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
24 March 2025: 16:00-17:30 CET / 17:00 Finnish time, via Zoom

Minutes

- **Approval of EC minutes of 28 Jan 2025 / Update on action points (See minutes of 28 Jan 2025)**

Update from President

a. XIX CercleS Conference 2026 applications

The following applications have been received to host the 2026 CercleS Conference:

1. From AICLU: formal application by *Università degli Studi di Roma Foro Italico*
2. From ACLES: interest from the *University of Navarra (Pamplona)* and *University Isabel I (Burgos)*.
3. From prospective member: *Université de Namur (Belgium)*

The EC will choose a host based on specific criteria. This choice will then be sent to the members of the Coordinating Committee for approval. **Zaan** will draw up a list of criteria and send it to the EC, who will vote the first week in April.

b. Collaborations and cooperation

The following requests for collaboration have been received:

1. International Association for Language Learning Technology
A meeting was held on 26 Feb between Julia, Mia, and Felix Kronenberg (FK). See minutes of the meeting in the Google drive folder of this EC meeting.
→ It was an interesting meeting and we may be interested in collaboration. Many of IALLT's current clients are Europeans living in the USA, and they would like to establish a platform in Europe. One option is also associate membership. IALLT, however, has individual (instead of institutional) membership. It was agreed at the meeting that FK would send an example of how they collaborated with AKS and Japanese counterparts. **Zaan** to follow up with FK about sending further information.

2. Akdem Publishing about Arabic language education
A mail was sent on 30 Jan to offer participation at the next CercleS Conference and they replied on 11 Mar with a request for collaboration before then. See the correspondence in the folder of this EC meeting.
→ Julia is hesitant to allow publishing companies to organise activities for our members, there would be an issue with the sharing of our member's data, etc. But they can participate in conferences and provide free materials to our teachers if they want. Tom agrees that we have to be careful of offering a platform to one publishing company (over another). **Zaan** to inform them of this decision.

3. Libertas International University in Zagreb, Croatia. See the correspondence in the folder of this EC meeting.
They approached CercleS for cooperation on their newly approved research project titled Enhancing LSP learning at Higher Education Institutions.
→ **Zaan** to ask them what the cooperation entails – is it a questionnaire? If they become associate members or members via a new Croatian Association (see the minutes: **Secretary General / assistant point a** below), they can always join the FG LSP.

4. Community of Practice (CoP) FOREU4ALL framework. See Libor's mail of 10/2 in the folder of this EC meeting.
→ Julia feels that this is a good collaboration opportunity because it could help us achieve our goals and those of our members. **Libor** will let them know that CercleS is on board.

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c. Policy regarding withdrawal from courses/training sessions

A colleague from the University of Oxford, who had registered and paid for the Boost training, requested withdrawal based on medical grounds (medical certificate provided) and asked for a refund of the 300 euro fee. Julia and Sabina decided that she could be refunded two-thirds of the amount.

Issue to be discussed: Do we allow withdrawal and refunds? What about reasons such as medical and teaching schedules (that staff cannot control)?

→ Julia mentioned that the decision to ask her to pay part of the training was based on the fact that she had already attended some sessions, although her condition existed before the start of the course, there is a medical certificate that indicates that her condition worsened. Libor is concerned about the message that we send, or that it will affect the reputation that CercleS has among members. Julia agrees, but individual responsibility is also important, we should always be receptive to situations in which attendees have no control over (change of class schedules, health problems, etc.) and suggests that in those cases we add to the inscription something saying: "When possible, if expenses have not yet been incurred on your behalf, we can refund the full or partial amount".

d. Meetups

Leadership meetups

Host & Chair: Libor

Feedback on meetups of 24 Feb and 17 Mar

A group of about 10-12 people attend the meetings, and they are currently discussing and working on the White Paper.

Zaan will add the topic of the next meetup on 19 May in the newsletter sent in April.

Teachers' meetups

Host & Chair: Tom

Feedback on meetup of 10 Mar

It was a very small group, and the discussion was focused on teaching in Ukraine. Although meaningful, it is not the aim of the group. There will be a theme for the next meetup. **Zaan** will add the topic of the next meetup on 28 April in the newsletter sent in April.

e. Upcoming webinars/workshops

9 Apr: webinar on English as Medium of Instruction – hosted by FG EMI

29 Apr: How to follow UNESCO's goals of education for sustainable development – hosted by FG LSP

14 May: webinar on scenario-based assessment – hosted by FG Assessment and Testing

June: Carmen Argondizzo has suggested an LLHE webinar. **Zaan** to contact Carmen and Anne about the dates.

