

Integrating CLIL in VET: Recommendations for Education Providers and Policy Makers



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The VET's CLIL project is aimed at widening the opportunities of VET students in a globalised world by implementing the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) methodology in the curricula.

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For more information, please visit: <https://projectes.xtec.cat/clil4vet/>.



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1. INTRODUCTION: THE VET'S CLIL PROJECT

The **BOOST for CLIL in VET (VET's CLIL)** project's goal is to improve the competitiveness and employability of vocational students in the European labour market through language learning. In this sense, VET's CLIL has aimed at widening the opportunities of VET students in a globalised world by implementing the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) methodology in the curricula:

-  Developing and testing a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) on the CLIL approach, starting by testing an Open Online Course (OCC) in English which will result in a MOOC.
-  Designing and implementing an electronic open platform that permits to mutualise the different materials developed in each region/country and to share experiences; this will ensure a sustainable and transnational community of Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals that allows the exchange of materials.

The specific project objectives aimed:

1. To stress the need to master foreign languages as a key competence to foster employability in all VET sectors.
2. To highlight the importance of developing intercultural competences as European citizens working in a global market.
3. To help teachers disseminate critical thinking skills through their teaching practices.
4. To disseminate and exchange innovative methodologies and approaches in the VET teaching and learning context done in a foreign language.
5. To define assessment strategies and use of different tools for assessment of the competences to be acquired by VET learners (digital, social, linguistic, content).
6. To use Web 2.0 tools and apps not only for engaging learners but also for the opportunities they offer regarding knowledge sharing, good teaching

and learning practices among teachers all over Europe, especially in those regions with fewer resources.

7. To improve teacher training programmes by teaching trainers how to use the many available tools effectively.
8. To enhance mutual trust among vocational schools and institutions to further future mobility projects.

The project is running from September 2018 to the end of August 2021. It is funded by the Erasmus+ programme KA2 (Strategic Partnerships) and coordinated by the Provincial Education in Flanders (Provinciaal Onderwijs Vlaanderen, POV, Belgium). Project partners are the Education Department of the Government of Catalonia (Spain), the Education Department of the Basque Country (Spain), Sedu (Finland), Da Vinci College (Netherlands), and EARLALL (European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning, Belgium).

The present guide is a key element within Intellectual Output 2 and complements the other IO products and/or activities:

1. Platform design.
2. Teaching e-portfolio design
3. VET community recruitment
4. Online EU forum for VET teachers
5. Course
6. Sustainability and transferability
7. Maintenance and upgrades (platform and forum)



This guide is proposed to draft evidence-based policy recommendations in order to facilitate the implementation of CLIL in public centres, engaging competent regional authorities with the concept and methodology. These recommendations shall also follow the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (art. 19) and extends its approach to the VET sector.

The project website, MOOC and platform are accessible through this link: <https://projectes.xtec.cat/clil4vet/tag/vetsclil/>.





2. OBJECTIVES

During the development of the project, it has become evident the need to compile a set of recommendations and implementation guidelines so that the VET's CLIL methodology is taken into account by decision makers. However, this effort was not limited to the usefulness of the CLIL methodology in engaging VET students in language learning, but also tackled the importance of teacher engagement and the appropriateness of MOOCs and short training programmes for teachers in fostering language learning innovation. Therefore, this paper directly targeting decision-makers and education centre management teams beyond teaching staff has risen as a key tool complementing teacher training and general awareness-raising efforts.

This document provides answers to the questions "why introducing CLIL in VET?" and "what steps are missing to do so from a governance perspective?", based on the academic state-of-art, the EU's policies supporting it, and the national reports produced in the context of the VET's CLIL project.

Therefore, the goal of this document is to provide a ground for improvement at all levels of governance aiming at:

- 🌊 Aligning regional policies with EU ones (promotion of new pedagogies, innovation and language learning).
- 🌊 Modernising the teaching and learning of languages in VET.

-  Highlighting the advantages of CLIL.
-  Improving support for teacher reskilling and upskilling.
-  Developing strong cooperation actions between all relevant stakeholders: authorities, employers, VET centres, students and the research community.
-  Facilitating international collaboration and networking, positive for the regional system.

3. METHODOLOGY

Slavin (2020)¹ defines **evidence-based reform** as “policies that enable or encourage the use of programs and practices proven to be effective in rigorous research.” However, as Pellegrini and Vivanet (2021)² suggest, “European authors and initiatives have tended to prefer the term ‘**evidence-informed education**’ [...]. In terms of research, sources of evidence extend beyond experimental studies and often include qualitative and mixed methodologies; for policies, the European Union (EU) documents provide guidance rather than stipulations regarding the use of evidence in educational decision-making” (bold our own). Furthermore, the European Commission produced in 2017 a report³ on support mechanisms for evidence-based policy making in education. Even if these reports mainly provide a country-level overview, several references are made to multilevel governance and sub-statal levels.

¹ Slavin. R. E. (2020), “How evidence-based reform will transform research and practice in education,” *Educational Psychologist*, 55(1), pp. 21-31.

² Pellegrini, M. and G. Vivanet (2021), “Evidence-Based Policies in Education: Initiatives and Challenges in Europe,” *ECNU Review of Education*, 4(1), pp. 25-45.

