

# **SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages**

## **LANGUAGE STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BELGIUM**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. The national linguistic situation**

##### **1.1.1. National languages**

Belgium is an official trilingual country. It consists of three officially monolingual regions and one bilingual region. The monolingual regions are (1) Flanders, in the northern part of the country (13,511 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of roughly 5,670,000) where Dutch is the official language, (2) Wallonia, in the south (16.846 km<sup>2</sup>, population 3,208,000) where French is the official language and (3) a small German-speaking region (854 km<sup>2</sup> with about 66.000 inhabitants). The capital, Brussels (162 km<sup>2</sup> with about 980.000 inhabitants), is an official bilingual region with French and Dutch as official languages.

For a correct understanding of the Belgian situation, it is important to realise that Flanders shares its official language with its northern neighbour, The Netherlands; Wallonia shares its language with its southern neighbour France, and the German-speaking parts share their language with Germany, their eastern neighbour. The linguistic difference between Dutch as it is spoken in Flanders and in The Netherlands can best be compared to the difference between American English and British English, i.e. differences in pronunciation, certain lexical items, and expressions do exist. The difference between standard Belgian French and standard French as it is spoken in France is even smaller than the differences between the two Dutch variants. The latter remark applies to Belgian German as well.

Although the Brussels region is officially bilingual French-Dutch, the number of French and Dutch speakers are currently unknown. It is commonly accepted, though by no means scientifically underpinned, that between 80 and 85% of the indigenous population consider themselves as French-speakers, while about 20 to 25% consider themselves as Dutch-speakers. The number of bilinguals is estimated at around 30% of the indigenous population. The lack of hard figures is a result of the abolition of language censuses for political reasons after 1947. Another aspect of Brussels is its substantial foreign population. It can be divided into two distinct groups. On the one hand, members of the European Union, mostly civil servants and their families and, on the other hand, migrants mostly from Moroccan and Turkish origin. Both groups together consist of about 250.000 people (cf. Van de Craen & Willemys 1988; Van de Craen 1989).

##### **1.2.2. Language policy**

In 1993 Belgium became a federal state composed of three linguistic communities and four regions, namely the ones that were just pointed out. However, language policy as we now know it in the three communities may be said to have started in the beginning of the 1960s when the so-called linguistic laws were passed. Since these laws have remained virtually unchanged over the years, it can be argued that language policy has not changed since 1962-3 (McRae 1986; Murphy 1988).

Responsibility for language policy lies mainly with the communities. This means that in Flanders, Wallonia and in the German-speaking parts the regional governments are in charge of language policies. In 1980, the Flemish government signed a treaty with The Netherlands, the "Treaty of Linguistic Union" - or "Taalunie" in Dutch - stipulating that both countries are to collaborate in matters of, for instance, corpus and status planning and other cultural aspects linked to the Dutch language (cf. Willemys 1984). Similar treaties with neighbouring countries do not exist for the French-speaking or for the German-speaking community.

Belgian language policies are, then, based on territorial principles. However, a limited number of status planning initiatives in favour of the Dutch language in the Francophone area and for French in the Dutch area do exist. The underlying idea is to stimulate language knowledge, for instance, by exchanging teachers, i.e. native speakers, of French and/or Dutch.

The differences in language policy between the communities is best described as follows. Generally speaking, the Dutch-speaking community has held a relatively conservative and defensive language policy as far as Dutch language planning is concerned. This is due to historical and sociolinguistic reasons with Flanders being under pressure from French between 1830 and 1960 (cf. Van de Craen & Willemys 1988). The French-speaking community has tried to uphold a policy of expansion until the 1960s within the framework of "la francophonie". Afterwards, the community gradually came to recognise Dutch as an equal partner and since the 1960s, due to the economic expansion in Flanders, Francophone language policy has come to accept the Dutch language as an equal force although some rearguard battles may occasionally be fought for political reasons. The German community has advocated a reconciliation policy based on openness and the principle of multilingualism.

## **1.2. The System of Higher Education**

The system of higher education in Belgium comprises (1) university education and (2) higher non-university education. Both sub-systems will be discussed.

