life and to support their linguistic integration.

In other respects, the Conference programme continued the work of previous conferences, notably with the report on the results of the third international survey of policy and practice in the area of LIAM, which 36 Member States responded to. It also included fruitful discussion in small groups of some key questions, feedback on which is to be found in this report, as well as presentations on projects related to LIAM run by other entities, and contributions from the OECD and the EU Commission on their work in the area of LIAM.

The organisers of the conference were struck by the high level of commitment and engagement of presenters and participants, the interest aroused by the various resources and projects presented, and the considerable degree of consensus on key issues, several of which are controversial. In sum, it was agreed that, even more than on previous occasions, the conference had achieved its objectives and had contributed to the building of a community of practice in the area of LIAM. The organisers sincerely hope that the work of conference participants will have an impact, however modest, on further developing the quality of policy formulation and implementation in Member States.

INTRODUCTION

Aims and context of the Conference

This 3rd Conference on *Quality in the linguistic integration of adult migrants: from values to policy and practice* was held in Strasbourg on 3-4 June 2014. It was organised by the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe. The programme including PowerPoint presentations is available [online](#).

As with the previous two conferences in 2008 and 2010, the main aims of this conference were firstly to provide a forum for the exchange of views among representatives of Member States who are concerned with language policy and practice aspects of immigration, and secondly to hear the views of conference participants on the resources made available by the Council of Europe to ensure that its future work responded to the actual needs of Member States in this areas. Additional aims of the conference included:

- Providing information on recent Council of Europe initiatives (*Language Policy Unit, Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly*), and related work carried out by other organisations (*the OECD and the EU-Home Affairs Commission*);
- Offering a forum to enable participants to network, to exchange opinions and experiences, and to discuss their needs. This was done through a group discussion workshop session and an open debate in plenary;
- Reporting the results a) of the survey on policies and practices related to linguistic integration carried out among member states in 2013, and b) of two piloting activities focusing on the use of instruments developed by the Unit: the European Language Portfolio for Adult Migrants and the Self-Assessment Handbook for language course providers.
- Reporting in a round table on related projects, the ECML ‘Language for Work’ project, and the ‘fide’ project in Switzerland, as well as on initiatives to support the linguistic integration of adult migrants taken in four cities - Hamburg, Strasbourg, Torre Vedras (Portugal) and Wels (Austria);

Another important objective was for the Council of Europe, to collect input on the expectations and needs of member states with a view to setting the agenda for the Unit’s future work in LIAM. A few possible elements of the future action plan were mentioned by the Rapporteur during the concluding session.

Background of the LIAM Project

The Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) project is fairly recent as it was launched only in 2006. However, the Council of Europe’s Language Policy Unit has been carrying out projects for over 50 years. Until the beginning of the century these focused exclusively on foreign languages. As explained in section 2, the Unit addresses a number of other areas of language policy such as languages of schooling and plurilingual education, which are both pioneering projects in the European context. First and foremost the Unit was responsible for developing the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” (CEFR), which

is well known in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. It is now available in 40 languages and is being used around the world. This Framework, although not intended for the purpose, is being used more and more widely in the teaching of languages to migrants, and above all in the evaluation of their language proficiency, that is in language tests. Using this instrument - which is as its name indicates a common 'framework', not a standard - inappropriately for such purposes can have serious consequences.

Since the necessary materials may not be available in respective ministries, over the years various resources aimed at different users have been developed as part of the LIAM project. These cover language policy, language training for adult migrants and the assessment of learning outcomes. The objective is to help all Member States to meet the specific needs of adult migrants as part of the wider goals of social cohesion and full participation in democracy based on the shared values of the Council of Europe, bearing in mind that integration is a two-way process.

Overview of developments since 2006

2006-2008: launch of the LIAM project; after extensive consultation, a number of thematic papers and case studies were prepared, and a first survey (2007-2008) was conducted among member states, based on the one carried out previously by ALTE. It was followed by a seminar in 2008 to draw the attention of member states to the thematic and case studies and the results of the first survey, and to explore further their needs relating to LIAM. During the 2008 seminar participants also explored Council of Europe principles related to language policies in LIAM. The importance of quality assurance in language programmes was emphasised, and key issues in language testing and assessment were discussed, and ideas for the development of further Council of Europe resources for LIAM were generated.

2008-2010: development of further documents and tools, and organisation of a 2nd survey (2009-2010), again followed by an intergovernmental conference in 2010. This conference, entitled 'The linguistic integration of adult migrants: towards the evaluation of policy and practice', aimed to consider key issues around the evaluation of policy and practice in the handling of language issues to do with migrants seeking family reunification, permanent residence or citizenship, as well as their access to the labour market. The conference covered a wide range of topics that reflected participants' concerns, and provided an agenda for the development of LIAM resources.

2010-2014: an intense period of development, including the creation of a dedicated website with numerous resources, guidelines, instruments for learners, teachers and language course providers. A 3rd survey analysed developments since 2007, followed by this 3rd conference (June 2014).

Conference documents and reports are available online: www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Events.

TUESDAY 3rd JUNE, 2014

1. THE OFFICIAL OPENING

chaired by Philia Thalgott, Language Policy Unit

The opening of the conference was remarkable for the passionate support, expressed in their addresses by three senior representatives of the Council of Europe's bodies for the work on the linguistic integration of adult migrants, as part of their wider integration. All three drew attention to centrality in this work of the Council of Europe's key values, human rights, democracy and the rule of law,

Before introducing the three distinguished speakers, Ms Philia Thalgott, Coordinator of the LIAM Project and Conference Organiser, outlined some key features of the conference:

- “Firstly, it comes in the wake of the recent European elections, in which advances were made by several political groups that see migrants as a problematic category. We all know that migrants are not one single category, and our work reflects this; moreover migration has enriched every civilisation over the centuries;
- “The conference is also special because, for the first time, the ministry delegates attending are not members of an existing network or of an intergovernmental committee³. We warmly welcome your presence, which signals genuine engagement on your part, and we are particularly pleased that a majority of delegates are directly involved with the issues that will be dealt with during this two-day event;
- “Lastly, this conference represents an innovation in terms of its conceptualization and dynamics. This time, the aim is to give participants even more opportunity than on previous occasions to participate actively in discussions, and also to bring together for these two days key people with different horizons and concerns:
 - At the political level: the main bodies of the Council of Europe, but also representatives of the OECD and the EU Commission.
 - At the level of implementation, people who have been involved in projects and in the piloting of Council of Europe tools
 - At the local level, representatives of four European cities, the representatives of which I warmly welcome.

Ms Thalgott hoped that participants would, through the conference gain a greater awareness of the richness of the resources that had been developed by the Council of Europe, make new contacts with colleagues in other countries, and gain new insights on developments in LIAM. She expressed her warm thanks to the members of the LIAM Coordination Group⁴ (see programme), who developed most of the resources now available, and made a major contribution to the preparation of the conference.

³ The European Committee on Migration (CDMG) which collaborated in the organisation of the first two such conferences no longer exists

⁴ All of them also played an active role during the conference: Jean-Claude Beacco; Claire Extramiana; Hans-Jürgen Krumm; Barbara Lazenby Simpson; David Little; Reinhilde Pulinx; Richard Rossner (rapporteur); Joseph Sheils

Ulrich Bunjes,

Acting Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, DG II, Council of Europe

“On behalf of Ms Samardžić-Marković, Director General of the Council of Europe Directorate General of Democracy, I am very pleased to welcome you to this conference on “Quality in the linguistic integration of adult migrants: from values to policy and practice”.

This conference comes at a particularly opportune moment. The integration of adult migrants into European societies is more relevant than ever. We have seen too many misunderstandings, too much human suffering, too many tragic events, unacceptable in a democratic society.

The Council of Europe attaches a lot importance to education and languages. These subjects directly concern the state of human rights and the future of a multilingual, multicultural Europe. They are politically sensitive issues, which need to be addressed with respect for the different backgrounds of adult migrants who have just arrived or recently settled in the host country. The aim is to assist them in their desire to open a new chapter of their life, and help them adapt to their new life situation.

Complementarity in the assistance provided to migrants

The Directorate General of Democracy is not the only Council of Europe sector involved in these activities and I am very pleased to welcome Ambassador Castro Mendes, Permanent Representative of Portugal and Chair of the Rapporteurs Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and the Environment of the Committee of Ministers. I also welcome Mr Le Borgn’, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, who will also shortly be taking the floor.

I am pleased to point out that, like the Council of Europe, other international organisations are continuing to put emphasis on quality in the linguistic integration of adult migrants. Tomorrow, representatives of the OECD and the European Commission will address the conference.

Language policy instruments

The Council of Europe has already made available to member States tools such as the “Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters”, whose potential application to adult migrants in their language training still needs to be assessed. Other, more recent, tools will be presented to you during the Conference: for example the “Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants” website or the “Guide to policy development and implementation concerning the linguistic integration of adult migrants”, which aims to place the offer of language courses in the political context of the management of economic migration.

Among other things, these tools highlight the fact that the term “migrant” refers to a demographic, sociological and administrative category — but certainly not to a language group.

Migrants do not fall within one single category of learners. Their learning needs and capabilities are complex and varied. The measures taken by public authorities and the teaching methods used in such training courses must therefore take account of this wide range of needs and expectations.

Quality in education

This third intergovernmental conference, which has been organised by the Language Policy Unit of the Education Department, will look at only one of the many aspects of these complex issues: the quality of language courses and linguistic evaluation for migrants in member States. This is not a secondary issue. Only high-quality training will ensure the proper linguistic integration of the persons concerned and guarantee the effective use of public resources. In 2012 the Committee of Ministers adopted a Recommendation to member States which focused on the importance of quality in education. Such quality can also be achieved in language courses for adult migrants. One precondition is that the adult migrants are not treated as immature pupils but as future fellow citizens. This is what most of them want to be, and may indeed become.

Learning [the language or] one of the languages of the host country greatly facilitates integration; it is important, however, not to forget that it is by living in the new society that the person will acquire the necessary communication skills. Language skills are not the only precondition for successful integration; rather, they are often the result of successful integration.

Quality education and democracy

The efforts to achieve quality in education for adult migrants admittedly include very important technical aspects, on which you will have very valuable discussions during this conference.

However, no matter how relevant these technical aspects are, they must be assessed in the light of their contribution to the respect for diversity and to active citizenship. The democratic management of cultural and linguistic diversity is an essential aspect of education. Language training courses play a crucial role, well beyond providing the linguistic skills required for employment and social and cultural life. They contribute to social cohesion and reduce the social tensions generated by ethnocentric attitudes and behaviour. As such, these programmes are also part of a wider policy of diversity management. The Council of Europe has developed quite a few initiatives to support public authorities in the member States in their quest to better respond to the requirements of a multicultural society. The “Intercultural Cities” network is one outstanding example; it brings together over 50 European cities and several national networks, committed to modernize their political and administrative practice in order to benefit from the “diversity advantage” and improve the integration of migrants in their midst.

Conclusion

Back to languages in education, where the Council of Europe has a long history of pioneering work. As is the case for all its activities, all the work it has done and to which this conference will further contribute is only fully justified if it helps to meet the broader objectives of the Council of Europe — if it strengthens democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Now, more than ever, it is necessary to promote and uphold these common values.”

Ambassador Luis Filipe Castro Mendes,

Permanent Representative of Portugal to the Council of Europe, and Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment to the Committee of Ministers

I am very happy to welcome you, on behalf of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, to this “Agora”, a building not exactly of classical Greek style, but a symbol of the importance that our Organisation attaches to citizenship in our democracies. I am delighted to see that this third conference is being attended by many representatives of member States and international partner institutions, as well as by representatives of our European cities, who will give accounts of their activities at a round table session. A most cordial welcome to all of you.

This conference on the quality of the language education offered to adult migrants once again reflects the importance which the Council of Europe attaches to the opportunity for persons from vulnerable groups to achieve fulfilment and to integrate completely, thus fostering the social cohesion of our European societies. The conference focuses clearly, as its title (“from values to policy”) indicates, on the consideration being given to the linguistic rights of new arrivals and the duties of the societies in which they settle. These are not recent matters of concern, for as early as 1968 they led to the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of a good number of standards and guidelines, starting with the Resolution on “the teaching of languages to migrant workers” and continuing up to the recommendations adopted in 2011 on “interaction between migrants and receiving societies” and on “validating migrants’ skills”, to name just a few.

The Parliamentary Assembly, for its part, has also worked hard on these issues and recently addressed to the Committee of Ministers a recommendation concerning the role of language tests in the process of integrating migrants. We shall examine this text shortly, in order to issue a reply to it. I hope that your discussions at this conference will contribute to this exercise.

As you are aware, our Organisation considers human rights, democracy and the rule of law to be the three fundamental values which must guide member States’ policies, particularly in respect of social cohesion and migration policy. The Council of Europe has defined integration as a two-way process based on rights and obligations: on the one hand, migrants must seek to adapt to their new environment, each pursuing his or her own strategies, in particular learning the language of the country of settlement. But the host country also has a responsibility to facilitate their integration into society, particularly through access to the labour market, taking account of their identity, and combatting all forms of discrimination.

The Language Policy Unit has conducted a very interesting survey on this subject, the results of which are to be presented to you at this conference. It shows that a growing number of member States are adopting policies on language education and assessment for immigrant populations. The Council of Europe has drawn up guidelines and instruments in order to help member States to put in place coherent and effective policies in this respect. In this context, in order for integration to be successful, it is important for the language education offered to take account of each immigrant’s own resources, whether in terms of the languages in his or her

repertoire or his or her work experience, and not to reduce language education to its practical and functional aspects.