³ European Commission (2017), *Support mechanisms for evidence-based policy making in education*, Eurydice report.



According to the aforementioned goals, this document offers policy recommendations based on quality research in the field of CLIL and the policy context at regional, national and European level. Its drafting process has followed the procedure and methods included below:

- 🌿 Desk Research: benefits of CLIL and its specific use in VET contexts and other levels beyond school education
- 🌿 Desk Research: EU policies, national reports from project partners, regional regulations
- 🌿 Feedback from participants in multiplier events
- 🌿 Feedback from teachers in testing phase
- 🌿 Feedback from project partners
- 🌿 Peer review and validation by project partners

This final project outcome has been prepared during the months of February to July 2021 and has taken into consideration the rest of project results. Its work builds on the experiences of the VET's CLIL project partners and stakeholders, as well as on quality academic and research work in the field of CLIL.

4. CLIL RESEARCH IN EUROPE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Firstly introduced by David Marsh in 1994, the CLIL methodology for bilingual education has been researched from the pedagogy and education policy areas for the past three decades, even if divergences remain about its very definition by the academic community. However, as Yi Lo (2020)⁴ points, a core characteristic of this methodology is the “the use of students’ (and very often teachers’) second/foreign/additional language (L2) as the medium of instruction (MoI) when teaching and learning non-language content subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, history and geography).” In this context, numerous academic publications in the

⁴ Yi Lo, Y. (2020), *Professional Development of CLIL Teachers*, Springer.

field of education have praised its benefits and even a specific international research journal was founded by the University of Jyväskylä on the topic which ran from 2008 to 2013.

This progressive research efforts and discoveries about CLIL's benefits have led to a widespread call to implement it from the policy side, at European, national and regional level, as we will see below. Nevertheless, divergences in terms of research amount and experimentation exist with regard to education levels. Basic secondary education remains the key focus area on which most research is developed, even if, in the last years, the scope has expanded to other areas such as higher education and vocational education and training (VET), mainly in relation to business education and engineering.

On another note, it must be acknowledged that research remains mostly experimental, and that further and more complete studies are needed, with special regard to VET and HE. Some examples of studies proving the benefits of the methodology are Várkuti (2010)⁵ and Aguilar and Muñoz (2013)⁶ on language skills improvement, but we should also mention, for instance, Mcdougald (2018)⁷ in Colombia on soft skills and wider benefits. In addition, Pérez-Vidal (2013)⁸ compiles a set of study results in Spain that tip the balance towards a positive effect on language and transversal skills in comparison with formal instruction (FI). However, she also includes studies that do not offer pro-CLIL results, and such a

⁵ Várkuti, A. (2010), "Linguistic benefits of the CLIL approach: measuring linguistic competences," *International CLIL Research Journal*, 1(3). Available at: <http://www.icrj.eu/13/article7.html>.

⁶ Aguilar, M, and C. Muñoz (2014), "The effect of proficiency on CLIL benefits in Engineering students in Spain," *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 24(1), pp. 1-18.

⁷ Mcdougald (2018), "CLIL across the Curriculum, benefits that go beyond the classroom," *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning*, 11(1), pp. 9-18.

⁸ Pérez Vidal, C. (2013), " Perspectives and Lessons from the Challenge of CLIL Experiences," in Abello-Contesse, et al., *Bilingual and Multilingual Education in the 21st Century. Building on Experience, Multilingual Matters*.



divergence of conclusions is attributed to the difficulties for group comparability and students' different starting points.

Furthermore, academic research shows that the context-specific variable has a strong impact on the success of CLIL implementation (Sylvén, 2013⁹, about the case in Sweden), regardless of the level of education. Nikula (2017)¹⁰ indicates that "from its inception, CLIL has been described as a flexible approach that can be adapted to different contexts according to their specific needs, i.e., there is no one model for CLIL." In this sense, the VET's CLIL project, with a regional/national component at its core, provides further insights on the reception of the methodology with both an educational-level and a regional-specific focus.

More specifically, teacher training and the development of so-called "CLIL teachers" is a topic that is highlighted by Yi Lo (2020) as a key research area, since the gap between teachers' skills and the ones that they need to implement CLIL effectively is still wide. In fact, a dichotomy has been traditionally established between so-called "content teachers" and "language teachers," while CLIL teachers come right at the juncture of both. Therefore, the skills that each type will need to become a CLIL teacher will be very different: either regarding content for language-focused ones, or language for content specialists. Specific training for teachers will be a key variable that determines the success of CLIL and its impact on students' skills.

Indeed, the VET's CLIL project has demonstrated the interest and commitment of both kinds of teachers in implementing CLIL in the VET classroom. 88% of participants in the pilot VET's CLIL MOOC acknowledged that they felt inspired to innovate in their classrooms, even if 70% of them were already familiar with CLIL. This shows the need for further training and materials in the field.

⁹ Sylvén, L.S. (2013), "CLIL in Sweden – why does it not work? A metaperspective on CLIL across contexts in Europe," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 16(3), pp. 301-320.

¹⁰ Nikula, T. (2017), "CLIL: A European Approach to Bilingual Education," in N. Van Deusen-Scholl and S. May, *Second and Foreign Language Education*, Springer.