### **1.2.1. Higher education at university level**

Higher education at university level is provided for either by "complete" universities or by associated institutions and establishments. They are all funded by the state. A complete university refers to an institute with at least five traditional faculties (Philosophy and Literature, i.e. the Arts, Law, Science, Applied Science and Medicine). In the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium and in the Dutch-speaking community in Brussels there are three complete universities, namely the "Rijksuniversiteit Gent" (RUG), the "Katholieke Universiteit Leuven" (KUL) and the "Vrije Universiteit Brussel" (VUB). In addition, three centres together form the university of Antwerp (UFSIA, RUCA and UIA); three other centres can be considered as "incomplete" universities, in the sense that they do not offer (all) graduate degrees. They are the "Katholieke Universiteit Brussel" (KUB), the "Limburgs Universitair Centrum" (LUC) and the "Katholieke Universiteit Leuven afdeling Kortrijk" (KULAK). In the French-speaking part of Belgium and in the Francophone community in Brussels there are four complete universities, namely the "Université de Liège" (Ulge), the "Université Libre de Bruxelles" (ULB), the "Université Catholique de Louvain" (UCL) and the "Université d'Etat de Mons". In addition there are incomplete university centres in Mons, Brussels, Namur and Gembloux. In sum: there are 17 institutions: 7 universities and various faculties and university centres (Jablonska-Skinder & Teichler 1992).

The degrees offered by these complete universities are called: (1) "candidat/kandidaat", i.e. undergraduate or first university degree, awarded after two, sometimes three years of study; (2) "licencié/licentiaat", i.e. graduate or second university degree, equally

obtained after two or three years of study and after the submission of a thesis at the end of the study period; (3) "doctor" i.e. postgraduate or third university degree. The doctoral degree can only be obtained two years after the "licencié/licentiaat" degree. The examination consists of the presentation of an original dissertation which has to be privately and publicly justified. In 1995 the universities are studying various possibilities for the implementation of doctoral programmes which do not yet officially exist at the moment of writing.

There is no policy for limiting access to Belgian universities. However, some universities introduced a numerus fixus for foreign students in the faculty of medicine (cf. Jablonski-Skinder & Teichler). In general, students enter university at the age of 18. In most cases they spend a four year study period before obtaining the degree of "licenc\_/licentiaat" at the age of 22. Exceptions to this schedule include the schools of psychology and law school (both 5 years of study) and the school of medicine (7 years of study).

### **1.2.2. Higher Education at the non-university level**

This type of education is called either short-term, when education consists of a three or four year study cycle, or long-term when education consists of two cycles of two years each. This kind of education covers a wide range of disciplines, including commerce, industry, transport and agriculture to the medical auxiliary, social professions and teaching, translation and interpreting, applied arts and the media. Eight branches are distinguished: higher technical, higher economical, higher agricultural, higher paramedical, higher social, higher artistic, higher pedagogical and higher maritime education.

### **1.3. The impact of secondary education on language studies in higher education**

Foreign language teaching is considered to be an important part of the Belgian primary and secondary school systems. For a thorough understanding of the Belgian situation, it is necessary to point out some basic facts with respect to the organisation of the school systems. According to the establishing body, three types of institutions can be distinguished at all levels.

1. "[O]fficial cultural community education organised by the [...] communities, whether by the Community Minister of Education (French and German cultural communities) or by the ARGO (Autonome Raad voor het Gemeenschapsonderwijs) in the Flemish cultural community;
2. [O]fficial subsidised education organised by the local authorities: municipalities, provinces and other public institutions;
3. [F]ree subsidised education organised by private organisations based on particular religious, philosophical or educational convictions (Vercruyse & Kaufman 1991:17)".

The language classes in Belgian education are regulated by the 1962-63 laws, commonly known as the language laws (cf. McRae 1986; Murphy 1988).

