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NETWORK

**FOR SOCIAL AND MARKET INCLUSION
THROUGH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

RECOMMENDATION PAPER

ON PROMOTION OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND LWUTLS AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

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The present document has been developed by the consortium of the **Network for Social and Market Inclusion through Language Education (SMILE)**.

This is an independent report. It does not represent a political document neither at European nor at national level. **SMILE** is a network that works on provisional level, looking directly into practices in order to overcome economic and social difficulties within the European Union through promotion of successful models for language learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The **Network for Social and Market Inclusion through Language Education (SMILE)**, involving partners from 15 European countries - Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey - aims to support both European and national policies in the fields of language learning and promotion of linguistic diversity for labour market and social inclusion.

This main goal has been pursued by the SMILE network through a dynamic process based on the research, identification and dissemination of the successful results of good practices for promoting linguistic diversity with particular focus on the learning of Less Widely Used and Taught Languages (LWUTLs). The SMILE Network has the purpose to bring together organizations coming from the educational, labour and social sectors and to explore opportunities for the accommodation of LWUTLs by increasing language competences and skills in order to boost competitiveness, to enhance employability and to reinforce social inclusion. The project as a whole aims at promoting LWUTLs as a competitive advantage in strengthening employment and in promoting social cohesion, given the importance of these languages for the economic, social and cultural spheres within Europe.

In order to enhance both competitiveness and employability and to strengthen social inclusion of various disadvantaged groups, by exploring cooperation opportunities between the fields of language education, training and work, the SMILE project produced a set of three main documents:

- ✓ **Country Overviews** for each of the countries involved in the project, based on a selection of good practices and methodologies for promotion of linguistic diversity and LWUTLs with focus on their practical application in different sectors;
- ✓ **Situational Analysis** with the purpose to provide information about the needs related to LWUTLs of identified sectors at European level and solutions for meeting them through non-traditional methodologies applied for situational language learning and promotion;
- ✓ **Recommendation Paper** with the goal to point out the demand, opportunities and challenges for the promotion of linguistic diversity and LWUTLs at European level and to provide recommendations for improvement of the current strategies and priorities in the field of language learning of LWUTLs.

This recommendation paper reflects the main conclusions from the thematic workshops organised under this project, so as to collectively outline both potential and threats on four specific panels - labour market, disadvantaged people, specific economic sectors and educational sector - identified as decisive ones for the promotion of linguistic diversity and LWUTLs. Through this report, the SMILE network intends to present a set of recommendations for enhancing the forthcoming European policies on these matters, after having gathered organizations, engaged in different industries and sectors of the economy, and jointly explored the opportunities to boost competitiveness, improve employability and reinforce social inclusion through better language skills with the emphasis on LWUTLs.

This closing document is thus an outcome of a thoroughgoing research made by every partner of the SMILE network, mainly focused on their country's state of the art, and also a result of a reflexive interaction process among these partners and other experts involved during the above-mentioned workshops, in order to better outline a set of valid recommendations with regard to promoting linguistic diversity and LWUTLs.

2. LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

DEMAND FOR LWUTLS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR LWUTLS	CHALLENGES FOR LWUTLS
<p>Language learning and promotion are relevant for the field of business and trade, given that this sector requires diverse language competences and intercultural communication skills for delivering better and more efficient results. The language demand here is extremely broad, including not only a great variety of European languages (both popular and LWUTLs), but also languages of strategic importance for businesses, such as Chinese, Russian, Arabic, etc.</p> <p>Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important context for accommodation of LWUTLs, since it can both address the needs of the labour market in terms of language competences and contribute to the free movement of qualified workers within the European Union (EU).</p> <p>In terms of labour market needs, it is a fact that</p>	<p>The following aspects, realities and sector specifics reveal certain opportunities for successful accommodation of LWUTLs and enhancement of their learning and promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More business and trade opportunities, either by entering into new markets, seizing business opportunities or building up business relationships; ✓ Integration into the labour market and society, both of seasonal and cross-border workers; ✓ Importance of language diversity as an asset for human welfare and economic development; ✓ More democracy in economical development processes; ✓ Teachers and language schools enhancement possibilities; ✓ Inclusive, innovative and reflective society, with 	<p>Here are some challenges for the promotion of LWUTLs at EU level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To endorse the demand for teachers of LWUTLs, where some of the times obstacles to a merited visibility of niche languages and markets are raised; ✓ To manage the insufficient financial resources for the promotion of LWUTLs, within a context of economic and financial difficulties among European countries; ✓ To better adapt national policies, which sometimes cannot duly take into account the importance and potential of LWUTLs in their

employers need and seek for language skills, not only in languages commonly taught, but also in rarer languages required for specific niche markets. As regards to languages of neighbouring countries, language skills are important for professional groups in border regions, e.g. firemen, policemen and ambulance personnel.

