

# LEi Xchange



# Seminar

Language Exchange International

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## Introduction

LEI Xchange Seminar was the platform for sharing and improving the Language Exchange Network.

During 4 days in Lyon, France, leaders and participants of language exchange groups talked with one another, sharing best practice and discussing and debating about multilingualism, volunteering, European identity, interculturality and social integration.

A lot of activities were organized such as roundtable discussions, debates, working groups on specific topics, as well as sightseeing, language games, etc.

This seminar aimed to create a better connection between the language exchange groups around Europe, to improve the links between the groups and to create a good framework for further joint projects.

This seminar also aimed to celebrate the European Day of Languages.

5 countries took part to this seminar (France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, United Kingdom).

### What is LEI?

It is a network of language clubs from all over the world

<http://www.lei-web.com/>

Language Exchange International on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/LEI.Language.Exchange.International>

*This project is supported by the Youth in Action program of the European Union*



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## LEi Xchange Seminar - Documentation

## Programme

lei.is.international@gmail.com, Jours fériés en France, Numéros de semaine

ven. 23 sept. – lun. 26 sept. 2011 (Paris)

	ven. 23/9	sam. 24/9	dim. 25/9	lun. 26/9
				Semaine 39 de 2011
08:00				Breakfast / Departures 08:00 - 12:00
09:00		Breakfast 08:30 - 09:15	Breakfast 08:30 - 09:15	
10:00		Introduction to Language Clubs 09:30 - 11:00	LEi General Assembly 09:30 - 11:00	
11:00		Break 11:00 - 11:30	Break 11:00 - 11:30	
12:00	Arrivals / Lunch 12:00 - 14:30	Exchange Best Practices / Preparation of a joint event 11:30 - 13:00	Workshop organized by the participants 11:30 - 13:00	
13:00		Lunch 13:00 - 14:30	Lunch 13:00 - 14:30	
14:00				
15:00	Last arrivals 14:30 - 16:00	Introduction to the topic of volunteering 14:30 - 16:00	Preparation of a joint event 2 14:30 - 16:00	
16:00	Break 16:00 - 16:30	Break 16:00 - 16:30	Break 16:00 - 16:30	
17:00	Presentations / Expectations and needs 16:30 - 18:00	Activity about Volunteering with Romans International 16:30 - 18:00	Preparation of a joint event 3 16:30 - 18:30	
18:00	Break 18:00 - 18:30	Break 18:00 - 18:30		
	18:00 - 18:30 Break 18:30 - 19:30 Dinner 19:30 - 24:00 Lyon Sightseeing	18:00 - 18:30 Break 18:30 - 19:30 Dinner 19:30 - 24:00 Intercultural Evenings / Cultural Performances	18:30 - 19:30 Dinner 19:30 - 24:00 Good Bye Party	

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## Presentation of the Language Clubs

Please refer to LEi website for clubs participating description.

Cafe Polyglotte Calais
Extreme Language Exchange - Rome
Happy People 31 - Toulouse
Happy People 26 - Valence
Happy People 69 - Lyon
Tandem Evening – Warsaw
Budapest Melting Pot
Cafe Polyglot Falmouth

Presentations have been done either as an oral description or using power point. This workshop showed us that groups were running successfully, using a variety of formats.

- Some meet monthly representing two languages, others meeting weekly representing as many languages as possible.
- Some organise special events in different locations throughout the city
- Organisation of 10 minutes face to face exchanges in two languages (e.g. Italian/English).
- The main method of organisation was by informal gathering in a cafe/bar/pub with a language per table.
- Some groups manage to gather 100's of participants while others gather 20 or so. The size of town/city makes a difference.
- One group has also established an online community where people can exchange their opinion on a vast variety of subjects; many languages are represented on this forum.
- Quite a few of those groups have emerged because of certain frustration in the lack of cultural/ languages events organised; or difficulties in finding polyglot interlocutors.
- Others have decided to set up a language club after attending one elsewhere.
- Groups have mentioned their difficulty in attracting different age groups. The groups mainly attract the younger generation except for a few of them.
- Most of them organise extra activities outside the weekly meetings.
- Some invite guest speakers.



It was an interesting session during which participants were able to take ideas from other groups to implement within their groups.

After this session, we felt we could recommend those groups to anyone going to the places where those groups are present which fulfils one of the aims of the seminar; getting to know each other better to improve the links within the federation.