In Flanders language studies start with optional French or English from the fifth class of the primary school on specific demands from the parents. As a result, for primary schools, classes in second language depend on local circumstances. However, it is fair to say that the teaching of French is relatively wide-spread at a maximum of three hours a week. From the first year of the secondary school French and English are taught but the number of hours of each of these languages varies among networks and the kind of school, i.e. an ordinary secondary school or a technical or vocational school. In general, in the first year between three to four hours of French and between two to three hours of English seems to be the rule but divergences may be found. From the third year onwards - sometimes from the fourth year - the number of hours decreases except for students

who opted for the section "modern languages". Some schools provide the possibility to opt for a third language which may be German, Spanish, Italian or Russian.

In Wallonia the situation is slightly different. In primary school it is possible to organise Dutch, English or German classes from the fifth year onwards on specific demands of the parents. In other words whether or not the classes are organised depends on local circumstances. In secondary schools, from the first year onwards, a second language is compulsory (four hours a week). This may be Dutch, English or German depending on the preference of the pupils or their parents and/or depending on the area. In the eastern part of the country close to the German border and in the areas of Liège, Verviers, Bastogne and Arlon German as a second language in the first year of secondary school is a relatively frequent option. As for the rest of Wallonia, at the moment there is a slight preference for English as a first foreign language. In the third year of secondary school a second language is introduced (four hours a week as well) and in the fifth year an optional third one can be introduced - Spanish or Italian mostly. If the latter is opted for it is possible to reduce the first language to two hours a week instead of four.

In Brussels, yet another regime prevails. Due to the bilingual character of the city, in primary schools the second language - Dutch for Francophones and French for Dutch speakers - is to be taught compulsory from the third year of primary school onwards for a maximum of two hours a week. In secondary education, the options coincide more or less with Flanders for the Dutch-speaking schools and with Wallonia for the French-speaking schools, although the number of hours for each language may differ according to the type of school, the options taken by the pupil, the network the schools belongs to and various other local circumstances.

It is clear that from the situation above that the role of language teaching at the secondary level is quite substantial. Since language teaching standards are fairly high - though by no means beyond criticism - it allows students to take up language studies at the universities on a relatively high level. Despite these positive remarks many more measurements can be taken to improve language teaching at secondary schools. Furthermore, despite these positive remarks considerable differences in proficiency can be observed depending on the school system attended, the language community and the teacher.

With respect to success in higher education a longitudinal study by Stinissen et al (1986) carried out in the beginning of the 1980s gives some insights. These figures refer to Dutch-speaking students only.

<b>Secondary school option</b>	<b>% of success in higher education in the human sciences</b>
Latin-mathematics	76
Latin-sciences	68
Sciences A	58
Modern languages	52

**Table 1: Secondary school options and success in higher education in the human sciences departments including higher non-university education for 6,000 Dutch-speakers (cf. Stinissen et al. 1986)**

As is shown in table 1 the percentage of successful students in higher education (university and non-university alike) seems to decrease according to the option in secondary school. It should be pointed out that these figures coincide with the intuitive

prestige school authorities, teachers, parents and pupils alike assign to these options. The study options seem to create some kind of Pygmalion effect regarding the chances of success in higher education. In addition to this, and equally referring to Dutch-speaking pupils, studies have shown that the language proficiency for most 18 year olds for the mother-tongue is fairly low (cf. Daems et al 1990; Leroy et al 1991). The fact that the latter only refers to Dutch-speaking pupils does not mean that the situation for French-speaking pupils is better.

In general, it can be said that in Belgium, despite considerable efforts in language teaching and despite extensive programmes, it is felt that the output does not match the input. In Flanders and Wallonia complaints can be heard about the knowledge of the second national language, French and Dutch respectively. In Brussels, complaints are heard about the knowledge of Dutch with Francophones. At the same time it should be added that the Belgian situation is above average compared to other member states.

## **2. LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES**

### **2.1. Traditional language/literature programmes**

#### **2.1.1. Content and objectives**

*Undergraduate programmes.*

Undergraduate programmes refer to the first two years of university education, also called the first cycle or "candidatures/kandidaturen". The programmes in language and literature have to conform to the various decrees issued by the Dutch or French-speaking communities. Contrary to other countries it is customary and often compulsory in Belgium to study at least two languages, although one of these languages can be - and often is - the mother-tongue.