Major progress has been made in this direction thanks to the efforts of all, both decision-makers and those active in the field. But the fact that adult migrants have learned, are learning or wish to learn the language or languages of the societies in which they have settled seems insufficient. Not in the eyes of the migrants themselves, who are aware of the importance of the language choices that they make for themselves and their children, but for that section of the public in the host countries who regard migrants as a threat to national identity. The results of the European Parliament elections in several of our member States sadly confirm this tendency.

In this regard, I shall point to the recommendations made in the Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, endorsed by the Committee of Ministers in May 2008, which suggests that diversity be managed on the basis of the human dignity of each and every individual. One of the things that it emphasises is the prime role of teaching and learning in all their forms, and the importance of spaces for intercultural dialogue, and it specifies that "effective integration policies are needed to allow immigrants to participate fully in the life of the host country".

While language education is important, it is incomplete if it does not promote relations between migrants and other citizens by creating opportunities for them to meet on a local level, at their workplace or in their neighbourhood, as well as in schools and places such as hospitals: places where mutual understanding can be developed; places where personal experience of intercultural communication can be gained, thereby combating the inanity of xenophobic ideologies; places where contacts can lead to socialising, and surprise give way to curiosity and to a wish to learn and to understand.

Let us be clear: our economies need migrants; we know this, although some people are sometimes unwilling to admit it. Migrants are also vital to our societies, which have always benefited from outside input. In a way, this process also applies to languages, which constantly "borrow" large numbers of terms, to the annoyance of certain purists who want to defend their national language against any outside influence.

I know that it is in this spirit of openness that you have come to Strasbourg, and I feel sure that, by pooling your skills and experience at this conference, you will help to take forward the question of the linguistic integration of migrants both within and for the benefit of our societies. On behalf of the Council of Europe and in my own name, not only in my capacity as Chair of the GR-C, but also as the representative of our Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and in my personal capacity as Ambassador of Portugal, a country which has for a long time embraced the plurality and diversity of the world's cultures, I thank you most sincerely for your attendance here today."

Pierre-Yves le Borgn'

member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

First of all, I would like to say that it is a great honour to address you on the occasion of this important conference. My presence here this morning is due to a contribution I made to a debate at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January. The debate concerned the reports by my colleagues Athina Kyriakidou and Tineke Strik on migrants and linguistic integration. You, Madam Chairman, were in the public gallery and you apparently appreciated my comments about the contribution that migrants make to European societies. Following an initial exchange of letters and a meeting in Strasbourg, you invited me to make an opening address at this conference, and I was very pleased to accept. Please receive my heartfelt thanks.

I am a migrant, and also a member of parliament. Before becoming a member of parliament in 2012, I, who am French, spent 20 years working abroad, in the United States, Luxembourg, Belgium and Germany. The story of my family is one of migration: I have a Spanish wife, whom I met in Belgium at Portuguese evening classes – and here languages already come into my story! We have two little boys, who have the nationality of both our countries. I was born in Brittany almost 50 years ago. At a young age I wanted to know more about the world, probably because there were no borders anywhere near Quimper, my home town, and because, from the books I read and the films I watched, I suspected that further away there was another world that would be exciting to discover.

I dreamt of travelling, just travelling, and I did not imagine then that other countries would become my whole life. I left Quimper in September 1988 to become a student at the Collège d'Europe in Bruges, and I did not return until June 2012, when I was elected as a member of the National Assembly by the French Constituency of Central Europe. Although a campaigner for Europe, leaving France did not mean that I was going to give up my interest in French public debate. On the contrary, living far away from France in geographical terms strengthened my interest in its history, its values and the message it sends out to others. France is a country of migrants but does not always like to acknowledge this, particularly in times of economic difficulties such as those in which we now find ourselves, or at election time – and we have just had the European elections. The disastrous results of these elections, in which a xenophobic party won the largest number of votes in my country bear witness to this, unfortunately.

Living abroad with the nagging fear that I could not become fully integrated and that I might lose all contact with my own past led me through all these years to become a member of various associations of people in the same situation. One of them was called “Français du Monde” (French people of the world). It was my salvation for it provided help, advice, friendship, and the human contact that I sought. International solidarity also led me to forge contacts with associations of other migrants: Italians, Greeks, Swedes and Moroccans. For several years I sat on the governing board of the “Citizens for Europe” confederation and I can still remember its exciting meetings. To cut a long story short, leaving home to live far away may be a risk but life abroad is also an opportunity: for migrants themselves, for the country they leave and which they never cease to honour and love, and for the host country.

And it is precisely because I see migration as an opportunity that I am concerned about the emergence over the past few years of a form of discourse that is deliberately hostile to migrants, who are presented as a burden for the public authorities and a threat to social cohesion. I was appalled when the previous French government introduced a Ministry of Immigration and National Identity, as if one threatened the other through a causal relationship. How can anyone ignore and distort the history of migration, in France and in Europe, to the extent that it culminates in such folly? I find the exploitation of fears for political ends outrageous and contrary to the European values on which the Council of Europe was founded. We should not foster xenophobia but combat it.

Immigration is not a burden, a threat, or a danger. I can remember the prefabricated buildings that were used to accommodate North African workers and their families in Quimper in the 1960s. I passed in front of them on my way to school. Those men did not pose a threat to France. On the contrary, they contributed to its economic growth and we owe them so much. Without migrant workers, what would happen to the sectors of our economies where there is a shortage of skilled labour? Without migrants, what would be the future of an ageing Europe with its shrinking populations? What would happen to creativity if there were less coming together of ideas, arts, and less diversity because there were no longer any migrants? What would France have become without Marie Curie, who was Polish, Pablo Picasso, who was Spanish, Lino Ventura, who was Italian, and Mohamed Dib, who was Algerian? And, if I may be a little mischievous, what would France be without Manuel Valls (the current prime minister of France), who is Catalan?

Ladies and gentlemen, let us speak plainly: we live in open economies and societies which need immigration. To challenge foreigners, put obstacles in their way, reject them, assault them, and insult them because of their accent, their language, the colour of their skin, their culture or their religion is absolutely intolerable. Let us not beat about the bush. The rights and duties of migrants must be made perfectly clear. All obstacles to their employment must be removed. Discrimination must be eliminated in all sectors of life by drawing on the work carried out by institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights, of course, but also by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. And above all, a start needs to be made on ensuring their linguistic integration.

That is the theme of your conference and it is a prerequisite for the success of migration. The problems migrants face are not only purely linguistic problems such as unaccustomed grammar and unknown vocabulary, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, arise from the behaviour, attitudes and social values that are communicated in a veiled but insistent manner by language. It is already difficult to learn a language when you are an adult, but it is even more difficult to decipher, understand and assimilate the complexity of another culture. That is why, although I am one hundred per cent behind the idea of helping migrants to learn the language of the host country, I cannot endorse the idea of compulsory language tests, which for many narrow-minded and less than well-meaning people are the equivalent of relatively strict and necessarily biased entrance exams.

In the history of our societies, there have always been people who have tried to divide the human race into two groups: “us” and “them”. With the emergence of nationalist movements,

language has increasingly become the main cause of division and sometimes a pretext for unequal treatment. I see language as an instrument of integration and progress, not of segregation and relegation. Several member states of the Council of Europe have set up institutes to promote and teach their language, for example the French Institute, the Cervantes Institute in Spain, the Goethe Institute in Germany, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Poland, and the Camões Institute in Portugal. I am also aware of the wonderful local initiatives launched by many municipalities and associations, some of which your conference will highlight over the next two days.

Migrants who have a good command of the language of the host country do not come up against the language barrier but that does not mean that their integration is guaranteed. Integration is often not achieved within a single generation but over several generations. I also believe very much in the emancipating role of schools. Schools pave the way for open-minds, tolerance and cultural diversity. Our teachers are facilitators of intelligence, particularly for this second generation. However, this requires resources and they are often in short supply in priority education areas. We no doubt need to move towards a form of positive support with regard to access to universities and what we in France call “grandes écoles”. Whatever the case, we need to step up our efforts to create a situation that is beneficial for the second generation and for the society of the host country by introducing a win-win system.

Allow me to switch to German to clarify this point. The tragedy of the second generation is summed up in a famous quotation from Goethe. In his work “Faust”, the leading character uses the following words to describe his inner conflict: “Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust” (Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast). Although Faust’s troubles bear no resemblance to those of the second generation of migrants, the quotation is nevertheless very appropriate. All too often, migrants are obliged to choose between their two identities: they must adopt either the values and traditions of their parents or the social norms of the country in which they are born. In a modern society, and in particular in a very diverse Europe, it must be possible to have a plural identity. The norm should not be “either...or” but “both... and”. To make this possible, it is very important that the second generation should be able to speak the language of their parents and of their country of birth equally well.

That is the point with which I wish to end my contribution. We should never forget our roots; we should always be aware of our background and never reject that part of ourselves that has distant origins. I often think about this in relation to my sons. I thought about it in relation to myself when, last January, overcome with emotion, I addressed the National Assembly to support the ratification of the European Charter of Regional or Minority languages. When I spoke in the Assembly Chamber, I was overwhelmed by the loving memory of my four grandparents, whose mother tongue was not French but Breton. If I am here today, it is also for them and thanks to them. It is also why, as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I have undertaken to draft a report on the voluntary and cultural networks of people from the 47 member states that exist in other countries, which I will present next year.

In short, the central theme of your conference is close to my heart. I will follow your discussions closely and I wish you every success. Let us not forget that such exchanges do far more than we realise to foster reflection, humanism, progress and, last but not least, peace,

which is the very reason why the Council of Europe exists, is it not? Thank you for your invitation and for your attention.”

Richard Rossner, conference rapporteur

The rapporteur briefly took participants through the conference programme, and emphasized the fact that the conference was mainly a forum for participants to exchange opinions and experiences, and to discuss the needs of their countries so that priorities could be set for future Council of Europe work in LIAM. In addition to presentations, the conference would include work in relatively small groups in which each participant could express their views, as well as an open forum during which questions submitted by participants would be discussed and commented on by a panel.

Richard Rossner concluded his remarks by wishing delegates an informative and thought provoking conference experience, and by urging them to make the most of the opportunity to express their own views and concerns.

2. COUNCIL OF EUROPE VALUES: POLICY GUIDELINES AND SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS

chaired by Villano Qiriazzi, Head of the Education Policy Division

This session focused on three major contributions to the field of LIAM developed within the Council of Europe. Mr Qiriazzi drew the attention of delegates to the scope of the Council of Europe's work in the field of education and languages, which dates back 60 years. Indeed, 2014 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the European Cultural Convention of 1954, which was the starting point for the work of the Language Policy Unit and the Education Division. The programme of work on education of which the Language Policy Unit's contribution forms a coherent part, focuses mainly on different aspects of quality in education. In the case of the Language Policy Unit, projects centred for many years on the teaching/learning of foreign languages as this was specifically referred to in the European Cultural Convention. A major part of this work was the development of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and related tools, which since its publication in 2001 has been used in most countries in Europe and on other continents.

In addition two important projects relating to formal education have been embarked on over the last ten years. The first focused on the languages of schooling, and the second on plurilingual and intercultural education. Since 2006, the Unit has also run a project on the linguistic integration of adult migrants, which has already led to the three surveys and two previous conferences.

The work of the Council of Europe in the field of education is supervised by a committee of representatives⁵ from the ministries of education of the 50 states that were signatories of the European Cultural Convention (in addition to the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, these include Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Holy See).

Mr Qiriazzi reminded participants that the Council of Europe's contribution to work on language issues is carried out both in Strasbourg by the Language Policy Unit and in Graz by the European Centre for Modern Languages, which is an "Enlarged Partial Agreement" with 32 of the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe, and which is particularly concerned with projects aimed at language education practitioners and specialists.

2.1 **'Integration tests: helping or hindering integration?' A Report of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly** (including a Recommendation) presented by Philia Thalgott

This [Report](#) which includes a Recommendation, a Resolution and an explanatory Memorandum was prepared by the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons (Rapporteur: Tineke Strik⁶) and adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January 2014.

In order to clarify the scope of this important set of policy texts, which are closely related to the issues addressed by the LIAM project and the conference, the mechanisms of decision taking

⁵ Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE)

⁶ T. Strik (Netherlands), PACE member, offered a remarkable contribution to the first LIAM seminar in 2008

and implementation at the Council of Europe were first explained to participants in graphic form in order to provide an overview of how the Council of Europe functions. The explanation focused on the relationship between the following two main bodies:

- the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) is a *forum for debate on key political and social issues*. It is sometimes described as the driving force of the Council of Europe, and represents public opinion. Its members come from the 47 national parliaments (they are not elected as in the European Parliament but designated), and PACE committees play an important role in examining current issues. PACE Recommendations and Resolutions serve as guidelines for the Committee of Ministers and national governments;

- the Committee of Ministers is the decision-taking body (strategy, policy and budget). Its members are the ministers of foreign affairs of each member state which has Permanent representatives in Strasbourg.

Certain extracts of the Recommendation on integration tests (addressed to the Committee of ministers⁷) and the Resolution were quoted and commented on. The explanatory memorandum underpins and outlines in detail the context of the recommendation and the reasons behind it, as well as providing examples.