Update from Vice-President

a. CercleS LinkedIn page

What is the link to share? https://www.linkedin.com/company/cercles-europe/ ?

First posts? AKS post-conference? NUT post-conference? ACLES - conference advertisement

What kind of things do we want to post? Focus Group webinars? Are these open to non-members? We should indicate that the FG webinars are only for members.

At the moment, Libor, Zaan, and the Masaryk University PR person, Hanka, can post. We should attempt to post a summary of some CercleS news around once a week. In addition, we can try create about two posts/shares a week of advertisements or promotion of future events of CercleS, Full Members (FM), or the LLHE, summaries of past events (FMs, CercleS) like webinars, other information promoting individual centres, FMs, or even featuring individuals from among our members, and activities, events, achievements. In the form of picture and text, or video and text, there is a limit of 4 pictures, text of 25-100 words plus a link, a video of 1 min, or a link to a video

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with a link to YouTube (CercleS, FMs or institutional YouTube channels). This will also ensure the video quality is good. **Zaan** to promote the LinkedIn profile in the newsletter.

b. EU Commission budget - consultations

If we would like to be heard, we can leave our opinion on the importance of languages…
https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14523-EUs-next-long-term-budget-MFF-EU-funding-for-cross-border-education-training-and-solidarity-young-people-media-culture-and-creative-sectors-values-and-civil-society_en
Libor encourages everyone (staff, institutions, NAs) to comment on what they would like to see reflected in the future budget. We are invited to share it with fellow staff, etc. **Zaan** to post on LinkedIn.

Update from Secretary General / assistant

a. Membership applications (See applications in the folder of this EC meeting)

1. *Centres de Langues Universitaires de Belgique francophone (CLUB)* would like to join as a Full Member.
Issues to consider: how many universities do they represent? Do they want to join CercleS via Ranacles or join CercleS independently?
→ Tom: the idea is to avoid going through Ranacles. According to the CercleS Statutes (2020), "No more than one full member shall be admitted to represent any one country, language community, or transnational grouping." The fact that Flemish Universities in Belgium are represented by NUT does not prevent CLUB from joining as an NA, because CLUB is a different transnational grouping. NUT represents Dutch centres in the Netherlands and Flemish centres in Belgium, while CLUB represents French centres in Belgium.
In order to avoid misunderstanding, we should perhaps rather start using the term Full Member – which is the term used in the Statutes (2020) instead of National Association.
Zaan to follow up with CLUB. She will also take into consideration the impact on the Coordinating Committee mailing list, number of votes, website, and invoices for membership fees.

2. *Libertas International University in Zagreb, Croatia* has submitted a form for associate membership. This point is moot in light of the following point (an application for full membership by the Croatian Association). **Zaan** to inform them of the possibility of joining via this association.

3. *The Association of LSP Teachers at Higher Education Institutions (Croatia)*: This association has individual membership, as is the case with CASALC SK. They currently have three centres as paying institutions.
Issues to consider: do they join as a full member (with representation on the Coordinating Committee), or do they join as separate associate members (for example: we have three AMs each in Greece, Romania, and Ukraine).
→ When centres join as AMs, it is because there is not yet a Full Member in their country. The Croatian Association is an active Full Member. **Libor** to follow up with them how many of the centres want to be members of CercleS.

Julia received a question from a centre in a country where there is already a Full Member about the possibility of joining CercleS as associate members because the centre does not wish to join the Full Member in their country.
→ According to the CercleS Statutes (2020), there cannot be AMs from countries where there is a FM. This means they cannot join CercleS as AMs, but they *can* join another Full member and be members of CercleS in this way.
Julia will communicate this to them.

b. Next newsletter (last newsletter on 19 Feb)

Content: webinars, teacher training week, LinkedIn profile, meetups
Date to be sent: Thursday 27 March. **Zaan** to send a draft to the EC, who must give feedback by Wednesday 4pm.

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c. E-bulletin (June 2025)

Content: Reports by the President, Vice-President, General Secretariat, Treasury, …?
→ we can also include White papers, Language accreditation benchmark meeting, feedback on webinars of FGs

Update from Treasurer

a. Membership fees for 2025

Membership fee invoices/debit notes to be sent out beginning of April
In 2022, the CercleS EC decided that one way of supporting Ukrainian colleagues was to provide a community of practice and invite them as associate members, and to waive their membership fees for the year. The decision to waive membership fees was also taken in 2023 and in 2024. We currently have three Ukrainian associate members.

