



2014
Presidenza Italiana del Consiglio
dell'Unione Europea



International Conference
ECEC & ELL
Early Childhood Education and Care
&
Early Language Learning

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

17 December 2014

h. 15.00 – 18.15

Workshop 2: ECEC & ELL

- *Chair:*
EC: Kristina Cunningham
Italian Presidency: Inspector Gisella Langé
- *Rapporteur:* TBD
- *Concept:* Early language learning: policies and experiences in Europe.
- *Participants:* policy makers, Director Generals, delegates from EU Member States.
- *Expected outcomes:* sharing ideas, policies and best practices in this field.
- *Initial input:* a presentation of the outcomes of a monitoring project carried out by the Italian Ministry of Education on early language learning in the Italian pre-schools, by Inspector Gisella Langé and prof. Lucilla Lopriore.

The spirit of the Conclusions adopted by the EU Heads of State and Government in 2002, “*to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age*”, appears to be more relevant than ever. There is growing interest in multilingual activities for young children almost everywhere in Europe. It is partly driven by an increasing demand by parents and partly a response to the increased challenge to integrate non-native speakers.

In addition to acquiring skills in a foreign language, early language learning (ELL) can enhance competences such as comprehension, expression, communication and problem-solving capacities. Research suggests that education through the medium of a second/foreign language also enhances communication awareness in the first language/mother tongue. Therefore under favourable circumstances, exposure to more than one language can improve and support their language development.

ELL can shape the way young children develop their attitudes towards other languages and cultures.

The discussion should focus on the following topics, aiming at collecting and sharing examples and good practices from the different Member States:

- Strategies and methodologies
- Staff Education and Training Programmes
- Mapping, Monitoring and evaluation
- Continuity (Links between pre-primary, primary and secondary school)
- Intercultural competences
- Existing models

Question 1:

What is the situation concerning ELL in your country according to the latest reforms and policies?

Question 2:

Please mention one or two examples of good practice involving one or more of the topics listed above.

References:

- ELL: Policies:
http://ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/learning-languages/early-language-learning_en.htm
http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=548
- European Council of Barcelona (15/16 March 2002) – Presidency Conclusions (11 languages): <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/latest-press-releases/newsroomrelated?bid=76&grp=4304&lang=it>
- Key data on teaching languages in Europe, 2012
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/key_data_series/143EN.pdf
- EC Communication: Rethinking Education, 2012:
http://ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/strategic-framework/rethinking-education_en.htm
- Commission Staff Working Paper:
European Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET 2020)
Language Learning at pre-primary school level: making it efficient and sustainable –
A Policy Handbook - 7.7.2011
http://ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/language-policy/documents/early-language-learning-handbook_en.pdf
- Other references:
 - on Early Language Learning:
http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=60
 - on multicultural ECEC:
http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=548

- Norwegian resources on Early Language Learning:

Alstads study: “Language in kindergarten – more than just talk”

Guidelines for language stimulation, documenting and evaluating language skills and language acquisition by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training.

http://www.udir.no/Upload/barnehage/Pedagogikk/Veiledere/Udir_sprakveileder_engelsk.pdf?epslanguage=no