



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
FIRENZE

Centro
Linguistico
di Ateneo



**The Language Center of the University of Florence, in collaboration with
Do.Ri.F and Euniwell, presents**

Intercomprehension and plurilingualism in professional communication
International conference

November 19-20, 2026
University of Florence

Conference presentation (study day + training day)

The conference is divided into two study days dedicated to the theme of “Plurilingual practices and intercomprehension in the professional sphere.”

The **first day** will be a reflection on the theme in the form of presentations aimed at sharing theoretical and methodological approaches, experiences, and projects. It is the third session of the Do.Ri.F traveling cycle “Enseignement du FLE dans les universités italiennes et monde du travail” and will therefore focus on plurilingual practices in the world of work.

The **second day** will be a training day dedicated to university staff, in particular administrative staff working in offices dedicated to inclusion, internationalization, and similar areas (in particular EUniWell staff, UniFi staff, and anyone else who may be interested).

Part I (conference) - November 19, 2026

In recent years, intercomprehension has spread significantly in the academic world, particularly with regard to Romance languages, thanks in part to the greater availability of teaching materials (textbooks, websites, platforms), as well as online tandems in the universities (Lyon II Lumière,

Università del Salento e di Firenze etc.) More and more universities, both within Europe and beyond, that offer Intercomprehension courses, whether as labs in the language centers (such as Bergamo, Bologna and Verona) or as full, credit-earning courses (Turin, Forlì, Florence, for example, sometimes organised as a *Blended Intensive Programme*). However, intercomprehension across related languages struggles to spread outside of universities or schools (see Balboni 2007, Bonvino-Garbarino 2022, Carralero Fernández 2026 etc.). For example, this innovative and stimulating approach has, unfortunately, not yet managed to penetrate the world of work. The need to transition from classrooms to offices is well recognized by the scientific community, but has still been achieved too little, apart from some training for administrative staff, but always within the university environment (Verona, UNITA in Turin, Lyon II Lumière, etc.).

This first study day will focus on professional or charity environments: where plurilingualism is already present and how it is being implemented. Above all, however, it will explore ways to advance intercomprehension as a means of communication in various professional contexts, such as school or university offices, hospitals, doctors' offices, migrant reception centers, companies, international organizations, volunteer associations, hotels, tourism sector operations, etc., – all settings where people from different countries circulate and communicate with each other.

Consequently, we would like to invite experts in IC and plurilingualism, but not only, to reflect on and suggest projects for this topic. We welcome the following contributions:

- reports on “in the field” experiences of intercomprehension as effective, spontaneous communications in non-educational contexts (e.g. associations, volunteering abroad, etc.) by people who are not necessarily “experts” in IC;
- reports on teaching experiences of intercomprehension (even partial or ongoing) to a non-student/non-university audience (e.g. corporate courses, administrative staff, etc.);
- proposals for implementing IC/plurilingualism in workplaces where monolingualism currently prevails (e.g. English as the lingua franca) or where several languages are in conflict with each other;
- reports on completed or ongoing projects which promote intercomprehension as a preferred mode of communication, in order to respect everyone's languages;
- reflections focused on plurilingual communication within institutions (e.g. European ones) or international organizations, with concrete proposals aimed at implementing true plurilingualism (with the difficulties that may arise but also the benefits).

Part II (training day) - Novembre 20, 2026

The Language Center of the University of Florence has been organizing intercomprehension (IC) courses between related languages (Romance and Germanic) for several years. Interest has been growing, particularly in the Blended Intensive Programs (BIP) that are offered annually and involve participants from a dozen foreign universities. The Euniwell Alliance partners have been involved in the project from the outset, both in the creation of a platform dedicated to intercomprehension learning (www.europaic.eu) and the related publication, *Europa IC 12*, as well as in the courses offered in person or remotely.

This second day will be dedicated to Unifi and Euniwell administrative/teaching staff (and possibly from other universities, but the number of places is limited) who would like to discover the world of intercomprehension. The aim is to promote plurilingual ways to interact, particularly when the languages are related, instead of resorting to English as a lingua franca. After a theoretical presentation of the principles of IC, workshop activities will follow, allowing participants to practice trying to understand languages from the same language family (Germanic or Romance options). The aim is to encourage participants to communicate plurilingually in the future, instead of limiting themselves by just using English. Strategies will be provided for communicating effectively both in writing (e.g., writing emails, drafting projects, reading minutes from meetings) and orally (e.g., videoconferences, face-to-face interactions in meetings), with everyone speaking their own language and understanding that of the others.

Conference languages: any European language, but the language or languages used in the slides must be different from that used in the presentation. Languages from different language families may be combined. Presentations will be held in person only.

Abstract submission (for the 19th Nov.): abstracts must be sent by April 15, 2026, to Hugues Sheeren at intercomprensione@cla.unifi.it Reference website: <https://cla.unifi.it/>

Please include your first name, last name, and institution. Abstracts must be between 400 and 500 words and submitted in two languages (of your choice, but preferably from different language families). In addition to the abstract, please submit a short biography (approximately 100 words).

Proposals will be double-blind evaluated. The outcome of the evaluation will be communicated by May 15.

Organizational details

The conference consists of two parts:

A) DoR.i.F – CLA in collaboration with Apicad: Thursday, November 19

Third stage of the Do.Ri.F traveling cycle “Enseignement du FLE dans les universités italiennes et monde du travail.”

Thursday morning: Plurilingualism in the professional sphere / Focus on French (Do.Ri.f)

Thursday afternoon: Presentations on furthering intercomprehension in the professional sphere

B) CLA – Euniwell: Friday, November 20:

Training dedicated to administrative/teaching staff at Euniwell, Unifi, and others interested

Friday morning (plenary session): training/presentation of IC, etc., and practical activities

Friday afternoon (groups): workshop activities in two groups, one for Romance and one for Germanic languages.

The conference is free; single-day attendance is possible.

Organization Committee (University of Florence + Euniwell)

Sirad Abdullahi

Mónica Molina Aragonés

Sabrina Ballestracci (President of the CLA)

Petra Brunnhuber

Gianna Galligani

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Sandrine Caddéo (Université d'Aix-Marseille)
Francisco Calvo dell'Olmo (Universität München)
Paola Celentin (Università di Verona)
Annick Farina (Université Paris -Nord Sorbonne)
Pablo Fernández Domínguez (Università di Bologna)
Alice Fiorentino (Université Savoie Mont Blanc)
Cristina Fronterotta (Universität Konstanz-Euniwell)
Fernando Funari (Università di Firenze)
Sandra Garbarino (Università di Torino)
Yannick Hamon (Università Ca Foscari di Venezia)
Marie-Christine Jamet (Università Ca Foscari di Venezia)
Paola Leone (Università del Salento)
Veronica. Manole (Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca)
Karine Marielly Rocha da Cunha (Universidade Federal do Paraná)
Hugues Sheeren (Università di Firenze-Euniwell)
Walter Zidarič (Nantes Université-Euniwell)

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