The following study programmes in modern languages are offered by all universities: Germanic languages (i.e. Dutch, English, German) and Romance languages (i.e. French and/or Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Rumanian, Catalan and Provençal). One university offers Scandinavian languages, (i.e. Danish, Swedish and Norwegian). Except for Scandinavian languages, students are expected to study at least two languages but the number of hours devoted to the second language as well as the number of languages offered may differ among universities.

The organisation presented above implies that Dutch speakers in Flanders and Francophone speakers in Wallonia study their respective mother-tongues and another language if they opt for Germanic languages or Romance languages. The Germanic language programmes consider all languages on an equal level. This is not always the case for the Romance language programme, where usually more attention is paid to French than to the other Romance languages. In the case of Scandinavian languages only Swedish is studied. Danish and Norwegian are only offered on an optional basis.

*Graduate programmes.*

Graduate programmes refer to the third and fourth year of the university education, the second cycle or "licence/licentiaat". Graduate programmes are intended as an expansion and elaboration of the first undergraduate cycle. The programmes usually offer a number of options which can influence considerably the content of the study. First, it is possible to specialise in a "major" language. Second, it is possible to maintain the balance between the two languages. Third, it is possible to specialise in a thematic field such as "literature", "linguistics" or "theatre". Again, the number and nature of the special courses depend on the individual universities. At the end of the two graduate year cycle, students are expected to write a thesis on a particular subject. The language of this work

depends on the subject but as a rule of thumb the works are written in the major target language studied.

#### *General remarks.*

In Flanders, the VLIR, "Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad" i.e. the Flemish Interuniversity Board, has tried for a number of years to monitor the language programmes. It has recently been agreed to attribute to each course a number of study points. This number can vary between 2 and 8 depending on the number of teaching hours and the study load of a particular course. Each academic year is supposed to consist of a maximum of 60 study points with very limited variation allowed. The aim of this measurement is to arrive at a more uniform distribution of the study load across the various study programmes. An assessment of this measure is still lacking at the moment of writing. In Wallonia, the CIUF, "Conseil Interuniversitaire Francophone" i.e. the Francophone Interuniversity Board is studying a number of measures which resemble the VLIR options. The total number of university students (Dutch- and French-speaking universities) is about 120,000.

The decrees on university education only vaguely specify the content of the studies under scrutiny here. No mention is made of the number of hours of literature, linguistics or language study proper. Depending on the university, an average of about 3 hours a week per language studied is provided. "Landeskunde" is included in this figure. As to the content of literature studies a considerable amount of freedom exists. In most universities the first two years are devoted to surveys and introductions while in the third and fourth year more specialised topics are dealt with. The same applies for linguistics: introductory courses are followed by more specialised subjects. Language study proper aims at improving the students' oral and written proficiency in the target languages.

#### **2.1.2. Structure of programmes**

All programmes focus on linguistics, literature and language proper. More general courses on philosophy and history, among others, complete the curriculum. All language and literature courses are offered in the target language. The more practical-oriented language proficiency courses are often offered by the language centres of the universities. Germanic and Romance language students are expected to have attained a considerable fluency in Dutch, English, German and French at the onset of their studies. In practice, the university staff takes into account the fact that entrance level proficiency varies with the foreign language involved. For that reason, German and English are treated differently at Flemish universities to accommodate for the generally lower entrance levels of German (as a result of the different status of German and English in secondary curricula. The same is true in Wallonia for Dutch and German. For Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and the other Romance languages students are considered to be beginners or near beginners. Also in the case of the Scandinavian languages, the university staff takes on a pragmatic attitude and a considerable amount of practical language study is organised. In general, it may be said that the language proficiency of 18 year olds entering the language programmes at the universities is very diverse and for that reason most universities encourage the first year students to follow additional language courses (i.e. summer courses) before the actual start of the academic year.

In Belgium, language programmes last four years divided in two cycles of two years. The first two years are devoted to general and introductory courses while in the following years a relative high number of options are offered. As a consequence, it is difficult to make general statements about the final outcomes of the various programmes. The number of specialisations is such that a graduate in languages can be anything from a specialist on 18th century French literature to a cognitive linguist.

