



Conseil Européen pour les Langues
European Language Council



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

CEL/ELC 2025 Annual Conference

Speaking the Future: Language Policies and Professional Communication within the Multilingual Landscape of Higher Education

4–5 December 2025

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Brescia, Italy

Call for Papers

The evolving face of higher education is now characterized by sociolinguistic diversity, the rapid adoption of novel technology, and multiple forms of mobility. Against that background, the 2025 CEL/ELC conference examines the changing language policies and professional communication frameworks in relation to multilingualism. Such policies and frameworks face an overarching paradox for HE institutions: on the one hand, comprehensive language policies are needed that encourage internationalisation at all levels and institutional academic competitiveness. On the other hand, HE institutions also should preserve local linguistic diversity, heritage, inclusivity, and sustainability.

To navigate these challenges, institutions use several languages with various functions and terms assigned to them, such as ‘national language’, ‘institutional language’, ‘own language’, ‘official language’, ‘working language’ or even ‘lingua franca’. Regulating these

designated roles through policy frameworks is important. However, equally challenging is addressing the other extreme — real workflow practices, where staff and students use full multilingual repertoires in governance, research and teaching.

Higher education professional communication includes not only scholarly outputs or administrative messages sent, but also other forms of multilingual communication related to linguistic diversity, such as cross-culture interactions, explicit or implicit recruitment rules and habits, branding for the institution, partnering and networking with stakeholders, etc. Multilingual communication increasingly incorporates AI tools, which enable users to switch between languages or to translanguage in international classrooms and research labs. Such tools, however, also come with a number of communicative drawbacks related their very nature, on which HE institutions should thoroughly reflect. This conference seeks to discuss topics as:

- the design, implementation, and evaluation of institutional language policies, balancing global aspirations with local language rights and equity;
- professional communication strategies in multilingual settings, including administrative discourse and academic genres, also linked to science communication and popularisation;
- technology-mediated solutions — collaborative platforms that enhance multilingual scholarly output;
- training and awareness-raising programs for staff and students, promoting reflexivity and competence in language policy and language diversity;
- governance issues and linguistic and epistemic justice, questioning linguistic hierarchies and the cultural erosion/loss of knowledge implied by an uncritical use of AI.

By reframing multilingual communication, neither as a purported non-issue (‘we adapt to international colleagues and students by simply using English’), nor as a matter of cultural integration (‘they should adapt as we simply use the local / national language’), but as a foundational resource of cultural and epistemic richness, this CEL/ELC Conference encourages bold institutional experiments, empirical studies, and critical policy analyses, in order to gain insights into inclusive language governance, actionable best practices, and renewed appreciation for the multilingual fabric of higher-education communities.

As the multilingual and technology-mediated reality of higher education continues to evolve, this conference invites contributions that address the complexities, tensions, and innovations in language policy and professional communication.

We welcome contributions from researchers, members of HE European Alliances, practitioners, administrators who engage critically with the multilingual realities of higher education. Participants are requested to submit an abstract of 300 words, indicating the **section** to which their paper belongs, and a 150-word bionote.

Please structure your proposal around one of the following **three thematic sections**, each guided by key questions:

Section 1: Reimagining Language Policies in Multilingual Institutions

Guiding questions:

- How do institutional language policies reconcile internationalisation with the preservation of local linguistic diversity?
- (How) Do institutional language policies rethink multilingual communication in the light of recent technological developments, including AI?
- What tensions arise between top-down policy frameworks and bottom-up multilingual practices?
- In what ways can language policies contribute to equity, inclusivity, and sustainability in higher education?

This section welcomes critical perspectives on policy design, implementation, and evaluation—especially those addressing language rights, governance structures, and linguistic hierarchies.

Section 2: Professional and Academic Communication across Languages and Cultures

Guiding questions:

- How does multilingualism shape professional communication in academic, administrative, and outreach contexts?
- What strategies or practices are emerging to facilitate effective communication across languages and cultures within higher education?
- How is science communication adapting to address diverse linguistic audiences and their needs?

Submissions may explore multilingual academic genres, administrative discourse, institutional branding, recruitment practices, and intercultural interactions within higher education ecosystems.

Section 3: Technologies, Translanguaging, and the Future of Multilingual Education

Guiding questions:

- How are digital technologies and AI reshaping multilingual communication and policy implementation in universities?
- In what ways can technology support translanguaging practices in classrooms, research teams, and institutional communication?
- What are the challenges and opportunities of using collaborative platforms to enhance multilingual scholarly outputs?

This section seeks empirical studies, case reports, or conceptual analyses on the use of AI, digital tools, and innovative platforms in support of language diversity and multilingual knowledge production and transfer.

Submission Guidelines

Participants must:

- Indicate the **section** (1, 2, or 3) to which their abstract is submitted.
- Provide a title, an abstract (max 300 words), and a brief bionote (max 150 words).
- Submit proposals **by 6 September 2025** via celelc@unicatt.it.

Notification of acceptance: **30 September 2025**

Registration link and deadline

In-presence attendance by **30 October 2025**, remote attendance by **15 November 2025**.

For both in-presence and remote attendance, please kindly register here : <https://forms.office.com/e/qmfKKVt9Qf>.

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Registration fee

For CEL/ELC institutional or individual members with up-to-date membership fees, all conference fees are waived.

Otherwise, if your institution has not paid this year's membership, attendance fees are as follows:

- Conference fee for **presenters**: € 100
- Conference fee for **participants** (simple attendants): € 50
- Conference fee for **PhD students**: € 30

Payment must be made by bank transfer **no later than 20 November 2025**.

You will find the bank details below:

KBC Bank Belgium (Antwerp)

IBAN: BE91 7340 4873 9576

BIC: KREDBEBB

SWIFT: KREDBEBB022

We kindly ask you to **send a copy of the payment receipt at celelc@unicatt.it** once the payment has been made.

Upon request, **certificates of attendance** will be sent soon after the event.

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Registration link: <https://forms.office.com/e/qmflKKVt9Qf>