

Country overview

ON THE APPLICATION OF LESS WIDELY USED AND TAUGHT LANGUAGES

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NETWORK

**FOR SOCIAL AND MARKET INCLUSION
THROUGH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

on the application of Less widely used and taught languages

GREECE



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The present document has been developed by the consortium of the **Network for Social and Market Inclusion through Language Education (SMILE)**.

This is an independent report. It does not represent a political document neither at European nor at national level. SMILE is a network that works on provisional level, looking directly into practices in order to overcome economic and social difficulties within the European Union through promotion of successful models for language learning.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present the up-to-date findings of the SMILE network regarding opportunities for learning and promotion of less widely used and taught languages (LWUTLs) in Greece. The **Network for Social and Market Inclusion through Language Education (SMILE)** aims to gather organizations from educational, labour and social sectors and explore the opportunities for implementation and dissemination of LWUTLs in order to increase language competences and skills and to boost competitiveness, enhance employability and reinforce social inclusion.

The SMILE network aims to support the European and national language policies through researching, identifying and spreading the successful results of good practices for promoting linguistic diversity with particular focus on the learning of LWUTLs. Accordingly, the present Country Overview is based on a selection of good practices and methodologies for promotion of linguistic diversity and LWUTLs with focus on their practical application in different sectors. The primary goal, on one hand, is to create cooperation opportunities between the fields of language education, training and work and thus enhance competitiveness and employability, and on the other, to strengthen social inclusion of various disadvantaged groups (migrants, people with disabilities, senior citizens, etc.).

This document provides an overview of the main European policies in the field of language learning and promotion of linguistic diversity as well as it outlines the Greek national language policies and practices both in formal and non-formal education. Further on, the Country Overview clarifies what is understood under the term “less widely used and taught languages”, as defined by the SMILE network, and states what languages are covered by the good practices and for what purposes.

The following sections focus on the collection of good practices, their practical application in eight sectors identified as a user-friendly environment in Greece as well as successful methodologies and approaches for learning and promotion of LWUTLs. The collection is based on language projects and initiatives, which have developed innovative language learning methods suitable as motivation boosters and resources both for labour market and social inclusion.

The last chapter of the document draws conclusions on the opportunities and challenges for promotion of LWUTL’s and their importance for the economic, social and cultural spheres of Europe’s life.

The Country Overview for Greece has been jointly developed by three Greek organizations working in different educational and economic sectors and providing lifelong learning opportunities for various groups of beneficiaries. For the purposes of project implementation, each organization has identified specific sectors and focused on target groups from its field of expertise and selected good practices providing innovative methods for promotion and learning of LWUTLs in situational contexts to non-traditional language learners from the identified sectors.

2. European language policies for labour market and social inclusion

The SMILE partnership has performed an analysis on several key documents published by the EU institutions and legislative bodies on the priority areas and targets for language learning and promotion on European level, with specific attention paid to the importance of languages for labour market and social inclusion.

The **Europe 2020 strategy** sets EU's growth targets for turning the Union into a “*smart, sustainable and inclusive economy*” by the year 2020 and helping the Member States deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. For achieving those targets the EU has set five objectives focused on concrete actions to be undertaken at European and national levels in the areas of employment, research and development, education, climate change and energy sustainability and fighting poverty and social exclusion.

Detailed information on Europe 2020 can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

A strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (**'ET 2020'**), published by the Council of the European Union in 2009, focuses on four common objectives to address challenges in education and training by 2020, and namely:

- Making lifelong learning and **mobility** a reality;
- Improving the **quality and efficiency** of education and training;
- Promoting **equity, social cohesion and active citizenship**;
- Enhancing **creativity and innovation**, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

The full text of the document is available in the official EU languages at [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01))

In terms of language learning, the new **Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020)** upgrades the Barcelona objective of “mother tongue plus two foreign languages” and places an explicit accent on the importance of the key competences and skills for the needs of the labour market. The Erasmus+ language objectives cover:

- improve the level of key competences and skills, with regard to their relevance for the labour market, in particular through increased opportunities for learning mobility
- improve the teaching and learning of languages and promote linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness
- develop basic and transversal skills, including multilingualism, using innovative and learner-centred pedagogical approaches and developing appropriate assessment and certification methods

Overview of the Erasmus+ programme can be found at https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en

The importance of languages for the labour market is further stressed in a Communication from the European Commission published in 2012 as a **Commission Staff Working Document** dealing with *Language competences for employability, mobility and growth*. According to the conclusions from the document, language competences have to foster the mobility of workers and students, improve the employability of the European workforce, be useful in real life and match labour market needs. In this respect language learning is set to support employability, mobility and growth as well as be based on the specific needs of the country and draw on best practice.

More information on:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012SC0372&from=EN>

In a document published in 2011 the **Council of the European Union** draws conclusions on language competences to enhance mobility and addresses, among others, the following recommendations to the European Commission and the Member States:

- Support mobility for language learning
- Exchange experience and best practice for language promotion for acquisition of new skills
- Promote specific language content for professional purposes (particularly in VET and HE)
- Enhance the recognition and validation of language competences acquired through non-formal and informal education
- Provide a link between VET qualifications that include language skills and the CEFR
- Provide support via EU programmes
- Support the development of teaching and learning materials for LWUTLs

The Council recognises the following priority areas for language learning and promotion:

- Learning mobility for enhancing employability, intercultural awareness, creativity and personal development
- Good command of foreign languages as a key competence for labour market and social cohesion
- Innovative methodologies for enhancing employability and mobility of workers
- Teacher training (in particular in VET)
- Broader choice of languages, including LWUTLs and languages of neighbouring countries
- Language competences of disadvantaged groups for better social inclusion and future professional development (especially children)
- Language teaching and learning for specific purposes
- Language learning throughout life, including senior citizens

The full text of the document is available at

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/126373.pdf

The general conclusions on the analysed documents can state that the importance of language competences and skills for the labour market is constantly increasing and more efforts should be put into meeting the requirements of this market by making language learning more learner-focused, practically oriented and more applicable in professional contexts. The demand and offer of language skills should therefore focus on employment-related language learning taking into consideration the fact that employers need language competences not only in mainstream languages (such as English, German, Spanish, etc.), but also in less widely taught languages needed for niche markets.