Evaluation is mainly achieved through oral examinations although for many language courses written examinations are organised as well. Students' language proficiency is

typically assessed along the lines of listening comprehension, oral fluency, reading comprehension and written proficiency. Candidates who fail at the first examination may repeat at a second session.

### **2.1.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

Community programmes have first been cautiously and later more and more enthusiastically been welcomed by the universities and university institutions. However, as far as student mobility is concerned much more needs to be done. According to 1993 figures Belgium occupied rank 10 out of twelve member states. Slightly more students from Wallonia than from Flanders seem to be interested.

## **2.2. Alternative programmes**

### **2.2.1. Content and objectives**

At university level only three non-language programmes include a substantial number of language courses within the curriculum, although the actual number of hours per week and the languages offered may again differ very much from university to university. The programmes in question are Economics, Commercial Engineering and Communication Sciences. As far as content and objectives of these programmes are concerned it is useful to distinguish between the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels universities. Yet, it cannot be said that in these programmes languages form an integrative part.

In Flanders, three languages are studied in the first two years of the curriculum: French, English and German. In the third and fourth year the language programmes are often reduced; in some cases one additional, optional language course can be chosen, such as Spanish, Italian, etc. The number of hours per course varies between 30 and 90 hours, i.e. one to two hours a week. It has to be noted that in many Flemish universities the number of foreign languages has been reduced in the past decades. This curtailment has been most pronounced in the Flemish law schools, where the number of hours for all languages but French was cut drastically.

The situation is slightly different in Walloon universities. With respect to the study programmes mentioned above, English is compulsory in the first two years and sometimes also in later years. In addition, Dutch or German are on the curriculum as well. The number of hours varies between 30 and 90 a year per language. Sometimes another language can be chosen such as Spanish and/or Italian or any other language that is offered in the language institutions.

In Brussels, Dutch, French and English are usually compulsory and are taught for anything between 30 and 90 hours per course per year. Of particular interest in some Brussels universities is the possibility to follow courses in a Dutch-speaking or French-speaking university respectively dealing with specialised subjects. This means that an Economy student enrolled in a Dutch-speaking university can follow a course on, for instance, financial marketing, at a French-speaking university and vice versa. This possibility depends, of course, on the proximity of the institutions and on their mutual agreement.

The main objective of these programmes is to enable the student to perform his/her profession adequately in a range of foreign languages. This is in line with the needs expressed by industry as is revealed by several studies (Verdoodt & Delbeke 1982-83; Vinikas 1986). At the same time other studies have revealed that most companies are dissatisfied with the language proficiency of their academically trained personnel.

### **2.2.2. Structure of programmes**

As has been pointed out before there is considerable variation between regions and universities in the structure and contents of the language programmes. In general, these programmes concentrate on material related to their specific study field. In this sense they are similar to courses of language for specific purposes. That is, English for economists will differ from English for law students.

Most language courses are offered during the first two years of the curriculum. In later years the language component is sometimes reduced. Evaluation usually takes the form of oral examinations though sometimes written examinations are organised as well. Assessment focuses on listening comprehension, oral proficiency, reading comprehension and written proficiency. Candidates who fail at the first examination may repeat at a second session.

### **2.2.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

There are no specific data available for this group. The remarks made under 2.1.3 are equally valid here.

## **2.3. Postgraduate programmes**

### **2.3.1. Content and objectives**

In Belgium there are no postgraduate programmes as such. Ph.D. candidates are accepted by a promoter after a subject for the doctoral dissertation has been agreed upon. The candidate may be encouraged to take courses (possibly abroad or at another university) but this largely depends on personal initiative.

However, the Flemish Interuniversity Board has recently taken an initiative which may eventually lead to compulsory doctoral programmes. As is the case with the first and second cycle the number of study points for such programmes should not exceed 60 points. The content of these programmes will consist of a limited number of courses to be followed and complemented by a number of tasks such as contributions to conferences and publications. Similar initiatives are being studied by the Walloon Interuniversity Board.

