

EUROCALL CONFERENCE 2021 PROPOSAL FOR PAPER

Promoting multilingualism and intercultural skills through multimedia toolkits

We present the online toolkits produced by the ERASMUS+ funded project *Generation Global: Multilingualism and Intercultural Skills for a Dual-Competency Workforce of the Future*. The project is a partnership between Scotland, Denmark and Norway and its goal is to address the skills gap and the language deficit that currently exists in these three countries, and in Europe in general. This paper contributes to improvement of professional development of language professionals, career advisors and policy makers.

English has become the *lingua franca* for global trade. However, mother tongue English or excellent command of English as a second language is insufficient. A cornerstone of the project is that young people need both improved intercultural understanding as well as broader range of language skills (in languages other than English) if they are to become effective participants in a future global workforce. The project develops materials that support learners in increasing their awareness of the importance of foreign language skills and soft skills and thus help them enhance their employability on the job market.

With the purpose of addressing the current challenges faced by foreign languages, the project has produced digital materials in the form of videos, webinars and documents that can be accessed by the three main focus groups: the business sector (Year One), education professionals, including careers advisers, policy makers, school leaders and teachers (Year Two), and the young people and their parents (Year Three).

Through our transnational collaboration, our conferences and our legacy of multimedia toolkits, developed by each partner for each of the three phases, the project's main aims are:

- to change attitudes toward language learning, by enhancing awareness of the value of multilingualism and intercultural communicative competences;
- to elicit employers to recognise the value of languages and intercultural competences, resulting in more explicit demand for these skills;
- to increase awareness, within education and careers/skills organisations, of the relevance of languages and intercultural competences;
- to prepare young people more effectively for the labour market by equipping them with skills in languages and intercultural competences, addressing the deficit that currently exists;
- to develop innovative approaches to motivate young people to study languages, while enhancing their awareness of intercultural competences.

In our presentation, which will involve input from the three countries, we will focus on how the range of multimedia products available on our project websites contribute to the fulfilment of the abovementioned project aims. The purpose is to showcase our toolkits to colleagues who may find them useful, either in their current formats or as templates to adapt to their own national contexts.