Based on the analysed documents, the SMILE network has identified the following priority areas for promotion of LWUTLs:

- Linguistic and cultural diversity
- Neighbouring languages / Cross-border regions
- Job-specific languages
- Trade partners languages
- Mobility (for study or for work)

In this line, LWUTLs face both challenges and opportunities for increasing their role as important players in the European linguistic, cultural and socio-economic life and they should be put in the context of competitiveness, market demand, social and cultural importance.

3. Less widely used and taught languages in Europe

(Definition adopted by the smile network)

For the purposes of project implementation, the SMILE partnership discussed and agreed on a common understanding of the term “less widely used and taught languages” (LWUTLs) and which languages can be included in this definition in regard to identifying opportunities and good practices for their promotion. No official and concrete definition for LWUTLs could be found in any of the analysed official EU documents. The adopted definition takes into consideration the goals of the SMILE network and its practical application with the target groups and does not represent an official statement for the meaning of LWUTLs.

Following the partner discussions on opportunities and problematic areas for promotion of LWUTLs, the following definition of LWUTLs is understood: “national, strategic, regional or minority languages” which can be addressed under the following conditions:

- Priority is given to the official EU languages, i.e. the major part of the selected good practices are focused on them.
 - The European Union has 24 official languages. They are Bulgarian, French, Maltese, Croatian, German, Polish, Czech, Greek, Portuguese, Danish, Hungarian, Romanian, Dutch, Irish, Slovak, English, Italian, Slovene, Estonian, Latvian, Spanish, Finnish, Lithuanian, Swedish.
 - The mainstream languages (English, German, French, Italian and Spanish) are excluded unless they provide an added value and transferability potential of good practices and methods applicable to LWUTLs. All other official languages are considered LWUTLs (within Europe).
- Regional and minority languages (including cross-border languages), such as for example Catalan in Spain and in very specific cases Italian in Switzerland, can be included when relevant to the project objectives (labour market and social inclusion) and target groups needs.
- Languages of strategic partners of the EU or with strategic importance for the social and economic development of the Union, such as for example Chinese, Russian, Arabic, etc.

Based on this definition the SMILE partners performed a research on good practices for promotion and learning of LWUTLs and their accommodation in various sectors identified as a language-friendly environment in each of the partner countries.

4. National language policies in Greece

The national policies and practices in terms of language learning and foreign language offered both in formal and non-formal education are determined by a number of political, economic, social, cultural and geographical factors. On one hand, language policy is influenced by the general educational policies and priorities, and on the other, by social aims such as cohesion, inclusion, tolerance and solidarity.

The official language of Greece is Greek. The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages has not been signed and ratified by Greece. There is no official language policy document in Greece. However, the National policy for language learning in Greece is expressed through the Constitution and the relevant legislation. The Greek educational system is highly centralized. The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Pedagogical Institute are responsible for issues regarding both the administration and the policy of the educational system, such as the curriculum, the school timetable and distribution of classes, the material and textbooks and the employment of teachers. The Primary and Secondary Education Directorates at regional level, the Offices at prefectural level and the Direction of Diaspora & Cross-cultural Education support the functionality of the educational system.

At national level the regional/ minority languages spoken are Turkish (in north-east region of the country, Thrace), Gipsy dialects, Romanian dialect (Vlachika), Slavomacedonian, Albanian dialect (Arvanitika) and Jewish dialect (Latino). However, only Turkish and Romanian are officially recognized in Greece. Namely, the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) recognizes a special regime for education in the official Turkish language, and the Convention of Bucharest (1913) recognizes a special regime for education in Romanian language, but the latter is inactive at present.

The language education (both formal and non-formal) is focused on the most popular EU languages, such as English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. Even though other languages are also present in non – formal education, their representation is low and they depend mainly on the personal and professional motivation of learners.

The foreign language learning as a part of the formal educational system in Greece focuses on the following foreign languages taught in schools: English, French, and German. According to the definition of LWUTL's given by the SMILE network, Greek is considered as such a language. As far as the teaching of Greek as a foreign/ second language is concerned, there is a prevision in national legislation for intercultural education and Greek language education of expatriated Greeks (who live abroad), repatriated Greeks, foreign immigrants and Roma. Indicatively the following legislation is mentioned:

- Presidential Decree 435/ 1984– Establishment / Operation of schools for expatriated Greek children
- Law 1865/1989 – Establishment / Operation of Schools for Repatriates (former expatriates) in Greece
- Law 2413/1996 – The Greek Education Abroad, Cross cultural education and other provisions
- Law 2817/2000 – Issues regarding Greek Education abroad and minority education
- Law 4027/2011 – Greek Language Education abroad and other provisions

The main target of the above mentioned legislation is the organization and operation of primary, secondary and high schools in order to address the educational, cultural and linguistic needs, principally of the Greek Muslim minority, mainly concentrated in the north-east of the country, and to a lesser degree of the Roma population. Moreover, the legislation addresses the educational, cultural, and linguistic needs of the new arrivals; in short, of the repatriates and their descendants, and of the foreign nationals.

The introduction of non-Greek speakers into national educational system is carried out in cross-cultural schools. In cross-cultural schools, a relevant number of student body are repatriated and/ or foreign students and the standard curriculum is adapted to meet the specific educational, social, cultural needs of them. The educators receive special training and their selection is based on cross-cultural education and teaching Greek as second/foreign language. There are 26 cross – cultural groups which operate since 1996 until today.

Non-formal language education is strongly present in Greece. English is widely taught (both in formal and non formal context) and a large percentage, especially of young people, has an adequate knowledge of this language. The knowledge of a second language (usually French or German) is also common in Greece, and the formal language education has contributed a lot to this direction. It has to be mentioned that formal language education is often supported by non-formal methods, such as private lessons or teaching to small groups. Moreover, non-formal foreign language learning is offered for people willing to improve their language skills, to pass different exams for language certificates or university admission abroad.

