



Minutes of the CercleS Coordinating Committee Meeting
20 May 2022, 10:00-13:00 (CET)
Via Zoom

The following members of the Coordinating Committee and the Executive Committee were present:

National Association	Members	Votes	Country	President present or represented
ACLES	64	3	Spain	Juana Sanmartin
AICLU	50	2	Italy	Carmen Argondizzo (proxy: A. Fazio)
AKS	49	2	Germany	Maike Engelhardt
AULC	43	2	UK	Mark Critchley
CASALC CZ	15	1	Czech	Libor Štěpánek (proxy: P. Gergel)
CASALC SK	3	1	Slovak	Peter Gergel
FINELC	14	1	Finland	Nina Pilke
NUT	26	1	Netherlands	Katja Hunfeld
RANACLES	64	3	France	Tom Grainger (proxy: L. Rouveyrol)
ReCLES	17	1	Portugal	Manuel Moreira da Silva
SERMO	8	1	Poland	Kinga Studzińska Pasieka
SSH-CHES-CSUS	13	1	Switzerland	Stefanie Neuner; Elisabeth Paliot
VUS	6	1	Austria	Simone Klinge
Total		20		

Executive Committee	Members	Votes	Present
		3	Sabina Schaffner (President) Anne Chateau (Secretary General) Marta Estella Clota (Treasurer) Carmen Argondizzo (Vice-President) Mia Panisse (Deputy Secretary General) Zaan Bester (Assistant to the General Secretariat)

1. Welcome and approval of agenda

Sabina welcomes everyone on behalf of the EC, especially those joining for the first time. Apart from the 3 members of the Executive Committee, 13 National Associations are present, which means all 16 members of the Coordinating Committee are represented. According to article 8.3 of the CercleS Statutes, except for the election of the Executive Committee (see Standing Orders), the Coordinating Committee decides by a simple majority of the votes cast by the members present and represented excluding abstentions, blank or invalid votes, which shall thus not be added to negative votes for the calculation of the majority.

Approval of agenda

Everybody agrees with the agenda as presented by Sabina and no points were added. (*Slides 3-4 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

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Approval of CC minutes of meeting of 10 September 2021, Université de Lorraine, Nancy / Zoom

The minutes of the Coordinating Committee meeting of 10 September 2021 are approved. (16 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstain)

2. Short reports of the EC activities – questions and feedback by CC members

o January 2022 – May 2022:

a. **President** (*Slides 7-9 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

Working groups: follow up activities from CercleS survey

- Dissemination of outcomes of CercleS Survey at conferences: XII Congreso ACLES: Nuevos horizontes para los centros de lenguas: Lenguas y Tecnología: University of Murcia: 16 September; XXV Seminario AICLU 2021, 24 September; 8th International scientific conference The Linguistic, Educational and Intercultural Research 2021 (LEIC Research 2021), Vilnius University: with Isabella Stefanutti

Policy Paper for stakeholders of University management & Guide for LC managers

- November 2021 – April 2022: Drafting and editing of Policy Paper and Guide for LC managers based on workshop for teachers (15 October 2021) and for management staff (19 November 2021) by Mark Critchley, Sabina Schaffner, Isabella Stefanutti and Ruth Tobias
- 15 – 17 September 2022: Presentation of both documents at CercleS Conference
 - Policy Paper: Workshop by Isabella Stefanutti and Ruth Tobias
 - Guide for LC managers: Poster presentation, accessible via conference web
 - Webinars in October / November 2022

These papers will be officially promoted and shared at the Porto Conference, therefore, Coordinating Committee members are invited not to disseminate them officially.

Aspire to Inspire Training

So far there is only one application. The final decision whether to run the second edition will be taken in the next 2 weeks. Sabina invites the members of the Coordinating Committee to comment on the low number of enrolments:

Maïke: Many universities have their own professional development initiatives, which are incentivised so it would be difficult to get the funds for such a training programme.

Katja: She has people in her centre that this could be aimed at, but they do not yet have these responsibilities so they may feel it is not yet relevant for them.

Elisabeth: During the first edition of the training, the Management modules had to be constantly adjusted because the group was very heterogeneous, so defining a target group is difficult. The trainers decided therefore that for this second edition the target group should be exclusively aimed at colleagues with management duties.

