

# THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW SYSTEM OF LANGUAGE PROVISION

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Languages for all

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# UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

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- Established in 1816
- No 1 in Poland, comprehensive, public university;
- Staff – 6200
  - Academic teachers 3200 (830 professors)
- total no of students – 65 800  
(1st, 2nd, 3rd cycle and postgraduate)
- Foreign students in degree programmes– ca 1000
- 7000 – outgoing students and staff
- 5100 – incoming students and staff
- 17 degree programmes in English
- 36 philology programmes taught in target languages





# LANGUAGE PROVISION – A SUCCESS STORY

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1953 - Language Centre established

2001 – University System of Language Provision established as a result of the reform of the system of language teaching

2006 – USLP awarded European Language Label for the most innovative language project in Poland 

2012 – USLP distinguished by the European Commission in the ELL competition 

# University System of Language Provision

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- ❑ The decision to launch the USLP coincided with the European Year of Languages and implementation of the Bologna Process
- ❑ To ensure that all 1st cycle students have equal access to a wide offering of language courses
- ❑ To broaden access to 2nd and 3rd cycle students
- ❑ To ensure the conditions of transparency, openness and comparability of criteria and learning outcomes (by reference to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
- ❑ To rationalise University spending on language provision

# Language policy and funding

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- ❑ Language policy is an element of University internationalisation strategy
- ❑ It aims to boost mobility and employability of students and graduates (within European Higher Education Area)
- ❑ Based on Regulation of Minister, Resolutions of the Senate on USLP and Development Strategy
- ❑ Sizeable funding depending on the number of students enrolled to language courses
- ❑ Additionally fee-paying courses for 2nd cycle students
- ❑ 3rd cycle students – 50% fee reduction rate

# Constituting elements

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- ❑ Central on-line registration for courses and examinations
- ❑ On-line diagnostic testing couples with the registration system (in 6 major languages)
- ❑ Framework programmes of teaching based on CEFR
- ❑ Conventional, on-line and blended courses in some 50 languages



# Cooperation and coordination

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- To ensure the broadest choice of language courses a consortium of providers created:
  - Faculties of Applied Linguistics, Modern languages, Polish Studies, Oriental Studies, Language Centre, Centre for Foreign language Teacher Trainign and European Education
- Coordination at the central level – Rector’s Deputy for language provision
  - Coordinators at respective units’ level
- CLIL – foreign language taught classes:
  - language competences and subject competences
  - Cooperation between Faculties and USLP in defining learning outcomes and assessment



# Varied offering – students' choice

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- ❑ Ca 50 languages (incl. of Polish as a foreign language and Polish Sign language)
- ❑ CEFR based
- ❑ Conventional, blended and on-line courses
- ❑ General and for academic and special purposes
- ❑ The ultimate aim –
  - to make sure each 1st cycle student demonstrates B2 in one language on completion of studies
  - To facilitate acquisition B2+ for 2nd cycle students and C1 for 3rd cycle doctoral students
  - To encourage them to learn an/other language/s

# Certification

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- University Certification Board
  - Independent of language offering providers
  - University Language Certificate
- Certification examination – an obligatory component of study programmes
  - ECTS, Diploma Supplement, transcript of records

# Motivating factors

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- ❑ CEFR – a standard ensuring comparability and transparency
- ❑ Allocation of ECTS credits
- ❑ Participation of elected students in the Certification Board, Language Centre Programme Board, Faculty Boards
- ❑ Certification system
- ❑ Consistency and integration of the offering
- ❑ Quality Assurance system – students' surveys
- ❑ ICT (on-line and blended learning based on Moodle)

# Some figures

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2011/2012

- ca 13 700 students learning languages
  - 50 languages (A1 – C2)
  - English ca 51%; French, German, Russian ca 25%; Spanish, Italian ca 12%; others 12%
- ca 8 500 students took certification examinations
  - English – 7043 (B2 – 6056)

# To sum up

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- ❑ USLP is a sustainable, durable element of the University landscape
- ❑ It has had impact on Polish higher education institutions
- ❑ Important for students' mobility and graduates' employability
- ❑ Linked to National Qualifications Framework
- ❑ Unique
- ❑ Still 'work-in-progress'



# CHALLENGES: burning issues

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- ❑ Sustainable funding taken account of the crisis
- ❑ Change of national legislation on HE
  - Regulation on National Qualifications Frameworks for Higher Education requires that all learning outcomes are achieved to award a qualification (B2 for 1st cycle, B2+ for 2nd cycle) – what if a graduate has not acquired the required level of proficiency?
- ❑ Quality of certification (cost-effectiveness, expertise)
- ❑ Cooperation between secondary and tertiary education (exit level in secondary and progression rate in tertiary education)
- ❑ Need to include immigrant languages (eg. Vietnamese for the Vietnamese)



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!