Therefore, we can conclude that, even if further research remains an essential need to boost CLIL, not only in VET, but in all educational levels, insights have been provided by academics on its benefits for students regarding:

- a) Second language skills.
- b) Soft skills, such as creativity and communication.
- c) Boost to students' self-esteem and personal development.

Furthermore, from the teachers' point of view, a clear need for a comprehensive training programme that bridges content-specific and linguistic knowledge and skills has been identified. Their motivation and lifelong learning spirit are the key enablers for a successful implementation of CLIL, and it needs to be answered with an adapted teacher training offer, and implementation opportunities in the education system.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

Complementing the conceptualisations presented in the previous section, CLIL has been defined as a **European approach to education** in which a language different from the first language is used as the medium of instruction for curricular subjects at primary and secondary stages of education¹¹. CLIL rapidly showed the capacity to take on board lessons drawn from the Canadian and US immersion programmes and content-based instruction. The ultimate objectives of CLIL programmes have been summarised by Zydatiss (2012):

"[...] The overriding purpose of the CLIL approach in our multilingual highly mobile societies would seem to be empowerment of school learners (through the

¹¹ 'Integrating content and language' (in 'higher education'), that is ILC/ILCHE are the corresponding terms used to refer to the same or similar approaches at tertiary level.



performance of scholastic tasks) to acquire subject knowledge, study skills and cognitive operations (based on verbal thought) via a foreign language, almost regardless of which particular school subject or topic may be chosen in a specific instructional setting.”

5.1. KEY ACTORS

CLIL reflects multilingual policies and the promotion of mobility and internationalisation as the ultimate goal across the educational systems. When dealing with CLIL, the responsibility of the learning process is no longer focused on the teacher, not even shared by the teacher and the learner, but affecting a much **larger number of stakeholders** (Ruiz-Garrido and Fortanet-Gómez, 2009¹²).

In fact, some of the main contributors to the success of a CLIL programme are usually **policy makers** and higher-level decision takers, external participants of the programme. As explained below, the European Union institutions have been constantly issuing principles and directives since 1982 to promote multilingualism, and, since the 1990s, they have also approved actions and projects to support CLIL. This has had an effect on national and regional governments which, in turn, have tried to persuade schools to look into the matter.

“Also essential for the successful implementation of the CLIL programme is the positive involvement of the **social environment**¹³.” CLIL has to be known by students, employers, institutions and even teachers not directly involved in the programmes.

Once a favourable atmosphere has been created, the CLIL programme has to be designed specifically for an institution. A coordinator is an essential participant in this process: a person responsible for collecting all the information for the need analysis from the external and internal participants in the programme in order to

¹² Ruiz-Garrido, M. R., and I. Fortanet-Gómez (2009), “Needs Analysis in a CLIL Context: A Transfer from ESP,” in M. Marsh, P. Mehisto, *et al.* (eds.), *CLIL Practice: Perspective from the Field*, CCN: University of Jyväskylä.

¹³ Sasidharan, P. (2012), *A Needs-Based Approach to Teaching and Learning of English for Engineering Purposes* (doctoral dissertation), National Institute of Technology Rourkela.

establish the objectives, the timing, the resources needed, etc. They are also responsible for the follow-up and constant support, as well as the assessment and final evaluation of the programme.

As internal participants in the programme, **decision takers**, that is, headmasters, headteachers and education provider management teams, need to be informed by experts about CLIL and how the programme could be developed so that they can commit themselves to support the programme.

The direct participants in the CLIL programme are teachers and students. They need to receive information and be assigned a certain role in the programme.

The figure below summarises the stakeholder's relationships in a CLIL programme (from Ruiz-Garrido and Fortanet-Gómez, 2009):

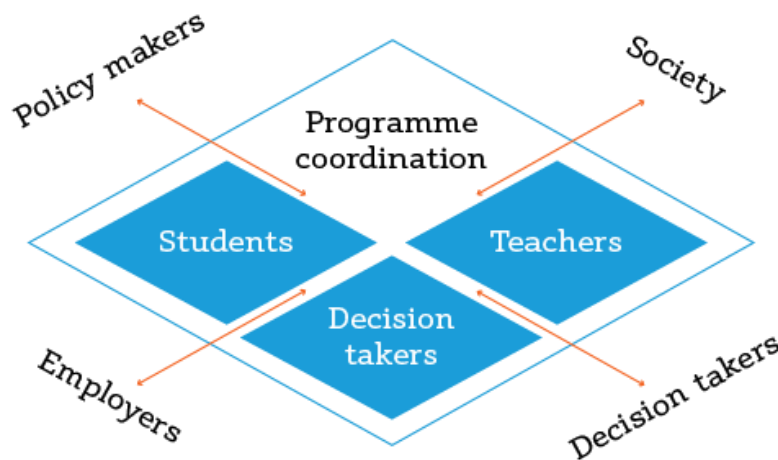


Figure developed from Ruiz-Garrido and Fortanet-Gómez, 2009.

"The Commission Staff Working Paper 'Towards more knowledge based policy and practice in education and training' (2007) identified three challenges in evidence based policy-making: knowledge creation, mediation and application.



