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## Newsletter L2paths - May 2014

### Pathways to Host Country Languages for Migrants

Learning the local language is just one of the challenges for people moving to a country for the first time.

Many EU countries offer some kind of assistance to migrants but local language-learning systems can nonetheless be hard to navigate for newcomers. Ill-adapted or overpriced courses, lack of guidance or mentorship and poor ICT skills are all issues that can stand in the way of migrants finding a course that is adapted to their needs.

**The aim of L2Paths is to work towards a creative approach to these issues and enable the implementation of concrete language-learning solutions in each partner country.**

In response to the myriad of language learning options available, some UK universities have set up “**language advice centres**” where learners can discuss their objectives with a trained advisor. The student is then provided with a **personal learning plan** based on his or her **needs, goals and personal circumstances**.

L2Paths intends to mainstream this concept and enable the implementation of language advice centres in **local communities**, with the aim of eventually making such a service part of partner country national integration strategies. Language advisors in existing centres currently base their evaluation of learners’ needs on their own resources and methodologies, while this project aims to create a **standardised**

**Needs Analysis format**, based on existing resources such as the **CEFR** (Common European Framework of Reference for languages, a guideline used to evaluate and describe language-learning levels across Europe) and **Europass** (issued by European training and education authorities and allowing users to make their skills and qualifications clearly understood across Europe).

## The Pathfinder System

The Pathfinder system will take into account **various important aspects** for language learning. These include location, time available, objectives and past learning experiences, current skills according to the CEFR, available learning environments (i.e. adult/vocational education, formal, non-formal or informal, online resources etc) and will include a **planning and tracking tool** that will allow learners to constantly evaluate their progress.

### What does this mean for learners?

Migrants will have access to **independent and unbiased advice** from qualified advisors who will be able to provide them with detailed information about local language learning options. The Pathfinder system will allow student and advisor to draw up a personal learning plan that includes **progress monitoring**.

## The Difficulties of Finding a Language Course: A Case Study from Berlin

Nellie moved from her native Poland to Berlin in 2013. She had studied German several years beforehand and had a basic grasp of the language but wished to brush up her skills. She visited various language schools from a list provided by the Job Centre and took a placement test in each one, but was obliged to wait several months before finding a school that could offer her a course adapted to her level.

### What's next for L2Paths?

**Needs analysis:** All partner organisations have carried out their local needs

analysis and interpreted the results. Students of foreign languages, adult education centres, vocational education institutions and universities were contacted and invited to give their opinion on language advice. Their views will be taken into account in the next steps of the project.

**Project meetings:** The kick-off meeting took place in Galway (Ireland) in November, allowing partners to exchange ideas and brainstorm about the management of the project. The project consortium is now looking forward to their next meeting in Potsdam (Germany) on the 27th and 28th of May.

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Translex  
58 Dominick Street Lower  
0000 Galway  
Ireland  
l2paths\_cr@vcat.de

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