Participants' attention was drawn to the following three statements from the Resolution:

- *“Knowledge of a receiving society’s language(s) without doubt facilitates the successful integration of migrants. This is the foundation on which integration tests were introduced by a small number of member States, initially for citizenship purposes. They have now, however, been embraced by a growing number of States and applied not only for citizenship, but also for residence, and even as a pre-entry requirement, primarily in cases of family reunion”* (Resolution, paragraph 1)
- *“There are two primary concerns over the use of these tests. The first is whether they promote integration or have the opposite effect. The second is whether they are being used not so much as an integration measure, but rather as a migration management mechanism to limit the number of migrants entering and/or remaining in the country concerned”* (Resolution, paragraph 3, first two sentences)
- *“Member States of the Council of Europe are therefore invited to reappraise their approach to integration tests by evaluating their long-term effectiveness as a tool for efficient, sustainable and user-friendly integration”* (Resolution, paragraph 6).

The debate over the use of language tests is a key concern for all of those involved in LIAM. As evidenced by the PACE initiative, certain Member States openly use language tests as a means of controlling immigration. However, the Council of Europe does not impose policy on its Member States. The purpose of this Report, as well as the conference (and indeed of all the Council of Europe’s work), is to draw people’s attention to certain key issues, particularly in relation to the core shared principles: human rights, democracy and rule of law.

⁷ The Committee of Ministers examined [Recommendation 2034 \(2014\)](#) in September 2014 : see the [Reply](#) addressed to the Parliamentary Assembly [www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Categories → Official texts]

Participants' attention was also drawn to certain key points raised by Tineke Strik in her Explanatory Memorandum, e.g. paragraph 10:

“It is also evident from many of the studies and reports I have examined that the Council of Europe “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment” (CEFR) is extensively used as a basis for assessing someone’s level of “integration”. Whilst it was not initially envisaged that the CEFR would be used as an assessment tool in these circumstances, overt reference in requirements for migrants to the proficiency levels described in the CEFR provides clear evidence of a steady increase in levels of language competency required by many States for the purposes of permanent residence or citizenship. The concern is that this upward trend will lead to many migrants being denied security of residence.”

In other words, this misuse or inappropriate use of the Council of Europe’s CEFR seems to be leading in some Member States to a disregard for the Council of Europe’s fundamental values rather than endorsement of them.

Another excerpt concerns the effectiveness of integration tests as a predictor of integration:

“...It is questionable whether such tests are really appropriate for predicting the degree of integration. As a rule, according to the INTEC⁸ study, tests tend to be an obstacle to integration rather than an aid.” [par. 38]

The impact of integration measures such as tests on integration are also questioned:

“As there is such limited information available it is difficult to reach any conclusions about the long-term effects of integration measures and tests on the four key domains of integration identified by the Council of Europe – economic, social, cultural and political. Such evaluations as are available are relatively short-term and tend to show mixed results. They do however highlight the need for a flexible, tailored approach in order to better meet the needs as well as match the capabilities of participants”. [par. 45]

Clearly, as mentioned in the concluding paragraphs of the Memorandum, there are potential implications for the human rights of migrants. It was underlined that, to date, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg - where individuals whose human rights have been infringed against can bring actions against their national authorities - had not been yet called upon in this regard. However, the Court of Justice of the European Union in Luxembourg is examining the use of such tests in certain Member States.

Given the relevance and scope of this Report, participants were urged to share their views on the issue of integration tests during the group discussion session, and to ensure on their return to their countries that colleagues involved in linguistic integration aspects are made aware of the issues raised in this Report.

⁸ T. Strik, A. Böcker, M. Luiten and R. van Oers, “*The INTEC Project: Synthesis Report - Integration and Naturalisation tests: the new way to European Citizenship*”. A comparative study in nine Member States on the national policies concerning integration and naturalisation tests and their effects on integration. 2010. Centre for Migration Law (CMR). Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Cited in “*Which Integration Policies for Migrants? Interaction between the EU and its member States*”, Y. Pascouau and T. Strik (eds.), 2012, p. 300.

2.2 Guide to Policy Development and Implementation

presented by David Little

This new [Guide](#), co-authored by Jean-Claude Beacco, David Little and Chris Hedges, was written to respond to the needs of policy makers in Council of Europe Member States, most of whom are themselves not language specialists, as well as practitioners. It draws on the Council of Europe's long experience in the field of language education. The Guide has a simple, accessible structure and is highly practical. Participants were given an overview of its main content.

The first main section, 'What is linguistic integration?' covers four key points:

- Learning the language(s) of the receiving society is a fundamental element of LIAM but is not enough because true integration involves putting in place the conditions for a successful reconfiguration of the linguistic repertoires of adult migrants
- Regarding linguistic repertoires, we all possess a complex of linguistic knowledge and skills that we deploy in various ways in the different domains of life. For many of us, including adult migrants, this repertoire is made up of more than one language and therefore rests on the concept of 'plurilingual competence'.
- Linguistic integration can take different forms: it may be passive, or functional or proactive. It may also at best expand the migrant's identity
- Because of migrants' linguistic diversity, there can be no single, standard language programme for adult migrants because their needs, backgrounds and previous education are so varied.

The second main section of the Guide then focuses on how appropriate language programmes for adult migrants can be created. After an introductory section on the general process of design and implementation, several key issues are raised concerning the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), the different types of language needs of adult migrants, and the importance of methodological choices and quality assurance in language programmes.

The final main section of the Guide addresses the issue of assessing the linguistic competence of migrants, in particular the issue of language testing, including some guiding principles in this area and mention of possible alternatives to testing.

The Guide ends with a list of highly relevant recommendations on the main aspects of course planning and implementation as well as on proper use of the CEFR and on testing and valid alternatives to it.

The Guide is a very readable and relevant additional resource for those involved in LIAM, especially those who are not specialists in language education.

2.3 The Council of Europe's website dedicated to LIAM

www.coe.int/lang-migrants

presented by Jean-Claude Beacco

The presentation took the form of a guided tour of the recently developed website, which provides a range of invaluable resources for LIAM, and is easy to access and to navigate. In

comparison with the *Guide to Policy Development and Implementation*, which contains in condensed form key messages and ideas about LIAM, the LIAM website contains the arguments, background documents, papers from and reports of the previous conferences and practical tools which can be explored in much greater detail.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) website. The header includes the Council of Europe logo and navigation menus for 'The Council in brief', 'Human Rights', 'Democracy', 'Rule of Law', 'Organisation', '47 Countries', 'Topics', and 'Newsroom'. The main content area is titled 'Linguistic integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM)' and includes an 'Introduction' section with text about the integration of migrants and the aims of the website. A 'News' section lists recent updates, including a 3rd intergovernmental conference and various reports. A sidebar on the right contains a search box, a word cloud with terms like 'Proficiency', 'Tests', 'Integration', 'Levels', 'Needs', 'Quality', 'course', 'Teaching', 'Learning', 'CEFR', 'Language', and 'Tailor-made', and a list of navigation links including 'Home', 'Guiding principles', 'Linguistic Integration', 'Language policies for adult migrants', 'CEFR and Levels of proficiency', 'Language courses and assessment', 'Instruments', 'Links', 'FAQ', and 'Contacts'.

The homepage of the website enables the user to access the resources in different ways via the menus on the right:

A. The **top part** enables users to go either

- to **'key terms' (with illustrated examples)**, where they will find brief entries in alphabetical order, each defined and discussed in simple and brief texts that examine the term in the light of LIAM and provide links to other relevant resources. The main purpose of this 'mini-encyclopaedia' is to provide easily digestible information for non-specialists, who may have responsibility for policy formulation and implementation and for other interested parties.
- or they can enter via **'categories of document'**, which range from official texts, to background papers, survey reports and instruments;
- or they can access the website through **'events'** such as the conferences on LIAM that have taken place, and the relevant conference presentations and papers.



- B. The middle part of the menu covers six main areas apart from the home page itself:
- **Guiding principles** – key principles which the Council of Europe sees as crucial to implementation of high quality courses and tests
 - **Linguistic Integration** – a discussion of what is involved in ‘linguistic integration’, and how it relates to the integration and full participation of migrants in the host society
 - **Language policies for adult migrants** – an exploration of key issues to be taken into account when formulating and integrating policies for LIAM
 - **CEFR and Levels of proficiency** – a guided tour of the CEFR and a discussion of its potential role in LIAM
 - **Language courses and assessment** – a brief overview of what is involved in designing and running high quality courses for adult migrants, and in the assessment of their linguistic competences, with links to a large number of relevant resources
 - **Instruments** – three instruments are so far highlighted in this section: the European Language Portfolio for Adult Migrants, together with its guides and related documents; the Self-assessment handbook for course providers; and a discussion paper on ‘Language in the Workplace’.
- C. There are three further sections:
- **Links**, which contains mainly links to the website of relevant organisations concerned with integration, language education, testing etc.
 - **FAQs**, a list of frequently asked questions related to LIAM with suggested approaches for further informed reflexion
 - **Contacts**, which also contains a list of the experts who are members of the LIAM Coordinating Group and have been involved in the preparation of the materials available via the website.

The Council of Europe website on LIAM has a dual purpose. The first is to ensure that the values and principles of the Council of Europe in respect of LIAM and reaffirmed over time in its official texts are brought to the attention of as wide a public as possible and taken into account in policy design, and that the key issues become topics for public debate. The second purpose is to provide a practical tool for people working in the ‘front line’ of LIAM, including centre directors and teachers, to enable them to take advantage of the manifold resources developed by the Council of Europe to assist them.

Tribute was paid to the tenacity and hard work of Philia Thalgott, who was responsible for actually creating the website together with a core group of the LIAM co-ordination group and with a web specialist and ensuring that all its constituent parts fitted together. The main texts of the website are now also available, among other texts, in the form of a book entitled ‘*From one Country to Another, from one Language to Another*’ (ISBN 978-92-871-7871-8).

3. DRAFT REPORT ON THE 3rd COUNCIL OF EUROPE SURVEY: main results and trends

presented by Reinhilde Pulinx and Claire Extramiana

chaired by Joseph Sheils

The Chair introduced the session by describing the reasons for and the scope of the three surveys conducted by the Council of Europe to date, and expressing the Council of Europe's gratitude to those in the participating Member States who had been involved in providing the responses. He underlined that the main purpose was to monitor the main developments and trends concerning member states' policy in this area, i.e. language competence requirements (including possible tests) and language tuition before entry in the host country, for a residence permit and citizenship. The information obtained was analysed with a view to producing a synthesis of developments

There are various international surveys relating to migration run by different organisations such as the OECD and the EU, but no other survey focuses specifically on language-related policies. The relatively high level of participation in the survey (36 member states on this occasion, 42 out of 47 member states participating in at least one of the three Council of Europe surveys) indicates that language is an important issue and presents Member State with various challenges. The Chair also acknowledged the hard work of Philia Thalgott, who had identified respondents and gathered the completed surveys, as well as the efforts of Claire Extramiana, Reinhilde Pulinx with Piet van Avermaet in putting together such an informative and illuminating report.

Reinhilde Pulinx, University of Ghent: Section 1 of the survey focused on national legislation relating to LIAM and its impact, while Section 2 examined in turn the courses and language tests applicable respectively to migrants seeking entry to the host country, migrants seeking residence, and those applying for citizenship. The survey questions covered the following list of indicators:

- Language tests required prior to entry
- Optional/compulsory integration programmes
- Optional/compulsory official language courses
- The use of CEFR proficiency levels to define requirements
- The cost of courses to migrants
- Sanctions for non-attendance or low attendance at language courses
- Measures relating to the quality of courses
- Optional/compulsory knowledge-of-society courses
- Optional/compulsory testing of language proficiency and knowledge of host society
- The cost of tests to candidates
- Sanctions if test are not taken or are failed
- Course curricula
- Whether the effectiveness of programmes is measured,

More of the 47 Member States had responded to the 2013 survey than to the previous surveys – 36, as opposed to 31 in 2009 and 26 in 2007. 20 had responded to all three surveys, which aided the analysis of trends. Nearly half of 2013 survey responses had been submitted by education ministries, the remainder by various other authorities⁹ (Foreign affairs, Interior, Labour, ...).

The analysis of the 2013 survey results indicated that a fairly high proportion of participating Member States had language requirements for migrants seeking residence (23 out of 36, of which 13 provided language courses), and for those applying for citizenship (26 out of 36).

The results of the 2013 survey were then compared with the results collected in 2009. Firstly, the number of participating Member States which had put in place language requirements for those seeking residence had increased by one, while the number specifying language requirements for applicants for citizenship had risen by two. Meanwhile, those providing official language courses for migrants had also increased by one in the case of those seeking residence, but by four in the case of those applying for citizenship. The changes between the 2007 and the 2013 surveys were more marked: 17 participating member States said they had put in place language requirements in 2013, whereas in 2007 this figure was only 13.

Claire Extramiana, General Delegation for the French language and the languages of

France: Sections 3 and 4 of the draft report analyse developments in the period 2009-2013 and 2007-2013. The following are some of the key points arising from the survey findings:

- i. The 36 member states which took part in the Council of Europe survey in 2013 can be divided into three groups:
 - 7 states which do not have legislation governing any of the administrative situations under consideration
 - 9 states which make language a requirement for residence OR for acquisition of citizenship
 - Around 18 states which make language a requirement for residence AND for acquisition of citizenship, if not for admission to the country.
- ii. Of the 42 Member States that took part in at least one of the three surveys since 2007, 15 had put in place language requirements for at least one of the three categories (entry, residence or citizenship) during the six-year period. Most Member States have language requirements both for those seeking residence and for those applying for citizenship. The differences in this respect between Western and Eastern European states mentioned in the 2010 report has largely disappeared, although the way legislation has developed varies considerably from country to country.
- iii. Factors affecting how Member States decide on language policies for adult migrants include the proportion of foreign nationals in the population as a whole, the length of time a country has been a destination for migrants, the ratio of migrants seeking work compared to those seeking to be reunited with their family members, and the countries of origin of the migrants who seek entry.