This short report will identify the actors and institutions involved in knowledge creation (e.g., departments in higher education institutions and statistics offices), knowledge mediation (e.g. databases, advisory groups and knowledge brokers) and knowledge application (recent examples of using evidence to support policy reform).” (Eurydice, 2017)¹⁴

If we apply these challenges to the VET’s CLIL project, all three of them have been tackled throughout its duration:

- 🌿 Knowledge creation: VET’s CLIL project - MOOC, MOOC results
- 🌿 Mediation: VET’s CLIL conferences
- 🌿 Application: VET’s CLIL national/regional reports

In this sense, this report extracts conclusions from the work done so far and the sub-challenges identified within each of these fields.

Furthermore, “the actors involved in evidence-based policy-making can be divided into policy-makers (e.g. politicians/civil servants) [group 1], research providers e.g. (universities, research agencies, consultants, think tanks) [2], and other stakeholders (e.g. teachers, parents, local administrations) [3].” (Eurydice, 2017). Again, to bring these concepts closer to the VET’s CLIL project, we can identify that project partners are made up of the latter. However information has been gathered from groups 2 and 3, in order to reach group 1, represented also by EARLALL members.

5.2. EUROPEAN POLICY CONTEXT

Europe’s vision for 2025: ‘ A Europe in which learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders. A continent in which people have a strong sense of Europe’s cultural heritage and its diversity’

5.2.1. EU SUPPORT TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

¹⁴ European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice (2017), *Support Mechanisms for Evidence-based Policy-Making in Education*, Eurydice Report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.

With the objective to work towards a European Education Area by 2025, the European Commission carried out a survey recently¹⁵. More than 8,000 young people (between 15 and 30 years) across the EU were enquired about their mobility experiences and knowledge of languages, among other aspects regarding teaching and learning. The survey revealed that a first foreign language is considered a basic skill almost everywhere and that 97% of pupils learn English as a first foreign language. Learning a second language is not compulsory in all EU countries or can eventually be dropped after three to four years. It is also interesting to highlight that only 9% of young people under 15 years old speak a different language at home than at school.

At political level, language learning in the EU is contextualised under the achievement of the European Education Area by 2025: "In late 2017, Heads of State and Government discussed education and training at the Gothenburg Social Summit, guided by the Commission's communication setting out its vision for a European Education Area by 2025. This resulted in the December 2017 Council conclusions calling on Member States, the Council and the Commission to take forward the Gothenburg agenda: Based on this rich legacy, today's communication¹⁶ sets out a vision for the European Education Area (EEA), together with a reinforced approach in order to achieve it by 2025. The European Education Area also ties in with the Next Generation EU and the long-term budget of the European Union for 2021-2027.¹⁷" (from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1743)

¹⁵ Flash Eurobarometer 466 - European Education Area (March 2020 but updated information in 2021)

¹⁶ European Commission (2020) COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on achieving the European Education Area by 2025. COM (2020)625 final.

¹⁷ European Commission (2020), "Achieving a European Education Area by 2025 and resetting education and training for the digital age," press release. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1743.



Among the EEA's six dimensions, the number one dealing with 'Quality in Education and Training' holds the objective to support lifelong acquisition of language competences:

- ✦ 'Fostering language learning and multilingualism. Being able to speak different languages is a condition for studying and working abroad, and fully discover Europe's cultural diversity. It enables learners and teachers to benefit from a genuine European learning space. Valuing and mobilising learners' linguistic backgrounds.'*
- ✦ 'Supporting teachers in managing linguistic and cultural diversity in school is a key element of fostering quality in education, notably by redressing persistent deficiencies in reading literacy. Such an approach also supports increasing education outcomes of pupils and youth with a migrant background.'*

The new Erasmus+ programme covering the period 2021-2027 has a reinforced budget and provides language learning opportunities under its three main strands (Mobility - Key Action 1; Cooperation projects - Key Action 2; and Policy Reform - Key Action 3) and considers:

- ✦ Mobility as a basis for language learning: linguistic support for mobility is strengthened through online means and other forms of support.
- ✦ New cooperation projects that focus on language learning will be funded.
- ✦ There is also an increased emphasis on excellence recognition - the European Language Label - and valorisation of existing projects.

In the 2021-2022 edition, the themes for the European Language Label are:

- ✦ Enhance language learning through ICT and digital media.
- ✦ Language learning and promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.
- ✦ Professional development of language teachers.

Nevertheless, a study published by Eurydice on 26 September 2017¹⁸ about foreign languages at school in Europe indicates that Vocational Education students have less opportunities to learn two foreign languages than school pupils.

Students in general and vocational pathways tend to study the same languages. However, in terms of participation, there is a clear trend for learning fewer foreign languages in vocational education than in general education: “The participation statistics give a true reflection of the differences in language provision as set out in official curricula for general education students, on the one hand, and VET students on the other¹⁹.”

At EU level, in 2014, the proportion of the total VET population at upper secondary level learning two languages or more was 34.5%. This is nearly 20 percentage points less than their counterparts in general education. At country level, 11 education systems had at least 90 % of their general upper secondary students learning two or more foreign languages in 2014 (Belgium / Flemish Community, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Croatia, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Liechtenstein).

