

## Report of the President of FIPLV, Dr Terry Lamb

June 2012

This report covers activity since my last report in September 2011. This has been an exciting period of activity in my Presidential role, as we continue to modernise the Federation in order to meet the needs of member associations and to attract new members, with a new Strategic Plan to guide our renewal.

FIPLV has made great progress in the development of our **communications strategy**. In January 2012, we entered the world of **Twitter**, and we are now building up a following of language teachers and their associations around the world. Our address is **@fiplv** and we would love you to join us there if you are one of the growing number of people who use this means of social networking. We would also ask language teacher associations to circulate this address to all of your individual members. We will be circulating regular updates on FIPLV as well as on our member associations, and retweeting interesting news and practice from those who follow us.

We have also been designing our new **FIPLV website**, which will soon be launched. As well as being a repository for our FIPLV documents and reports, and for shared resources, this new website will facilitate interactivity, for example, enabling members to post and respond to messages, and supporting Webinars and electronic discussions. We are planning our first electronic discussion in the Autumn, where the Marille project will be the focus. We will also be using the interactive features to enrich our online Handbook for Language Teacher Associations, which has resulted from our work on the previous ECML LACS project. The website will also be dynamic through its display of our Twitter activity, and has a Calendar where we will encourage you to promote your activities. Additional features will be added in the future, and we would love you to make any suggestions. I would like to thank our Communications Officers, Tatjana Atanasoska and Goran Vodicka, who are giving up their time voluntarily to support the Federation and all of our members.

Our relationship with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) continues to go from strength to strength, and we have renewed our memorandum of cooperation between ECML and FIPLV. In February 2012, the third meeting of the Professional Network Forum was held in Graz, in which opportunities for additional cooperation were discussed as well as updates on the Graz Declaration on Language Education. The [members](#) of the Professional Network Forum on Language Education undertake to work together on various key initiatives, including:

1. An overview of European and international reference sources on which to base national, regional, and local language education policies, strategies, and practices.
2. Closer international and regional cooperation in sharing and applying relevant research, and ensuring that relevant research projects are properly designed to address new challenges.
3. New approaches to learning, teaching, and assessment in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, including among recently arrived migrants.
4. Improved mutual recognition of language qualifications, specifically in less widely taught languages and languages for specific purposes.

5. The development of a common approach to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of support for language learning across all sectors, and of schemes for promoting quality and outstanding achievement in language education.
6. Ways of identifying the professional competences needed by language teaching professionals working in different contexts, including more effective use of new technologies in (language) education, innovative pre-service language teacher education, and mobility programmes for teachers.
7. An open forum for discussion of language education policies and their implementation leading to more integrated approaches to language education at national, regional, and local levels.
8. A common language to discuss and develop ways of assessing linguistic and plurilingual competences, and a redefinition of the concept of literacy in multilingual communities.
9. Further development and implementation of Council of Europe tools, such as: the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP); the development of reference standards for competences in the languages of schooling, academic education and language courses for migrants, as well as for the most widely used non-European languages; the wider use of 'personal language profiles' (e.g. in language portfolios).
10. Implementation of relevant Council of Europe recommendations, such as Recommendation (2008)7 on the use of the CEFR and the promotion of plurilingualism.

Once again we had the opportunity to discuss ways of collaborating with a view to bringing further benefits to our members. This is being taken forward in the new ECML LACS2 project, which I coordinate in behalf of FIPLV, and which began this year. The Professional Network Forum this year was attended by the following:

- AILA – Bernd Rüschoff
- ALTE – Emyr Davies
- CEL/ELC – Maurizio Viezzi, Manuel Célio Conceicao
- CercleS – Johann Fischer
- EALTA – Gudrun Erickson
- EAQUALS – Peter Brown
- EPA – Johannes Theiner
- EUNIC – Martin Gilbert
- FIPLV – Terry Lamb
- IAM – Britta Hufeisen
- ICC – Rob Williams
- Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe – Philia Thalgott
- OLBI – Marie José Hamel
- ECML – Michael Armstrong, Susanna Slivensky, Waldemar Martyniuk

Further information and links are available from the ECML website (<http://www.ecml.at/Aboutus/ProfessionalNetworkForum/tabid/137/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>), and will soon be posted on the new FIPLV website.