⁹ See Appendix C of the Survey Report, 2014

Some examples of the relatively strict policies introduced in some ‘interventionist’ countries in northern Europe were presented:

States	Before entry	Residence (different types)	Citizenship
Germany	A1 certificate (2007) Free language courses	Free test at B1 (2005), obligatory courses of 600-900 hours – partly fee-paying	B1 test (2008) - no specific test required
Austria	A1	A2 (2006), B1 test - fee-paying (2011), obligatory courses – partly fee-paying	A2 (2006), B1 (2011)
Liechtenstein	Test A1 (2009)	A2 test - fee-paying (2009), optional fee-paying courses	B1 test – fee paying (2008), optional fee-paying courses
The Netherlands	Test A1 test - fee paying for family reunion (2006), self- directed language courses 50 – 300 hours	A2 test – fee paying (2010) for permanent residence. No courses offered	A2 test (2007) No courses offered
United Kingdom	Points-based system (2007- 2010) A1 oral test for spouses	Progress by one CEFR level (2007), obligatory B1 test B1 – fee-paying (2013), no courses offered	Progress by one CEFR level (2007), obligatory B1 test B1 – fee-paying (2013)

Table 1: language proficiency levels required of adult migrants in selected countries in northern Europe

These examples can be compared with the requirements and provision in various other countries:

- in Denmark, Finland and Norway, where courses are largely free, although in Denmark the language level required both for permanent residence and for citizenship is similar to the above examples
- countries in southern Europe, where generally language proficiency requirements are lower, and, in some cases, language courses are also free of charge
- Belgium, France, Switzerland and Luxembourg, where the language proficiency level required for residence is lower than in the countries in table 1, although the level required for citizenship, at least for oral communication, is on the increase;
- Some countries in Eastern Europe, such as Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina and the Czech Republic, where language requirements are gradually being brought in but so far at a lower level.
- In the Baltic States where requirements are significant and for certain professions not dissimilar from those illustrated in table 1.

In summary, over the period of the successive surveys there has been an increasing trend towards firmer and more stringent requirements relating to migrants’ proficiency in the language of the host country whilst at the same time in several countries the provision of free language courses has been reduced and the need for migrants to pay for tests to prove their level of competence has become more prevalent. On the other hand, the differences in policy between countries in different parts of Europe are not so clearly distinguishable as was the case in 2007-2008.

Participants were made aware that the draft report would be finalised and consolidated after the summer and that member states which had responded were invited to check the data relevant to them and inform the Secretariat by mid-July of any proposed amendment.

4. GROUP DISCUSSION: feedback from groups and Open Forum

Participants were divided into three groups to discuss the following two sets of topics relating to the resources developed by Council of Europe, and the outcomes of the survey:

1a. What linguistic resources do migrants need in order to function in a new society?

1b. Why do the CEFR levels required for residence and/or citizenship vary across member states?

2a. Do language tests help or hinder process of integration?

2b. What are the alternatives to language tests?

This way of working enabled participants to discuss these important issues with their own national contexts in mind while reflecting on the morning's presentations. Each discussion group was led by a member of the Coordinating Group, aided by a conference participant who kindly volunteered to act as rapporteur. Their task was to report back on the group discussions at a plenary meeting on the second day, during an Open Forum session which also offered the audience the possibility to raise further issues.

Group 1 – Moderator: Reinhilde Pulinx; Rapporteur: Peter Novak (Czech Republic)

Group 2 – Moderator: Hans Jürgen Krumm; Rapporteur: Maria Luisa Gonçalves (Portugal)

Group 3 – Moderator: Claire Extramiana; Rapporteur: Anne Leurs (Luxembourg)

This section contains two main parts:

- Part 4.1 records some sample contributions during discussion in the three groups
- Part 4.2 covers the 4 questions and records both feedback by each group rapporteur and the comments made from the floor.

The objective is here to offer two complementary perspectives on the very rich discussions over the two days.

4.1 Sample contributions collected by the rapporteur

The following sample contributions to the lively discussions were collected by the rapporteur during brief visits to each group.

Group 1, moderated by Reinhilde Pulinx

There was extended discussion of the actual linguistic and communicative needs of migrants as opposed to the proficiency levels required by national policy. The following points and questions were raised by group members:

- It was very important to enable individual adult migrants to provide information about their practical communicative needs- in everyday life

- What informal opportunities for developing their communicative competence exist outside formal courses for migrants in low skill jobs, many of whom may have been in the country for a number of years?
- Similar need for informal language learning opportunities for migrants seeking admission to adult and higher education

The moderator then asked how decisions were taken to raise the level of proficiency required, as exemplified in the survey results. There were various answers depending on the member state concerned. In some cases the Ministry of Education was not involved in this mainly political decision; in another case, experts had been consulted, and in a third the preoccupation was mainly with work-related language requirements

There followed a discussion of the rationale for certain CEFR levels being used as benchmarks for migrants' language proficiency. Remarks made included:

- There is a need to differentiate between individual migrants' communicative needs, and to focus especially on oral language, as suggested by the policy of several Member States mentioned in the survey report instead of adopting a 'one-size fits all' approach to levels, i.e. selecting one CEFR proficiency level and applying it to all adult migrants from third countries whatever their situation and likely requirements;
- Adopting relatively high and uniform language requirements often appears to be a political means of reassuring the electorate that migration is being limited and that highly skilled people are admitted. However, high levels of language proficiency are not required for most of the jobs that migrants are actually able to find in order to survive.

Group 2, moderated by Hans Jürgen Krumm

The focus during the rapporteur's visit was on the justification for and use of language tests. Remarks made included the following:

- Many countries use tests as a regulatory mechanism for political purposes, while in fact migrants in many cases need and want proof of their language ability for employment and for other reasons.
- Preparing for and taking language tests is stressful for migrants, who are already under pressure in various ways. This is likely to have a negative impact on their wellbeing as well as test results.
- Quality in tests is crucial, but however good they are, tests cannot determine how successfully a migrant will integrate with the host society.
- A formal language qualification may help, but tests should be voluntary, not mandatory.
- There is a clear distinction between the use of tests for diagnostic purposes, i.e. to find out for the benefit of the candidate what level of proficiency has been attained, and the use of tests as a tool for exclusion.
- The suitability for migrants of language tests developed by major testing bodies such as Cambridge Assessment or the Goethe Institut is questionable. Such tests imply a standardised view of proficiency whereas in fact migrants often have language needs that go beyond the CEFR level descriptors that the tests are calibrated to.

David Little summed up this part of the discussion: by noting that CEFR levels of proficiency, especially as reflected in tests, can be used in radically different ways, for example, as a means of supporting the migrant's language development or as a means of controlling which migrants may enter, take up residence or seek citizenship in a Member State. This results in radically different views of the role and value of CEFR levels. These were not conceived as mechanisms of control but as illustrations of competence profiles.

Group 3, moderated by Claire Extramiana

On the use of CEFR levels in the handling of adult migrants, the following comments were recorded:

- Adult migrants have varying needs, which means that a uniform approach to levels of proficiency is not appropriate. For example, it is not appropriate or fair to require a uniform level of proficiency in reading and writing when the migrants have a low level of literacy.
- Allowing a lingua franca mainly for a privileged minority (e.g. English in Denmark) does not necessarily enable adult migrants to escape marginalisation. Moreover, there is a danger that national languages will somehow be devalued.
- Some migrants don't necessarily want to integrate or learn the language of the host country
- Different Member States interpret the CEFR levels differently, in line with their different economic circumstances.
- Some Member States require a B2 level of proficiency of migrants; however, some of their own citizens are not proficient at that level, especially in reading and writing
- CEFR levels are a pretext: the CEFR itself recommends defining competence profiles rather than levels of competence.

On the question of tests and certificates, additional comments included the following:

- There are some advantages in test certificates for professional life, especially if migrants need to demonstrate their language proficiency but have no time to take courses.
- It is important to take account of the intrinsic diversity of migrants' needs in the context of integration and their practical situation. For example, it is often difficult for migrants to complete training courses due to their circumstances, but they may need to take language tests in order to participate in other educational and training opportunities. In this case, tests have a facilitating role not a regulatory one.
- Tests can help integration if they aim to open up additional educational opportunities to migrants.

4.2 Report back on group discussions, and OPEN FORUM

chaired by David Little

The purpose of the session was to share feedback collected by the rapporteurs during the discussions that took place in the three groups the previous day. The rapporteurs were asked to deal with the questions one at a time. The audience were invited to share their views and were also free to raise any other subject of common interest and related to the conference's main topic. In fact, the questions discussed by the groups appeared to embrace most of the concerns touched on during the open forum.

The following paragraphs include a) a report by the group rapporteur b) comments by the chair c) comments by the audience.

Question 1a: What linguistic resources do migrants need in order to function in a new society?

a) Feedback from group rapporteurs

Petr Novak (Czech Republic) reporting on discussions in group 1:

The discussion encompassed both question 1a and 1b (variation in CEFR levels required by different member states). The following were among the points were made:

- Many adult migrants are in a vulnerable situation and language courses aimed at them need very careful organisation, and additional support may be needed.
- Language skills are only one set of skills required by adult migrants; they can and should be combined with the learning of other skills, such as learning strategies, and communication strategies.
- Tailor-made courses are needed to cater for the diverse learning needs of adult migrants, depending on their situation and specific needs.
- The professionalization of language teachers is a priority, including the development of their methodological awareness.

Maria Luisa Gonçalves (Portugal) reporting on discussion in group 2:

the balance of the diverse opinions in the group was that the attitude of migrants to the competence required in the language of the host society varied considerably depending on whether it was obligatory to attain a given level of proficiency, or whether the priorities for language learning depended on the needs and wants of the individual migrants. Generally, the level of proficiency needed should reflect adult migrants' personal as well as professional needs. Some members of the group emphasised that, while language resources were necessary, they were not at all sufficient to ensure integration, since social integration is equally important. It is therefore crucial that migrants' individual language and communication needs are assessed since, for example, a migrant intending to join the medical profession in the host country will need resources and skills that are different from those needed by migrants whose primary concern is to find their feet in the new environment.

Anne Leurs (Luxembourg) reporting on discussion in group 3:

many similar points arose in group 3's discussions. These included the distinction between, on the one hand, the basic global linguistic needs of migrants in their gradual integration, such as everyday use of the language and language skills needed for access to basic services and the labour market; and on the other hand, the particular language needs of individual migrants depending on their educational background, professional capabilities, and personal social situation, which also affects the ease with which individuals learn the language. In addition, group 3 agreed that courses were not enough: opportunities to use the language of the host community in social encounters of various kinds can also play a key role in the acquisition of the new language. Whether or not individuals have a job makes a difference since this will increase their opportunities to use the language in everyday encounters as well as to form

relationships with members of the host community. Reference was also made to the possible usefulness of a shared ‘dominant’ language (such as English) to overcome communication difficulties, but many group members felt that adequate competence in the language of the host community was essential for integration.

b) Comments from the floor on question 1a:

- It has to be remembered that language learning is a lifelong process.
- A distinction can be made between the development of language skills for social interaction and language skills for working life. Where the former is concerned, a number of options and platforms exist to encourage social interaction between migrants and members of the host society. As regards language learning for professional purposes, a more specialised and individualised ‘tailor-made’ approach is needed.
- Employers have a key role to play in assisting migrants to develop the language skills required for given professional domains. They should not make unfair demands on migrants, who need time to develop competence in the language of the host country, and migrants’ skills in other languages should also be taken into account. What is important for the employer is whether the migrant can do the job he or she is hired to do.
- Autonomy and individual needs are key concerns. It is impossible for any standard course offering to cater for the diverse needs of groups of adult migrants. The resources are simply not available. So training in how to learn and how to get the best out of independent, autonomous learning is essential, and teachers need to find means of providing this.
- The issue of needs analysis is complex, especially as regards students with limited literacy. Descriptors of competence below A1 are needed, as well as an understanding of the challenges facing such learners.
- A distinction can be made between ‘instrumental’ needs and needs related to integration. The former include passing the necessary tests and achieving the level of competence required. These instrumental needs and aims should not be underestimated.

c) Comment from the Chair in response to the intervention on learner autonomy and independent learning: in its original form, the ELP especially developed for adult migrants¹⁰ proved to be a successful tool and means of support in Ireland as it ensured that groups of migrants with diverse needs could work together on some areas of common relevance and separately on building language resources to meet their specific, e.g. lexical needs. Also, efforts were made to ensure that people from the host community were brought in to talk to students so that they could get first hand experience of such interaction and learn more about living in Ireland from them.

Another issue to consider in relation to question 1a is how necessary it is to learn the language of the host society given that a degree of integration is possible by getting speakers of a migrant’s first language in the community to help with key aspects of integration. The problem

¹⁰ E.g.: *Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment*, David Little, 2009 (www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Categories)

here is that there remains a risk of discrimination on grounds of language, and of dependency on this kind of help being available when needed.