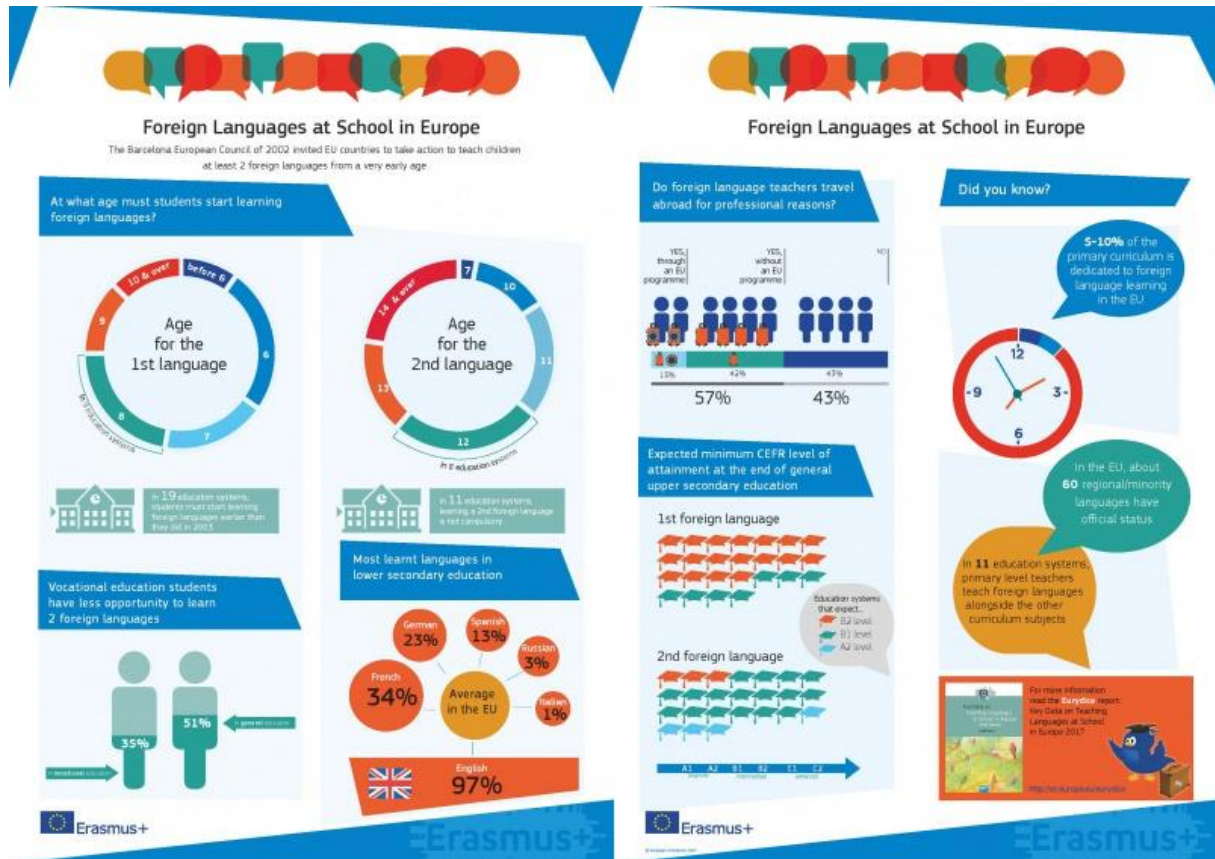
The study includes information on research works and EU policy documents. It presents a state of play of the existing policies on key aspects of foreign language teaching and concludes with further routes which could be explored to encourage language teaching at primary and secondary level in the future. Although the main focus of the report is on foreign languages, some information about the regional/minority and classical languages in the curriculum is provided.

¹⁸ ‘Key Data on teaching languages at school in Europe, 2017 edition’ Eurydice Brief. EU publications

¹⁹ European Commission (2017), “Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe – 2017 Edition,” Eurydice highlights.



The report also discusses the language support measures available for newly arrived migrant students. CLIL, as a teaching approach, is included among five key EU and national policy themes in language learning.



Infographics by Eurydice, 2017.

Current policy efforts in Europe that support the teaching of regional or minority languages in schools are also gathered in another Eurydice study released in 2019²⁰. The report presents the references made to regional or minority languages by top-level education authorities in official documents. It also illustrates some of the existing policies and measures on teaching regional or minority languages in the different European education systems.

5.2.2. CLIL METHODOLOGY IN EU DOCUMENTS

The CLIL approach has been identified as very important by the European Commission in the last decades as “it can provide effective opportunities for pupils

²⁰ ‘The Teaching of Regional or Minority Languages in Schools in Europe’ Eurydice, 2019.

to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for later use. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence in young learners and those who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education. It provides exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum, which can be of particular interest in vocational settings (European Commission, 2003)²¹. The European Commission has therefore put many efforts into promoting the training of teachers for “enhancing the language competences in general, in order to promote the teaching of non-linguistic subjects in foreign languages.”²²

Furthermore, a recent boost for the CLIL methodology was made by the European Union through the [Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages](#) (2019):

"Whereas [...]

19. Content and Language Integrated Learning, i.e. teaching subjects through a foreign language, and digital and online tools for language learning have proven efficient for different categories of learners. Language teachers across Europe could benefit from continuous professional development in both updating their digital competence and learning how they can best support their teaching practice by using different methodologies and new technologies. An inventory of open educational resources could support them in this, taking into account the work of the Council of Europe. [...]