Apart from the Ph.D. programmes a number of postgraduate programmes can be followed. As far as languages are concerned the Flemish Interuniversity Board has recently stipulated that four options can be organised, provided that the various universities collaborate. These subjects are "theatre sciences", "literary theory", "linguistics" and "translation sciences".

### **2.3.2. Structure of the programmes**

The structure of these programmes largely depends on the initiatives of the organising faculties. In the following, the structure of the "linguistic" programme will be sketched since it covers more typical language issues than the other postgraduate programmes do. Courses last for one year and a final work is required. Out of five study fields, seven subjects have to be chosen to be followed at two different universities. These fields are "Linguistic methodology and epistemology", "Language structure", "Language behaviour and language community", "Comparative linguistics" and "Language technology".

## **2.4. Career prospects for graduates of language programmes**

In Belgium the career prospects of students of language seem at first sight rather limited but are in practice relatively wide. Limited prospects because it is commonly thought that the best prospects lie in the educational system, i.e. in the last three years of secondary



school. From the 1980s onwards, careers in the school systems have stagnated while the number of language students has somewhat decreased. Relatively wide because in practice language students end up in a variety of environments.

As far as opportunities in the school systems are concerned the following remarks have to be made. While it is true that the prospects in secondary schools have somewhat decreased new perspectives with respect to education have recently emerged, including adult and migrant education. Adult education organised by private and public organisations have opened new opportunities for language students. In cities such as Antwerp, Brussels and Liège with a relatively high number of migrants, language students are often integrated in migrant education initiatives. Further career prospects include the spoken and written media, and a variety of private firms who require linguistically qualified personnel.

Overall, career prospects for language students in the educational system have been fair. Career prospects outside the field of education are fair to good particularly in cities like Brussels, where there is a constant need for linguistically qualified employees. As far as education is concerned the following remarks have to be made. Paradoxically, the total number of teachers has increased in the 1980s, while at the same time the number of pupils has decreased, as is shown in the following table.

	1983/84	1988/89	Evolution
<b>Dutch speaking community</b>			
Number of pupils	1,153,150	1,090,573	-62,577
Number of teachers	112,976	118,932	+5,956
	1983/84	1988/89	Evolution
<b>French/German speaking community</b>			
Number of pupils	839,496	816,142	-23,354
Number of teachers	80,892	81,302	+410

**Table 2: Total number of pupils and teachers in all communities and their evolution (OESO 1991: 346)**

Table 2 needs some clarification and should not be interpreted over optimistically. First, the decrease in the number of pupils is not matched by the number of teachers. This is explained by the increase of women teachers and the increase of part time jobs: no less than 51.5% in the Dutch-speaking community and 27.2% for the French/German-speaking community. Second, the table does not show that the number of male teachers is decreasing while the number of female teachers is increasing only when part time jobs are considered. The total number of full time jobs is definitely decreasing (OESO 1991).

There is another remark of importance to be made here. Because of the decrease in the number of pupils few young non-graduate and graduate teachers join the teacher profession. As a result, any long-term assessment of the teaching staff in Belgian schools should take into account an increasing ageing staff. In 1988, the average age of a teacher was 44 years old against 37 years old in 1983 (OESO 1991). This threatens to imbalance the age curve of the staff and, moreover, it may discourage young teachers from joining the system (cf. OESO 1991). These problems are currently being investigated by the various ministries.

### **3. INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

#### **3.1. Initial training**

### 3.1.1. Institutions responsible for training

Teacher training is part of higher education. Three levels can be distinguished: (1) teacher training at the universities, (2) teacher training in short-term higher education and (3) teacher training in higher pedagogical education for "social promotion". The latter will not be discussed because training programmes for language teachers do not exist at this level.

*Teacher training at university level.* During the third and fourth years of the regular curriculum, students can follow teacher training courses. It is also possible to follow these courses after an academic degree has been obtained. The pedagogical diploma provides access to teaching positions in the three final years of secondary school. All full-fledged universities provide teacher training facilities.