Question 1b: Why do the CEFR levels required for residence and/or citizenship vary across member states?

a) Feedback from group rapporteurs

Report on discussions in group 1: The decision as to which CEFR level is chosen by a given state is a political decision, but should be taken in consultation with experts in the field. However, the actual needs of individuals vary considerably, as has been discussed. There are also cases where migrants get by in the host society without learning the language and lose their motivation to do so, which involves the risks mentioned earlier. Finally, the case of Austria was cited, where migrants have the option of a fast-track or slower track route to citizenship: the former involves achieving a higher level of proficiency in a shorter period of time and can be more motivating for certain migrants.

Report on discussion in group 2: Various examples were given of the differences in requirements among countries represented in the group, ranging from no specific level of competency in Swedish being demanded in Sweden, while a relatively high level of competence in German is required in Germany. However, in trying to explain the divergent approaches taken by different countries, the group reached the conclusion that the decision was often taken on the basis of an inadequate understanding of the CEFR and the implications of the levels represented in the scales it contains, combined with ‘looking over the fence’ at what other countries are doing. In summary, the group felt that the decisions are usually based more on political priorities than on technical or practical considerations.

Report on discussion in group 3: The focus of this question is less on the needs of adult migrants and more on the requirements and expectations of the host society, which vary considerably depending on national history, the experience of migration, and the understanding of and attitude to the CEFR and its scales. The group itself had a lively discussion as to what level of language competence is actually necessary for integration purposes. The discussion ended up with agreement that it is more useful to think in terms of a language competence *profile* rather than a given *level* of language proficiency.

b) Comments from the floor:

- Claire Extramiana, co-author of the report on the survey of member states: it is worth pointing out that certain countries (Norway, Denmark) require fairly low levels of competence but offer courses which enable migrants to progress to higher levels. So the decisions are generally taken on the basis of what individual countries see as their specific needs.
- Political concerns include migration management or even the reduction in the number of migrants over time.
- The decisions are mainly political but in France for example they go hand in hand with a need to ensure that the courses are high quality and that those involved in delivering

them are as competent as possible so that the needs of both migrants and the host community are met efficiently.

c) Comment from the Chair:

There is a difficulty in seeing any CEFR level in terms of an absolute value. It has to be defined within a context of language use, which links to the notion of profiles in place of levels, a main message of the CEFR. In relation to this, it is important for us as language professionals to point out to relevant authorities that A2 is for most purposes a very acceptable level of proficiency to attain since it means that the language user (in this case the migrant) has communicative competence for the social domain as well as many practical domains of everyday life. A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 are often thought of as equidistant points on a linear scale of proficiency, but they are not equidistant. Nevertheless this simplified view may lead people in authority to believe that higher levels of proficiency can be attained than education systems – or courses for migrants – currently allow for.

- Jean Claude Beacco, member of the LIAM Co-ordinating Group, agreed strongly with this point: the distances between CEFR levels are not equal but rather exponential. It has to be remembered that, to define a given level, all the descriptors (not just some of them) need to be taken into account. Competence is manifested in a consistent ability to demonstrate it in language use. Thus for a given student to show that he or she has attained a competence at level A2 in a test implies that a score of 100% should be reached. Otherwise the level is only partially achieved.

Question 2a: Do language tests help or hinder process of integration?

a) Feedback from group rapporteurs

Report on discussions in group 1: In some countries, tests come in various forms: obligatory tests for citizenship and long-term residence, voluntary tests for other purposes. Clearly, acquiring citizenship is a key event in the life of migrants who are seeking it, which makes any tests especially stressful due to the high stakes involved.

Report on discussion in group 2: Several participants felt that language tests are being used to manage or limit migration rather than a means of integration. However, depending on how tests are used they can also be an aid to integration, for example if tests are used as a way of raising migrants' awareness of the way language and communication works in the host community. In addition, tests can be helpful as they provide certification of a certain level of proficiency in the language, which can be important for migrants seeking employment. There was some disagreement in the group about whether it is civil society or the state which tends to discriminate against those migrants who have low levels of proficiency in the language of the host country. However, there was general agreement on the point that, if tests are used properly, they can be useful.

Report on discussions in group 3: It was also the opinion of members of this group that, if tests are used, for example, before entry as a hurdle for migrants to jump over, they are more likely to hinder than to aid integration. On the other hand, tests that help migrants to

determine their level of proficiency in the language and to decide how they should take their language learning further, can be useful. The issue of test objectives and validity were also discussed: it is crucial that tests actually assess the communicative competence that they are focusing on, and that the communicative ability of migrants is actually assessed rather than simply their ability to adapt the test-taking situation. There was also discussion of whether standardised national tests should be used so that a certain level of test quality is guaranteed, or whether it is better to use tests that are adapted to the particular context of the migrants in question.

b) Comments from the floor

- In the UK tests are frequently used to measure the efficacy of the course provider and as part of the measure of whether funding should be released for them, and this makes them a powerful tool for various stakeholders, including governments.
- It is critical to ensure that tests are constructed to fit the purpose for which they are designed, that there is a system of quality assurance for tests and their fairness is in place in the form of a process of test validation. Also, the relevant authorities need to reflect on the impact of obligatory tests on migrants and on their wellbeing, and on the consequences of using them in the ways that are envisaged.
- It has to be remembered that in many cases using tests with migrants implies introducing them to a culture of test-taking with which they may not be at all familiar. This presents them and those using the test results with further challenges.
- H.-J. Krumm, member of the LIAM Coordinating Group, stated that tests are often over-estimated. People who pass a test have done no more than to show that they can pass that test. Also, standardised tests do not fit with the notion or practice of tailor-made courses. Rather, they work in the opposite direction by pushing teachers and course designers towards a standardised approach, which may be unhelpful for migrants seeking to meet their specific language needs related to the labour market or other domains.

Question 2b: What are the alternatives to language tests?

a) Feedback from group rapporteurs

Report on discussion in group 1: The issues of the quality of test structure and test criteria were discussed, and the idea of providing means of assessment that were less stressful and more suitable for those migrants in vulnerable situations was also raised.

Report on discussion in group 2: Opinions in the group were divided between those who did not believe in the value of tests, and those who thought it important to identify tests that are suitable for the purpose, rather than to find alternatives, and to take full account of any negative impact of tests on migrants by allowing candidates, for example, to retake the test within a given period. Others in the group proposed that the development of language competence and integration could be aided by helping migrants to form links with individuals and groups in the host community and by using means such as public forums for social

interaction where migrants can share time with members of the community and learn more about issues other than language.

Report on discussion in group 3: The concern of group members was that courses should be of high quality and relevant to migrants seeking to integrate with the host community, containing elements that helped them to become better acquainted with the host community and the specific language needed for their circumstances. Also, it was felt that courses needed to demonstrate a respect for the individual migrant and provide insights into the functioning of society and its culture.

c) Comments from the floor:

It is important to ‘walk the talk’ in respect of national immigration policy. If a country overtly adopts an accommodating approach to migration in which the aim is not to screen people for issues relating to language but to take advantage of the skills offered, it should ensure that the policy is implemented. The issue is one of equal rights and opportunities and avoiding discrimination.

5. PROJECTS TO FACILITATE THE LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION OF ADULT MIGRANTS

chaired by Hans-Jürgen Krumm, University of Vienna

5.1 The ECML’s ‘Language for Work project’

presented by Alexander Bradell, project team member

Developing Migrants’ language competences at work networking project

This project is part of the ECML’s 2012-2015 programme of projects ‘Promoting inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education’. It is run by four experts from different countries. The reasons for the project include the diversity of approaches in Europe to migration, work organisation, labour market structures, as well as learning, and the growing importance of communication and learning in the workplace.

Language for work is an emerging field of activity in language education. A network such as that being created by the project team will enable learning providers, employers, policy makers, researchers, and others to benefit from the exchange of information and become better informed about policy and practice so as to be able to develop more effective responses for their respective contexts.

The project covers:

- Pre-employment programmes: language skills for job-search, applications, interviews and generic work tasks such as telephoning, explaining a procedure, dealing with forms;
- Language for specific occupational areas, e.g. engineering, social care, leisure and tourism, healthcare;

- Workplace language learning: learning provided directly in the workplace, linked to work activity; this may be the only language support accessible to employees working long hours in low-paid roles.

Apart from financing the project team meetings, network meetings and the workshop which form part of the project, the ECML is aiding the development of a website to support the main aim of the project, which is an active ‘language for work’ network. This network already has individual members in 15 Member States. Interested conference participants were invited to register at the [Language for Work website](#)¹¹.

5.2 Responding to the language needs of adult migrants: the *fide* project

presented by Myriam Schleiss, manager of the *fide* project, Federal Office for Migration, Switzerland

Switzerland is a multilingual country with four official languages, German, French, Italian and Romansh, and its population includes a high proportion of migrants with on average 15% coming from EU/EEA countries and 8% from third countries. It has a sophisticated system of support for integration at federal and at cantonal level, a central pillar of which is related to training, including language training, and access to the labour market. Fide’s work involved first developing a framework for encouraging the development of language competences among migrants. The framework encompasses:

- a) Assuring the quality and effectiveness of courses provided for migrants across Switzerland;
- b) Development of a simple and easily understood tool to assess the language competences of migrants;
- c) Development of a ‘framework curriculum’, which was completed in 2009;
- d) Analysing migrants’ learning needs and objectives in relation to the various domains of daily life.

This background work has enabled the *fide* project to create an impressive and diverse range of resources for the teaching of adult migrants, which are being made available via the [fide website](#)¹². The resource bank covers 11 domains of daily life including such topics as housing, health, job-seeking, dealing with banks, the post office, and insurance etc. It includes video material and samples of writing as well as teaching materials and a student’s portfolio. These are being introduced to teachers at cantonal level through training courses prior to piloting.

The project will also tackle the issue of quality assurance through a scheme that will cover the three main areas of course quality, institutional quality and the quality of the ‘offer’ as presented in publicity and external communications.

Myriam Schleiss presented a number of striking concrete examples to illustrate the additional challenge of catering for 4 official languages faced by migrants (see her [powerpoint](#) online¹³).

¹¹ <http://languageforwork.ecml.at/>

¹² www.fide-info.ch (available in German, French, Italian and English)

¹³ LIAM website www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Events → Conference 2014 [Programme]

WEDNESDAY 4TH JUNE 2014

6. USING THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S INSTRUMENTS FOR LIAM

chaired by Jean-Claude Beacco, Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle, Paris III

6.1 Piloting the European Language Portfolio (ELP) for Adult Migrants in Lombardy

6.1.1 Introduction by Barbara Lazenby Simpson, author of the LIAM ELP

The ELP for Adult Migrants is a version of the ELP that has been especially developed for use by adult migrants. Like all [validated ELPs](#)¹⁴ it has three components:

- Part 1: a 'Language Passport' where the user records his/her linguistic identity
- Part 2: a 'Language Biography' in which the user focuses on past experience, present learning and future aspirations
- Part 3: a dossier where users may keep products of their learning, useful resources, tests that they have completed and any other items that support the process of language learning.

The ELP is especially suitable for adult migrants because, while making learners aware of language learning and helping them to develop skills that can be transferred to other areas of life, it also offers a 'bridge' between their past life and their current and future challenges. The ELP is designed to engage learners as partners in the learning process, providing a focus for all language learning, and ensuring continuity of learning, whether informal or formal. It is a very flexible tool that accommodates the multi-faceted nature of language learning, which often involves developing different language skills at different levels in different timeframes. The use of an ELP provides a combination of language learning with learning for integration into a new society by prompting reflection on life experiences and offering adult migrants the opportunity to explore aspects of the new culture and society. It also helps them to shape aspects of learning that are critical for them

The [ELP instruments for adult migrants](#)¹⁵ developed by the Council of Europe's Language Policy Unit include:

- An introduction to the ELP and Integration of adult migrants
- A bank of ELP pages which can be selected and adapted according to the particular needs of given adult migrant learners
- A Guide on the use of the ELP pages for teachers, programme and materials designers
- Goal-setting and self-assessment checklists, based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) for use in combination with the ELP pages
- A set of workshop activities to introduce the CEFR and the ELP to teachers.

¹⁴ www.coe.int/portfolio

¹⁵ The ELP version (bank of pages) and the *Guide for teachers* were developed by Barbara Lazenby Simpson; the Introduction, checklists and workshop activities were developed by David Little [www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Instruments]

This version of the ELP can flexibly support tailor-made courses that meet individual learning needs. It also provides a realistic means of assessing the progress and achievement of migrant language learners based on a developing profile of their language competence. It supplements existing curricula and materials, suggests topics for teaching which are relevant to the needs of migrants, and offers a personal tool which encourages and supports learners in adopting good approaches to effective language learning.

6.1.2 Piloting the ELP in Lombardy - Constanza Bargellini and Silvana Cantu, ISMU Foundation, Lombardy

The piloting of the ELP for Adult Migrants was done in three areas of Lombardy as part of the large scale ‘Vivere in Italia’ project supported by the European Union. It took place between January and March 2014 following a workshop and planning meeting with Barbara Lazenby Simpson in October 2013 and a period of time to allow for the translation of the ELP by the Council of Europe and preparing accompanying materials into Italian.

As indicated in table 2 below, groups of adult migrant students in three locations in quite distinct contexts were involved in the piloting.