Sabina: It may be decided to run smaller online training modules instead of offering the whole training.

Maïke: Shorter modules are often better attended and should be considered.

Elisabeth: Modules would work better online, perhaps. The trainers will discuss this shortly.

Cooperation with Ukrainian Language Centres

We had two meetings with three colleagues from a university in Lviv and two from universities in Kyiv. In order to react to the special situation Ukrainian colleagues and Ukrainian Language Centres in Higher Education are confronted with, the Executive Committee decided to take the following measures:

- We are going to offer honorary membership for Ukrainian colleagues during 2022 as chance to cooperate and check future regular membership in 2023, either as a national association (which does not currently exist) or as Associate Members.

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- The next e-bulletin will be dedicated to Ukraine (support, cooperation).
- We would like to give the 5 colleagues we met the chance to apply for scholarships for the CercleS Porto Conference.

Stefanie: Do we know of any Ukrainian LCs that need a partner in Switzerland?

Sabina: We can't tell now, but will follow this up once we will have received a more or less comprehensive list of LCs at Ukrainian universities from one colleague from Lviv.

General Secretariat (Slide 10 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

Online talks and webinars

- CEFR Companion Volume implementation toolbox (VITbox) by Johann Fischer on 19 Jan followed by 2 workshops on 23 Feb & 9 March
- Leadership meetups (Feb. 22, March 15, April 26)
- LLHE Webinar on May 4, conversation with authors of articles published in LLHE 11.1 (2021)
→ recorded and online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmMyeq3jE0o>)

Membership management

We currently have 371 institutional members and 23 associate members. There are 685 individual subscribers to the website.

Update on website

(Promotion of forum: ideas, Instagram quizzes, other ideas)

It is a fact that forums are not visited much, and people may not know that items have been posted. The job advertisements forum is the only active one. We would also like to use the social platforms more but do not always have the ideas or the resources. We will follow this up later, but it is not a top priority right now.

b. Vice President (Slides 11-13 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

LLHE publications

Carmen would like to again mention appreciation for the Scientific Committee of the journal, of which Laurent and Stefanie are part.

Previous issues: 10.2 (2020); 11.1 (2021); 11.2 (2021)

Issue 12.1 (May/June 2022) - Empowering learners in their critical, creative and autonomous thinking: from a good language learner to a better world citizen.

There will be 3 sections:

- Project-Based Language Learning (5 papers);
- Assessment, self-assessment, autonomous learning (5 papers);
- ELF, EMI, CLIL (5 papers and 1 Activity Report).

Submissions from: Australia, Colombia, Italy (2), Japan (2), Czech Republic, Spain (2), France, Turkey, Hungary, China, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Finland

Issue 12.2 (October 2022) - Special Issue: Sustainable development literacy in Language Learning and Teaching

There will be 2 sections:

- Special section on sustainable development literacy (6 papers);
- Regular section (21 papers under the reviewing process).

We will have another webinar in October/November – with focus on Issues 11.2 and 12.1.

Annual Report for 2021 from De Gruyter

Editorial Office Statistics

Issues published, articles published (30), pages published (544), average article length (18)

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Timeline for publication

May and October each year; Delay in months (4 in year 2020; 1 in year 2021)

Citations (most cited articles)

Enhancing critical thinking (Y. Kusumoto) 12 times in 2018

Usage and Downloads

4.121 (2018); 4.410 (2019); 9490 (2020)

Cooperation with De Gruyter: Annual Report 2021

Most viewed articles (in 2021)

- Raciolinguistics ideology in first-year university (non)heritage Chinese classes (S. Chang) 275
- The underlying action-oriented and task-based approach of the CEFR and its implementation in language testing and assessment at university (J. Fischer) 241
- The input of an instruction to improve L2 learners' academic competence abstract writing in multidisciplinary programmes (G. Oratim-Uba) 224

Subscriptions

Society (383); Institutional (14); Individual (0)

Promotional measures

- Annual catalogue
- Inclusion in linguistics mailing and campaign
- Mouton Twitter
- Inclusion in linguistic online journal package deals

Sabina mentions that, together with Carmen, she is in contact with De Gruyter regarding the low number of institutional inscriptions and the marketing strategies.