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## Exchange of Best Practice

During this workshop, the participants were divided into 4 groups exchanging their ideas and feelings about the following topics related to the LEI committees:

- New Cities
- Fundraising
- Communication
- Best Practice

The participants came up with lots of ideas and feedbacks on these topics.

### ***New Groups***

- **What does LEI offer?**
  - Formal entity to provide funds
  - Contact with other group leaders
  - Share best practice
  - Publicity (list and map of the groups)
  - Organising joint events
  - Promotion of destination towns
  - Highlighting of diversity on a local level
  - Increased online presence through Facebook & LEI website
  - Recognition for a group that they belong to an international organisation
  - Formal help to start/maintain a group
  - Training materials : handbook
- **How to contribute to LEI**
  - Calendar of events
  - Database of prior events
  - Sharing knowhow with other groups
  - Using own work experience to benefit LEI in some way
- **How to attract language exchange groups?**
  - Researchers in each language/country / Coordinator by country who gives contacts to the creator of a new group
  - Word of mouth
  - Help group to set up (warning of another group creation, other groups of the same country can help the new creator)



### **Proposals**

- To regroup all these ideas we have to create a specific tab on the website: how to create a new group? To allow people to register and say I want to create my own group in this city etc. This tab should provide all the information above and a registration form to fill in with the basic information the coordinators have to know to contact the person, to create a warning message and promote the new group.

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## Communication

- **Language Exchange Meetings**

- Stressing the fact that local groups are a part of a wider network – LEI (this could be achieved by displaying a LEI flag, logo or poster in the place where the meetings take place and by sparing 5 minutes of every meeting for 'LEI announcements')
- Efforts to establish positive relationship with student organizations (esp. ones for Erasmus students) and other groups that include international members in particular city (mutual help and support instead of competition)
- More events focused on particular aspects of culture (e.g. national cuisine event, films event, music event)

- **Strengthening the connections between LEI members**

- Network projects (e.g. short clip contest, photo contest, 'blackboard project')
- Skype conferences (e.g. seminars devoted to different languages, seminars devoted to different culture, seminars devoted to intercultural communication)
- Exchanging skills and knowledge – a forum for LEI members to ask for help (language, cultural knowledge)
- Divided into 'a family of websites' connected to each other, rather than one LEI website (that is overwhelming)
- Separation of resources
- Mailing list
- Articles from different countries (segregated according to topics)
- Archive for old articles
- Google calendar for LEI events
- Wikipedia for LEI documents
- Training videos section (e.g. how to create a language exchange group)
- Looking for partners – link exchange



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## Fundraising

- Applying for funding to local consulates (funds for promoting the country in an international environment')
- Local cuisine fairs
- Adding a % to the prices of drinks and snacks on language exchange meetings (tbd)
- Barter agreements with different institutions
- Piggy bank for money

## Best practices

- Step by step guidebook – how to start a language club
- Book exchange – a shelf in a bar
- Preparing clear rules for newcomers – welcome table
- Sharing things – books, culture (evenings), music
- Advertising: word of mouth, universities, practicing language for free, making friends makes you like the city, media
- Linking with local centres
- Taking parts in contests together
- Going to a common performance, e.g. drama students in a need of audience
- 
- **What was working well in the club?**
  - Dinner parties, dishes and desserts from different countries (Calais, Valence)
  - Birthday party of the club (Budapest Melting Pot)
  - Sightseeing and guided tour in the 8<sup>th</sup> district of Budapest
  - Poetry evening (Budapest)
  - Artistic night (Budapest)
  - Multilingualism (Finnish text, finding out what was said in certain paragraphs)
  - Karaoke night (Valence)
  - 20 kms bike tour (yet to come but also in Valence)
- **Recommendations**
  - Wine festivals
  - Organize a barbecue once a year
  - Create a step-by-step guide book (on how to advertise etc)
  - Training videos
  - Sharing things (bookshelf, food, music)
  - Set of rules (flags on tables etc)
  - Advertising (tell everyone that the club exists)
  - Get to love the city that hosts the language club, linking with local events
  - Taking part in contests
  - Creating artistic events (gallery, theatre etc), connected with fundraising
  - Theme projects in every country shared in the LEi website
  - Skills market place (UK)
  - Welcome table
  - What's happening in the whole world in 5 minutes (using Skype)





