



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
FIRENZE

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Letterature e Psicologia

PRESS RELEASE

Florence, January 14, 2026

Italian students trained as linguistic and intercultural mentors to support young migrants and refugees

The University of Florence and COSPE – Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries, the Italian partner of the European project Language Buddy, announce the successful completion of recruitment and training activities for 50 university students who will serve as linguistic and intercultural mentors supporting migrant and refugee children and youth in Italy.

This phase of the project, corresponding to Work Package 3, represented a strategic milestone for the implementation and operational launch of the Language Buddy system, both at the University of Florence and at partner universities in seven other European Union Member States. The main objective was to sustainably integrate the Language Buddy model into existing university structures and train the human resources necessary for the pilot phase, involving a total of 365 students across the European Union.

The Language Buddy training course

Within the international consortium framework, partners designed and delivered a non-degree Language Buddy online course, structured in 8 modules and primarily aimed at students in education, pedagogy, modern languages, and literature. The training path is based on principles of social and intercultural pedagogy and experiential learning methodologies, addressing topics such as:

- Intercultural dialogue in educational contexts
- Critical and social pedagogy
- Use of non-formal and informal methods in language learning



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- Digital tools for education
- Art as a vehicle for intercultural dialogue
- Observation, reflection, and self-assessment
- Design and management of Language Buddy sessions

The course is delivered through the Language Buddy digital platform, specifically developed to support online sessions, document the mentoring process, and facilitate the exchange of experiences among students from different partner countries.

In summer 2025, a three-day in-person Training of Trainers (ToT) was also held in Malta, attended by 22 selected students from consortium universities, trained to assume the role of trainers and mentors at the national level.

Results in Italy

Following the recruitment and training process, 50 Italian students successfully completed the Language Buddy course, accumulating 40 hours of training and obtaining the necessary certification to participate in the project's pilot phase. During this operational phase, student-mentors will work directly with migrant and refugee children and youth aged 12 to 17, supporting them in learning the Italian language and facilitating their educational and social integration.

Project information

The Language Buddy project is implemented by a consortium of 16 organizations – 8 NGOs and 7 universities – from Greece, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal, Malta, and Austria. Launched on March 1, 2024, the project has a duration of 26 months and a total budget of €1,366,713.14, co-financed by the European Commission through the AMIF-2023-TF2-AG-CALL program (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund).

Language Buddy aims to promote more inclusive societies by strengthening the capacities of higher education institutions through training activities and the development of innovative educational systems. The project prepares university students to offer linguistic, cultural, and social support to migrant and refugee children and youth, concretely contributing to their educational and social integration.



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For further information about the project or collaboration opportunities, please contact the Language Buddy project coordinators:

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