She thanks Carmen Argondizzo and Gillian Mansfield along with all the reviewers for their very hard and important work on the journal.

d. Treasurer's report:

Final balance budget 2021

A final budget for 2021 (on accounting basis) is presented. (*Slide 14 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

A final budget for 2021 (on accrual basis) is presented. (*Slide 15 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

The final balance is approved (12 in favour, 0 against, 4 abstain).

Updated budget 2022

The budget for 2022 (on accounting basis) is presented. (*Slide 16 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

The updated budget for 2022 (on accrual basis) is presented for approval. (*Slide 17 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

Money was moved from CC meeting to scholarships to help Ukrainian colleagues. Other expenses are mostly the same.

In 2021 we had more yearly expenses than income – the website being a major project and expense, but in 2022 the balance between income and expenses is maintained.

The amended budget is approved (12 in favour, 0 against, 4 abstain).

3. Proposals, reports, motions from members

a. CASALC SK: Motion regarding membership (*Slide 18 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx*)

Peter Gergel explains the background of his motion:

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In some National Associations, not all institutional members are members of CercleS. A lot of the smaller institutional members of CASALC SK are not members of CercleS because the membership fee is too expensive for small institutions.

Discussion:

This issue has been discussed before, and it was decided against giving membership to individuals. Sabina explains that - according to the current statutes - individual membership is possible only for honorary or benefactor members.

Anne and Sabina both bring up that differentiated fees would be very difficult to implement on a practical level.

Anne suggests to solve the problem by the National Association; in RANACLES, for example, where CercleS subscription is included in the fee paid by institutional members to the NA, larger Language Centres pay €500 and smaller ones €250.

Kinga suggests that smaller LCs could form an association/network to count as one LC within the national association, split the costs and share the benefits.

Peter will take the suggestions back to CASALC SK.

b. Mark Critchley: Report on Working group on CercleS training and Internationalisation initiative
(Slide 19 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

The working group met on 21 January and looked at the format and type of training that could be offered across the CercleS network. But the working group realised that national associations need to be consulted – to have a look at what training is happening on a national level they could take advantage of. It was therefore decided that a survey will be sent to National Associations' presidents to find out what training opportunities they offer. Mark will send a mail to the working group to finalise a survey, which will be sent to the national associations. Mark is planning to communicate the outcomes of the survey at the next Coordinating Committee meeting in Porto.

b. Mark Critchley: Report on CercleS Internationalisation initiative (Slide 20 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

There is interest in international collaboration/exchange between institutional members, also including virtual mobility and developing internationalisation at home initiatives. It is suggested that we use collaboration between members of CercleS to access training that they would not always have themselves. In the Wulkow network, Ruth Tobias also expressed a desire to follow up more international exchange among the group.

There will be a workshop on teacher training needs for virtual exchange planned by Mark Critchley and Marco Cappellini at the CercleS Conference in Porto:

This workshop will explore how some of new opportunities may be developed, and focus on teachers' own training needs to allow virtual exchange techniques to be adopted more widely in language centres across Europe. The workshop will focus on one-to-one partner collaborations and will also consider multi-partner collaborations. An objective is to use the workshop to support development of a teacher training programme in virtual exchange for CercleS member institutions.

Sabina thanks Mark for the initiatives and agrees that we have to check the needs of the national associations.

4. XVII CercleS Conference 2022: Presentation by Conference Organisers
Manuel has been elected as Dean of ISCAP – congratulations.

a. Provisional programme outline (Slides 22-23 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

Plenary sessions and parallel sessions will be streamed via Zoom or another format.

