

Final External Evaluation Report of POOLS-2

"Producing Open Learning System Tools-2"

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Transfer of Innovation Project (ref. no. ES/09/LLP-LdV/TOI/149016)

September 2011

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Contents

Introduction	page 3
POOLS-2 Executive Summary	page 4
Products, Performance and Impact of POOLS-2	page 6
The progress made towards the contractual outcomes, respect of the updated work-plan and Transfer of Innovation	page 8
Dissemination, exploitation and future developments	page 12
The manner in which the partnership performed as a transnational collaboration	page 18
Recommendations	page 20

Introduction

This is the final external evaluation and the results of independent monitoring and recommendations during the 2 years duration of the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme's project "POOLS-2" (Producing Open Learning System Tools 2).

The purpose of the report, the main areas of evaluation, the outcomes and the sources of information for the evaluation are all described in detail in the Initial Evaluation Strategy document in the First Evaluation Report, which are available on the POOLS-2 site at http://www.languages.dk/archive/pools-2/evaluation/First_External Evaluation Report.pdf

http://www.languages.dk/archive/pools-2/evaluation/First External Evaluation Report.pdf and in the External Evaluation Interim Report available at

http://www.languages.dk/archive/pools-2/evaluation/POOLS-2%20v2%20Interim%20External%20Evaluation%20Report%20-%20AB-GL%20Oct%202010.pdf

The approach and methods followed by the external evaluation as contracted aimed to identify the relationship between the original aims and specific objectives of the project and the overall work progress, quality and added-value of POOLS-2 results. In order to address these areas the external evaluation team has followed a specific strategy (see the two previous reports), based on the external evaluation plan presented at the project's Kick-off meeting in Madrid in January 2010. The general evaluation strategy was approved by the project's members.

During the duration of the project, the external evaluators accompanied the project on continuous basis, observe the work-progress and developments of Pools-2, provided comments, constructive feedback and made recommendations about how to tackle the challenges or implement solutions to overcome these changes, in order to meet contractual objectives with quality results.

Our findings and recommendations are synthesised in the following summary and detailed in the next sub-chapters.

We would like to thank all the participants for their cooperation with us, the prompt action on our feedback and for the collegial work atmosphere that all contributed to our work.

1. POOLS-2 Executive Summary

The 2-year project POOLS-2 brought together leading vocational education and training institutions from Spain, Cyprus, Denmark, Malta, United Kingdom, the Evora University from Portugal and EfVET, the European Forum for Technical and Vocational Education and Training network with a European-wide reach. The partnership was joined by an associated partner, the Distance Learning University Switzerland Switzerland. The partnership benefited from the experience in the innovative use of ICT and ODL in education and training – Pools' original partners won an European Award for Innovation and Creativity in Lifelong Learning in 2009, and also in languages - Scotland's Gaelic College won the European Award for Languages in 2007.

The POOLS-2 project achieved the final results in very good relationship with the original aims foreseen in the contractual work-plan and produced additional outcomes. This is an exceptional achievement considering the external challenges the project encountered in the beginning of the year 1 and that led to delays in several work-packages. All the delays were recovered by the partners' hard-work and professionalism, the strong commitment of the Spanish Project Manager and the continuous dynamic support of the Danish Project Manager.

Pools-2 was effectively and innovatively addressing the LLP and Leonardo Priority, Specific and Operational objectives targeted in application: LEO-SpObj-b, LEO-OpObj-6 LEO-OpObj-3 and LEO-OpObj-5 and LEO-TraInno-3.

The final results of this transfer of innovation are a wealth of adapted and translated educational resources for language teaching and learning linking + 100 languages and VET teacher-oriented updated courses and solutions. These cover new ICT trends and take advantage of the new platforms and social spaces used for language learning. The products, teachers' courses, videos and all the other outcomes have been delivered professionally and developed jointly by all partners. The products are now available freely on project's website in the 3 TOI languages (Portuguese, Maltese and Greek) in French as additional language and updated in English.

The project deployed successfully the Transfer of Innovation from Pools project to Cyprus, Malta, and Portugal, as foreseen in the original application and to an additional country, Switzerland. Led by the experienced Spanish Confederation of Education and Training Centres , the participants adapted and translated the core materials of Pools project and made available high quality results: Pools-2 language teaching manuals and guides , e-Learning materials and methodologies; Ready to use language learning units and exercises; digital videos that can be used for language learning and teaching; Do-It-Yourself videos with subtitles in the three core project languages; the DVD with step by step instructions and examples on how to create multimedia online material the project's website.