more quality of service, social integration and better cultural understanding for solutions;

- ✓ Encouragement of workers for both mobility and local courses abroad, in order to provide better services, better wages, more employment options, as well as opportunities beyond frontiers;

- ✓ To encourage economic solidarity, through the acquisition of new language skills, which is an important facilitator both for mitigating intolerance and prejudice within local communities and for adding more value to one's curricula.

decision-making and development processes;

- ✓ To foster the demand of LWUTLs in the labour market in some of the countries.

3. LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

DEMAND FOR LWUTLS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR LWUTLS	CHALLENGES FOR LWUTLS
<p>In reference to language learning for vulnerable people and groups, there is a clear demand for trained teachers to work in intercultural environments. In some countries, there is also an increased demand for teaching disadvantaged people, as well as for additional training to teach people with specific needs.</p>	<p>The following aspects, realities and sector specifics reveal certain opportunities for successful accommodation of LWUTLs and enhancement of their learning and promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cope with most recent humanitarian crisis, leading to the increase of migration and refugee movements all over European countries, where language learning and cultural integration in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To broaden national initiatives specially targeted at migrants, seniors and disabled, in order to motivate most vulnerable groups to learn languages in general and particularly LWUTLs; ✓ To promote national policies and capacities in EU countries with short

host countries are crucial;

- ✓ Involve integrated migrants as both mediators and motivators for newcomers;
- ✓ Apply appropriate methods for specific groups;
- ✓ Effective use and implementation of good practices;
- ✓ Opportunity for newly trained teachers to enter the labour market;
- ✓ Local society members to learn migrant languages;
- ✓ Use of MLs (Migrant Languages) for better business and training opportunities, which shall lead to the creation of jobs for migrants;
- ✓ Retired seniors to teach others, to stay active and to keep socialising;
- ✓ Involve seniors as a potential target group for language learning with the purpose of travelling and of promoting active life styles;
- ✓ Migrants, disabled and other most vulnerable groups as a potential for targeting language learning to enter labour market;
- ✓ Exchange of experiences between countries with a long history of migration and countries with a short migration history.

migration history;

- ✓ To upgrade the level of information about basic country issues on migrant languages;
- ✓ To expand the offer of trained teachers to work with specific target groups;
- ✓ To fight against racism and xenophobia issues;
- ✓ To ban stereotypes in local societies;
- ✓ To encourage appropriate approaches, resources and language learning offers.

4. LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR SPECIFIC ECONOMIC SECTORS

DEMAND FOR LWUTLS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR LWUTLS	CHALLENGES FOR LWUTLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Globalization of the world economy requires professionals and specialists in various areas to communicate effectively in foreign languages. The success depends on their ability to manage language and cultural barriers, for instance, on the language skills and competences with respect to their professional areas. ✓ Concerning the tourism sector, a high demand for LWUTLS is detected in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agro-tourism; ✓ Tour guides and travel agents; ✓ Ecological tourism; ✓ Special forms of tourism, such as culinary tourism, cultural tourism and wine tourism. ✓ With regard to other economic sectors where a high demand for LWUTLS is also perceived, the following industries should be outlined: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ LWUTLS can be used by migrants in order to work in the tourism and industrial sectors; ✓ Elderly people are travelling more and many of them are interested in learning about the culture and the language of their destination; ✓ Focus on LWUTLS teaching for unemployed people in order to upgrade professional profiles, given the fact that the labour force is looking forward for new skills, largely due to the increase of unemployment; ✓ The fact that the general approach of the EU promotes the language competence for the upgrade of professional profiles (expressed through “Europe 2020 strategy”); ✓ Tourism and healthcare are favourable environments for accommodation of LWUTLS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To develop better business performances of professionals ✓ To go beyond the learning of popular languages, mainly English; ✓ To deal and valorise multicultural teams in the workplace and so, ban the issues related to racism; ✓ To develop innovative and attractive training programs and language resources as well; ✓ To train teachers of LWUTLS in order to work in multicultural environments; ✓ To motivate tourists to learn the language of their destination. ✓ To promote workforce development ✓ To overcome the barriers for the mobility of professionals within some economic sectors.

- ✓ Footwear industry;
- ✓ Construction;
- ✓ Textile industry;
- ✓ Healthcare sector.