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b. Keynotes (Slides 24-26 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

Joseph Hopkins (Spain)

Prof Dr Kris van de Poel (Netherlands) & Prof Dr Tobie van Dyk (South Africa)

Manuel Célio Conceição (Portugal)

c. Update on abstracts received (Slide 27 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

Nr. of verified submissions: 140

Nr. of authors: 179 (including first authors and others)

Type of presentation:

- Oral presentation 88
- Workshops 9
- Not specified 40 (to be confirmed)
- Posters 3
- Total 140
 - ± 5 online presentations
 - ± 135 onsite presentations

Abstracts received in English ± 130, Portuguese ± 5, German ± 3, Spanish 1

Nationalities represented: 21 (Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States)

d. Important dates (Slide 28 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

- Submission of proposals: 31st March 2022
- Notification of acceptance: 18th May 2022
- Registration opens: 15th April 2022
- Early bird registration: **until 30th May 2022**
- Regular rate registration: **until 31st August 2022**
- Conference dates: **15th-17th September 2022**

e. Anniversary activities (Slide 29 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

- Conference Dinner & Recognition of Honorary members
- Cake and champagne
- DJ and music
- Spotify List (to be disseminated)
- Surprises?

There may also be a networking moment to talk about research and projects (Erasmus, BIPs, etc.)

f. Focus Groups meetings (Slide 30 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

The CercleS EC and Conference organisers wanted to create a space for FGs to meet, so did not schedule anything else in that time. But only 3 groups have said they will attend.

- Schedule: 15 September 2022, 9:00-13:00
- Focus Groups participating:
 - Leadership & Management
 - Language Testing and Assessment
 - Autonomy
- Planned procedure
 - 45 mins: Sort of speed dating to get to know different FG at the beginning of the slot, followed by meetings
 - 120 mins: meetings aiming at an output (article, event, networking)

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We could perhaps consider having the speed dating format at 12 (after the FG meetings) and not early in the morning to attract more people. Maybe we could have a hybrid session with at least one person from each FG.

g. Roundtable (Slide 31 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

Multilingual Roundtable on future challenges of CercleS

- **Main moderator:** Ruth Tobias (FU Berlin, AKS)
- **5 Interviewees:** María del Carmen Arau Ribeiro (ReCLeS); Tom Grainger (RANACLES); Juana Sanmartín Vélez (ACLES), Chaya Fischer (Assoc member); Nina Pilke (FINELC).
- **7 first respondents for the fishbowl:** *associations: AKS, AULC, AICLU, CASALC CZ, NUT, SERMO, SSH-CHES-CSUS*
- **2 feedback givers:** David Little (honorary member, former CercleS president); Sabina Schaffner (current CercleS president)
- **Moderator** (Ana Gonçalves) to pass on the main questions and comments by colleagues participating online (Padlet)
- **Interpreters** from the official conference languages (French, Spanish, Portuguese, German) into English: interviews; fishbowl, experts): by students from ISCAP, from G to E still needed: any suggestions?
Stefanie: At the AKS conference there was a Polish student translating into German. Sabina will follow up with Thomas Vogel.

Preparation:

- Send a guide to the participants and the interpreters about the format and procedure of the fishbowl session
- Prep meeting end of June

5. Outlook on activities 2022 (Slide 32 CercleS CC meeting 20220520.pptx)

a. Talks / Webinars / Trainings

- There will be another **LLHE webinar** (Oct/Nov) and also a session presented by colleagues from **Ukraine** towards the end of June.
- Stefanie and Elisabeth suggest a session on **language mediation** – it was recently integrated into the CEFR, it is reflected in textbooks, and we should rethink how to integrate it into the classroom. Laurent mentions that the VITbox project also includes also a module on mediation (Possible speakers: Brian North; Barbara Sawicka from Poznan).
- Mark suggests **intercultural competence** – he will speak to Ruth Tobias, who raised the possibility of forming a working group (possible speakers: Vincent Merck, Michaela Carriere)

b. Research:

Sabina explains that the two suggestions regarding research were issued at the last Coordinating Committee meeting on 10 September 2021:

- **Machine learning?**
No interest to follow this up mentioned.
- **Internationalisation?**
Mark is interested in this topic, but has not yet contacted Cristina Pérez Guillot again. Maike is also interested in joining.
- Manuel is interested in the virtual and augmented reality in the fields of language learning at the University of Lorraine (Language Labs). *Anne will follow up with her colleague at the university.*

c. For the Coordinating Committee meeting in Porto, we will send a call for applications for the CercleS conference 2024.

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6. AOB

The next CC meeting will take place on 14 September 2022, 14:00-17:30, at Porto ISCAP. It is planned on site, but we could arrange a **hybrid** mode if needed.

Nina notes that she will be travelling and the hybrid format will allow her to join.

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