## Volunteering

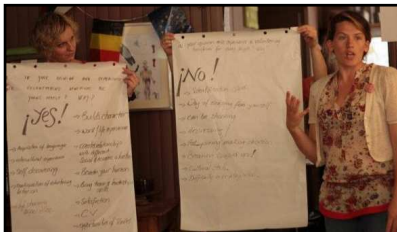
### Examples of voluntary jobs in different European countries:

- **France**
  - Give food through the Resto du Coeur in winter
  - Red Cross
  - Children summer clubs (BAFA)
  - Emmaus
  - Tutoring to help people to organise their lives
  - Help the elderly
  - Organic farms (WWOOF)
  - Caritas
  
- **Hungary**
  - Teach English to homeless
  - Help NGO'S
  - Youth work through exchange
  - Language clubs
  - Help in hospice centre
  - Help provided to Rom communities
  - Organic farms (WWOOF)
  - Clown doctors
  
- **Italy**
  - Repainting of Rome
  - Organic farms (WWOOF)
  
- **Poland**
  - WOSP
  - Youth work
  - Mentoring for Erasmus student
  - During Music / cultural events
  - Euro 2012
  - Animal shelter
  - LGBT movement
  
- **UK**
  - Charity shops
  - Visiting the elderly
  - Medical volunteering
  - Environmental projects
  - Organic farms (WWOOF)
  - Beach cleaning
  - Bring hot meals to persons in need (Meals on Wheels)
  - Volunteering in school

## European Voluntary Service

*This workshop was moderated by Andreea Cauea from Romans International, EVS organization in the Drôme department.*

### In your opinion and experience is volunteering beneficial for young people?

YES	NO
Builds character	Identification issues
Give work/life experience	Way of escaping oneself
Creates relationship with different social / economic situation	Can be a shocking experience
Broaden your horizon	Give an excuse to postpone decision making
Bring team / leadership skills	Can break couples up
Satisfaction	Cultural chill
Good on C.V	Difficulty in reintegration after such experience
Opportunities to travel	
Acquisition of a new language	
Intercultural experience	
Self discovery	
More chance of continuation of volunteering later in life	
Life changing experience	

### What do you know about the European Voluntary Service (EVS)?

- Open mainly to EU members through Youth in Action programme
- Coordinate the organisations and volunteers to match them up at the best of their abilities.
- For under 30's
- Language course provided
- Promotional website about their activities:
- [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/european-voluntary-service\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/european-voluntary-service_en.htm)
- They make sure that the volunteer receive from the organisation he/she is working for provide accommodation, food and pocket-money.
- It is a proven organisation
- They provide mentoring/consulting
- Depending in countries but set hours of work are required



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## What would be the benefits of hosting a foreign volunteer in your organisation?

- Bring new ideas and skills
- Improve networking and communication (local/international)
- Help to handle a project
- Depending of the level, can help to structure the organisation such as Project Manager
- Cultural activities from their native countries
- Free motivated labour
- Can open minds and help to erase stereotypes
- Bring new ideas in problem solving

## What would be your responsibilities as a hosting organization for a foreign volunteer?

- Giving tasks at their level of skills
- Mentoring/guidance: professionally & socially
- Introduction to the culture/language
- Providing accommodation, health care, food, pocket money
- Giving feedback, having structured progress planned
- Motivating
- Promoting volunteering – making a journal

## What should you do when the volunteer arrives?

1. Find a flat
2. Public transportation pass
3. Take to language club
4. Explain organization rules
5. Sight-see in the city
6. Useful addresses and numbers
7. Mobile phone
8. Basic language
9. Free time activities
10. Insure safety and security



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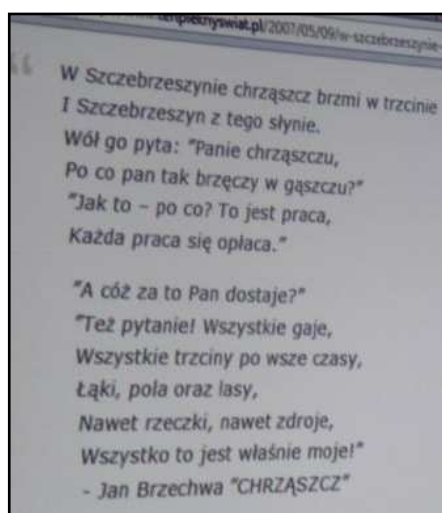
## Intercultural Evening – Celebrations of the European Day of Languages

*During this evening, several activities have been prepared to celebrate the European Day of Languages.*

### Hungarian Tongue twister



### Polish Poetry



### Multilingual Karaoke



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## Preparation of LEi joint events

