



Network for the decentralised and centralised dissemination of the results and outcomes of the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages III (TNP3)
(Socrates-Erasmus Programme 2006-2007)



PRESS RELEASE

Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst, Campus Vlekhö-Brussel
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EUROPEAN DISSEMINATION CONFERENCE Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages (Socrates-Erasmus Programme)

Which languages and which language-related and intercultural skills and competences are required of higher education graduates – language specialists and non-specialists – on the European and international labour markets? What structures for consultation and collaboration between higher education institutions and employers – small and medium-sized enterprises, international corporations, companies in the language industry – should be put in place, so that universities can adjust their programmes to changing and emerging needs and employers gain a better understanding of current and future trends?

These questions were at the heart of a three-year EU higher education cooperation project, in which some 90 institutions and organisations from across Europe participated (2003-2006). Experts surveyed provision and needs in the participating countries, and identified and described Europe-wide trends. They conducted a Europe-wide on-line consultation among employers, graduates, and non-university educational stakeholders, and they staged two major European conferences, at which they sat down with employers to discuss their findings and recommendations.

The aims and activities of the project were firmly anchored in the Bologna process, with its emphasis on learning outcomes relevant to the sustainable employability of graduates.

What became clear during the course of the project was that – due to mobility and migration – the multilingual challenge Europe is confronted with has assumed a completely new dimension. Practically all EU Member States have become multilingual and multicultural societies. Moreover, advances in ICT have changed the modes of communication beyond recognition. These developments have a direct impact on job profiles and professional qualifications, as well as on communication needs in the public and private sectors.

The findings and recommendations of the three-year project are currently the subject of a one-year dissemination project. At four regional conferences – in Aarhus (Denmark), Braga (Portugal), Southampton (United Kingdom), and Warsaw (Poland) – project outcomes were presented to and discussed with higher education experts, employer representatives, and people from the other sectors of education. At the European Conference, the results of the original project and the outcomes of the regional conferences will be discussed by three panels made up of representatives of European academic, employer and trades union organisations and European networks as well as of industry.

The Conference will be opened by Mr Ján Figel', Member of the European Commission responsible for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, and closed by Mr Leonard Orban, Member of the European Commission responsible for Multilingualism.