Last year saw the end of the ECML funded project **LACS (Language Associations and Collaborative Support)**, one of the projects of the ECML 2008-2011 programme (Empowering Language Professionals). This project was developed to create opportunities for language teacher associations to benefit from greater collaboration with one another as well as engagement with the range of ECML projects. As coordinator of the project, I was working for four years with a project team consisting of other FIPLV colleagues who represented other partner organisations: Sigurborg Jónsdóttir from Iceland (FIPLV Nordic-Baltic Region and FIPLV Europe), Marianne Hepp from Italy (FIPLV and IDV) Janina Zielinska from Poland (FIPLV and FIPF), and Nicole Thibault, former Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT). In addition, for the first two years, IDV was represented by Lucka Pristavec from Slovenia and in the second half of 2010, the team was enhanced by an ECML Fellow, Tatjana Atanasoska.

The LACS project was aimed at exploring the ways in which language teacher associations around the world support their members through professional development activities and action to influence policy. A number of surveys and a workshop were organised over the years in order to explore association needs and to share expertise. The resulting **Handbook for Language Teacher Associations**, available in English, French and German, is now almost ready for online publication and will soon be seen on the LACS website as well as the FIPLV website. The Handbook has been divided into 12 sections, which consider important aspects of association work as identified by those associations represented at the LACS Workshop, as well as the priorities identified in the questionnaire returns. Each section analyses feedback from associations in order to identify key principles and orientations, and contains rich exemplification of association activity through direct use of quotation as well as the inclusion of case studies contributed by associations. The sections are:

1. Introduction
2. Definition of a language teacher association
3. Rationale for membership of a language teacher association
4. Member recruitment and retention activities and resources
5. Dissemination through events
6. Association websites
7. Publications
8. Involvement in policy
9. Involvement in research
10. Fundraising activities
11. Useful collaborations
12. Evaluation

We hope that associations will find it useful to learn about other associations, and that this will provide food for thought in considering their own priorities. It is intended that this handbook will be regularly updated online, so if you have any additional ideas or contributions, please let the FIPLV President (Dr Terry Lamb, [T.Lamb@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:T.Lamb@sheffield.ac.uk)) know directly or, preferably, post your ideas and contributions online.

The good news is that we were successful last year in our application for a new ECML project, which is one of the new projects forming part of the ECML Programme 2012-2015, Learning through Languages. The project, entitled **LACS2: Empowering Language Networks** will further develop the work of the first LACS project by encouraging collaboration between all types of language teacher associations, including those which support teachers of the languages of schooling as first or second languages and those which support heritage language teachers, as well as other language organisations. The aim is to develop a worldwide network of organisations committed to language learning, and to encourage mutual support and collaborative activity. In the course of the project we will be organising four (or five) **regional workshops** on themes related to ECML projects past and present. The first of these will take place as a pilot in Helsinki in the course of the World Congress, and will bring together teachers of Finnish as first and second language as well as teachers of foreign languages. I will be working with Eija Aalto from the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, with whom I worked on the previous ECML MARILLE project (MAJoRity language Instruction as basis for pLuriLingual Education). For further information on this project, please see the project website: <http://marille.ecml.at/>. It was indeed the MARILLE project workshop which revealed a potential role for FIPLV in facilitating cooperation between different types of language teacher associations with a view to supporting the holistic language development of learners, which is now being realised through the new LACS2.

LACS2 will be promoting ECML projects through its own communications strategy. Please follow the project through the following media:

<http://lacs.ecml.at/>  
<https://twitter.com/LACSECML>  
<https://plus.google.com/1012569319791345...>  
<http://facebook.com/LACS.ECML>  
<http://www.fiplv.org/> or <http://fiplv.com>

Once again, I would like to thank all of our friends at ECML and the Council of Europe for their support and friendship. I am delighted that the Executive Director of ECML, Waldemar Martiniuk, is able to attend our World Congress in Helsinki this June, and we look forward to further development of our partnership. One example of this is a special issue of my journal, the *International Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, which will report on six of the completed ECML projects, including LACS, late in 2012.