- Ukrainian Catholic University: School of Ukrainian Language and Culture,
- Ukrainian Catholic University: Center for Modern Languages,
- Foreign Languages Intensive Study Centre, Zaporizhzhia National University

To be discussed: Should we waive their membership fees for 2025? → Yes, we will waive the fees again. **Zaan** to communicate this to them.

Who will send out the mail to FMs and AMs? → The General Secretariat
Revision of the mail that was sent in 2024? → **Zaan** to send to Tom and Ruth
Payment deadline? → **Tom** to indicate the deadline for payment

b. Support for Focus Groups

The FG EMI contacted Julia regarding a grant for their upcoming one-day workshop. We currently have a policy in place of giving FGs 500 euro per year for FG meetings and activities. Do we want to amend this policy in terms of amount or types of activities? → Tom suggests an increase to €1000 for a major international face-to-face event. Requests should be via a form sent to generalsecretariat@cercles.org
→ Is there a form that FGs can complete to apply for support/grants? **Tom** to provide list of information required, for **Zaan** to create a form (Excel template preferably).

AOB

a. Update on RANACLES/CercleS Teacher Training Week 2025 (Marseille): → Tom says it is ready to launch

- Update on programme – provisional programme is ready
- Promotion to members via newsletter, LinkedIn
- EC meeting on the afternoon of Tuesday 10 June: EC to plan to arrive on Monday 9 June in the evening or the morning of Tuesday 10 June.

All to please arrange travel and complete the claim form (**Zaan** to send it). **Tom** to arrange hotel accommodation for the EC.

b. Upcoming EC meetings

Monday 12 May via Zoom at 16:00 CET/17:00 Finnish time
Tuesday 10 June in-person in Marseille (14:00-16:00 CET)
Monday 22 Sept via Zoom at 16:00 CET/17:00 Finnish time
Monday 27 Oct via Zoom at 16:00 CET/17:00 Finnish time
Monday 8 Dec via Zoom at 16:00 CET/17:00 Finnish time

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Action points:

→ **Mia** to send minutes to EC
→ **Julia** will communicate to those centres who asked about joining as AMs in a country where there already is a FM, that this is not possible, but that they can join via another Full member.
→ **Libor** to let the Community of Practice (CoP) FOREU4ALL framework know that CercleS is on board.
→ **Libor** to follow up with the colleagues of *The Association of LSP Teachers at Higher Education Institutions (Croatia)* how many of the centres want to be members of CercleS (they must also contact *Libertas International University in Zagreb, Croatia*)
→ **Tom** to indicate the deadline for payment of membership fees to Zaan.
→ **Tom** to provide list of information required for the funding application, for Zaan to create a form.
→ **Tom** to arrange hotel accommodation for the EC for 9 and/or 10 June.
→ **All** to arrange travel and complete the claim form.
→ **All** to let Tom know about dates that accommodation in Marseille will be required.
→ **Zaan** to upload agenda and minutes to website
→ **Zaan** will draw up a list of criteria and send it to the EC to choose a host for the 2026 CercleS Conference.
→ **Zaan** to follow up with Felix Kronenberg from IALLT about sending further information.
→ **Zaan** to inform Akdem Publishing about the decision regarding cooperation.
→ **Zaan** to ask *Libertas International University in Zagreb, Croatia* what the cooperation entails.
→ **Zaan** will add the topic of the next meetup on 19 May in the newsletter sent in April.
→ **Zaan** will add the topic of the next meetup on 28 April in the newsletter sent in April.
→ **Zaan** to contact Carmen and Anne about the dates for an LLHE webinar in June.
→ **Zaan** to promote the LinkedIn profile in the newsletter.
→ **Zaan** to post on LinkedIn about the EU Commission budget - consultations
→ **Zaan** to follow up with CLUB about joining as Full members. (done)
→ **Zaan** will amend the Coordinating Committee mailing list, number of votes, website information, list of centres on website drop-down menu, website registration, and invoices for membership fees to reflect CLUB's membership.
→ **Zaan** to send a draft newsletter to the EC, who must give feedback by Wednesday 4pm.
→ **Zaan** to communicate to the three Ukrainian AMs that their membership fees for 2025 will be waived.
→ **Zaan** to send to Tom and Ruth the mail that was sent with membership fees in 2024 to revise for 2025.

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