CertiLingua Annual Conference
Thursday 31 May 2007 - **Friday 1 June 2007**
Düsseldorf.

- Minutes -

---

1. Opening ceremony

The participants and guests at the CertiLingua Launch Conference and the first CertiLingua Annual Conference were welcomed by Henny Rönneper, who introduced the members of the steering group to the audience:

- Prof. Hartmut Ebke, Germany (Baden-Wuerttemberg)
- Gérard Links, France
- Franz Mittendorfer , Austria
- Henk Oonk, The Netherlands
- Henny Rönneper, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia)
- Dr. Eike Thürmann, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia)

After a welcome address by Barbara Sommer, the Minister of Education and Further Education of North Rhine-Westphalia *(see Enclosure 1)* and a bilingual performance by students of the Mataré-Gymnasium, Meerbusch, Germany, the agenda of the conference was presented to and unanimously accepted by the participants.

2. Current status and recent developments

Henny Rönneper informed the participants and guests about the current status and recent developments of the CertiLingua project. *(see Enclosures 2/3)*

3.Field reports: CertiLingua members

a) Austria

Franz Mittendorfer[1] presented the Austrian field report *(see Enclosure 4)* informing the audience about

- a. the Austrian educational system (background / targets),
- b. foreign languages in year 12 (target levels and national standards),
- c. external language certification,
- d. documents and instruments,
- e. the three steps to CertiLingua, and
- f. challenges.

---

[1] Center for Vocationally Oriented Language Learning, Austrian Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture

b) The Netherlands

Mr. Jindra Divis [2] presented the Dutch field report *(see Enclosure 5)* informing the audience about

    a. the ELOS framework (see *Enclosure 6*),
    b. the structure of the network,
    c. the Dutch pilot,
    d. major issues,
    e. languages involved, and
    f. monitoring and evaluation.

4. The CertiLingua Piloting Phase

Michael Rogge[3] presented NRW's recommendations on the basis of the structure of the pilot phase in North Rhine-Westphalia. *(see Enclosure 7)* :

- Time management during the piloting phase
- Planning aids for pilot schools
- The accreditation of pilot schools
- A planning dossier for pupils
- Feedback to the ministry

5. Feedback, open discussion

During the following discussion chaired by Prof. Ebke the following points were made:

- The present Steering Group which has already started work on the project is to be officially nominated by the Annual Conference.
- It prepares the decisions then taken by the Annual Conference.
- Schools can profit from existing or new partnerships/projects.The minimum number and length of bilingual modules have to be stipulated in the course of the pilot phase
- The CertiLingua website and the COMENIUS Programme can help to establish networks between the participating schools.

---

[2] European Platform for Dutch Education

[3] Ministry of Education and further Education of North Rhine-Westphalia.

6. Evaluation

Dr. Thürmann[4] presented a complex and detailed survey of the 4 elements of quality control and development *(see Enclosure 8)*: accreditation – certification – evaluation on a general basis and the exchange of experience and materials.

The participants emphasized that this comprehensive model represents a prototype of quality control. Nevertheless, the "KISS" principle (*keep it small and simple*) should be maintained in order to guarantee evaluation as stipulated in the "Feedback Form" and make a minimum of evaluation possible even if conditions are less ideal.

Furthermore it is important to note that processing of data can also be effected by universities or regional inspectors, possibly in the context of student theses (Master/Doctorate).

The European Platform, too, has offered support in evaluation.

A corresponding workgroup (see Further Agreements) should deal with these questions.

7. The CertiLingua Annual Conference

a) Organisational structure

The members of the Annual Conference are the representatives of the signatories of the CertiLingua Memorandum of Understanding with full voting rights. So far, this document has been signed by Austria, Finland, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, The Netherlands and Thuringia

- o The former Bylaws were replaced by a so-called Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding.
- o Members of the steering group need not necessarily be representatives of signatory states, but can also be members of organizations contributing to the project.
- o Frans Lander leaves the steering group. The conference thanked him for his highly committed work. He will be replaced by Dr.Kim Haataja, Finland. The newly formed steering group was officially nominated for the pilot phase. This proposal was unanimously accepted by the representatives of the seven signatory states.

b) Documents

The following six documents were unanimously accepted by the seven representatives of the signatory states as official CertiLingua documents:

1. CertiLingua Certificate

---

[4] Ministry of Education and Further Education of North Rhine-Westphalia.

2. Project description (Its text will be updated in due course.)
3. Memorandum of Understanding
4. Annex
5. Application for Accreditation
6. Feedback Form

- The a.m. documents should be translated in the languages of the signatory states and sent in to the Ministry of Education and Further Education of North-Rhine Westphalia.
- The certificates should be made available to pupils in at least two languages.
- The text of the a.m. documents will not be changed on a contents level during the pilot phase.
- A corporate design is still being discussed, among others, in co-operation with professional schools or through the organization of competitions. The participants are kindly asked to make corresponding suggestions.

Further agreements:
  o A (preliminary) CertiLingua internet platform open to all CertiLingua participants has been established and is hosted by the Ministry of School and Further Education North-Rhine Westphalia. A short instruction how to work with it will be added to the minutes (Enclosure 9). Furthermore, an official CertLingua web page will be launched in the near future.
  o The conference proposed the following Workgroups such as: Evaluation, CertiLingua Junior, CertiLingua Job, Recognition of the CertiLingua Label and Public Relations , European and international competences. A preliminary list of group members and chairs, as proposed so far will be added to the minutes (Enclosure 10). For those groups that have not named a chair so far, the steering committee will make some proposals.
  o The co-operation with universities, institutions and companies as "Friends and supporters of CertiLingua" was considered to be of great importance All participants were kindly requested to establish the necessary contacts and to publish the corresponding names and addresses on the CertiLingua platform. A sample of a possible letter of request already in use in North Rhine-Westphalia is added to the minutes. The offering of trainee places was regarded as one good example of possible support by the a.m. institutions and companies.
  o In order to motivate all pupils of a CertiLingua school to strive for high linguistic, European and international competences the Europass and the European Portfolio of languages should be made available to all the pupils of a CertiLingua school. Representatives of the Europass and the European Portfolio will be invited to the next Conference.
  o The next CertiLingua Annual Conference will take place in Austria on 25-27 April 2008.

Peter Schimmel / Ursula Hoffmann