



Autumn School

Blended Intensive Programme

# Promoting Intercomprehension and Multilingualism in Higher Education

**Virtual Session: Monday, 13 November 2023**

**Face-to-face Seminar: Tuesday, 21 November - Saturday, 25 November 2023**

Organised by:

SOFIA  
UNIVERSITY



ST. KLIMENT  
OHRIDSKI  
1888

In collaboration with:

AUF



ANIME  
Academic Network  
on Inclusiveness, Multilingualism  
and Excellence



Erasmus+

## **FORMAT**

The Autumn School "Promoting Intercomprehension and Multilingualism in Higher Education" will take place as a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), a new mobility format offered by the Erasmus+ 2021/2027 programme.

A BIP alternates virtual activities and short-term physical mobility, which integrates teaching and training activities and seeks to achieve the following aims:

- Develop new knowledge or specialise in or outside your area of expertise,
- Share a unique experience abroad,
- Discover physical mobility in areas where it is limited or for those who do not wish to go abroad for a long period of time,
- Meet new people or strengthen professional relationships.

As organising institution, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski covers the costs linked to the programme, with the exception of transport, meals and accommodation which are covered by partner institutions through Erasmus+ grants paid to participants.

## **TARGET AUDIENCE**

- Academic, administrative and technical staff, students (all levels), from different linguistic contexts,
- Participants are expected to speak either French or English as their first or second/foreign language.

## **WHY MULTILINGUALISM?**

Since ancient times, the Tower of Babel has signified the existence of a multitude of languages all over the world. This metaphor aside, linguistic variety poses a number of questions related to language learning skills, to the interpersonal and social aspects of verbal interaction, to the mutual influence of different languages, to education, social order and other topics of theoretical and practical interest.

Not only was multilingualism common in a historical perspective but today the trends of linguistic contact and interaction on a personal and societal level are made more prominent as the processes of globalisation intensify.

A person's linguistic experience is inextricable from his or her cultural context - from the language spoken at home through the language of the local community and society to the languages of other peoples (studied at school or university or acquired through direct communication).

## **WHAT IS INTERCOMPREHENSION?**

Intercomprehension is a relatively new discipline in the field of applied linguistics. It appears on the border of natural and social reality, on the one hand, and sociopolitical liberalism and philosophical pragmatism, on the other and it has special value in the practice of language teaching and learning and, more broadly, in communicating across borders, languages and cultures in various contexts. Put in simple terms, intercomprehension allows people to effectively communicate with each other even when each of them speaks his or her first language. It naturally occurs in situations that require communication in different languages and helps people to acquire partial linguistic competence.

## **THE AUTUMN SCHOOL**

“Promoting Intercomprehension and Multilingualism in Higher Education” is organised by Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and devoted to multilingualism in a Bulgarian context and to promoting awareness of the Bulgarian language (regarded as lesser spoken) on part of speakers of other languages.

It is part of the AUF CO//ECTIF 2023 MUDEXI project, Action N°4, and is open to students, academic and administrative staff members from partner EU universities.

Intercomprehension has already been exploited for the three major groups of European languages: Romance, Germanic and Slavic. The school will seek to apply intercomprehension between two or three languages of small circulation (such as Bulgarian, and Romanian among others), and two languages of wide circulation (French and English) and is expected to pilot a model to be multiplied in further contexts.

This school aims to:

- Enhance participants' understanding of multilingualism and intercomprehension,
- Provide participants with linguistic tools necessary to access the meaning of simple messages written in Bulgarian and transfer this experience to accessing other less widely spoken languages with the help of either English or French,
- Create conditions to reflect on and discuss the value of multilingualism and intercomprehension in a personal, professional and academic context,
- Foster intercultural communication and mutual understanding.

## **PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME**

### Online Session (2 Hours)

Monday, 13 November 2023

10.00 – 12.00 CET / 11.00 – 13.00 EET

### Physical Activities in Sofia, Bulgaria (5 Days)

📍 Main Building of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd, Sofia & Francophone Centre, North Wing, Floor 4, Rectorate, 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd, Sofia Francophonie Centre, floor 4, North Wing

*Beware this Blended Intensive Programme will take place from Tuesday to Saturday included. Recommended travel dates are Monday, 20 November for arrival; and Sunday, 26 November for departure.*

Tuesday, 21 November 2023

#### **Morning session**

09.00-12.00

#### **Welcome and introductions**

Rectorate (Sofia University Main Building) guided tour

#### **Afternoon session**

14.00-17.00

**Keynote lectures:** A short theoretical overview of Multilingualism and Intercomprehension

👉 Prof. Dr. Georgi Zhechev, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philologies, Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria

👉 Lecturer TBC

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

#### **Morning session**

09.00-12.00

**A general presentation of intercomprehension techniques and explanation of Bulgarian language elements**, level A0 – A1 – A2, selected according to their effectiveness in facilitating access to meaning and (positive) language transfer, i.e. understanding by correctly identifying assumed (unfamiliar segments, words and spelling) and inferring meaning, making connections, associations of meaning, etc.

#### **Afternoon session**

14.00-17.00

**Hands-on tasks in small group to apply the above**

Preparation for the small group field projects

## Thursday, 23 November 2023

### **All day**

A trip to Plovdiv, European Capital of Culture 2019  
**Small group field projects**

## Friday, 24 November 2023

### **Morning session**

09.00-12.00

### **Small group work**

Preparation for presenting the results of the field work

### **Afternoon session**

14.00-17.00

### **Group field projects presentations**

## Saturday, 25 November 2023

### **Morning session**

09.00-12.00

**Competence transfer – group work (according to first language) and discussion** - How to access basic Romanian / Italian, etc. (less widely spoken language).

### **Afternoon session**

14.00-17.00

### **Reflection, summary of the Autumn School and closing**

(optional) Joining the activities commemorating the 135th Anniversary of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski”

## **THE MUDEXI PROJECT**

In December 2022, the MUDEXI project “Dynamic multi-/plurilingualism, breeding ground for inclusive excellence in higher education” was selected as part of the Co//ectif 2022-2023 Call for Projects launched by the University Agency of Francophonie (AUF).

The project, led by an international consortium initially composed of a non-academic organisation and five member universities of the AUF and the ANIME network, aims to “meet the challenge of multilingual practices, necessary to ensure inclusion and excellence in higher education”. It also sets itself the objective to continually improving the practices of higher education institutions in the areas of production and transmission of knowledge, as well as in staff training.

The implementation of the project comprises four main actions. The Autumn School Multilingualism and Intercomprehension is action #4. It will involve a wide range of partners from the ANIME Members and other universities.

Find out more: <https://www.auf.org/europeouest/nouvelles/actualites/coectif-2022-2023-10-projets-de-cooperation-innovante-selectionnes/>

## **ANIME**

The Academic Network on Multilingualism, Inclusiveness and Excellence – ANIME, is an international university network that brings together 14 institutions on 3 continents.

Launched in November 2020 by the Vice-President of Europe and International Relations of the University of Strasbourg, this network demonstrates a desire to go beyond bilateral cooperation to develop network cooperation, and thus strengthen the internationality and plurality of universities .

Questioning the consideration of notions of inclusion, multilingualism and excellence in the development and conduct of the international policies of our universities, ANIME aims to create new dynamics, both at the level of each institution, where it constitutes a potentially transformative agent of the practices of international cooperation itself, as well as at the global level, where it allows us to move away from sometimes predominant competitive patterns, to place the sharing of experiences and “doing together” at the heart of the values of the Higher Education.

Find out more: <https://www.unistra.fr/reseau-anime>





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