Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues dans l'Enseignement Supérieur

European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education

Europäischer Verband der Hochschulsprachenzentren

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**CercleS Executive Committee Meeting**
**27 October 2025: 15:00-17:30 CET / 16:00 Finnish time, via Zoom**

## Minutes

- **Approval of EC minutes of 22 Sept 2025**
  The minutes are approved

## Update from President

**a. Preparation of Rome Conference - presentation by Alessandra**
Alessandra reports on the state of the art as it is at the moment.
The agreement is to be signed between CercleS and AICLU and the host university

**1.1 Conference fees**
*Fees for whole conference:*
CercleS members: €250 (€200 + €50 sponsorship)
AICLU members: €200
Non-members: €300
€100 for online participation

*One-day fee*
CercleS members: €125
AICLU members: €100
Non-members: €150

Conference dinner: €50 (+ €50 sponsorship)

→ Mia asks about including an early-bird fee. Alessandra will add this.

**1.2 Conference venue**
Uniroma4 | University of Rome Foro Italico
The Organising Committee will ensure appropriate venues for the plenary sessions, the parallel sessions, lunches, conference dinner, exhibition space, and extras.

**1.3 Dates**
Conference website to go live mid-November
Call for abstracts – mid-November
Deadline for submissions: Friday, 27 February 2026.
Feedback to authors – suggested for 30 ~~May~~ April
Programme to be completed by 10 July

**1.4 Representation of CercleS Executive Committee on the Conference Scientific Committee**
The President and Executive Committee will be invited to be part of the Scientific Committee



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**1.5 Reporting and exchange**
AICLU will give regular feedback to the EC and will provide written reports in Feb, Apr, May, and Aug 2026. Both parties (Uniroma4 and CercleS) commit themselves to exchanging information in keeping with agreed-upon deadlines.

**2. Conference languages and title**
Official languages: English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian as working language. There is a suggestion to add Chinese and Arabic, but after discussion, the EC decides against this.

The Conference title will be: *The Role of Language Centres in a Fast-Changing World: Responding to Emerging Needs in Society, Communication, and Learning*

**3. Scientific Committee and Steering Committee**
3.1 The **Scientific Committee** to be finalised with AICLU. We must remember that representatives of all NAs should form part of the Scientific Committee. We should aim to include members representing different scientific domains in language teaching and learning. **Julia** to draft (and **Zaan** to send out) a mail to the NA presidents asking for nominations for the Conference Scientific Committee

3.2 The **Steering Committee** as proposed by AICLU:
Prof. Carmen Argondizzo
Prof. Thomas Wulstan Christiansen
Prof. Chiara Degano
Prof. Alessandra Fazio
Prof. Elisabetta Marino
Prof. Enrica Rossi
Prof. Cesare Zanca
CercleS EC delegate?

**Hotel Booking information**
Organising team will select 2 or 3 hotels offering special rates. The information will be made available on the conference hotel website. Room rates are expected to be between €130 and €180 per night (bed and breakfast) and bookings will be managed through an agency. Alessandra will also add cheaper accommodation options.
For the EC, the organising team will book rooms at Hotel Villa Glori, Via Bernardo Celentano 11, Rome, 00196 This is about 15 minutes' walk from the University. The special rate will be fixed (€130-€150 for bed and breakfast per person).

**Conference registration**
Conference registration will be available online via the website and will be managed by the Agency, which will handle the issuing of invoices and receipts and provide weekly updates to the Organising team.
Early-bird registration: 12 January to 31 March 2026
Regular registration: 1 April to 30 June 2026

**Conference Registration and Info Desk**
The Conference Registration and Info Desk will be managed by students, volunteers, and language centre staff, supervised by the University Communication Office.