One could identify, two general, wide target groups that are interested in learning Greek: a) non Greek speakers who live in Greece (repatriated Greeks, foreign immigrants, Roma, Turkish language minority) and b) non Greek speakers who live abroad (expatriated Greeks & all others interested in Greek Language). Those target groups learn Greek mainly in order to get the Certificate of Attainment in Greece, to integrate into the Greek educational system and/or because of special interest and love of Greece and its culture.

To sum up, there is no wide interest in learning LWUTL's (as defined within SMILE network) in Greece. The interest in language learning in Greece is focused on the most popular EU languages, such as English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. The interest in learning the Greek language refers to Greek citizens (repatriated, expatriated & lingual minorities), immigrants and foreign people with special interest. The Greek educational system addresses the educational, linguistic and cultural needs of the foreign students as well as of the Greek Muslim and Roma minorities.

5. GOOD PRACTICES

The SMILE partnership performed a research on successful language projects and initiatives providing innovative methods for promotion and learning of LWUTLs in situational contexts and created a database of good practices covering 34 countries. The selection of good practices was based on a set of implementation-related and content-related criteria addressing the needs of the identified sectors for accommodation of LWUTLs and the current European and national policies in the field of language learning, and namely:

- Social inclusion through Language Education
- Labour Market inclusion through Language Education
- Multilingualism
- Less widely used and taught languages
- Non-traditional methodologies for language teaching and learning
- Methodologies for language learning in situational context
- Language learning for specific purposes
- New teaching approaches for non-traditional language learners
- Language products and materials for self-study purposes
- ICT-based language learning materials
- Adaptability and transferability of methodologies for various target groups
- Innovative teacher training methodologies
- Mobility for language learning
- Recognition of language skills acquired through non-formal and informal education
- Application of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)
- Linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue
- Good practices for using languages at the work place

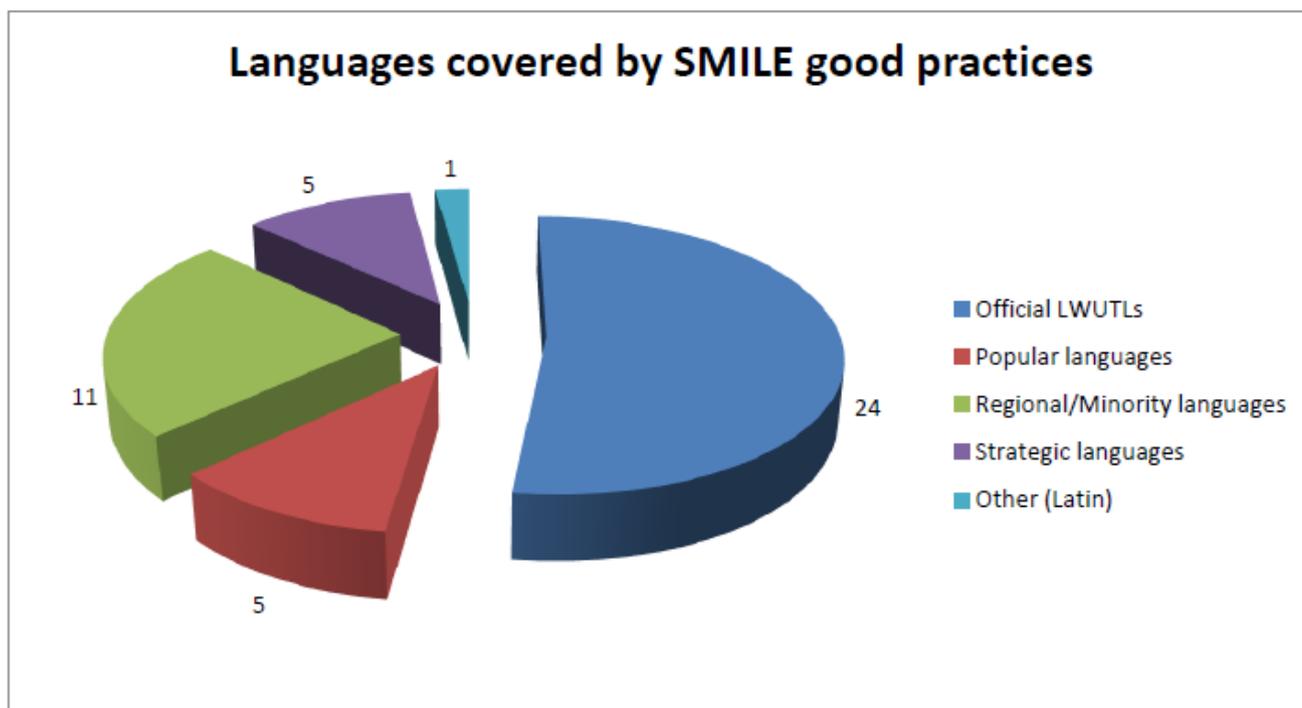
The performed research has the aim to create links between the worlds of education, training and work and identify opportunities for accommodating LWUTLs in friendly language-learning environments. The collection of good practices covers a wide variety of economic, educational and social sectors and provides working models for application of methodologies and products in practical settings. The good practices can have direct impact on a few groups of stakeholders:

- **Organizations active in the field of labour markets** –trade unions, employers associations, vocational training and education providers, prequalification providers, etc. which can become familiar with alternative language-learning methods and multilingual products for increasing competences, competitiveness and employment in various sectors and thus improve their expertise and services to people in search of better realization on the labour market.
- **Organizations from specific economic sectors** (construction, tourism, renewable energy, environment, etc.) – They can benefit from non-traditional methods and products for situational language learning and promotion in the specific context of their field of expertise and interest. This will enhance the quality of the offered services and the qualification of the providers.
- **Organizations providing learning opportunities for people at risk of social exclusion** (migrants, people with disabilities, senior citizens, etc.) – Disadvantaged people are supported in their better integration in the society and provided with motivation for development of qualities corresponding to the requirements of the labour market

- **Organizations providing formal and non-formal language education opportunities** – schools, universities, language centres, adult education providers, vocational language education and training, wide public, etc. which are encouraged to apply the identified methodologies for situational learning of LWUTLs with their learners. Good practices providing such methodologies are available for all 4 educational sectors – school education, higher education, adult education, vocational training and education.