*To motivate the audience, we made them do some warm up exercises; for both the brain and the body. During the first part of the workshop, we reminded people about the aims so that they can relate the events to those aims.*

*After we presented the two projects to the participants, we emphasized that we needed to come out of the workshop with very concrete projects to implement on a decided timescale. The participants worked in two groups; to brainstorm on a big European scale event and on a small international scale event.*

*After the exercise, all the participants gathered together to present each event and vote which ones have to be implemented. Below I shall describe the small scale event part of the workshop.*

### Ideas for a small event:

- Artistic workshop with a thing from a specific country – e.g. pisanki from Poland for Easter
- Speak on an important topic – cultural differences, stereotypes tolerance
- Bake – bread day
- Music – folk songs exchange
- Photo walk – looking for foot marks, strange words in language
- Common music video – line sung by a club
- City presentation
- Singing in each country
- A traditional recipe on video in each country
- An international quiz with questions made by every country
- LEi Eurovision Contest
- Cooking seminar
- Sport meeting
- Food exhibition
- Video contest – Disney song
- LEi Flashmob
- Specific event around the Olympic games
- Objects and stories



### Ideas for a big event:

- Creative exchange – making videos of legends
- Video map – videos on cities/towns
- Volunteering for a common cause, e.g. migrants
- Promoting languages and cultures among local society
- Language camp
- Seminar on NGOs – managing, fundraising, obtaining volunteers
- Sports event (Football European Championship / Olympic games)
- Europe Trip
- Language Music Festival
- European Capital of Culture
- Chocolate Festival
- Big Eurovision event
- Cooking Seminar

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## ***Small scale event***

**Title:** LEi FLASH MOB singing a song famous worldwide and easily translated

**Date:** March 2012 (chosen as it will be a mid season in the north and south hemisphere)

**Aims and goals:** Promote language diversity

**Expected results:**

- To be viewed by millions on You Tube
- Increase memberships in each language groups participating

**Press coverage**

- Have an average estimation of participants mobilising for the event

**Countries:** All countries represented in the federation

**Follow up:** Showing video clips of the flash mob from around the world

**Role of LEi organisers:**

- Provide advice sheet to each LEi group
- Promote and coordinate the event
- Be able through Skype and email to answer and queries

**Communication:**

Internally: through Skype meetings and emails

Externally: create links with Town Hall, police, media and other organisations.

**Things to discuss:**

- Song chosen by vote
- Copyrights
- Partners
- Calendar
- LEi's flag
- Event's title



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## Large scale LEi event

**When:** between May-Sept 2012

**Title:** Language Fair-Camp

**Location possible:** France, Germany, Poland, Hungary

**Date-Duration:** 5+2 +study visit

**Goals:** include local community, (e.g. teaching English) promoting languages/interculturality/cultural diversity

**Outcomes/Results:** Share Europe with locals

**Preparation:** till December 2011: Map - founding or apply, find participants

Till March 2012 : get funds - have date of study visit, find –choose participants

**Countries involved:** Poland, Hungary, France UK, Italy, Germany, Spain

**Description of the action:** Language Fair

**Evaluation/follow up:** Last day evaluation,-questionnaire; film presentation of the camp, local media involved somehow

**Role of LEi organisers:** Planning

**Role of Lei Members+ other participants in Lyon:** ideas, taking active part in the camp, finding location, administrative stuff, contact other group members

**Communication:** Mail, media, word's mouth

**Funding:** Donations, EU, local community, sponsors, schools



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## LEi Xchange Seminar - Documentation

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
+1 study visit Plans and steps Hunt game preparation Contact media Participants bring stuff for garage sale events Cooking for sponsors Looking for facilities	Icebreakers Hunt game Divide into groups: teacher/logistics, facilitators, Video cams Sport group Cooking Promoters	Energizers/reports Preparing Lunch Preparing Dinner FUN!	Preparing Lunch Preparing Dinner FUN!	LEi meeting + preparation for 2013  EXCURTION	FAIR

Partners involved:

Local schools (possible venue?), local language schools, local council, local companies, local media.

EU: DG of programme, multilingualism acquisition

**FAIR:**

Stalls: countries, themes

video group

message corner

teaching

(courses and games)

cooking

garage sale

Lei donations

sports (outside)

LEi suggestion board

Technical

After: karaoke, dance, music

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## Good Bye Dinner

*The Seminar ended with a good bye dinner in a restaurant in Lyon.*



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