The Pools-2 participants learned or improved their knowledge about how to use ICT in a pedagogically sound way for supporting communicative lessons. The **partners made every effort to provide in time and with high quality** the Computer Assisted Learning Languages resources, guidance and a user friendly Internet platform with all resources available freely for the teachers and their students, with focus on teachers of the LWUTL (Less Widely Used and Taught Languages) and vocational training.

The planned teacher courses on producing CALL materials and how to apply such CALL materials in their classes were piloted and teachers were offered support, hands-on resources and exercises and the newest information on how to make attractive the lessons. These ranged from 'teaching their students how to make use of smartphones, tablets, and/or computers for dictionary lookups between English and 100+ languages, link webpages word by word to 100+ languages using the Wordlink as teaching tool not just for translations, or create quizzes, multiple choices, and short answer exercises online to using the free service to put exercises online for students working at home or in classes'.

The content of Pools-2 courses, exercises and tools reflect best practice identified in learning methodologies and ICT resources for LWULs teachers in vocational sectors.

These performances and additional results of Pools-2 project were delivered by the committed and enthusiast partnership, key to the success of the project and its impact.

2. Overview of Products, Performance and Impact of POOLS-2

The POOLS-2 products have been by now delivered professionally to the three TOI countries Portugal, Malta and Cyprus and to Switzerland as associated country.

All the products, resources, CALL methods and ICT and e-learning materials, tested and evaluated through teacher courses in are now in final versions and are available in English, the three contractual languages (GR, MT, PT) and French as additional outcome. The POOLS-2 project successfully updated, translated resources and methodologies, trained teachers and students to develop attractive CALL languages courses and ODL materials in a variety of areas and fields.

- 1) **Pools-2 CALL Course Book's** 57 pages present a Do-It-Yourself material and reference book to be used as useful additional help to the learning / teaching method and materials for the course.
- 2) **Pools-2 Course Guide** (44 pages) with guidelines for methodology and materials development.
- 3) **60 videos suitable for eLearning languages teaching:** produced 20 videos by each of the partners from Cyprus, Malta and Portugal, all available freely from www.languages.dk/digital The videos produced by the Pools-2 teams embed attractively in the language learning the aspects of countries' culture, traditions, history and cultural heritage.
- 4) **CALL units, lessons plans and eLearning exemples** for the languages courses, available in PT, MT and GR.
- 5) Do-It-Yourself videos with subtitles (in English, with subtitles in GR, MT, PT and FR) demonstrating how the software TextBlender can be used to make the webpages available on the Internet and how to work with Hot Potatoes to create ready-to-use language learning exercises.
- 6)The **Pools-2 distinct website** http://www.languages.dk/pools-2/ and Facebook http://www.facebook.com/pages/POOLS-2/
- 7) Dissemination and exploitation activities and materials.

The project POOLS-2 improved the development steadily from the third month of activity and during the whole during the second year of activity, solutions were found to tackle successfully the challenges that occurred in the beginning of the project or a difficult period in year 2 in the Maltese organisation.

In the end of the project, its performance was high with regard to the transfer of innovation to the three LWULs languages PT, MT and GR of the specific educational outcomes focusing on communicative language teaching to facilitate language learning in vocational contexts.

The performance of POOLS-2 can be measured by the impact they have had on the teachers and their students participating in the testing and training activities. Internal and external evaluations were performed with good results highlighted in the countries' reports. The POOLS outcomes received recognition as innovative and examples of best practice aspects. The POOLS-2 project has already demonstrated a clear impact of the transfer of the best practices of computer mediated teaching based on a pedagogic design and of exploitation of CALL methods and materials in the teacher pilot courses organized.

An example of quantitative indicator of impact is the number of 150 teachers and

An example of quantitative indicator of impact is the number of 150 teachers and participants to the Pools-2 pilot courses that benefited from the training on e-learning and CALL methodologies, Pools software tools (WordLink, TextBlender), other relevant software and Internet-based tools.

An example of qualitative impact is the recognition of the course in Portugal by the Portuguese National Council for Training in Service and the accreditation of ECTS.

A key performance indicator of impact is the number of unique-users that downloaded, tested or used the products. The many dissemination actions and initiatives of the Pools-2 partners increased the impact at both a European and local, regional and national level. Concrete exploitation initiatives beyond the EU funding period are already taking place. As example of impact beyond the seven countries, the POOLS-2 copy-left products CALL Course book and Do-It-Yourself videos are currently used in other project in Romania by the Leonardo ToI project "Pools-cx" Click-Learn-and-Teach http://poolscx.eu/.