With regard to the European Commission, FIPLV Europe has been invited to be a partner in a new project, which is intended to build on the LETPP (Languages in Europe: Theory, Policy, Practice) project which came to an end last year. (Further information on LETPP, including reports and podcasts from the various project meetings and conferences, can be found at <http://www.letpp.eu/>.) The new project is developing a major network of multilingual cities around the world, and is entitled **LUCIDE (Languages in Urban Communities – Integration and Diversity for Europe)**. LUCIDE is a network which is developing ideas about how to manage multilingual citizen communities. It is building up a picture of how communication occurs in multilingual settings across the EU and beyond. It aims to help institutions (councils, schools, hospitals) and local and national economies make better productive use of diversity as an economic resource and to strengthen social cohesion by fostering better communication and mutual understanding. It is clear that this project is intimately aligned to the underlying principles and aims of FIPLV, and we are delighted to be involved. This invitation is further endorsement of FIPLV's status and its ability to reach hundreds of thousands of language teachers and

other professionals around the globe. Further information on LUCIDE can be found here:  
<http://www.urbanlanguages.eu/>

FIPLV Europe has also recently been included in a further EC bid for a project on European Citizenship, coordinated by **MEET – Movement towards a European Education Trust**, a citizens' initiative based in Strasbourg, France, which is committed to a high quality European education for all. We await the outcome of this bid, but hope that it will enable us to organise a workshop on multilingualism in 2013. See the website for further information: <http://www.euroedtrust.eu/home>

FIPLV has also had some involvement in the Language Rich Europe project, led by the British Council. This is researching European policies for multilingualism, and I acted as critical reviewer of the publication as well as being invited to the LRE Conference in Bucharest, Rumania, in June, as plenary speaker.

I was also invited in May to be the keynote speaker at a conference in Oslo, Norway, which celebrated the end of a national project led by the Norwegian National Centre for Foreign Languages in Education. The project was a pilot for the introduction of the second foreign language to learners in primary schools, and my talk was entitled Transition from Primary to Secondary Language Learning: Progression, Differentiation, and Motivation.

In terms of our **membership**, we continue to face the same financial challenges as language teacher associations worldwide, so activity is limited to the sorts of funded activities I describe above. I hope that our higher visibility and capacity to support members will result in increasing membership so that we can facilitate even more collaboration. We are currently reviewing our membership strategy, and hope to include a much broader spectrum of associations and organisations as described above in the section on LACS2. We are also considering a fee structure which is more realistic for members, particularly in these challenging economic times. Our preference is to have many members paying lower fees, so that more can benefit from our global networks. Nevertheless, we are having ongoing discussions regarding membership with a number of associations, such as Albania (ELTA), Austria (Teachers of English in Austria), Colombia (ASOCOPI), Lithuania (LATEFL), and Malta (MATEFL), as well as a range of associations in Ireland and Turkey. We hope also to build on our regionalisation agenda, and enable associations to form regional groups along the lines of our highly successful Nordic-Baltic region (which is also sharing its conference with us in Helsinki this year), in different parts of the world.

Finally, in the year of our World Congress, I would like to extend an enormous **thanks to SUKOL, the Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland**, our Finnish member association, for hosting us and organising our triennial gathering. I do not underestimate the amount of work and commitment which has gone into this, and am personally very grateful.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow members of the FIPLV Executive Committee, as well as all volunteers actively engaged in language teacher associations, for all of their support and commitment to supporting the professional lives of language teachers around the globe.

I look forward to meeting more of you in 2012 (and don't forget we will be able to meet via Twitter and our website too)!

Terry Lamb

President, FIPLV



International Federation of Language Teacher Associations  
Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes

June 2012