Recommends that Member States [...]

²¹ European Commission (2003), COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004 – 2006, COM(2003) 449 final.

²² COUNCIL RESOLUTION of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism



6. Encourage research in and use of innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies, including for example the use of digital tools, intercomprehension and ways to teach subjects through a foreign language (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and innovate initial teacher education”

The abovementioned Eurydice publication on Key Data on teaching languages at school in Europe holds a specific section (III) devoted to the CLIL methodology. The report highlights that the objective of CLIL is to enhance students’ proficiency in languages other than the language of schooling. The target language in CLIL lessons is not the subject of the study but a communication vehicle to study another subject of the curriculum. The exposure to the target language is thus increased without claiming an excessive share of the school timetable.

The publication also highlights that the fact that CLIL provision exists in an education system does not necessarily mean that it is widespread within the education system. Only in Italy, Cyprus, Austria, Malta and Liechtenstein is CLIL provision available in all schools at some stage.

Furthermore, in addition to foreign languages, regional or minoritarian languages are also taught through CLIL in some cases.

5.2.3. OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Outside the EU’s work, but with impact at European level, there has been a lot of research and publications carried out by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)²³ from the Council of Europe that recognises Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and bilingual education as being increasingly popular across Europe. The ECML supports CLIL teachers and teacher trainers not only to take account of and strengthen the language component in subject learning but to focus on the development of cognitive and academic literacies.

The ECML publications and projects devoted to CLIL include ‘Curriculum development for Content and Language Integrated Learning’ (CLIL CD) and its publication ‘The European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education, Content and

²³ [ECML/CELV > Thematic areas > Content and Language Integrated Learning](#)

language integrated learning through languages other than English' (CLIL Start) and for their further development, CLIL Go, where the methodological skills needed by CLIL teachers are described and illustrated, and where there is a more theoretical approach to CLIL teaching. They are all available on the Center's website (see footnote 13).

5.3. PROJECT PARTNERS NATIONAL/REGIONAL CONTEXTS

5.3.1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Complementing the insights provided above from Euridyce (2017), below a comparative table related to the implementation of CLIL at national/regional level is presented according to the data gathered among country/region reports coming from Flanders, the Basque Country, Catalonia, Finland and the Netherlands. The aim of this table is to compare the different European regions to have an idea of the level of implementation of CLIL.

Country /region	Flanders	Basque Country	Catalonia	Seinäjoki	Netherlands
Subjects currently proposed in CLIL for VET	Hairdressing, beauty care, waiter, chef, restaurant & kitchen, personal care, tourism. However, all subjects are possible and the region aims at increasing the scope of VET subjects covered by CLIL.	Each training organisation decides on the most suitable subject-s	Technical English subjects (EOP/ESP); learning outcomes in a professional module; project module.	Nursing, Business & administration, agricultural and surface treatment	Each education can choose the most suitable subjects.



Representation of CLIL in VET	Under-represented	Number of students is quite low as student's language level is often lower than required	Quite developed	Quite developed	In 2017, 21 VET schools provided 39 two-language education courses through CLIL
Languages available for CLIL	French, English, German	English and French	English, French, German	English (in other regions in Finland, also French, German, Russian)	English, German
Time of the course in a different language	Maximum of 20% of non-language lessons can be taught in CLIL.	Depends on the number of subjects offered by each organisation: 1 subject per school year avg.	Technical English/French subject (EOP/ESP) (99h) in some the VET fields.	Key concepts taught in Finnish/English, 80% of teaching in English	At least 50% of teaching time is offered in English
Level required for teachers	C1 Level	- Higher VET: C1 level - Intermediate VET: B2 level	Minimum B2 level in English and 90 hours of training in CLIL	Each education provider can decide what the regulations are concerning the teachers' language level. The education provider makes sure that the teacher's language skills are sufficient	- B2 level The subject teacher works together with the target language teacher.
Level required for students	- Enough mastery of the official school language (generally Dutch) - Pupils must commit themselves to remain a full year in CLIL.	- Higher VET courses, 3 options: 1. B2 certificate 2. English language mark over 7 (7/10) in the Baccaulaureate's 2nd year. 3. Entry exam (level B2) - Intermediate VET courses: 2 options: 1. B2 certificate	Minimum A2/B1 level in English, French or German	Pupils participate in an aptitude test.	n/a

