**Position Paper**

**Recommendations for promoting German as a second language in the context of work**

In the context of national developments, I would like to present to you the result of a national support event targeting an issue in education that impacts on society and deserves real attention. Like other countries in Europe, Germany faces the problem of labour-shortage, and, to compensate, relies to a large extent on the integration of migrant workers into its workforce. For the process of integration to be successful, the acquisition of German language is essential. Although there are possibilities on an institutional level to apply for language classes, many workers and their companies are struggling to find support that aligns with the reality of working life.

Following the Zukunftswerkstatt (Future Workshop), *Promoting German as a Second Language where it is needed: in the workplace* in May, 2023 a position paper was produced and is currently awaiting publication. The workshop itself was a National Support Event for Germany sponsored by the Council of Europe’s European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). The workshop came in two parts: first was a roundtable at an international conference in Berlin in September 2023; the second event was the Future Workshop, run by two organizations who promote vocational integration, with the support of the ECML-supported *Language for Work* (LfW) Network. Many of you know Matile Grünhage-Monetti, who went to great efforts to coordinate these events and achieve the result.

The Zukunftswerkstatt brought together around 50 professionals from different social systems: practitioners and researchers of work-related DaZA (German-as-Second-Language), employers, trade unions, and the federal agency in charge of German and Migration.

The paper targets decision-makers in politics, companies, trade unions and L2 education. Through policy statements, it aims at raising awareness on how fair, effective, and sustainable work-related German-as-Second-Language support should be designed to complement existing initiatives in times of acute skilled and unskilled labour shortages. As discussed at the Future Workshop, the paper details the importance of language skills and their role in the context of work, and presents demands to the relevant political decision-makers.

Authentic case studies illustrate concrete DaZA demands in different workplaces, and show how state-funded support does not meet the real needs of employees or employers.

The paper closes with concrete recommendations and demands, to expand on the existing state-funded work-related L2 system in Germany.

Although tailored to the situation in Germany, the overall issue and many recommendations are relevant to most European countries as well.

The paper includes an initial 20 signatories, some as individuals, others on behalf of their institutions.