5. LANGUAGE LEARNING IN EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

DEMAND FOR LWUTLS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR LWUTLS	CHALLENGES FOR LWUTLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, international communication skills play a crucial role as a prerequisite for a deeper integration, either in social or professional terms, of any European citizen. ✓ It is thus important that the educational sector offers conditions for students to get in touch with a wider range of languages and cultures, from an early stage. In this context, neighbouring and cross-border languages as well as cross-cultural understanding must be enhanced as a contribution to greater respect and tolerance. 	<p>The following aspects, realities and sector specifics reveal certain opportunities for successful accommodation of LWUTLS and enhancement of their learning and promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ LWUTLS should appear among national priorities, given their relevance to societies and communities both at national and local levels; ✓ Professional development opportunities for LWULT teachers need to be guaranteed; ✓ Online platforms for self-learning are a useful tool that can be widely promoted; ✓ Promotion and support of bilingualism and multilingualism for a better integration of non-natives in host societies; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Better adapt regional policies, some of the times delineated in contradiction with national policies; ✓ To improve teacher competence to teach LWUTLS (methods, approaches, ICT, etc.); ✓ To avert the prevalence of monolingualism in education systems of some multilingual EU countries and regions; ✓ To increase the level of motivation for learning LWUTLS; ✓ To develop the host country language skills of immigrant and

✓ This educational policy approach must be ensured along all educational stages, either at pre-primary, primary, secondary or higher education levels.

- ✓ Finding new ways to boost motivation of learners at a higher level;
- ✓ Language assistance and training for parents of migrant school children;
- ✓ Addressing cultural differences, historical and cultural backgrounds and motivation of learners;
- ✓ Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach could create a need for language learning at school.

ethnic minority groups;

✓ To take into consideration the cultural differences, different historical backgrounds and motivation of learners;

✓ To contribute for a better and close communication among all European citizens as a key factor for a political stability in the EU, with major reflections on economic and social dynamics at supranational and national levels;

✓ To cope with the limitations on financing resources, since most recent times have been marked by aggravating economic difficulties within the EU.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Hereby follows a set of recommendations pointed out for the four areas identified along the process: labour market; disadvantaged people; specific economic sectors; educational sector.

1. LABOUR MARKET

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIES AND METHODOLOGY	TARGET GROUP(S)
1. Make use of the existing means of negotiation at political level (Social Dialogue) in order to promote active labour market policies.	Promote discussions, negotiations and joint actions involving organizations representing employers, workers and trade unions.	Public authorities, Trade unions and companies, workplace supervisors.
2. Increase and improve the information flow about language skills needs on the labour market.	Promote regular surveys of trends for insuring a better match between supply and demand for languages.	Career advisers, education authorities at all levels and companies.
3. Establish a system ensuring the systematic exchange of good practices.	Promote European and international networking with a view to disseminate efficient methodologies and successful outcomes in order to better orientate language training for employers and people in VET.	Local public and private authorities, migrant communities, NGOs, companies, trade unions, etc.
4. Develop specialized language training modules and methodologies for trainers in VET.	Stimulate collaboration engaging both language teachers and teachers of other subjects in order to promote in-service teacher training.	Language teachers, trainers of VET sector and decision makers at local, national and EU levels.
5. Validate and recognize non-formal language skills.	Formalize non-formally and informally gained language skills both in national policies and internationally.	Decision-makers, public and private authorities at local, national and EU levels.

2. DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIES AND METHODOLOGY	TARGET GROUP(S)
<p>1. Raise awareness about the demand for LWUTLs having in sight social inclusion and employability.</p>	<p>Increase the research on the demand of learning the host country language; disseminate information using communication platforms and tools.</p>	<p>Decision-makers in Education both at national and EU levels / Social Inclusion as well as Research Funding Programmes at national and EU levels.</p>
<p>2. Create networking opportunities at policy level between countries with long and short histories of migration.</p>	<p>Promote European networking for exchange and dissemination of information, as well as best practices related to successful language learning programs for migrants.</p>	<p>Decision-makers on Migrant Integration and Education at EU level.</p>
<p>3. Valorize and strategically incorporate LWUTLs in the educational curricula at national level, allocating financial support.</p>	<p>Officially create and give opportunities both for migrants to learn the language of the host country and for local people to learn migrants' language, at all educational levels.</p>	<p>National and regional governments; European Union.</p>
<p>4. Develop retraining programmes for language teachers towards an inclusive teaching and inclusive education.</p>	<p>Design and deliver models and courses of inclusive education training and continuous professional development for language teachers.</p>	<p>Local/ regional authorities, teaching institutions, associations and disadvantaged people/groups, as well as language institutes.</p>
<p>5. Develop awareness raising programmes on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Broaden awareness initiatives (e.g., information sessions, workshops, etc.) both to mitigate stereotypes and to valorize the potentialities of each group.</p>	<p>Local/ regional authorities, NGOs, associations and disadvantaged people/groups.</p>