		2. Entry exam (level B1)			
Objectives to be achieved by students?	<p>Foreign language targets are set by the institution according to the abilities of the students, but they never have an impact on their final results.</p> <p>Regarding the subject objectives, the students should attain the goals set in the subject curriculum.</p>		<p>-Improve communicative competence in a foreign language.</p> <p>-Develop key skills for the 21st century (basics, thinking and attitude, or personal).</p>		Students reach a level of language proficiency corresponding to level B2 or level B1
Common framework for the development of a CLIL training methodology	<p>Little is stated regarding the didactic CLIL skills and training. Schools must explain in the application form how the teachers can become proficient in the CLIL methodology, but they do not have to present any certificate of mastery of the CLIL didactics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers who meet the requirements, will go through a training period during the academic year. - Linguistic evaluation/accreditation of the teaching staff will be carried out both prior and during the training period. - Training courses organised to train technical teachers to teach technical subjects in English 	<p>During the Generació the Plurilingüe (GEP) plan (2017-18): teachers of the participating schools receive training on CLIL.</p> <p>-School management teams receive guidelines for the implementation of the multilingual programme in the centre, the design of an action plan and the preparation of a final report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each education provider can decide for themselves what the regulations are concerning the teachers' language level - The education provider is responsible for making sure that the teacher's language skills are sufficient 	<p>- Teachers ensure a balance between the various language skills and choose professionally oriented teaching methods from English-speaking countries. If the material does not match the level of the students, it is tailor made by the teacher.</p>
Is there any financial support at national/regional to implement CLIL?	<p>No financial or extra staffing support is given to schools. Nor do pedagogic guidance services receive</p>		<p>- In 2005: Department of Education created an experimental programme in foreign languages (PELE, Programa</p>		<p>- Staff members are facilitated to prepare and implement the bilingual VET. However, there is no financial support</p>



	any extra manpower to support the experiment.		<p>experimental de llengües estrangeres, 2005-2011)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PELE offered 300 annual school grants to carry out CLIL, project work, or activities for oral skills development - One action allowed schools to have grants to take students abroad or to start a PELE project 		<p>at national or regional level: time and money investments come from the school itself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The team is partly responsible for a coherent curriculum. -Use is made of material that has been specifically translated and/or developed for bilingual VET.
Regulation progress of CLIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Education who communicated in 2013 the CLIL-decree which allowed schools to offer CLIL classes to the pupils of secondary education - Schools need to fill out an extensive application form which contains many criteria - The form must be approved by CLIL committee and by the Ministry of Education 	<p>The multilingualism experience started in 2006 and is ruled by an administrative resolution published every year, based on the current Basque Vocational Training Plan, and following the Law on Vocational Training which features plurilingualism in the training processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since the late 1990's, recognised authorities in CLIL were visiting Catalonia annually to observe school experiences - The Department of Education decided to create the experimental programme in foreign languages (PELE, Programa experimental de llengües estrangeres) that was carried out from 2005 to 2011. - English already introduced since 2006 for VET diplomas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CLIL teaching started in 1987 - VET provider offers practical nurse training in English since 2010 - Popularity of the CLIL method has grown -2012: 41 municipalities provide CLIL teaching in Finland on a larger or smaller scale for different pupil levels and age groups 	<p>For the Netherlands in VET; Nuffic lists schools that are involved in CLIL/bilingual education. There is a list of requirements followed by audits. Schools join the bilingual-network.</p>
Obstacles faced by CLIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High level of language for teachers - Lack of financial support - Workload for teachers and 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the number of CLIL quality materials ready to use. Although there is an on-line platform in Catalonia with CLIL class material, it does not cover all the needs of our 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More municipalities would like to implement CLIL, but lack of teachers - Need to develop teachers' skills in CLIL and empower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More and more schools that use CLIL as a method within VET. A clear list has not yet been made. - No clear data. - Lack of financial


	<p>schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heaviness of application form for schools 		<p>teaching staff</p>	<p>them to try new methodologies and tools for a more advanced CLIL</p>	<p>support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workload for teachers and schools
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Some countries are more advanced concerning the implementation of CLIL in VET. Since the CLIL methodology was developed in Finland in the 1980s, its popularity has grown. Catalonia developed the teaching of CLIL in the late 1990s' and offers VET diplomas in English since 2006.

A major fact to take into account is also the political environment related to languages. In Spain, both regional languages and Spanish are taught: there is already a bilingual tradition. In Belgium, there is no such thing as 'Belgian CLIL,' as education is a regional matter and therefore the Dutch, French and German communities of the country have different regulations regarding CLIL. It must be noted that the countries/regions that already have a bilingual tradition are more eager to develop CLIL than the other countries/regions.

6. LOOKING FORWARD: AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH IN EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY AND EXPLOITATION OPPORTUNITIES IN OTHER SECTORS

From the previous statements and analysis, the following key areas remain unexplored to some extent by the academia regarding CLIL:

-  Teacher CLIL-specific training and upskilling, for which different options can be considered, including formal education (HE), but also non-formal learning through training courses and innovative options such as microcredentials. The VET's CLIL MOOC already provides a first step in this sense, but further options and impact analysis need to be explored.



- ✦ The use of CLIL in adult learning, in-company training strategies, and other education areas beyond formal education remains unexplored.
- ✦ General education is the main target of academic research, while VET and HE are gaining progressive attention. However, progress remains to be made in the area, especially taking into account variables such as:
 - Specific career paths and sectors, with a focus on hard skills' acquisition.
 - The regional/local component, with special attention to multilingual territories that already count on bilingual education programmes.

Lastly, as already identified by Majhanovich and Deyrich (2017), “while the CLIL approach to language learning is now generally considered an asset for social inclusion, more work is needed to employ CLIL techniques for vocational training. More training for language educators in the use of CLIL is needed both for linguistic purposes as well as vocational and skills training. Although teacher training in CLIL methods is well supported at the policy level, this has not played out sufficiently well in practice, and further research is recommended to explore the inconsistencies in practice and to study how actual language teacher training could change²⁴”. However, policy reviews show that while theoretical support is provided, especially in EU documents, further efforts are needed in a coherent approach to the implementation of CLIL, particularly at national and regional level.