Currently, the database includes over 300 good practices from 34 countries and it is available on the project website www.smile-network.eu through a user-friendly search engine. The users can sort out their search preferences and search for good practices by criteria, target languages, sectors, country, key words, etc. Each practice provides information on the selected initiative, target groups and sectors concerned, objectives, methodology used, outcomes, benefits for the target groups, awards received as well as potential transferability potential.

The collection of good practices covers 46 languages which can be clustered into the following categories:

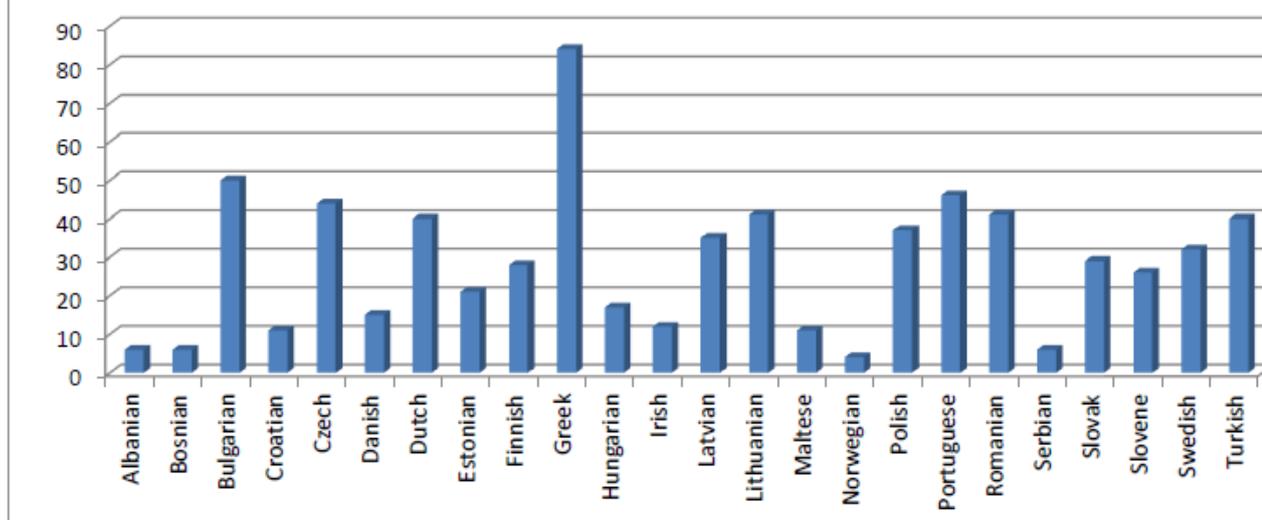


Below is a graphic representation of the separate languages included in the collection of good practices by categories and the number of practices available for each language:

- **Less widely used and taught languages (LWUTLs):**

The major part of the database deals with LWUTLs which represent official state languages within Europe, excluding the five mainstream languages – English, German, French, Spanish and Italian.

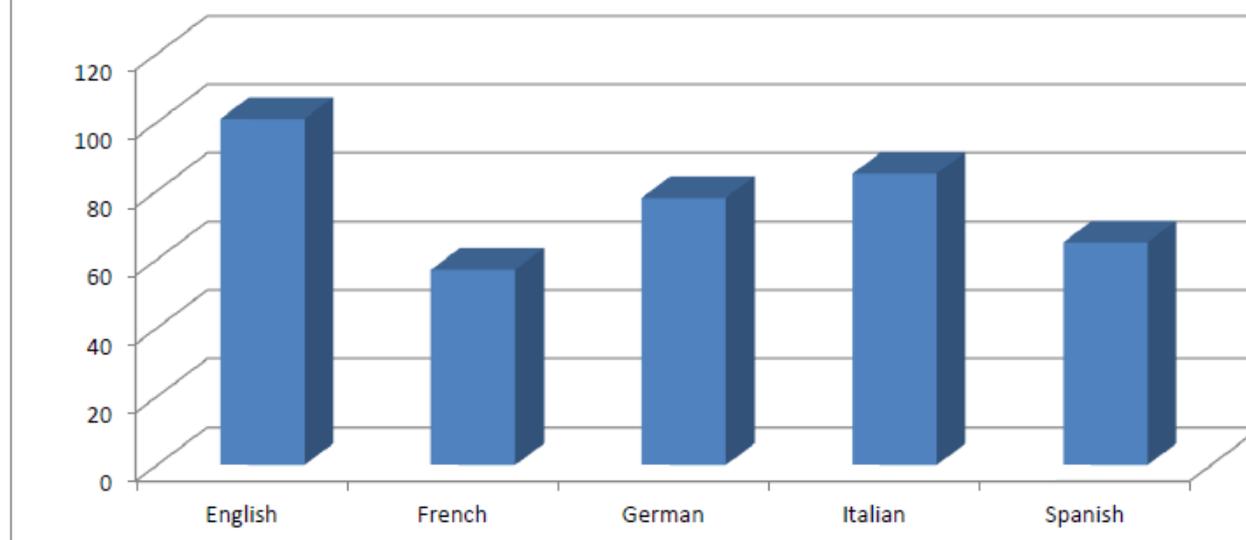
Official LWUTLs in SMILE good practices



➤ Popular languages:

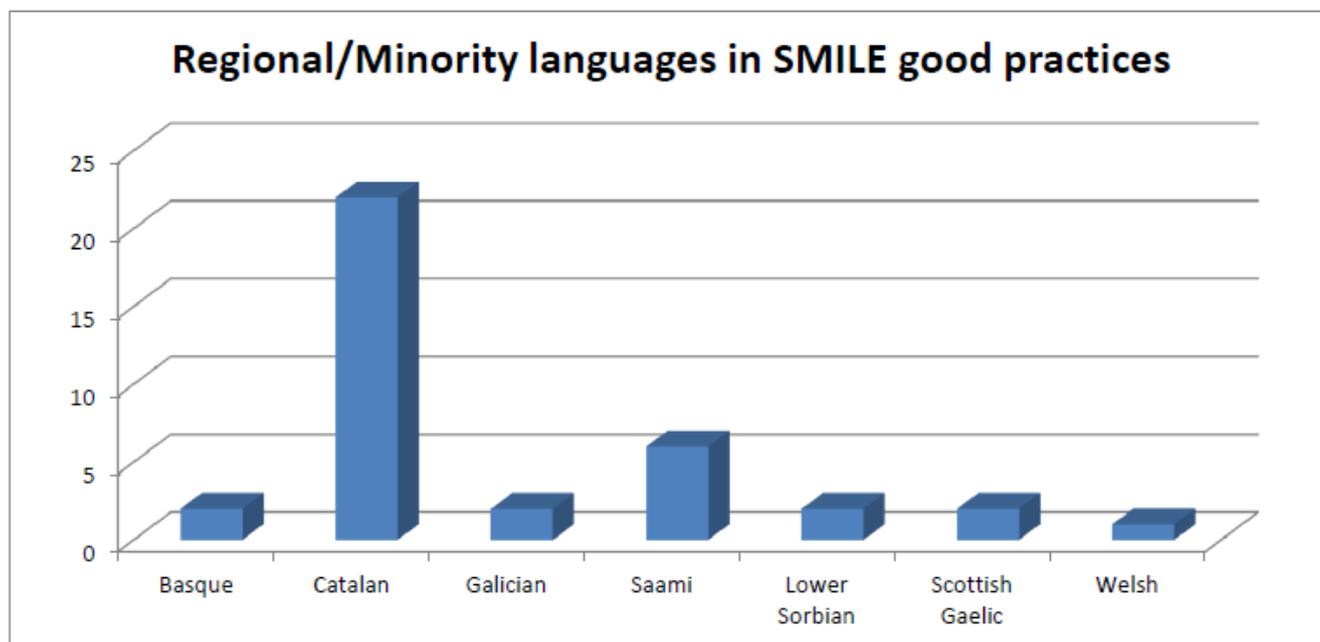
The “popular” languages are included as part of good practices promoting LWUTLs or providing specific transferability potential which could be beneficial to the identified sectors and target groups.

Popular languages in SMILE good practices



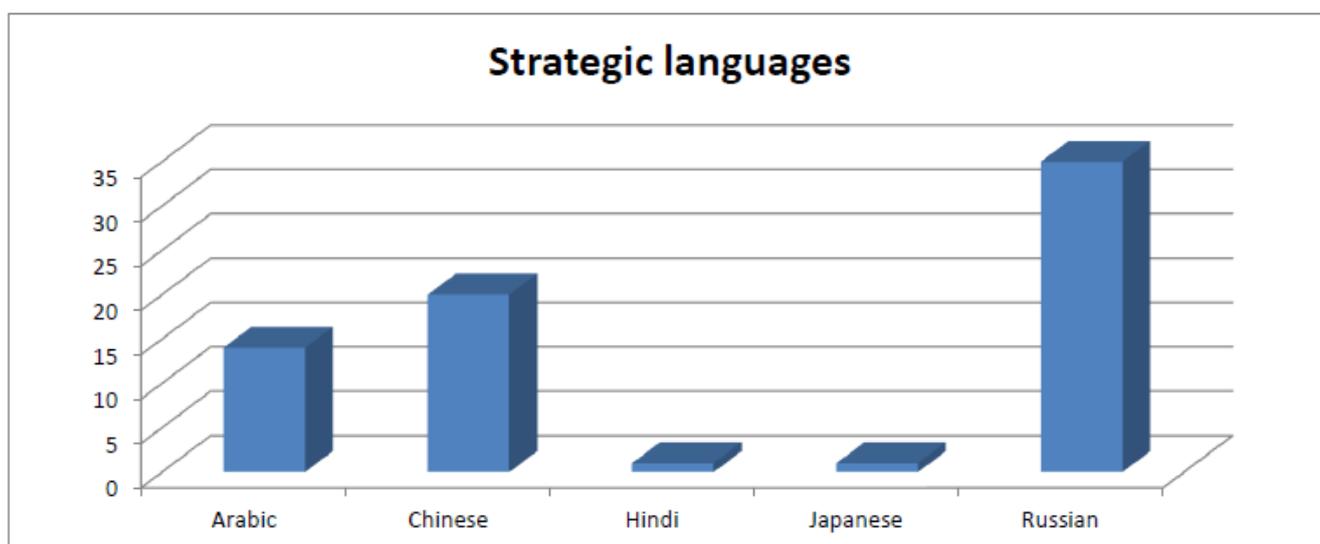
➤ **Regional and minority languages:**

Regional and minority languages (including cross-border languages), such as for example Catalan in Spain, are included when relevant to the project objectives (labour market and social inclusion) and the target groups' needs.



➤ **Strategic languages:**

The strategic languages cover the languages of strategic partners of the European Union or such with strategic importance for the social and economic development of the Union, such as for example Chinese, Russian, Arabic, etc.



6. Identified sectors in Greece

The SMILE network has identified sectors, which can benefit from the application of non-traditional language-learning approaches focused on LWUTLs, and has established channels for involving the respective stakeholders. Focus is put on creating opportunities for using language learning and promotion as means of enhancing competitiveness, employability and social inclusion in different spheres through exploring and addressing specific linguistic needs.

The main sectors for implementation of LWUTLs covered during the selection process in Greece, among others, include:

- Labor markets
- Repatriated and Migrants
- University for foreign students
- Adult education (formal – non formal)
- Disadvantaged people
- Business and trade
- Tourism

The three Greek partners in the SMILE network focused their research activities on the above mentioned sectors, analyzed the sector demand for LWUTLs and identified effective strategies for accommodating LWUTLs in both formal and non-formal language education. The next project steps will be directed towards spreading innovative methodologies from the selected good practices among target groups' representatives in Greece. This is to be achieved through close cooperation with relevant stakeholders from the respective sectors, national and transnational events promoting the network findings, workshops, links with other national and European networks, projects and initiatives, promotion activities, etc.

