

## **Report of the President of FIPLV, Dr Terry Lamb August 2009**

This report will refer to activities carried out in the period January-August 2009, following from the report produced in January 2009.

Following the Executive Committee meeting in Helsinki in January, there has been a continued focus on FIPLV's relationship with the **European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)** in Graz, Austria, which is the official FIPLV address. ECML is part of the **Council of Europe** and in the past six months there has also been concrete engagement between the Council of Europe itself, in Strasbourg, and FIPLV.

The ECML funded project **LACS (Language Associations and Collaborative Support)** is one of the projects of the ECML 2008-2011 programme (Empowering Language Professionals), and it continues to develop opportunities for language teacher associations to benefit from greater collaboration with one another as well as engagement with the range of ECML projects. To remind you, I am coordinating the project with the support of a project team consisting of other FIPLV colleagues who represent other partner organisations: Sigurborg Jónsdóttir from Iceland (FIPLV Nordic-Baltic Region and FIPLV Europe), Lucka Pristavec from Slovenia (FIPLV and IDV) and Janina Zielinska from Poland (FIPLV and FIPF). In addition, the project team has been joined by Nicole Thibault, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT), which is enabling us to explore collaboration on the North American continent.

The LACS project is 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. Following an initial survey which had 35 returns from FIPLV, FIPF and IDV members across the globe (Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Macedonia, Morocco, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Togo, United Kingdom, USA, Venezuela, Zambia), a follow-up survey is being sent out in order to pick up responses from an even broader range of associations. This survey has sparked interest from a number of associations wishing to be more closely involved in FIPLV's work.

In April 2009, there was a meeting in Graz of the LACS team. A report of this meeting can be found on the project's website ([www.lacs.ecml.at](http://www.lacs.ecml.at)). The main task was to prepare the project workshop which will take place 10-11 December 2009, with representation from all ECML member countries (which are not exclusively in Europe). We are asking ECML National Contact Points to find active representatives from language teacher associations who will be able to act as multipliers in their home countries, so please look out for this. It will be a valuable opportunity for different associations to meet up and explore issues together, and will be entirely funded by ECML.

The LACS meeting also came up with other ideas for enhancing the website and raising teachers' awareness of what is happening in language teacher associations around the world as well as of some of the exciting ECML project work. From this summer, there will be monthly mailings to all members of FIPLV, FIPF and IDV which will offer you opportunities to profile your work as well as to learn about ECML projects and the latest LACS news. We would encourage all named representatives of our member associations to forward these brief mailings widely to your own individual members, as they stand to gain a great deal from this information.

I am also involved in another ECML project called MARILLE (MAJoRity language Instruction as basis for pLuriLingual Education), which also had a project team meeting in April, and which is organising its workshop for 15-16 December 2009. Further information can be found at this project's website: [www.marille.ecml.at](http://www.marille.ecml.at). This will be of great interest to those of you who are interested in all aspects of children's linguistic development, including the development of the language of schooling for those children for whom this is only one part of their linguistic repertoire. In June, I was invited by the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division in Strasbourg to represent the MARILLE project at a seminar to develop further the Council's work on the Languages of Schooling. There I met colleagues from the Language Policy Division, including Joe Sheils, and we had a discussion about ways in which FIPLV can be involved in this work. The hope is to bridge the gap not only between teachers of different languages, but also between teachers involved in different types of languages, mother tongue teachers, second and additional language teachers, and teachers of modern and community languages.

Finally, in relation to ECML, we are about to sign a memorandum of understanding to cement our relationship even further. In January, I will be representing FIPLV at the invitation of Waldemar Martiniuk, Executive Director of ECML, who is setting up a Professional Network Forum on Language Education, consisting of INGOs in partnership with the ECML, e.g. EAQUALS, ALTE and CercleS, with a view to sharing language education issues and challenges, to provide a better platform for cooperation and coordination, and to develop common statements on language education issues.

I would like to thank ECML for its support and collegiality. In recent months, all the staff there have been extremely helpful, for example in helping us to transfer our bank account to Graz.

With regard to the **European Commission**, I was recently part of an expert panel on linguistic diversity together with Leonard Orban, Commissioner for Multilingualism. The panel was part of a seminar on ways in which mainstream schools and community/complementary schools can work more closely together in supporting bi- and plurilingual learners. Organised by CILT, the National Centre for Languages in England, the seminar took place in the House of Lords in London. This gave me another opportunity to raise Commissioner Orban's awareness of FIPLV, and I suggested we have another meeting in Brussels.

FIPLV is also part of a consortium bidding for another EC project on language policy which, if successful should provide further opportunities for us to get together. More news on that at a later date.

As part of my job at the University of Sheffield, I have recently been successful as part of a consortium in gaining research funding from the Training and Development Agency for Schools to develop a strategy for diversifying the range of languages taught in schools in England. As part of this project, called the World Languages Project, I hope to link into FIPLV members in order for us to share ways in which teachers of different languages are trained in our countries and how new policies for multilingualism might be developed. One of the partners in this research is ALL (the Association for Language Learning), which will be playing a crucial role at the consultation stage. Hopefully this will also provide a model for language teacher associations wishing to gain funding for research activities to support their members.

Finally, I am working with the Government in England to develop a new Diploma for 14-19 year olds, called the Diploma in Languages and International Communication. This has attracted attention from a number of other countries, and I am working closely with the French Government on using the Diploma as a platform for a joint qualification at baccalauréat level. The intention is then to work with other countries in similar ways. I am delighted to inform you that the French Prime Minister has honoured me with the award of Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques in recognition not only of this work but also for my work with FIPLV.

Terry Lamb  
President, FIPLV

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