LOCATION	CEFR LEVEL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	LENGTH OF COURSE	Scope of pilot
Clusone, near Bergamo	A2/B1	11	80 hours	10 of the 16 pages selected
Pasturo near Lecco	B1	9	80 hours	5 of the 15 pages selected
Giambellino quarter, Milan	A1/A2	24	80 hours	3 of the 15 pages selected

Table 2: organisation of the piloting of the ELP for Adult Migrants in Lombardy

The groups were quite varied, predominantly women in two cases, and mainly from North Africa in one case, and from Eastern Europe in another case. As might be expected, the results of the pilot varied from centre to centre. While in one centre many pages were tried out by the teacher and few changes were needed, in the others far fewer pages were piloted but more changes were felt to be necessary. This was partly due to the approach taken by the teachers: the one who tried out several pages making few changes was confident in the intrinsic usefulness of the new ELP, while the others took a more critical approach and made changes that arose from their initial piloting. Handling a high quality translation into Italian with students at A1-B1 levels was also not easy, and recourse was made to the original English version. Conference participants were shown some examples of how the piloting had generated modified translations of the original following piloting as a means of making it easier for students to use the ELP.

In summary, the piloting exercise in Lombardy had shown that the ELP helps adult students in:

- defining and redefining their language learning goals
- assessing the progress made
- moving towards autonomy

- reflecting on personal learning processes (and strengths and weaknesses)

For teachers, using the ELP enables them to support adult migrant students by developing their awareness and self-awareness in regard to language learning and by supporting their ‘identity building’ in the host country.

Those involved in organising the piloting believe that the ELP has an essential role to play as a tool for language learning as well as for developing self-confidence in the new context, provided that there is initially strong support from the teacher, and that some adaptations are made to meet the specific requirements of given contexts.

In conclusion, the speakers strongly recommended the use of the ELP in migrant teaching/learning contexts. A detailed report (in English and in Italian) was one of the conference documents and is available [online](#)¹⁶.

6.2 Quality in the provision of language courses for LIAM: piloting the Council of Europe’s Self-assessment Handbook in Slovenia

6.2.1 Introduction by Richard Rossner, EAQUALS, author of this version of the Handbook

The Council of Europe’s Self-assessment Handbook arose from a desire to offer organisations providing courses for adult migrants a tool for assessing all aspects of their provision, including some non-pedagogical aspects, as a means for identifying where they meet high quality standards and any areas where steps could be taken to improve quality. The Handbook is based on the notion that achieving high quality in services (such as language courses) involves meeting the needs of ‘customers’, in this case adult migrant students, and, if possible, exceeding their expectations. Indeed a Council of Europe recommendation¹⁷ states “A *system of quality control should be established in order to guarantee the content of the language courses and the qualifications of the trainers.*” (CM/Rec 2008-10).

Quality in courses intended for adult migrants is crucial for several reasons. The situation of migrants seeking to integrate in a host community is delicate, and their needs and backgrounds are highly diverse. This presents complex challenges for providers, who are often receiving public funding and are subject to supervision by state or local representatives. However, successful learning outcomes are important both for the migrants concerned and for the host society.

This makes quality management in such provision essential, not a luxury. It involves:

- Creating and applying standards for relevant areas, and organising methods and procedures for regularly assessing whether these standards are being met, i.e. ‘quality assurance’ (collecting and evaluating evidence)
- Training people to do this and to report on the findings, and identifying areas where standards are not being met

¹⁶ www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Instruments → ELP

¹⁷ [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2008\)10](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to employment (*Adopted on 10 July 2008*)

- Developing an action plan to address those areas where improvement is necessary or desirable, and ensuring that teamwork on continuous improvement takes place.

The Council of Europe Handbook is designed for the use of managers and other staff members working for an educational organisation on the basis that ongoing quality management is best done by insiders, and that self-assessment is in itself a valuable process. However, the checklist it contains could also be a useful starting point for a system of external quality evaluation. The Handbook is in three main parts:

- a) An introduction, and guidelines on the principles and possible methods of institutional self-assessment
- b) The self-assessment checklist itself, which covers 10 main areas
- c) A glossary of terms arising in the introduction and the checklist.

The self-assessment checklist covers ten key areas:

- Stakeholder needs, and desired outcomes (stakeholders include the students as well as those funding the courses and those organising them)
- Planning teaching and learning
- Educational resources and facilities
- Teaching and supporting learning
- Assessment of progress and achievement in learning
- Internal quality assurance processes and procedures
- Other services provided to course participants (outside the courses themselves)
- Staff qualifications, experience and training
- Internal communications within the institution
- Information provided to students and the public about the courses, the institution etc.

6.2.2 *Piloting the Handbook in the Slovenian context* - Nataša Pirih-Svetina, Centre for Slovene as a Second Language, University of Ljubljana

Courses for adult migrants sponsored by the Slovenian Government are only part of the work of the Centre for Slovene Studies at the University of Ljubljana, which also provides courses in Slovene as a foreign language for various other kinds of learners, ranging from youngsters to professionals, as well as being responsible for the preparation of formal examinations and being involved in the writing of textbooks in Slovene.

In 2013 when the piloting took place, 635 learners – more than half the total enrolled on the Centre's courses – were adult migrants, both from neighbouring countries of the former Yugoslav Republic and from countries outside Europe, representing over 40 nationalities in total. 45 different groups were organised according to language level, location etc. The courses were in line with the Slovenian Government's decree on the provision of integration courses for migrants, and followed the specially written curriculum. This includes a sort of individualised portfolio or 'education plan'. Courses were 60 to 180 hours in length, as decided by the civil servants concerned. As an incentive, 80% attendance of such courses enables participants to take the official Slovene exam at A2 level (required for citizenship) once free of charge.

The Centre for Slovene Studies decided to take part in the piloting. It was seen as a challenge, an opportunity for professional development for staff within the Centre, and also as a team-building exercise. Preparation for piloting started in September 2013, and the piloting itself took place in October 2013 with the assistance of Richard Rossner. Preparations began with detailed study of the Handbook. It was then translated into Slovene by the Council of Europe. In order to enable various different members of staff to be involved in the self-assessment exercise, the questionnaire/checklist¹⁸ was divided into several parts:

- sections 1, 3A, 8 and 10 for administrative staff
- section 4 for teachers of adults
- sections 2, 3B, 5, 6, and 7 for the Head Teacher and Teacher Trainer
- section 9 for Managers.

These separate groups of staff went through most of the questions before the visit by Richard Rossner, the main purpose of which was to discuss their detailed feedback, identify any missing questions and to gather ideas on the process of self-assessment that could be added to the guidance notes in the Handbook. Then, as part of the visit, a meeting involving 15 teachers of adult migrants was organised, during which the checklist items in section 4 were discussed in some detail and useful feedback was offered. Other smaller meetings with managers and administrative staff also took place so that it was possible to discuss suggestions for improvement both in the presentation of the Handbook and suggested changes to specific questions. For example, as a result of the meetings and feedback received, the original ‘question’ format was dropped in favour of a ‘statement’ format, and a ‘not applicable’ option was added.

For the Centre staff, the visit had a dual function: the first was to enable staff to carry out a thorough review and identify areas for improvement which would later lead to the development of an action plan. The second was to provide their collective feedback on the Handbook itself. The verdict of Centre staff on the Handbook itself was that it serves as a **key tool** for undertaking such a review because it offers a clear starting point, a pathway and signposts for the process. On the other hand, it is a standard document whereas the nature and context of each provider of such courses is different, so some adaptation is necessary.

A detailed report was one of the conference documents and is available [online](#)¹⁹ in Slovene and English.

¹⁸ See [Part 2: Providers of Courses for Adult migrants : Self-assessment Handbook](#). Revised 2014.

¹⁹ www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Instruments → Handbook

7. PRESENTATIONS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OECD AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

chaired by Philia Thalgott

7.1 OECD, Cécile Thoreau

Administrator, International Migration Division, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs

Immigrants' mastery of the host-country language: Challenges and policy responses in OECD countries

The main focus of the presentation was the work of the OECD on the integration of migrants in the labour market, and in collaboration with the European Commission, on updating indicators relating to migration. Previously these indicators focused mainly on socio-economic factors, but now come a little closer to the question of linguistic integration and migrants' command of the languages of their host countries.

The presentation focused on three key issues relevant to LIAM that the OECD has worked on:

- What do we mean by linguistic integration and what do we (want to) measure?
- Does proficiency in the host-country language make a difference as regards access to the labour market?
- What do we want to achieve and what policy responses work best?

Regarding the issue of migrants' command of languages including the language of the host community, two measurement instruments were referred to. The first was the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which was updated in 2012 and the second, the self-assessment from the 2008 and 2014 LFS²⁰ ad-hoc module.

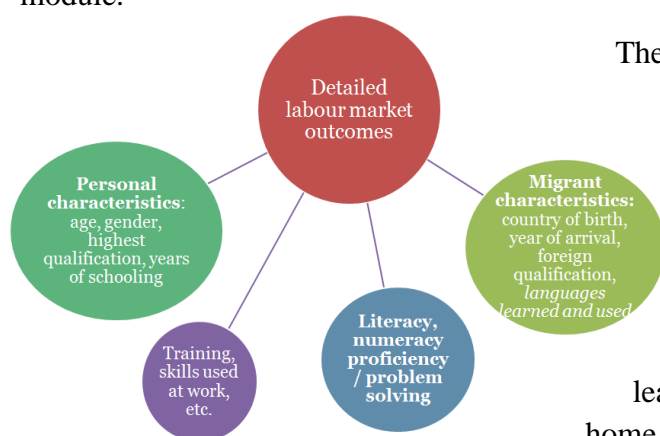


Figure 1: scope of PIAAC survey

The PIAAC survey explores various aspects as indicated in figure 1, including which languages adults have maintained since childhood and which they use in their everyday life, as well as past training, length of stay in the host country etc. One of the results of the most recent survey concerns the main languages learned as a child and the languages spoken at home by migrants.

The results show that the picture varies considerably, with more migrants not speaking the host country language at home in Scandinavian countries, Austria, the USA and Canada than, for example, in France, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

²⁰ LFS stands for Labour Force Survey.

Conversely, fewer migrants in Scandinavia are monolingual native speakers, unlike in Spain, Ireland and Australia, where native speaker migrants form a majority due to the length of time they have been in the country. Another interesting set of data to emerge from the PIAAC survey indicates migrants' level of literacy as compared to that of citizens for whom the language of the country is the first or only language. In general, foreign-born migrants who speak the language of the host community as a mother tongue have a level of literacy similar to that of non-migrants, though in some cases a little lower, as for example in Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands. However, in general, migrants whose mother tongue is different generally have a rather lower level of literacy, due no doubt to problems of language competence.

Certain conclusions can be reached from these data as well as the results of a second survey, the 2008 LFS ad hoc module (due to be updated in 2014), which was a series of self-assessment questions, including one on whether migrants felt they needed to improve their skills in the host country language in order to get an appropriate job. The conclusions are as follows:

- Foreign-born migrants who say they lacked proficiency in the host-country language share a cumulative combination of disadvantages, such as lower education levels, more likelihood of having had a foreign education, and of being refugees or asylum seekers, etc.
- Even after taking these disadvantages into account, their employment rate is 14% lower than for other migrants (those who said they did not feel they had language difficulties), and their rate of over-qualification for the jobs they hold is on average 17 % higher.
- For migrants without language problems, the incidence of over-qualification is no longer any higher than for non-migrants.

These data could suggest that it would be politically expedient to invest more in language support for adult migrants who are candidates for the employment market.

In the light of discussion in previous sessions at the conference, some key conclusions could be that it is essential that migration should be seen as a two-way process: newly arriving migrants should be accepted. It could be useful to give positive signals and recommendations to the relevant national authorities, for example along the following lines:

- Migrant learners should be given help in determining the types and levels of language proficiency that they need for their work and daily life, and their 'learning trajectory' should be designed accordingly.
- Different learning pathways should be designed to accommodate individuals' educational and language background, and language support programmes should be flexible and compatible with their daily life (work, childcare etc.).
- Special programmes combining language support with other kinds of training are needed for migrants who are seeking employment.
- There should be greater access to on-the-job language training (co-financed by employers).
- Language support should also aid migrants to achieve a degree of independence or autonomy to enable them to continue language learning after the end of their course.

7.2 European Commission, Eva Schultz

Policy Officer, Immigration and Integration Unit, DG Home Affairs

Overview of EU actions in support of linguistic integration

The presentation concerned itself primarily with aspects of policy, and the measures being taken by the European Commission to support third country migrants, i.e. migrants from non-EU countries. The main responsibility for integration policy lies with EU Member States, but the Commission has a role to play, especially in the areas of monitoring and benchmarking, sharing of experience and expertise, and financial support. Moreover, the integration of migrants links with EU legislation in certain areas, such as legislation on equal opportunities and legal migration, and with policy actions related to employment and education.

Article 79 (4) TFEU states that the EU will put in place “*measures to provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories, [but] excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations*”. Several such measure have been put in place, building on the ‘[Common Basic Principles for Integration](#)’ agreed by EU Member States in 2004, the fourth of which states “*Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.*”. Moreover and importantly, the recent [Council Conclusion on the integration of third country nationals legally residing in the EU](#) (June 2014) reaffirms the validity of the Common Basic Principles and states specifically that “*...concrete actions should be taken... with a view to promoting inter alia education, language learning, employment, as well as migrants' access to public and private goods and services...*”.

Steps taken by the Commission in the field of integration over the last decade include

- Coordinating knowledge exchange via the Network of National Contact Points on Integration, the last meeting of which considered the Council of Europe Recommendation prepared by Tineke Strik;
- Ensuring dialogue and consultation, for example, through the European Integration Forum of 2009, and providing information on policies and projects through the [European Website on Integration](#)²¹, where various practical resources can be found;
- Providing financial support for projects, now through the EU’s new Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, with a new funding period about to begin.