The chosen sectors in Greece represent important environments for promoting opportunities, raising interest and motivation for language learning. They could contribute towards reducing unemployment, finding new and better job opportunities and increasing competitiveness. At the same time, in the recent years the migration flows towards Greece has been intensified and as a result there is an additional pressure of implementing effective measures for the integration of immigrants into society.

The majority of selected good practices address at the same time more than one priority areas and they can provide models for efficient cross-sectorial collaborations, creating a link between language education, labour market and social inclusion. The extracted language learning models and approaches can be applied in different sectors. The provided methodologies can pose as fresh ideas for improving the quality, enhancing the language learning in practical settings and reflecting specific needs of various sectors.

The database provides good practices addressing the identified sectors and originating both from Greece and European countries. This is a good precondition for extracting successful models from other countries as well as exchange of experience between stakeholders in relevant sectors.

Below is a description of the main sectors chosen from Greece for implementation of LWUTLs and the target groups who can benefit from the collection of good practices:

6.1. Labor market

The demand for foreign languages and communication skills is steadily rising in European labor market. At the same time unemployment rises in Greece, and labor market becomes a crucial sector in Greek community. People are trying to gain deeper and more specialized knowledge in order to find a job or to become irreplaceable in their working environment. Additionally, employees, who work abroad or search for a new job in another country, very often do not know enough about the culture of the target country and their language command is not sufficient. Hence, the mobility of workers creates the need for their vocational accompanied by cultural training in order to update their skills and adjust them to the labor market. Towards this direction, there is an incremental interest in language learning.

The methods used to address the language learning needs in labor market sector should refer to professional contexts and also they should be learner-focused and practically oriented. Another important factor in this sector is developing intercultural competence through language learning, as the mobility at work, exchange and work placement abroad rises.

Language learning in the context of labor market sector refers to a wide variety of target groups, such as

- Adult learners,
- Vocational teachers/trainers
- Educational Institutions
- Continuous education centers.

Example: Good practice for labor market



Agricultural Alliance for Competence and Skills based Training – ACT project contributes to reduce the mismatch between new jobs and existing skills. It refers to labor markets with focus on the agricultural sector and aims to improve the agricultural curriculum design and delivery by innovative vocational education and training services and broad dissemination throughout Europe. ACT expects to increase the number of upskilled employees and aims at providing innovative instruments and modulised trainings. <http://www.act-now.eu/>

6.2. Repatriated and immigrants

The last two decades, the large rate of immigration in Greece has significantly, and irreversibly, altered the social, cultural and economic characteristics of the population residing within Greece. Faced with increasing and changing diversity as a result of immigration, Greek society and the state have been called to respond, adapt and formulate adequate policies through which to manage these transformations. The education sector is probably one of the most sensitive and politically charged areas because of its determining role in identity formation, national cohesion and national consciousness. It is equally one of the most important sectors in socio-economic terms since it determines access to the job market, personal and economic development. Apart from immigrants, there are also the repatriated Greeks, namely Greeks who have lived abroad and return to their country of origin with their descendants, who most of them barely speak or do not speak at all the national language. It could be argued that this sector can exploit and benefit the most out of dissemination of best practices (methodologies and products) for language learning.

The SMILE network has identified good practices providing successful methodologies and outcomes for language learning and better social integration of migrants that can be beneficial to many target groups, among which the following ones:

- Migrants students and trainees,
- Vocational teachers and trainers
- Workplace instructors
- Foreign language speakers in Greece.

Example: Good practice for Repatriated & immigrant integration



The Migrant laNGuage and social intEgration (Mingle) project aims at enhancing quality of life and facilitating integration of migrant workers to local society, by improving their access to language training courses and other guidance and counseling material, helping them become active members of the hosting society. This is achieved by developing a web-based, easy-to-use Distance Learning Application and the respective educational content for teaching the language of the receiving country to the migrants. <http://mingle.exus.co.uk>

6.3. University for foreign students

National governments are responsible for their education and training systems and individual universities organise their own curricula. However, the challenges facing higher education are similar across the EU and there are clear advantages in working together. Higher education and its links with research and innovation plays a crucial role in individual and societal development and in providing the highly skilled human capital and the articulate citizens that Europe needs to create jobs, economic growth, and prosperity. Higher education institutions are crucial partners in delivering the European Union's strategy to drive forward and maintain growth. The Europe 2020 strategy has set a target that by 2020 40% of young Europeans have a higher education qualification.

The target groups, which can mostly take advantage of the methodologies developed under this sector, are:

- University students
- Learners at language institutes
- Comenius / Grundtvig in-training seminars participants

Example: University for foreign students

International University Programs are offered in Greece mainly by Private Universities. The great majority of the Higher Educational Institutions of this category are based in Athens or in Thessaloniki. You can choose among short training courses, e-learning courses, or full bachelor's courses or master's degree programs, taught either in English or in Greek.

Because Greece belongs to Schengen, if a foreign student has a Schengen country passport has automatically the right to stay in Greece. For more information or for opportunities for scholarships you can visit the websites of:

- Ministry of Education and Religion affairs: <http://www.minedu.gov.gr/>
- Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation: <http://www.onassis.gr/>

- www.studyinggreece.gr

6.4. Adult education (formal – non formal)

Formal and Non Formal Adult Education

In the smaller EU countries the last years many Multinational Companies have established local branches. The staff of such companies usually belongs to two categories. In the first category belongs the Managerial team who usually speak at least 2 of the main languages. Additionally they must learn the local language at least at basic level. In the second category belongs the staff who has local nationality, speaks the language of the country, but they must learn to speak and to write at least in English.

For both groups there is a need to get language courses. In Greece there are several schools, public or private, offering Greek lessons. Similar language training activities have been developed in Slovak too.