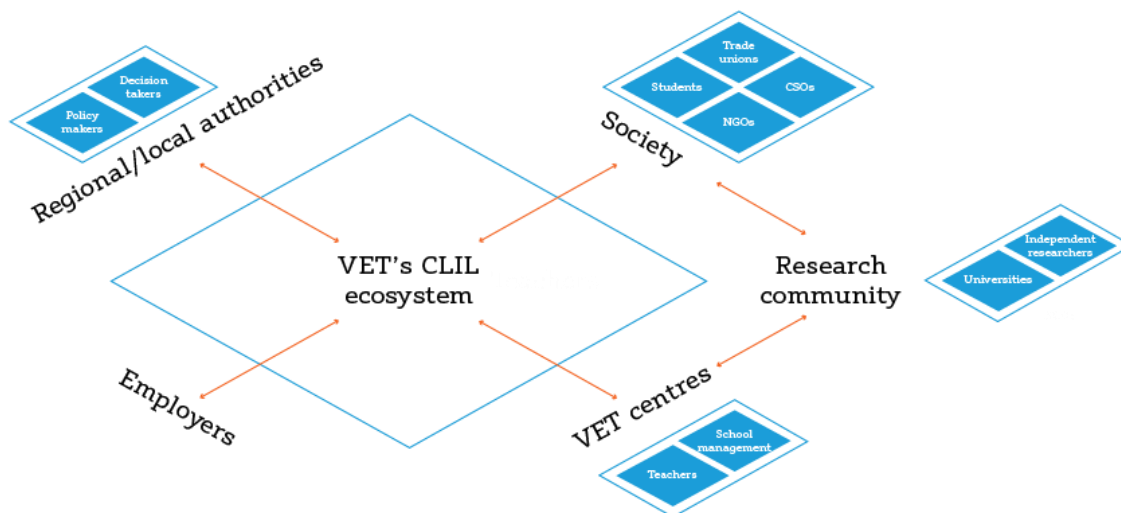
7. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AT EU, NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Taking into account the actors presented in section 5.1, the building of regional and local CLIL ecosystems that integrate all relevant parties into a space

²⁴ Majhanovich, S. and M.-C. Deyrich (2017), “Language learning to support active social inclusion: Issues and challenges for lifelong learning,” *International Review of Education*, 63, pp. 435-452.


of exchange and dialogue to boost CLIL in VET is a target to be considered and further explored at European, national and regional/local level. Building on the quadruple helix fostered by the Centres of Vocational Excellence of the European Commission, the ecosystem shall include representatives from the four axes (authorities, society, employers, VET centres), but a fifth element regarding the research and teacher training community is added.

In this sense, cooperation can be fostered through funding programmes such as Erasmus+ but also through initiatives like events and smaller-scale projects at all levels.



With regard to specific recommendations, we shall focus for the purpose of this paper on a) Education provider managers as the programme coordinating force, and b) policy makers as being the ultimate enablers of the implementation of innovation in education.

7.1. EDUCATION PROVIDER MANAGERS / PROGRAMME COORDINATION

-  Keep constant contact with the regional and local authorities, as well as with other actors (companies, parent associations, CSOs, etc.) in order to identify key areas for CLIL implementation and anticipate a good reception of the



methodology among the local education community, including students and parents.

- ✦ Engage in international projects, with special attention to Erasmus+, to exchange best practices and learn from other VET centres, but also from other levels of education (e.g. general education, adult learning and education, etc.).
- ✦ Provide additional language support for students in lower levels so that they can reach the language level required to join the CLIL classes or feel safe and successful in them.
- ✦ Facilitate teaching schedules so that teachers can take part in CLIL training activities.
- ✦ Allocating funds for the development of CLIL programmes in VET.







7.2. POLICY MAKERS

7.2.1. EU LEVEL

- ✦ Foster a multi-level approach with a practical view beyond general support.
- ✦ Acknowledge the overlaps between multilingual territories and foreign language learning, and develop specific recommendations in the field.
- ✦ Finance projects such as VET's CLIL and make language learning a priority of education programmes.
- ✦ Combining CLIL with a lifelong learning approach, taking into account also non-formal and informal education.

7.2.2. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL/LOCAL LEVEL

- ✦ Include the commitment to language skill improvement and support for the CLIL methodology in legal texts, acknowledging European recommendations
- ✦ Making funds available for the development of CLIL programmes in VET.

-  Improve coordination at regional level of CLIL courses and foster teacher networking and community-building.
-  Facilitate training opportunities for teachers and trainers on CLIL, including different levels of expertise, in order to foster teacher upskilling and reskilling according to the latest developments in the field.
-  Widen the scope of education sectors and areas where CLIL can be implemented.
-  Take part and support research studies on CLIL at different levels of education with specific attention to VET.
-  Improve inter-regional cooperation at European level to exchange CLIL best practices and organise joint initiatives for teacher training, innovation, and student exchange.
-  Engage local and regional actors in VET's CLIL programmes, facilitating the involvement of all skills ecosystem axes in the learning process of students and fostering CLIL also in in-company training programmes.



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<https://projectes.xtec.cat/clil4vet/>

#VETsCLIL