<p>6. Create and implement the use of Information Technology (IT) and innovative tools for language learning to counter obstacles related to disability.</p>	<p>Develop e-learning and other assistive technology adapted to everyone's abilities, giving opportunities to disabled and other users to fully participate in all aspects of social life and to enter the labour market.</p>	<p>Teachers of LWULTs;</p> <p>Organizations for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools (universities, VET centers, research centers, etc);</p> <p>IT companies.</p>
<p>7. Promote a regular exchange of good practices and programmes on how to take in hand language training for disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Support networking to disseminate efficient methodologies and successful outcomes in order to adjust language training towards a better inclusion of specific target groups with special needs, either due to their economic, social or personal backgrounds.</p>	<p>Local authorities, NGOs, associations of disadvantaged groups, local and migrant communities, etc.</p> <p>Volunteers.</p>

3. SPECIFIC ECONOMIC SECTORS

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIES AND METHODOLOGY	TARGET GROUP(S)
<p>1. Extend the use of Information Technology (IT) in the learning of LWULTs specially targeted to professionals from the diverse economic sectors.</p>	<p>Broaden the implementation of IT tools - such as digital platforms, self-training packages, computer games and mobile applications extensively used in the learning process, specifically tailored according to the different professional contexts.</p>	<p>Teachers of LWULTs;</p> <p>Organizations competent for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools (universities, training centers, research centers, ministries of education);</p>

		IT companies.
2. Train teachers and educators of LWULTs in order to meet the requirements of the professional groups for instance, for a better communication with migrants parents and their children.	Adjust the learning of LWULTs both to the needs of professional groups and to market demands.	Teachers of LWULTs; Organizations competent for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools (universities, training centers, research centers, ministries of education).
3. Promote and implement innovative/more attractive training approaches, methodologies and tools for language learning with specific purposes related to the diverse sectors, such as healthcare services, tourism, etc.	Stimulate the production of resources and tools with specific sectoral terminology and expressions/incorporate modules in the language courses to meet the professionals' requirements. Extend the use of innovative learning methodologies in which the trainee actively participates in the process, such as blended training and entertainment tools.	Teachers of LWULTs; Health professionals (hospitals, emergency services, health care centers) to deal with language minorities. Organizations competent for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools (universities, training centers, research centers, ministries of education); Companies, chambers of commerce and professionals.
4. Promote the cultural dimension of the language during the learning process.	Promote the cultural dimension in the learning process, in order to create added value when in international business environments.	Teachers of LWULTs; Organizations competent for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools

		(universities, training centers, research centers, ministries of education); Organizations promoting the quality of language in the EU.
5. Ensure the cross-sectoral exchange of good practices.	Maximize the cross-sectoral exchange of good practices, so as to lead to effective methodologies, projects and tools for the promotion of LWULTs.	Participants in relevant EU and national projects; EU and national services designing training programs; Organizations competent for the design and the delivery of the training methodologies and tools (universities, training centers, research centers, ministries of education).

4. EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIES AND METHODOLOGY	TARGET GROUP(S)
1. Give more emphasis at governmental level on motivation to learn LWUTLs.	Highlight the importance of investing in learning LWUTLs as an added value in one's curricula and as a way to upgrade one's profile.	Decision-makers in Education at local, national and EU levels.
2. Ensure the recognition of acquired	Formalize and validate non-formally/informally gained language skills, both in national policies and	Decision-makers in Education on local, national and EU level, as well as