For more information about Greek lessons you can visit the websites:

- www.dgelearn.com
- www.lexis.edu.gr
- en.greekcourses.uoa.gr
- www.hcc.gr

Example: Good practice for adult education



English for Training and Mobility proposed a wide range of Language Teaching Programs for different professions in two at least LWUTS. www.eftam.com

6.5. Disadvantaged people

The number of people from a difficult social background who are without any training or who are only able with difficulty to find a job in their first profession is constantly increasing. Adult education is intended to provide these individuals with an opportunity to complete courses of further education and thus improve their qualifications.

Experience and studies from different parts of Europe show that adult education and lifelong learning offerings are predominantly taken up by individuals who already have a certain amount of training. The socially disadvantaged in particular are seldom represented among the trainees. Every person and every institution engaged in adult education and lifelong learning is responsible for reaching learners who are in particular need of them and adjusting their offerings to meet their needs. Politicians, stakeholders and other individuals in positions of responsibility for education should take this situation into account and contribute to overcoming unequal access to lifelong learning.

The contribution of the **European Social Fund in Greece**, through the last and previous community packages, was essential and supported people with a difficult social background or that are experiencing social disadvantage to have access to education and Lifelong Learning programmes.

Example: Good practice for disadvantage people



The project E.T.O.S. – Effective Training for the Outsiders of the Society develops a training model that will be performed on the job and not in classrooms through practical, interrelations activities thanks to entrepreneurs (small, sole proprietorship) becoming adult trainers and supported by experienced tutors. The project also develop a new EU skills certification based on an innovative evaluation model in line with ECVET system requirements, awarded at the end of the training path. <http://www.etosproject.eu/>

6.6. Business and trade

In Greece, a new economy is in the making. In parallel, investment opportunities are abundant and attractive, in a wide variety of sectors. Greece's massive reform efforts are opening new investment frontiers that reward both first movers and established players.

The next decade is set to see sustained growth in tourism, ICT, energy, environmental sciences, food, beverage and agriculture, logistics, and life sciences. Greece's exceptional human capital, advanced infrastructure, geostrategic position, and potential for economic expansion are attracting investor interest from throughout the world. And Greece's newly designed investment framework supports the creation of new businesses, new synergies, and new partnerships.

An outward looking economy that is focused on long-term growth means that investors can look forward to highly favourable returns. As a member of the European Union and the Eurozone, Greece continues to be the economic hub of Southeast Europe, an ideal gateway to the Middle East, Western Europe, and North Africa, and an emerging logistics hub for the entire region.

The Greek government has adopted a proactive role in charting a determined course for Greece that is friendly to investment, promotes growth, and welcomes new business.

Example: Good practice for business and trade



The MARINA project aims:

- 1) To make a useful addition to the training of coastal tourism workers.
- 2) To form strategic networks, including employers, unions and providers of learning opportunities, which will advise, test, disseminate and mainstream the project results.
- 3) To increase social competence.
- 4) To develop the skills of adults in the labour market. <http://www.marina-project.com/index.html>

6.7. Tourism

Tourism is a fast growing sector in the Greek economy. In the last year visitors of Greece, are citizens not only from EU countries, US, Canada, Australia but also from other countries with languages, which belong to the Less Widely Used and Taught.

For the above reason there is a necessity for the Greek educational and training system to include training programs for those languages in the non-formal language programs of private institutions and/or cultural organizations aiming to teach staff involved into tourism activities.

SMILE Project will provide to them the necessary methodology in order to acquire the best training.

Example: Good practice for tourism



English for Training and Mobility proposed a wide range of Language Teaching Programs for different professions including Tourism Sector in two at least LWUTS. www.eftam.com

7. Methodologies for learning and promotion of LWUTLs

The SMILE network has identified good practices, which have developed or are developing innovative non-traditional products and methods for promotion and learning of LWUTLs in situational contexts related to labor markets and social inclusion. The database represents a variety of sectors suitable for implementation LWUTLs where different methodologies are useful for different purposes.

In the context of LWUTLs the key importance factor is set on the level of learners' motivation as a result of personal characteristics and specific needs. Research suggests that motivation may influence language-learning outcomes more than language aptitude. In this respect LWUTLs should be brought to practical contexts and motivation should arise from the personal needs and benefits of learners. It is understood that in order to overcome the challenges of learning LWUTLs in terms of motivation, they should be put in a less formal and friendlier learning environment, especially if presented with informal learning opportunities and placed in a practical setting. Focus should be put on creating a learning-friendly environment, familiar and meaningful context of language materials, multi-sensory activities and language learning materials and practical, "hands-on" application of the learned material.

Apart from a number of useful traditional resources developed in LWUTLs, like conversational sets, thematic phrase books and dictionaries, survival kits, etc., the collection of good practices under SMILE includes also more non-traditional methodologies for language learning and promotion which address the needs of the above-described sectors. They can be grouped as follows:

7.1. Language Learning through on line communication

On line resources enhance the practical implementation of innovative methods that contribute to language learning. Learning through on line communication is based on the idea that language learning is happening as a result of communication (communicative approach to language learning) and online social interaction with others. In other words, this method is based on the formation of on line communities and/ or cities where learners interact and communicate with each other and with tutors. There is emphasis on real communication through the use of real tasks in a variety of language exercises.

Learning material often includes interactive activities, visual representations and multimedia means (for example audio and video files) in on line environment of learning communities that help participants to develop all four skills of language learning (speaking-listening-reading-writing). Moreover, in this way learners acquire a complete and also visual cultural context for language learning. Participants in on line learning communities are introduced into real world situations and they interact and communicate with other learners and tutors. On line learning through communication enhances online socialization and enculturation and constitute an interesting, motivating and in many cases playful practice. Moreover, learners can proceed at their own pace, as they can access on line content anytime and from anywhere.

Example: Good practice for online communities – Cities



The **Hellas Alive** © developed an on line multi – purpose Workspace, the Virtual City, and virtual 'playspaces'. Participants are urged to meet, interact socially and collaborate with tutors and other learners using different tools such as sound messages, chat, and written announcements. Authentic Greek is presented in context through videos and other media. There is also a Communication Bar for feedback and student collaboration.