3. The progress made towards the final contractual outcomes, respect of the updated work-plan and quality of Transfer of Innovation

The POOLS-2 project has met its objectives in terms of delivering results, relevant for LLP and Leonardo priorities and objectives.

The success of transfer of innovation in the 3 countries, plus a forth additional country, the dissemination, exploitation activities beyond the planned scope, engaging of additional associated partner who have provided extra dimensions to the work and an additional languages beyond those in the application, all these are achievements with added-value aspects.

While the majority of ToI projects focus on a geographical or sector transfer, the POOLS-2 has also managed an **innovative ICT methodological transfer** within its life time.

All the outcomes were finalized and available online by the end of September 2011, when these were checked and analysed again by the evaluators. The quality and relevance for users of the main outcomes is reviewed below for the products that were not analysed in detail in the previous Interim Report.

The Pools-2 Manuals and Guides

The Pools-2 CALL Course book was finalized with 57 pages as adaptation and translation of the Pools Course Book in GR, MT, PT, FR and improvement of the design and presentation in English. The final course book has available already in English, Greek, Maltese, Portuguese and French. The Pools-2 Course guide remained with 44 pages presenting th useful resources, methodologies and guidelines such as working with e-portfolios, using webquest for exercises, Webquest, or Task-Based method, video making, video subtitling, using Pools software. All these resources were not only translated but also used by POOLS-2 three TOI partners from Cyprus, Malta and Portugal (plus the associated Swiss partner) to develop their own materials, which were peer-reviewed by the other 3 partners from Denmark, Spain and UK.

• The ready to use language learning units were finalized as foreseen for learning Greek, Portuguese and Maltese.

They were tested in the pilot courses organized in ToI countries and are available at http://www.languages.dk/pools-2/index.htm#Exercises for learning Maltese http://www.languages.dk/pools-2/index.htm#Exercises for learning Portuguese

As previously, testing the exercises with videos embedded was a pleasure. We tested several videos listed bellow and used MultiDict translation of texts from Greek, Portuguese and Maltese towards English.

Exercises for learning Greek

- Diatrofi (version 1)
- Διατροφή Πιστοποίηση Ελληνομάθειας Επίπεδο Γ΄
- Τα ζώα θέλουν φροντίδα Κατανόηση Προφορικού Λόγου
- Πασχαλινά Παιγνίδια
- Γενέθλια Λευκής
- Τα Μπάνια

Online exercises produced with the TextBlender and Hot Potatoes, the exercises have been placed online for free using the Dropbox.com facilities:

- Διατροφή Πιστοποίηση Ελληνομάθειας Επίπεδο Γ΄
- The Tombs of the Kings Οι Τάφοι των Βασιλέων

A ready to use WebQuest in Greek. Ξέρετε με ποιο τρόπο ένα καγκουρό που δεν ζει στην Αυστραλία να μπορεί να φτάσει εκεί; Ο Μικές Τρικοίλης του 5ου Δημοτικού Σχολείου Καλύμνου γνωρίζει την απάντηση. Εσείς την γνωρίζετε: <u>Click here to download</u>

* Back to Top

Exercises for learning Portuguese

Online exercises produced with the TextBlender and Hot Potatoes, the exercises have been placed online for free using the Dropbox.com facilities:

- Quem somos nós?
- Perdida na Planície Alentejana Évora Monumental
- Viagem ao mundo dos mármores
- Amores de Estudante: Video with text and exercises
- Ida às compras: Video with exercises

WebQuests for learning Portuguese, each of them has support texts in English, download and test them here:

- CONHECER PORTUGAL Meet Portugal
- Fim-de-semana em Évora
- Visita ao Fluviário de Mora

* Back to Top

Exercises for learning Maltese

Text and video linked word by word to dictionaries:

- In the science lab
- · Watching the Boat Race Regatta
- Our Lady of Victory Church
- Fireworks

Online exercises produced with Hot Potatoes:

Sample exercises produced with Hot Potatoes

- A Blog linked word by word to dictionaries
- Blog linked through Wordlink

WebQuests to be used for learning Maltese:

- Ferrovija ħafifa għal Quest City
- Vetturi Alternattivi
- WebQuest Bask
- Żjarat fil-mużewijiet tal-Belt Valletta (Malta)
- WEBQUEST li taħdem barra l-pajjiż

Videos for language learning and teaching

The teams from Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Switzerland continued their hard work to finalise the production language learning and teaching videos that cover different aspects of life, culture, and education in the four countries. We would like to highlight the quality of these results for the language teaching and learning, their attractiveness and multicultural aspects, the suitability for diverse vocational contexts.