In addition, in response to the fact that integration is a ‘cross-cutting’ phenomenon, DG Home Affairs provides intra-service coordination with DG Education and Culture, DG Employment and Social affairs etc.

As an illustration of practical measures that have been taken, the Commission developed a [Common Agenda for Integration](#) in 2005, the aim of which was to strengthen the implementation the 2004 Common Basic Principles. In relation to Common Basic Principle 4 and integration of migrants, this includes as an EU agenda item: “*Stimulating trans-national actions, e.g. adaptation of good practices to different contexts, exchange of personnel, joint*

²¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/>

development of programmes, common dissemination of results”; and also “*Supporting innovative integration programmes or models incorporating language and communication training, and the cultural, political and social characteristics of the host country*” (page 7). The 2005 Common Agenda was followed in 2011 by a [European Agenda for the Integration of Third Country Nationals](#), which makes several references to language learning opportunities for migrants. These include acknowledgement that acquiring language knowledge has been identified as “critical” for integration, and that enhanced language skills lead to improved job opportunities, independence and improved participation in the labour market by migrant women. These are reasons why “*language training, as well as introduction programmes, must be accessible both financially and geographically. It is important to offer different levels of language courses based on participants’ knowledge and conditions for learning*” (section 1.1, page 4-5).

However, policy on integration including linguistic integration remains primarily a national if not regional or local responsibility, mainly because the conditions for and patterns of migration vary so widely among the 28 Member States. This makes it hard sometimes to reach agreement in international meetings on what the policy priorities should be.

In support of this agenda and national policies and practice on integration, the Commission oversaw the development in 2011-2012 of a series of European Modules. Based on best practice gathered in the Member States, these suggest practical approaches to dealing with some of the challenges implicit in providing support for integration. Module 1 specifically addresses introductory courses and language classes, and covers pedagogic approaches to language support, incentives for participants, and evaluating and assessing quality.

Another area of work is on indicators related to integration, notably in four areas: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. However, language proficiency was not at the time included as an indicator. The aims were to increase comparability and to monitor the results of policies, and to support benchmarking in relation to European targets and the formulation of recommendations. In addition there have been other data-gathering initiatives involving Eurostat, as well as cooperation with the OECD on related survey.

Conference participants’ attention was drawn to the provisions of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (over €3 billion for the period 2014-2020): the [Fund regulations](#) make specific reference to language (“*comprehensive civic orientation courses and language tuition*”) as part of possible pre-departure measures (article 8, paragraph d), and also to “*measures focusing on education and training, including language training and preparatory actions to facilitate access to the labour market*” (article 9, paragraph d).

8. CITY-LEVEL POLICIES TO FACILITATE THE (LINGUISTIC) INTEGRATION OF ADULT MIGRANTS,

moderator: Imogen Lamb, Radio-France

The roundtable on linguistic integration initiatives that have been taken at city-level was an important and timely innovation. Language policies relating to adult migrants are generally developed at national or, in non-centralised member states, at regional level, in line with political priorities. For this reason, the Council of Europe's LIAM project focuses primarily on policy at the national level with the aim of enhancing the clarity and coherence of these and of supporting their successful implementation. However, numerous initiatives to support the linguistic integration of adult migrants are the result of the work of associations and local authorities. It was therefore decided that, during the last session of this 2014 conference, should offer conference participants an insight into some of the initiatives that complement what is done at national or regional level. Thus, representatives from four diverse cities in four member states were invited to talk about and answer questions on their projects at a roundtable. The invited representatives showed a real enthusiasm for sharing information about their initiatives in this international forum.

Participants:

- From Hamburg, Germany: *Anja Nikodem*, coordinator of the project « Dialogue in German » established by the city council
- From Strasbourg, France: *Mine Günbay*, city councillor (responsible for areas such as the Council for Foreign Residents, women's rights, citizen participation)
- From Torres Vedras, Portugal: *Ana Umbelino*, city councillor (responsible for cultural and social affairs)
- From Wels, Austria: *Claudia Gloessl*, Urban Community, Head of the Department for Women, Equality and Integration.

The moderator of the roundtable, Imogen Lamb of Radio France, was able to identify certain features these local initiatives had in common, which ensured that the contributions of the representatives of the four cities reflected the dynamism and enthusiasm of those working on LIAM at local level.

- a. During the Open Forum, some conference participants had discussed the importance of migrants using their skills in the language of the host community in informal contexts in order to extend their learning. Some concrete examples were given by the panellists.
 - Claudia Gloessl talked about the educational programme in Wels (Austria) called 'Welcome to Wels'. It covers topics such as employment, the education system, possibilities for lifelong learning and further education, living together etc. It runs alongside the courses in German, and opportunities are found to go outside the classroom with participants, visiting museums, learning how to use public transport, visiting Linz, the capital of Upper Austria, and Vienna, and so on. From time to time participants are given tasks, such as buying something, talking to receptionist staff at

offices and asking about their work, in order to enable them to interact with members of the community in a normal way.

- Anja Nikodem described the *Dialogue in German* project in Hamburg. This is an open conversation course for migrants. The meetings are held in branches of the public library, of which there are 33 across the city. This gives those attending a chance to practise their skills in German near their homes, and also to make new acquaintances. There is also an element of orientation to life in Germany as they share their various experiences.
 - Mine Günbay described the Council of Foreign Residents established by the City of Strasbourg. The City sees itself as multi-cultural and well-integrated, and does not limit itself to national policy in the area of integration. It established the Council initially to give foreign residents greater visibility, and to compensate for the fact that they do not have voting rights in local or European elections. However, the Committee's work now has a wider scope. The Council seeks to enable foreign residents to participate fully in the affairs of the city in which they live. This is done primarily through activities highlighting the cultural diversity of Strasbourg. The Council organises a programme of conferences, talks and other activities, and is now part of the city's policy of local democracy.
 - Ana Umbelino talked about activities organised for migrants in Torres Vedras (Portugal), such as '*Tales of many corners*' [Contos de tantos cantos] and '*a time called me*' [Um tempo chamado eu: recolha e histórias de vida]. Non-formal opportunities for learning are a necessary complement to formal courses, and various projects have been launched which are now embedded in the city's activities. These projects aim to engage both migrants and Portuguese residents. '*Tales of many corners*', for example, involved migrants from many countries. Its aim was to gather stories, legends, lullabies etc. from the various countries represented. These were collected by the migrant participants who, with the help of a mediator, wrote them down in their mother tongue, and then through a series of steps also summarised them in Portuguese. Illustrations provided by both migrants and Portuguese participants were added, and the selected items and illustrations were then published in book form. The project provided a 'bridge' connecting participants' past, present and future lives and enabling them to highlight their cultural heritage. There was considerable common ground between the various items gathered, and the process enabled participants to develop their skills in Portuguese. The book that resulted is now used as educational material in schools and cultural organisations.
- b. The Panel then discussed the issue of migrants' motivation to take language courses to improve their competence in the language of the host community to meet the formal requirements established in many countries.
- Anja Nikodem pointed out that migrants take part in the conversation sessions in Hamburg, which are not obligatory, for various reasons: some use them to improve their language skills, others see it as a leisure activity or a way of meeting people, and there are those from southern Europe who have to pay for integration courses

and can't afford them so participate in the free conversation groups to gain the skills they need to get a job. Older migrants who have been in the country a long time also join in because they now have the time and opportunity that they did not have earlier on.

- Mine Günbay referred to the work of voluntary associations in France, which provide numerous courses and other activities. These give migrants the opportunity to meet local residents. For example, there are cycling courses that are open both to migrants and residents from the host community who have not learnt to ride a bicycle. The Council of Foreign Residents in Strasbourg makes a point of ensuring that its activities are intercultural and involve a cross-section of Strasbourg society.
- c. Panellists were asked to address the question of whether women migrants have special needs when it comes language learning.
- Anja Nikodem felt they did have special needs, and Hamburg has established a women's course for those women who for cultural reasons are not permitted or do not wish to study alongside men, or newly arriving women who wish to meet other women.
 - Claudia Gloessl agreed and mentioned that courses were organised for women from certain communities in Wels. Course organisers point out the advantages of women being encouraged to learn German so that they can, for example, also take the children to school and attend meetings, especially when their husbands are unable to, and generally increase their level of independence.
 - Mine Günbay agreed that women do have specific needs. There is an association in Strasbourg that works mainly with mothers, providing language courses for them in the schools attended by their children, which gives them a chance to familiarise themselves with the school and meet teachers. Ms Gumbay also drew attention to the situation of women migrants from earlier generations, who are now grandparents and often illiterate. These women now want to participate in courses and have the opportunity to do so.
 - Ana Umbelino said that, although Torres Vedras had not identified that women in the community had specific needs when it comes to language training, staff at the local support centre try to understand the special needs of any individual migrant or migrant groups, and where relevant put in place tailor-made courses.
- d. Panellists discussed how the provision in their respective cities takes into account the previous experience and prior learning of migrants.
- Anja Nikodem mentioned that participants in courses such as *Dialogue in German* can remain anonymous, which makes participation easier. However, the fact that the sessions take place in public libraries can be a challenge because some migrants do not feel comfortable in this type of public environment, having not had previous experience of it.

- Claudia Gloessel agreed that choosing a suitable venue was sometimes a challenge. In Wels various premises and venues are used, including in initial sessions venues in the community that are familiar to participants.
 - Ana Umbelino said that in Torres Vedras the city tries to take migrants' previous experiences into account by using a life history approach. For example, in the '*time called me*' project, migrants participate in workshops with members of the host community which enable them to reflect on their own lives. Participants put objects that have special value or meaning for them in a box that is provided, and over several sessions to write down a narrative of their lives using the object as a starting point. It is important for them to have this opportunity to raise and discuss issues related to their own identity in a dynamic manner.
- e. As a last point, the panellists discussed various other questions raised by the Moderator, such as the way in which cooperation works between the authorities and association and other NGOs active in the support of LIAM and social integration in general.
- Mine Günbay said that, while local initiatives, supported by EU funds, complement national policy and provision, municipalities are in a position to take certain actions to meet the needs of their own migrant communities through non-formal means. She gave the example of the work being done by certain associations in Strasbourg on securing recognition of migrants', especially women migrants', existing competences gained in their countries of origin so that these competences could be taken into account when they are working towards qualifications in France. The *Plurielles* association in Strasbourg, for example, organises 'valorisation' sessions for women with previously acquired competences, for example as artists, nurses, psychologists or chefs. The objective is to help them to gain recognition of this prior learning and their existing competences and, in relevant cases, use the sessions as a starting point for longer term career counselling. France is lucky that such initiatives are possible and that funding is available not only at city level but also at regional level.
 - Claudia Gloessel talked about the '*month of appreciation and tolerance*' organised annually in Wels. It involves various opportunities for migrants and members of the host community to meet, as well as film evenings, and traditional Austrian celebrations. Having these opportunities to come together makes social interaction between the groups easier.
- f. Panellists were asked about the support, if any, that is provided for illegal migrants. Anja Nikodem pointed out that as the '*Dialogue in German*' programme in Hamburg allows participants to remain anonymous it provides some kind of support for illegal migrants, and this was important for that group. Ana Umbelino agreed that, given the nature of the activities organised for migrant groups in Torres Vedras, it was not evident which participants were legal migrants and which were not. Moreover the support centre in the city, working hand in hand with national authorities, aims to assist migrants in various ways, including helping illegal migrants to legalise their situation.

CONCLUSIONS by the rapporteur, Richard Rossner

The aims of the conference were to facilitate information-sharing and up-dating, especially as regards recent Council of Europe initiatives, and related work carried out by others; to provide a forum for participants to network, to exchange opinions and experiences, and to discuss their needs; and to serve as a means to assist the Council of Europe in setting the agenda for its future work in LIAM. Although ambitious, these aims were achieved.

The conference began with an inspiring opening session that included some timely reminders of how relevant the issues focused on during the conference are to the Council of Europe's work. Ulrich Bunjes, the Acting Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, drew attention to the fact that the Council of Europe's work in education and languages is central to its aims to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and pointed out that high quality is essential in all aspects of provision if that provision is to fulfil its objectives. Then Ambassador Castro Mendes, on behalf of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, referred to the long history of the Council of Europe's concern for vulnerable groups including migrants, dating back to its 1968 resolution, and also made reference to the White Paper of 2008 on intercultural dialogue, which underlined the importance of intercultural policies in enabling migrants to participate fully in the life of their host communities. The opening session ended with an address by Pierre-Yves Le Borgn', on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly, who spoke of his passionate belief in the contribution made by migrants and migration to European society, and the importance of LIAM and of the work being done by the Council of Europe in this area.

The following session drew participants' attention to three key resources recently developed by the Council of Europe. Philia Thalgot described the thought-provoking Recommendation and Report prepared by Tineke Strik for the Parliamentary Assembly, which questions the value of language tests in integration measures, and advocates alternative means of assessment. This was followed by a presentation by David Little of the *Guide to Policy Development and Implementation*, which raises key issues about the design and implementation of language programmes and the assessment of linguistic competence, but also offers clear recommendations on these issues. Last but not least, Jean-Claude Beacco gave participants a tour of the very rich variety of resources contained in the new LIAM website. Participants were urged to make use of all these resources and to bring them to the attention of colleagues working in the field of LIAM.