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Opening hours:
10 Sep 14:00-18:00 (→ Zaan suggests an earlier start – Alessandra agrees with 8:30)
11 Sep: 08:30-18:00
12 Sep: 08:30-12:30

**Conference bags**
Will contain a notebook, pencil, badge, map, the programme, a gadget

**Conference website**
The Conference contents will be published on the University website.

- Slider on the homepage
- Special section dedicated to the Conference linked to the CLA containing:
  - General presentation
  - Information about Rome and the hosting university
  - Programme and scientific contents
  - Registration
  - Travel information
  - Hotel information
  - Contacts (Scientific Committee, Organising Committee)
  - Last minute information

**Budget**
The budget is presented based on 200, 250 and 300 participants

**Comments and questions by the EC**
Everyone thanks Alessandra for the proposal and the hard work that has gone into it.

Libor asks about the composition of the scientific committee – should it be more CercleS or more AICLU? Julia agrees that the scientific committee should be made up of representatives of more NAs and AMs. We can ask the CC to suggest names for the scientific Committee.

Zaan reminds everyone that the Call for Papers should be in all the official conference languages, not only English.

Mia asks about early bird fees – this is not shown in the budget. We really need to add this, because it has been given in the past.

Julia asks about investigating options for a cheaper conference dinner. Julia asks that we discuss the fees over email.

**b. Extraordinary General Meeting (31 Oct at 11:00 CET)**
Julia shares the PowerPoint for the GM – it will be in the folder tomorrow for Zaan to check. We will summarise the information CLUB sent us and will provide members with the material that CLUB sent to support their application. We will open time for questions, and the EC will respond to these.
Voting will be via Google form and we will put the links in the chat. There will be three links for voting (attendance, approval of Durham minutes, approval of CLUB membership). If this doesn't work for some reason, members can write their answers in the chat.



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**c. CC meeting in December – content**

Apart from the regular feedback of events from June to Dec, we will also include the following:

- Feedback from Ranacles-CercleS summer school in Marseilles
- CLES anniversary (perhaps in newsletter rather than in CC meeting?)
- Results of the voting at the General Meeting regarding CLUB membership. If CLUB is admitted, they will join the CC for the first time, and we can give them time to introduce themselves.
- Presentation of final copy of white papers
- Alignment process of certifications
- Results of the questionnaire and working groups to define actions to face the needs expressed
- Budget 2026
- Approval of NAMUR as host of teacher training summer school 2026 and CercleS subsidy
- Information about the Conference 2026
- Future CercleS trainings

## Update from Vice-President

**a. Common framework for CercleS training proposals**

Julia and Libor suggest a table that can be applied to all CercleS training programmes, that would standardise the determination of preparation, workload, remuneration, distribution of fees to trainers, CercleS subsidy, and certification (e.g. microcertificates). Libor explains how microcertification works and it could be done via an institution like Masaryk University, for example.
The idea is that anyone who wants to give training in the name of CercleS would complete this table and submit it to the EC for discussion and approval.

Julia suggests that CercleS subsidy and the distribution between the trainers should be same for all trainings. The subsidy is suggested to be one third of the total cost of the training. CercleS members will pay a cheaper, subsidised price, and non-members will pay a higher price.

Julia feels that offering training for our teachers is a good initiative.
Zaan asks that we not neglect free webinars to members – we don't want it to appear that CercleS is now offering more and more paid events at the expense of free ones. Julia agrees, the training programmes should be independent from the free webinars; in fact, there are already webinars organised for November, December, February and March.

## Update from Secretary General / assistant

**a. Meetups**

*Leadership meetups*
Host & Chair: Libor
Next meetup: Monday 10 Nov, 17:00 CET

*Teachers' meetups*
Host & Chair: Tom
No-one turned up at the last meeting. Tom will advertise more aggressively for the next one.
Next meetup: Monday, 17 Nov 17:00 CET



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**b. Next newsletter (Nov) and e-bulletin (Dec)**

**Newsletter (November)**

*Content*

- Announcing new Full Member if CLUB application is approved
- Information about CLES anniversary (Annick Rivens)
- Information about the project related to CEFR alignment
- Details about CercleS trainings in 2026: Boost and Leadership

*Timeline and deadlines*

- Contributions by Monday 3 Nov
- Zaan to send first draft Monday evening
- Deadline for feedback: Tuesday 4 Nov before noon
- To send out Wednesday 5 Nov

**e-Bulletin (December)**

*Content*

- Profiling our new Full Member CLUB (if application approved at GM)
- Preliminary results of the CEFR alignment
- White papers
- Profiling our newest Associate Members (New York University in Abu Dhabi, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Turkey)
- Information about the CercleS Conference, website, CfP, etc.