Each video has subtitles in English and has cultural and language notes to assist the selection. The videos were graded according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and Levels (CEFRL) as planned.

The **62** new videos enrich the database of **POOLS** outcomes with 4 new languages and are all available online on Pools main website and were also uploaded on Youtube.

The **20 excellent Portuguese videos** for language learning/ teaching were produced and 23 are listed in the final results because there are 4 parts of the video on Museum Artesanato.

These are presented on http://www.languages.dk/digital/indexPT.html and YOUTUBE.

Their quality is high as educational videos and artistic and cultural outcomes.

1. Receita de Bolo de Queijo

- 2. Quem Somos nós?
- 3. Alentejo
- 4. Biblioteca
- 5. Drmto Saramago
- 6. Claustros
- 7. Viagem ao Mundo dos Mármores
- 8. Vamos Tomar um Café?
- 9. Ida às compras
- 10. O quarto de uma estudante universitária
- 11. O Verão no Alentejo
- 12. Évora Monumental
- 13. Praça do Giraldo
- 14. Universidade de Évora
- 15. Uma manhã no museu
- 16. Amores de Estudante
- 17. Trabalho sobre Évora
- 18. Hotel
- 19. Museu Artesanato I
- 20. Museu Artesanato II
- 21. Museu Artesanato III
- 22. Museu Artesanato IV
- 23. Indicações

The **20 Cypriot videos relevant for** vocational learning, developed by the partners for learning Greek are presented at http://www.languages.dk/digital/indexEL.html

- 1. GOURI
- 2. LEFKI
- 3. TAMPANIA
- 4. MATIES STI PAPHO
- 5. The Baths of Aphrodite
- 6. Lysos festival
- 7. Tombs of the Kings
- 8. Mosaics
- 9. Make Up
- 10. Electrotherapy
- 11. Cooking
- 12. EXTETASIS TRAPEZOKOMIAS
- 13. Οινοποιείο 'Βουν'ι Παναγιά' μέρος
- 14. Οινοποιείο 'Βουν'ι Παναγιά' μέρος Β
- 15. Η Μουσική στο Δημοτικο Σχολείο
- 16. Video Clip 18
- 17. Adonis Baths
- 18. Πειθαρχία και Όρια Pools
- 19. Χαλούμι Το Ανωυρκάτικο
- 20. Οινοποιείο 'Βουν'ι Παναγιά' μέρος Γ

The **Maltese interesting videos** for Maltese language learning were improved.

The final videos have a now a quality sound and good structure as we can see at http://www.languages.dk/digital/indexMT.html

- 1. At The Science Lab
- 2. Watching the Boat Race Regatta
- 3. The Church of Our Lady of Victory
- 4. Maltese Fireworks
- 5. Interview with the Traditional Boat Race Organiser
- 6. St Thomas More Boys Junior Lyceum in Ħamrun
- 7. Auberge d'Italie
- 8. The Tailor
- 9. The Bookshop
- 10. The Bookshop 2
- 11. The Village Feast
- 12. At the Village Feast 2
- 13. The Fish Hawker
- 14. Senglea Harbour
- 15. Senglea 1
- 16. Senglea 2
- 17. Take Away
- 18. The Greengrocer
- 19. Mini-Market
- 20. In the Kitchen 2

The Swiss Pools-2 team produced two excellent and fun videos for French language learning. The 'Secret of what Distance Learning Really is' and 'Multicontact' are presented on Pools-2 website http://www.languages.dk/digital/indexFR.html and on Youtube.