The program also includes Podcast Learning. 80 podcasts can be downloaded to mp3, CD & pdf form.

www.hellasalive.gr

7.2. Learning on the Field (Working Place)

For the majority of LWUTLs is not very easy and cost a lot to develop educational and training material from the beginning because of the small number of people who would like to be involved in traditional learning procedures.

On the other hand learning one of the LWUTL's is not the first choice for the great majority of people and also they don't want to spend a lot of time in learning activities. For the above reasons it could be much easier if we could combine "Basic theoretical introduction" with "Learning on the place of work".

Learning a language following this methodology you may get at the same time the necessary theoretical background, the speaking experience for everyday communication and the understanding for specific terminology which is necessary for the profession of the learners.

Example: good practice for learning on the field

In Greece we have started recently working on this methodology for the project MISEEBE, between Greece and Romania. The site of the project will be ready in the next three months. The teaching and learning procedures will be developed until September 2015 and will be presented in one of the next SMILE project meetings.

8. Conclusions

The performed analysis on key documents dealing with current European policies and strategies in the field of language learning and promotion reveals that EU's priorities for the coming years are set on implementing legislative and practical measures for increasing employment, productivity and social cohesion within all Member States. In this respect, efforts should be put towards meeting the requirements of the labor market by making language learning more learner-focused, practically oriented and more applicable in professional contexts. The demand and offer of language skills should therefore focus on employment-related language learning taking into consideration the fact that employers need language competences not only in mainstream languages (such as English, German, Spanish, etc.), but also in less widely taught languages needed for niche markets. Importance is placed also on language learning of various disadvantaged groups in order to support their better social inclusion and future professional development.

The SMILE network adopted a definition of the term "less widely used and taught languages" (LWUTLs) and focused its work on identifying successful models and approaches for promotion and learning of those languages in practical settings. The definition distinguishes three groups of languages relevant for achieving the network goals for reinforcing labour market and social inclusion, and namely – official LWUTLs, regional and minority languages, and languages of strategic partners of the EU. The mainstream languages (English, German, French, Spanish and Italian) are included given that they provide an added value and certain transferability potential.

The discussed Greek national policies and practices in terms of language learning suggest that language policy in Greece is influenced by the general educational policies and priorities as well as by social aims such as cohesion, inclusion, tolerance and solidarity. The language offer in both formal and non-formal language education in Greece puts the focus on the popular EU languages English, French and German. Even though rarer languages are also present in the educational system, their representation is low and dependant mainly on the personal and professional motivation of learners.

The performed analysis on European and national language policies was used as a basis for the selection of good practices providing opportunities for accommodation of LWUTLs in friendly language-learning environments and supporting labour market and social inclusion. The developed collection of good practices provides successful and innovative methods for promotion and learning of LWUTLs in situational contexts to non-traditional language learners (disadvantaged people, unemployed or people searching for prequalification, sectorial organisations, VET providers, etc.). So far the database includes more than 300 good practices from 34 countries focused on 46 languages.

The three Greek partners in the SMILE network have identified seven main sectors, which can benefit from the accommodation of LWUTLs in Greece. They are considered an important environment for promoting opportunities and raising motivation for language learning in terms of supporting economic growth and better social cohesion.

Effective language outcomes focused on LWUTLs are also important for the integration of migrants and repatriated. The good practices from this sector can be useful for migrants, repatriated people and organizations working for the integration of migrants, language providers, volunteers, etc.

Language education at Universities addresses mainly the needs of foreign students to learn the home language. Good practices in this sector, help foreign students to effectively learn a LWUTL and practice it since they are staying in the country.

Adult education offers a good environment for promotion of LWUTLs because it can take advantage of the personal motivation and characteristics of its target group and bring language learning to a learner-focused setting addressing specific needs. Thus language materials can be successfully piloted and applied with a wide variety of beneficiaries pursuing personal or professional development.

Experience with disadvantaged people and studies from different parts of Europe show that adult education and lifelong learning offerings are predominantly taken up by individuals who already have a certain amount of training. The socially disadvantaged in particular are seldom represented among the trainees. The contribution of the European Social Fund in Greece, through the last and previous community packages, was essential and supported people with a difficult social background or that are experiencing social disadvantage to have access to education and Lifelong Learning programs.

Language learning and promotion are relevant also for the field of business and trade as this sector requires diverse language competences and intercultural communication skills for delivering better and more efficient results. The language demand here is extremely broad, including not only a great variety of European languages (both popular and LWUTLs) but also languages of strategic importance for the business, such as Chinese, Russian, Arab, etc.

The tourism sector is a favorable environment for accommodation of LWUTL's and upgraded language competences are seen as a key factor for boosting the competitiveness and attractiveness of the market. Various groups of stakeholders can benefit from the selected good practices, among others, tour guides, travel agencies, hospitality sector staff, volunteers, unemployed, VET and language providers, etc.

The collection of good practices under SMILE provides a number of out-of-the-box methodologies for language learning and promotion, which address the needs of the identified sectors. Among others, successful methods focused on LWUTLs include language learning through on line communication and learning on the field (working place). They are applicable to various sectors and language-learning settings (both formal and non-formal) and can be adapted to address real needs of different types of target groups and learners.

The collected good practices provide not only ready-to-use language products, but more importantly, creative models, ideas and approaches towards the LWUTLs, which can be transferred, to further languages and different contexts. In order to overcome the challenges of learning LWUTLs the key importance factor should be set on the level of motivation of learners and their importance for the linguistic, cultural and socio-economic life of Europe. More efforts should be put in promoting the significance of those languages for competitiveness, market realization and social inclusion and the direct benefits they offer to learners in practical contexts.

In this context, providing the opportunity to directly interested learners / individuals (migrants, children of mixed linguistic background marriages, etc) or indirectly interested learners (individuals that choose to learn a less widely used and taught language) can be a way to maintain the language/s itself and the culture behind it, throughout time. Promoting LWUTLs in EU Level and each country at any extent possible in National level, can only have positive and effective aspects in a variety of sectors, such as: migrant integration, business and trade, tourism, education (adult & youth), vocational education & training and various others.

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