*Timeline and deadlines*

- Reports: Presidency in English and Spanish, General Secretariat in English and French, Treasury in English and German?
- Deadline for submissions: Friday 5 December
- Zaan to send out first draft for comments and feedback: Monday 8 December
- Deadline for feedback: Wednesday 10 December
- Any additions after the CC meeting to be added
- To send out 15 December

**c. Membership:**

A request was received for Associate Membership from Assoc. Prof. Fidel Çakmak, Director of the School of Foreign Languages, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Turkey. The application was discussed by the EC over email and approved. It was decided that we will not charge the membership fee for 2025, but will invoice them from 2026.

387 Institutional members, 27 Associate members
Website subscribers as on 27.10.2025: 1152 (incl. 4 administrators)

**d. Webinars in 2026:**

- Katarzyna Matuszak to present a webinar or special needs in February.
- NULTE will organise a webinar on testing delivered by Prof. Jarosław Krajka, from the university of Lublin entitled "Cultural sensitivity in language assessment - Will GenAI or a human win the game?"

## Update from Treasurer

**a. Membership fee payments received from Full members and Associate members**

None received. The only expense since September was the Zoom add-on to increase the capacity for the EGM.



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## AOB

**Presentation by Sigrid Richter on the AKS training system**

Sigrid explains how the AKS teacher training system works. In the past, there would be various workshops, hosted by various centres. The thought was to unify the various trainings and offer it to all members. They created an online platform where they made these workshops by LCs visible. The institutions who want to publish their workshops on the platform pay €60 per year. Centres have to be accredited to publish their workshop on the platform. A workshop that is accredited means that it is relevant to teachers in HE, and that it is not just commercial. The workshops are free for language teachers, but the hosting university/centre can decide if they want to add a fee for participants. The hosting university can also indicate if attendance is only for internal staff, or if it is open to external AKS members.

On the platform, the following information is given: which of the 5 general topics areas it is linked to, the learning goals, and the name of the expert giving the workshop. Language teachers can register for these workshops and then get points, which can be used to get a certificate. There are three different levels of certification: Basic (30 hours, in 3 of the topic areas), professional (70 hours in 4 topic areas), expert level (120 hours in all 5 the topic areas). The applicants can apply for the certificate via the platform, and the platform then generates the certificate – at a fee of €20 for AKS members and €30 for non-members. Platform URL: https://www.aks-fobicert.de/commonInfo.xhtml

Sigrid mentions that the money from the fees, accreditations are used to further develop the platform. There are features on the platform like searching for a topic or a specific expert, or notifications about a particular topic. They had a dream to have a summer school a number of years ago and it has been held in Paderborn since its inception. It is a week where there are two parallel workshops each day and the language teachers stay on-site and network.

Julia thought that it would be a good model and system for CercleS to use (if AKS would be happy that we use it). Sigrid has no problem if we clone/copy the system and then adapt it but would ask for permission from the fellow creators. IT support would be necessary.

**EC meeting and workshop:** Julia suggests holding an EC meeting and working day at FU Berlin on 4-5 February.

**Next EC meeting:** Monday 8 Dec at 16:00-17:30 CET

**Action points:**

→ **Mia** to send minutes to EC

→ **Zaan** to upload the agenda and minutes to the website

→ **All** to please note deadlines for submissions for newsletter and e-Bulletin

→ **Julia** to draft (and **Zaan** to send out) a mail to the NA presidents asking for nominations for the Conference Scientific Committee

→ **Zaan** to organise translation of the Conference CfP into the various conference languages, and to send it to Julia (Spanish), Mia (French), Alessandra (Italian), and Ruth (German) for checking.



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