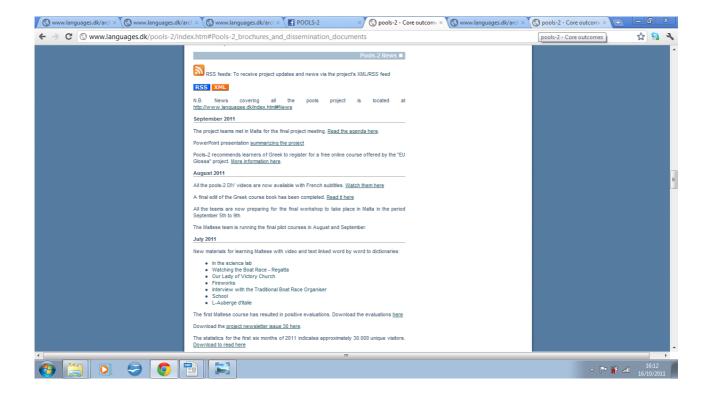
4. Dissemination, exploitation and future developments

The activities planned, the brochures, flyers, newsletters, conference materials, etc. have been produced in accordance with the original plans but with an increased frequency. As in the other WPs, an updated work-schedule and deadlines were necessary to accommodate the the administrative delays occasioned by the Spanish NA in the first months of project's lifetime.

The Spanish leading institution CECE, the Danish partner SDE and the EfVET have been actively involved in multiple European and national dissemination activities. In addition, the dissemination activities and reach of the events were enhanced through the inclusion of new partner and country – Switzerland, and a new language – French.

Newsletters and information on project's progress were mailed to all vocational training centres, certified language trainers in vocational training and all the other organizations that already were familiar with the project from previous contacts and mailing ists.

Pools-2 uses also RSS feeds -o receive project updates and news via the project's XML/RSS feed, for ongoing interaction with the end-users.



The website was central to the international and transnational dissemination and exploitation of the project POOLS-2.

The project developed as suggested at the end of year 1 a **dedicated Pools-2 website** at www.languages.dk/pools-2. It is continuously updated with the results and news, generally 3-4 times a month, which is a remarkable frequency. It is embedded in the main website of all the Pools related projects but it is offering a more direct and clear presentation of the Pools -2 outcomes and activities. An excellent and remarkable result of the reach of dissemination is supported by the statistics in July 2011:

'The statistics for the first six months of 2011 indicates approximately 30.000 unique visitors. Download to read here '.

The final indicators of dissemination will be available from the POOLS-2 Final Report.

There are two dedicated sections and links to relevant results that have maintained the momentum from the start of the project's web presence. The section gives access to the brochures in each of partnership's language, press releases and other dissemination activities at the http://www.languages.dk/pools-2/index.htm#Pools-2 brochures and dissemination documents. The **Newsletters** have been presenting in a engaging and friendly manner the synergies between Pools-Tools, Pools-Methods and Pools-2, see Newsletter 24 to 31.





The **Pools-2 blog and the Facebook page** continue to be well-used and well populated in terms of comments, photos, links, contributions – this indicates widespread support from the team members and friends of the project. The Pools-2 has now 165 friends on its Facebook.



An important event arrived towards the end of the project was announced on POOLS-2 Facebook and celebrated with joy: one of the most active POOLS-2 participants, Ms. Ana Silva from Evora University in Portugal, gave birth to TWINS!

POOLS-2

I wish I could be there with you:) I'm very happy for you, who are wrapping up our wonderful project. I've learned a lot with all of you! A special word for Kent is due! You've opened my horizons as a language teacher! I share with you my twins... I'm glad this is not Pools-3, or I might have had triplets. Best wishes for the Malta meeting and for the rest of the project. Ana



Wall Photos Share · 08 September at 01:10 ·

You, Maria Theodorou Constantinou, Jolita Lepsiene, Kent Andersen and 3 others like this.



Kent Andersen The twins are wonderful:-) Are you prepared for a pools-3? 08 September at 01:19 · Like · 1 person

The NEWS

The information provided in News varies and it is frequently updated. Three or four times a month news are disseminated, invitations from downloads of the latest information on meetings, to test versions of the educational resources and other related products to experimenting with – continuing a dissemination methodology with added-value highlighted at Interim time already.

Two examples from the dozens of the Pools-2 news:

A resource page for the ongoing courses in Malta has been set up. Access it here

The pools website is dedicated to serving all languages, especially the less widely taught languages, but also English: <u>Try a new exercise English Mania</u>.

The twenty Greek videos have now been completed with summary, cultural notes, language notes, transcript, and translation. Go to the Greek videos

A book of reference (based on the work of POOLS-2 for Computer Assisted Language Learning can now be downloaded in English, Greek

April 2011

The project newsletter issue 29 is ready for downloading.

The project teams met in March in Evora, Portugal to check on progress and milestones. Read the minutes here.

The Cyprus team has found a good manual in Greek for Hot Potatoes. Click here to download

The Portuguese team has compiled a number of evaluations from pilot courses. Download the evaluations here.