*Teacher training in short-term higher education.* These teacher training colleges can be attended after the completion of secondary education. These programmes train infant teachers, primary school teachers and teachers for the first three years of secondary education. It is only in the latter case that training is provided for language teaching specifically. The institutes of higher pedagogical education (the former "écoles normales/normaalscholen") are completely independent from universities. Both the Catholic as well as the state-run networks have teacher training colleges.

The French-speaking community is currently conducting a long-term research project aimed at a complete reform of teacher training programmes. This "Commission scientifique d'\_tude" (Scientific Study Committee) is concentrating, among other things, upon the following: (a) a uniform teacher training programme at university level for all levels of education, i.e. from infant teachers to secondary school teachers; (b) specialised training for teachers of children from 3 to 8 years old and from 8 to 13 years old. For 14 to 18 years old, a thorough psycho-pedagogical training is added; (c) collaboration of institutes of higher pedagogical education and psycho-pedagogical institutions at the universities. Similar initiatives in teacher-training reforms are investigated studied by the Dutch-speaking authorities.

### 3.1.2. Content of training programmes

*Language teacher training at university level.* Teacher training curricula at university level consists of two components. First, a theoretical component focusing on pedagogical and didactic issues and problems; second, practical teacher training. The theoretical part includes the history of the science of teaching, methodology and experimental pedagogy with special reference to languages. Practical training includes training in classrooms under the guidance of an experienced teacher. Teachers are qualified to give instruction in two languages according to the options in their degree courses.

*Language teacher training in short-term higher education.* This type of teacher training takes three years and provides both general language education as well as pedagogical training. The latter gains in importance as the study proceeds. Qualifications are not limited to languages proper as languages have to be combined with other subjects. The organisation of the training is as follows. Students opt for a main subject which means they have a choice between Dutch, French, English or mathematics. In addition, they choose one subject among, on the one hand, history, geography, physics and biology and, on the other hand, geography, humanistic studies, German, biology, economy, physics and chemistry. This implies a wide variety of combinations as is shown in table 3.

<b>Main subjects</b>	<b>first option subjects</b>	<b>second option subjects</b>
Dutch	History or	Geography, Biology, Religion/Ethics,

	Geography	Chemistry, Economy, German, Latin
French	History or Geography	Geography, Religion/Ethics, Chemistry, Economy, German, Latin
English	History or Geography	Geography, Religion/Ethics, Chemistry, Economy, German, Latin
Mathematics	Biology or Physics	Geography, Physics, Religion/Ethics, Chemistry, Economy, German, Latin

**Table 3: Options for teacher trainees of lower secondary education (12-15 years of age)**

Table 3 also implies that it is impossible to opt for Dutch and English or Dutch and French, for instance. It should be noted that this programme has undergone quite a few changes in the past decades and that previously other combinations were possible. In addition to the previous subjects pedagogy is a compulsory subject. The degree allows the holder to teach three subjects in the first three years of secondary education, i.e. lower secondary education.

### **3.1.3. Structure of the programmes**

At university level, the pedagogical programme is spread over two or three years when it is taken during the regular curriculum. When the pedagogical courses are followed after the degree has been obtained the pedagogical education lasts one or two years according to the preference of the student teacher. The examination includes theoretical and a practical exams: two lessons have to be given in a real classroom situation. During the study, but varying from university to university, a number of papers to be written by the student are required. The number of practical hours varies from university to university but does not exceed 60 hours a year.

The programmes in short-term higher education are spread over three years. The first year consists of general courses and specialised subjects, such as languages, as well as introductory courses in pedagogy. In the second year, about as much time is devoted to pedagogy as to the rest of the subjects, while in the third year, about half of the time is devoted to teaching proper together with a practical training in various schools under the guidance of an experienced teacher and the trainers of the training institute. Examinations include theoretical as well as practical components. In most institutes, a final project is required which usually consists of an extensive paper on a didactically oriented subject.

### **3.1.4. Impact of community programmes to date**

The impact of community programmes on teacher mobility is better than for student mobility. Belgium occupied rank 6 out of twelve member states in 1993. In general there are more Dutch-speaking than French-speaking teachers involved. However, very few teachers from other member states seem to opt for Belgian programmes. Here the country's ranking order is 10 out of twelve.