A key part of the conference was the presentation by Reinhilde Pulinx and Claire Extramiana of the report on the 2013 international survey on LIAM completed by 36 Member States, the summary conclusion of which drew attention to some interesting if disturbing trends in policy development, notably the steady increase in the level of proficiency in the language of the host country required by certain Member States.

The lively discussion in three subgroups threw up some key issues in response to the questions posed. Some of the main points noted are mentioned below.

On the question of the language resources needed by adult migrants:

- The importance of finding effective ways of identifying migrants' individual needs
- The need for migrants to engage in (additional) individualised and autonomous learning
- The need for them to have training in 'learning how to learn'
- Language proficiency is necessary but not sufficient for integration
- The difference between 'instrumental' and practical language needs

On the question of the variations in CEFR levels required at national level:

- Surprise that these range from zero to a rather high level (B1)
- Decisions on the level to be required seem to be political or imitative but not necessarily logical
- Migrants' language 'profiles' are more useful and valuable than their language 'levels'
- The successive CEFR levels from A1 to C2 are not equidistant but exponential.

On the question as to whether tests are a help or a hindrance to integration:

- It needs to be clear whether the aim of a test is exclusion or to support integration
- It depends on how tests are used – as a threat or as a useful tool to measure progress, or to diagnose needs
- Standardised tests are a barrier to tailor-made courses
- Means need to be found to achieve fairness in tests (and to protect human rights)

On the question of possible alternatives to language tests:

- Other indicators of social competence should be considered – we should broaden the view of relevant competences beyond language
- Ways need to be found to minimise the negative impacts of formal assessment, especially for disadvantaged migrants.

Conference participants then had an opportunity to learn about two examples of projects related to LIAM being run by other bodies. The ECML's *Language for Work* project, aims to create a network of those working in this area so that research and resources can be shared among those working in this area. Meanwhile the very impressive Swiss *fide* project is an example of a fully thought-through, imaginative and multi-layered implementation of strategy to aid the linguistic integration of adult migrants. The *fide* website is already endowed with rich resources and provides an inspiration for others involved in LIAM.

On the second day, participants were informed about the piloting of two Council of Europe tools for LIAM, the European Language Portfolio especially designed for adult migrants, which was piloted in Lombardy, Italy; and the Self-assessment Handbook for Course Providers, which was piloted in Slovenia. Both pilots were found to be useful both for the organisations carrying out the piloting and for the Council of Europe in terms of ensuring that the tools are fit for purpose. Other Member States are invited to take advantage of these opportunities to pilot Council of Europe resources and to request consultancy assistance from the Coordinating Group.

Conference participants also learnt about the work being done by the OECD and by the EU which has a potential impact on LIAM. Cecile Thoreau of the OECD drew some conclusions from the parts of the PIAAC survey that relate to migrants' language competence and literacy:

differential individualised training is likely to be more effective than ‘one-size fits all’ language courses, as are flexible programmes with different pathways; there should also be more provision of on the job training; evaluation throughout courses can play a key role for participants and stakeholders. Eva Schultz drew attention to the European Commission’s work in the area of LIAM, which is specifically mentioned in the 2004 Common Basic Principle for Integration as well as in subsequent agendas for action on integration. The EU also has a very useful website on integration, and the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund is launching a new round of funding to support activities in the field within the EU.

The final conference session was a unique roundtable of representatives of various cities in Europe which have put in place their own measures to support the linguistic and social integration of migrants residing in those cities. The measures described provide examples and inspiration for other local initiatives, and complement policies and provision at national level.

In summary, the conference participants coming from different backgrounds (ministries; local authorities; associations; etc.) engaged in very positive dialogue and shared their concerns on many key issues. A genuine desire was demonstrated to improve the means available to support LIAM, and to find better solutions to the issues of levels and assessment of proficiency. Participants were also interested in and enthusiastic about the work done by the Council of Europe, and some participants expressed an interest in using/adapting the Council of Europe’s resources and giving feedback on them. Participants took note of related work such as that being done by the EU and the OECD, and projects such as *fide*. In short, it was apparent that there was a considerable ‘meeting of minds’ among participants, perhaps the beginnings of an international ‘community of practice’ in the field, which would be an excellent way to ensure that the quality of provision for migrants is maintained and developed, that policies are regularly reviewed, and that the chances of successful linguistic integration are optimised.

Action points

Some further action points for the Council of Europe emerged from the conference:

- i. The survey of policy and practice should be continued in some way, at least as a monitoring exercise addressing key aspects of national policy
- ii. There should be work on developing additional resources, such as:
 - Descriptors and guides for supporting migrants with low literacy or/and little educational background
 - Instrument and guide for needs assessment in LIAM
 - A guide on means of assessment other than testing
 - Guidance on relating CEFR descriptors to the needs of adult migrants
 - Guidance on determining and developing migrants’ language profiles rather than assessing and raising their language levels
- iii. The Council of Europe should continue to encourage Member States to request support and collaboration such as piloting and expert visits
- iv. Co-operation with the EU, OECD and other bodies concerned with integration should be pursued.

- v. A symposium could be organised to look in more depth at case studies of successful work on LIAM and at relevant research as a means of providing additional support to member states in policy formulation.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

In closing the conference, Philia Thalgott warmly thanked all the participants for their engagement and lively participation. She expressed her gratitude to the presenters and moderators, and the LIAM Coordinating Group, who had helped organise the conference, as well as the staff of the Language Policy Unit whose hard work had made the event possible. A [web link](#)²² would enable participants to access the programme and Power Point presentations, and a formal report would be provided in due course.

FEEDBACK ON THE CONFERENCE

After the conference, participants were invited to offer feedback on the event and suggestions for further work via an on-line questionnaire. The feedback from those who responded on the relevance of the event and its organisation and structure was largely positive, averaging 4.5 overall on a five-point scale. The top five suggested areas for further work on LIAM by the Language Policy Unit were: alternatives to testing; (other) issues related to assessment; assistance with policy review; [support](#) in the use of the Council of Europe's LIAM resources; and responding to migrants' individual language learning needs. These and other suggestions offered by participants will be taken into account during the next phase of work on LIAM.

²² www.coe.int/lang-migrants → Events → Conference 2014 → Programme

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Programme of the Conference[Online](#): version of the programme including presentations

LIAM

3rd Intergovernmental Conference**Quality in the linguistic integration of adult migrants: from values to policy and practice**

Strasbourg, 3-4 June 2014
Council of Europe – Agora (Room G 02)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Language Policy
Politiques linguistiques

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 3 June 2014	
08.15 - 09.00	Registration
Chair : <i>Philia Thalgot</i> 09.00 - 10.00	OFFICIAL OPENING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ulrich Bunjes, Acting Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, DG II Luís Filipe Castro Mendes, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Portugal and Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C), Committee of Ministers Pierre-Yves Le Borgn', Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE : Richard Rossner, Rapporteur
Chair: <i>Villano Qjriazi</i> 10.00 - 11.00	Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) - COUNCIL OF EUROPE VALUES: POLICY GUIDELINES AND SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Integration tests: helping or hindering integration?</i> - Recommendation 2014(2034) from the Parliamentary Assembly to the Committee of Ministers, and accompanying Report: Philia Thalgot <i>Guide to policy development and implementation</i>: David Little LIAM dedicated website: www.coe.int/lang-migrants: Jean-Claude Beacco <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>From one country to another, from one language to another</i>
11.00-11.30	Break
Chair: <i>Joseph Sheils</i> 11.30 - 12.30	LIAM: POLICY AND PRACTICE - REPORT ON THE 3RD COUNCIL OF EUROPE SURVEY Presentation of main results and trends: Reinhilde Pulinx and Claire Extramiana Open discussion
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch (provided)
14.00 - 14.15	INTRODUCTION TO GROUP TASKS
14.15 - 15.30	GROUP WORK [Rooms: G02 + G05 + 85.04C] <i>Participants will divide into groups to discuss the following two sets of topics</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What linguistic resources do migrants need in order to function in a new society? Why do the CEFR levels required for residence and/or citizenship vary across member states? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do language tests help or hinder process of integration? What are the alternatives to language tests?
15.30- 16.00	Break
Chair: <i>Hans-Jürgen Krumm</i> 16.00 - 17.30	PROJECTS TO FACILITATE THE INTEGRATION OF ADULT MIGRANTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Language for Work networking project: an ECML project</i>, Alexander Bradell, project's link person and principal author of the LfW website Questions from the audience <i>Responding to the language needs of adult migrants: the fide project</i>, Myriam Schleiss, manager of the fide project, Federal Office for Migration, Switzerland (with video examples illustrating scenarios) Questions from the audience Conclusion by the chair

Wednesday 4 June 2014	
Chair: <i>David Little</i> 09.00 - 10.30	INTRODUCTION TO DAY 2 USING THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S INSTRUMENTS FOR LIAM Introduction Reports on piloting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The ELP approach for adult migrants: teaching, learning, assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Introduction</i> by Barbara Lazenby Simpson, followed by a <i>presentation</i> by Costanza Bargellini and Silvana Cantù, Fondazione ISMU, Progetto 'Vivere in Italia', Milano o Questions and comments b. Quality in the provision of language courses for LIAM: using the Council of Europe's self-assessment instrument: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Introduction</i> by Richard Rossner followed by a <i>presentation</i> by Nataša Piriš-Svetina, Centre for Slovene as a second language, University of Ljubljana o Questions and comments
10.30 - 11.00	<i>Break</i>
11.00 - 12.30	REPORTING BACK ON GROUP DISCUSSIONS (rapporteurs as panel) OPEN FORUM Questions arising from the group discussions and other issues raised by participants [collection of questions on day 1]
12.30 - 14.00	<i>Free time for lunch</i>
Chair: <i>Philia Thalgot</i> 14.00 - 14.45	PRESENTATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OECD : <i>Immigrants' mastery in the host-country language : Challenges and policy responses in OECD countries</i>, Cécile Thoreau, Administrator, International Migration Division, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs • European Commission: <i>Overview of EU actions in support of linguistic integration</i>, Eva Schultz, Policy Officer, Immigration and Integration Unit, DG Home Affairs
14.45 - 15.30	ROUND TABLE Moderator: Imogen Lamb, Journalist, Radio France Internationale, Paris City policies to facilitate the (linguistic) integration of adult migrants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hamburg, Germany</i> : Anja Nikodem, coordinator of the project « Dialogue in German » established by the city council • <i>Strasbourg, France</i> : Mine Günbay, city councillor (responsible for areas such as the Council for foreign residents, Women's rights, Citizen participation) • <i>Torres Vedras, Portugal</i> : Ana Umbelino, city councilor (responsible for cultural and social affairs) • <i>Wels, Autriche</i> : Claudia Gloessel, Urban Community, Head of Office, Department for Women, Equality, Integration Interaction with audience
Chair: <i>Philia Thalgot</i> 15.30 - 16.00	Some priorities for Council of Europe action plan: Richard Rossner, Rapporteur Close

LIAM co-ordinating group:

Jean-Claude BEACCO, Professor emeritus, Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle, Paris III.

Claire EXTRAMIANA, General Delegation for the French language and the languages of France (DGLFLF), Ministry of Culture, Paris.

Hans-Jürgen KRUMM, Professor emeritus, University of Vienna

Barbara LAZENBYSIMPSON, formerly *Integrate Ireland Language & Training* (IILT), Dublin.

David LITTLE, Associate Professor emeritus of Applied Linguistics, Centre for Language and Communication Studies, Trinity College, Dublin.

Richard ROSSNER, Chair of EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services) - UK

Joseph SHEILS, former Head of the Language Policy Division, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Piet VAN AVERMAET and Reinhilde PULINX, Centre for Intercultural Education, University of Ghent.

Appendix B: List of Conference documents

Survey

Linguistic Integration of adult migrants: Policy and practice
Draft Report on the 3rd Council of Europe Survey

Reports on the piloting of two instruments developed by the Language Policy Unit

- *In Lombardy* : European Language Portfolio for Migrants
European Fund for the Integration of non-EU immigrants - Living in Italy Project. Italian for work and citizenship.
Report on piloting the ELP approach for adult migrants: teaching, learning, assessment prepared by Costanza Bargellini & Silvana Cantù (available in English and in Italian)
- *In Slovenia* : Providers of Courses for Adult Migrants – Self-assessment Handbook
Piloting at the University of Ljubljana Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language.
Report prepared by Asst. Prof. Nataša Piriš Svetina, PhD University of Ljubljana, Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language (available in Slovenian and in English)

Support to member states

Document describing the areas in which the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe can offer assistance to member states

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

Integration tests: helping or hindering integration?

Rapporteur: Ms Tineke STRIK, Netherlands, Socialist Group
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

- Recommendation 2034 (2014) adopted on 29 January 2014 and addressed to the Committee of Ministers
- Resolution 1973 (2014)
- Explanatory report - Doc. 13361 - 04 December 2013

Instruments

European Language Portfolio - Learning the language of the host country - Adult Migrants, Barbara Lazenby-Simpson

- The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: *an introduction*, David Little
- European Language Portfolio for adult migrant learning the language of the host country - *A guide for teachers*, Barbara Lazenby Simpson

Providers of Courses for Adult Migrants - Self-assessment Handbook, Richard Rossner

Publications

The linguistic integration of adult migrants: from one country to another, from one language to another, 2014 - ISBN 978-92-871-7871-8

The linguistic integration of adult migrants: Guide to policy development and implementation, 2014

Appendix C: List of Participants

ALBANIA

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AUSTRIA

Ms Nora KIENZER
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