Early exploitation and future developments

POOLS-2 benefits from a strong position in terms of image and reach in the field because of the previous POOLS initiatives and embedded joint dissemination activities with the other POOLS projects.

The exploitation activities were however due to the efforts, commitment and enthusiasm of the Pools-2 own participants. The Portuguese Pools-2 team was very active in exploiting the results in the six courses organized on the regional and local levels. Testimonies from the project:

Pools-2 team in Portugal ran four courses on CALL between January and June 2011. These courses were conducted by Maria João Marçalo and Ana Alexandra Silva. The courses were attended by future teachers of English, Spanish and Portuguese. The contents of the course were considered very interesting by the students and covered from hotpotatoes to multidict and textblender. Some of the students were able to apply their knowledge, they were given the possibility to teach Portuguese to a group of foreigners. The University of Évora hosted this summer an Erasmus Intensive Language Course, and some students (now future teachers) were given the opportunity to teach Portuguese as a foreign language. The 5th and 6th course were also held in the University, but now the course was accredited by the Portuguese National Council for

<u>Training in Service</u>. The course was promoted in basic and secondary schools, but also on Regional Education Board. All the trainees were certificated teachers. English, Spanish, French teachers as a foreign language constituted one course; the other course was composed by teachers of Portuguese as a foreign language.'

As example of **exploitation** and impact **beyond the seven countries**, the POOLS-2 copy-left products CALL Course book and Do-It-Yourself videos are currently used in other project in **Romania** by the Leonardo ToI project "Pools-cx" Click-Learn-and-Teach http://poolscx.eu/.

The manner in which the partnership performed as a transnational collaboration

The project's partnership worked professionally for the whole duration of their cooperation. The transnational collaboration, commitment to ambitious schedule and work-plan by the participants from Spain, Portugal, Denmark, United Kingdom, Cyprus and Malta and from Switzerland represented key strength of POOLS-2.

From the beginning, the partnership was planned well to cover the areas needed by the project. There was a clear allocation of tasks and responsibilities among the partners, based on relevant expertise that proved to be successful.

The enlargement of the partnership was beneficial, with the participation of the associated partner Distance Learning University Switzerland.

The activities of the partners and results of the two years were in very good relationship with original objectives and with the contractual obligations.

The transparent communication between most of the partners between the meetings took place through e-mails, POOLS-2 blog, to Skype and Facebook and it was frequent as it can be see in the evaluations. The transnational collaboration included also a strong dissemination aspect and effort to insure the impact of the project.

There were other key aspects that ensured the good work-progress and tackling the variations and changes. Among these, the friendly transnational collaboration, the shared project management between Spanish and Danish Project leaders, the availability of Kent Andersen to travel and help Maltese team with hands-on training when needed, the creativity of the participants from all ToI countries that enabled the production of very good videos, helped by the Scottish partner, the excellent organisation of the meetings by the members in Spain, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus.

The work progress and additional results of activities, the impact and dissemination, were evaluated by partners at every 3 months and at the end of the project. The on-going evaluation, both internally and externally, were an additional important element of the partners' collaboration and certainly played an important role in finalizing with quality within reduced time, the planned results.

The collaboration and participation to the project, the contribution of each team were aspects evaluated positively by partners their quarterly reports and at the end of the project. It is certain that the successful completion of the project was the direct result of the professionalism and the commitment of the partnership.

Taking all these aspects in account, we can conclude that the partnership performed efficiently and that there are premises to take further steps for renewed collaboration.

Pools-2 has proved that a collaborative and a successfully-managed LLP project can achieve its original objectives within the lifetime and overcome difficulties and variations from initial work-plan with adequate solutions and additional results and impact.

The external evaluators would like to commend all of the partners for their hard work. They will not be listed individually here for fear of an omission, but all have dedicated themselves throughout the project and also are clearly committed to continuing successes after the initial eligibility period.

Recommendations

Given the success of the Transfer of Innovation of POOLS-2, the demonstrated demand for

the project's core results and the continuous need for Less Widely Used Languages learning

resources for teachers, support for using ICT and new Internet-based media and platform to

create pedagogically-sound and attractive lessons, the lack of resources for language teachers in

vocational sectors, the external evaluators suggest the following:

1. Continue to update the Pools-2 website and the common POOLS Internet platform and

to support further the free e-learning resources as an effective promotion tool for reaching new

users and the overall impact and ensure the sustainability of the project's results.

2. Explore European funding opportunities to transfer the course's results and the

innovative resources in other VET domains and / or countries.

September 2011

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20