language skills.	internationally.	local authorities.
3. Promote and support bilingualism in education systems for better integration of non-natives.	Sustain the bilingual education of immigrants/ ethnic minorities, in an attempt to mitigate communication obstacles deriving from the lack of language skills.	Decision-makers in Education, local authorities, school communities and NGOs.
4. Encourage governments to ensure infrastructure and motivation for language learning, especially in relation to migrants towards their settlement in the society, instead of isolation.	Take into consideration, along the decision making and implementation processes, the need to provide both migrant children and their parents an extra support in terms of host language learning, such as additional explanatory lessons.	Local authorities, local and migrant communities, NGOs working for migrant integration and education, community development, etc.
5. Encourage state/regional governments to promote regional and ethnic minority languages.	Contemplate the possibility to learn and to practice regional/minority languages, e.g. through extra curricula activities and other activities both in and out of educational contexts and environments.	Local/regional authorities, language teaching institutions, ethnic/regional communities willing to promote their languages and culture, as well as NGOs.
6. Establish a system ensuring the systematic exchange of good practices/programmes on how to deal with language training for parents, teachers, etc., both at governmental and EU levels.	Optimize the dissemination and sharing of best practices promoting an effective networking for a better and more inclusive education starting from an early stage.	Local decision-makers in education, teacher training institutions, teachers associations, parents associations, etc.
7. Encourage governments to look for new ways of promoting cooperation between regions as regards to language issues.	Promote exchange of experiences on language and cultural identities, involving parents, teachers and students from different origins and backgrounds. Cases such as Basque and Catalan languages in Spain, ethnic conflicts based on language differences in	Local authorities, community activists.

	Central Europe, etc, need a special attention.	
8. Place special focus on language learning opportunities in kindergartens, pre-school and primary schools in order to promote equal opportunities in education.	Create opportunities and stimulate adequate resources and methodologies for children to learn a second language at an early age, specially the migrant children, as a way to facilitate their integration.	Kindergartens, pre-school and primary schools.

7. CONCLUSION

It is expected that this report constitutes a rationale that can be assessed by stakeholders across the European Union, while formulating and implementing policy instruments aimed at safeguarding the promotion of multilingualism, linguistic diversity, intercultural dialogue and LWUTLs.

This report goes through the status quo in the four dimensions analysed, where LWUTLs can play a major role. It also focuses on opportunities, on one hand, and on challenges, on the other, that can broadly characterise the path taken to promote LWUTLs. As regards to the labour market dimension, it is recommended to maximize the means of negotiation within the social dialogue framework, in order to facilitate active labour market policies, as well as to develop information flows about language skills needs on the labour market. It is also necessary to ensure the systematic exchange of good practices, to emphasize the focus of VET on language teaching and to validate non formal language skills. Concerning disadvantaged groups, besides the need to clearly define the scope of LWUTLs, it is important to expand the research on the demand of LWUTLs for employability and social inclusion. Additionally, the creation of networking opportunities at policy level between countries with long and short histories of migration shall result in significant synergies in this field, as well as promoting - and inclusively financing - the inclusion of LWUTLs in educational policies at national level. Plus, it is worthwhile, not only to retrain teachers for them to be able to teach disadvantaged people, but also to raise awareness on migrant issues, disabled groups and stereotypes among societies.

While focusing on specific economic sectors, significant potential can arise both from expanding the use of Information Technology in the learning of LWUTLs and from exploring more attractive training methodologies and pedagogical tools, along with training teachers of LWUTLs for them to better meet the needs of specific target groups. It is also important to promote the cultural dimension of the language during the learning process, on one hand, and the cross-sectoral exchange of good practices, on the other. As for the educational sector, it is crucial to ensure the recognition of acquired language skills, as well to promote and to support bilingualism in education systems for better integration of non-natives. These recommendations go together with encouraging both state and regional governments to ensure infrastructure and motivation for language learning - especially in relation to migrants - and to protect both

regional and ethnic minority languages, by looking for new ways to promote cooperation between regions in the field of language. It is also relevant to guarantee the systematic exchange of good practices and programmes on how to deal with language training for parents, teachers, etc., both at governmental and EU levels.

All of these approaches, together with the set of recommendations pointed out for each of the four dimensions of intervention, come rather close to some of the major issues that the European Union and its Member States and regions are facing at present. Fine examples of these global pressures are both economic development processes suffering from financial difficulties - either in public, entrepreneurial or private spheres - and social tensions deriving from demographic trends associated to migration. It is within this challenging political, economic and social framework, which roughly defines major EU context nowadays, that one must clearly focus on synergies of both inner strengths and potential for each territory, as well as its population and specific assets (markets, languages, competitive advantages, etc.), to better overcome such challenges, together with other European countries and regions. It is therefore essential to sum up this reflection process by highlighting, not only the importance of language learning in the process of acquisition of communication skills within a multilingual and multicultural Europe, but also the need for raising citizens' awareness on Europe's linguistic and cultural diversity, where LWULTs can play a determinant role for mitigating issues deriving from such a particular context that EU is now living in, such as most recent migration episodes, as well as economic globalization trends and their impacts on education, businesses and global communication.