## **3.2. In-service training**

### **3.2.1. Institutions responsible for training**

In the Dutch-speaking community there are three kinds of centres co-ordinating in-service training. In fact, each network has its own in-service training centre. The "Pedagogical Centres" organise in-service training for the state-run schools, the "Pedagogical-didactic centres" organise in-service training for the Catholic network and

local pedagogical centres organise training in cases where local school authorities are in charge, mostly in the cities of Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent. In addition, universities organise in-service training sessions by mutual agreement with school inspectors. Material help is provided by the ministry, such as informing teachers and schools, refunding travel expenses, insurance, etc. Some 300 million Belgian francs is made available annually for in-service training, of which 70% goes to the Catholic network.

After the erection of the "Autonome Raad voor het Gemeenschapsonderwijs" (ARGO) (Autonomous Board for State-run schools) in 1989, the number of in-service training programmes has increased considerably. At this writing 47 projects are on-going. Yet, it is felt that this proliferation is not well co-ordinated and should be reformed.

In the French-speaking community, in-service training is provided by the ministry and co-ordinated by the department called "Organisation des Etudes" (Service for study organisation). This service co-ordinates all activities for state-run schools and provides financial aid to all networks. In addition to this and upon the recommendation of the Council of Europe special centres for in-service training were founded in Frameries, Charleroi and Huy (OESO 1991). Distinct from this, the Catholic network provides additional in-service training as well. Furthermore, a decree stipulates that 0.12% of the annual education budget is to be used for in-service training.

### **3.2.2. Content of training programmes**

With respect to language training, two kinds of in-service training can be distinguished, namely short-term and long-term training. Short-term training refers to individual sessions, usually one day, where teachers are introduced to new techniques and/or methodologies and/or where assessments are made of previously discussed material and/or methodologies. Long-term training refers to more extended activities such as attending particular training sessions over a period of time.

The content of the various programmes is diverse and varied because it is not structured by any authority. Ideally, these programmes should introduce the teachers to new techniques and methods as well as provide an assessment of them. In the Dutch-speaking community, it is felt that, in general, there are too many programmes covering too many subjects. In the French-speaking community some priorities have been put forward. Only those priorities dealing with language are mentioned here. Starting with the primary schools, priority is given to (1) in-service programmes dealing with learning a second language according to the principles of communicative teaching and (2) to intercultural education and its implications.

The content of the in-service training programmes dealing with language and organised by universities are equally diverse. In recent years, communicative language teaching has been the focus of attention but new ways of teaching literature and the status of grammar in foreign language education to name a few areas have equally enjoyed attention.

### **3.2.3. Structure of programmes**

As has been said earlier there are short-term and long-term programmes. Short-term programmes last one day and generally take the form of a workshop or study day. Long-term programmes can last a whole year or - in some cases - cover a number of years. A special kind of long-term programme involves teachers who are temporarily relieved from classroom duties in order to follow special programmes in the home country or abroad. After their training has been completed it is their task to train their colleagues. Another kind of programme involves collaboration with Lingua. In this case teachers spend some time in a foreign institute or foreign teachers are brought in to train local teachers.

### **3.2.4. Impact of community programmes to date**

With respect to the Lingua in-service programmes Savage has neatly summarised the current situation. He writes: "In Dutch-speaking Belgium, there was some negative effect when LINGUA was set, as the INSET budget for courses abroad was abolished. [...] [T]his has now been replaced by a substantial budget [...] It is hopeful and encouraging that the Minister decided [...] to grant leave to teachers who, in the interests of education, are required to spend at least 14 days abroad in the framework of an exchange or in practical language experience. In practice this means that paid substitution becomes possible, which will obviously break down barriers. This is also a form of co-financing by the Flemish Community. [...] The position is similar in French-speaking Belgium, except with regard to replacement costs. In addition, as a result of LINGUA contacts, there is now much better in-service training provision for teachers of Dutch in co-operation with the Dutch Talenacademie in Maastricht" (Savage 1994:24).

### **3.3. Training of teachers of second language**

In teacher training no distinction is made between foreign languages and second languages. Foreign and second languages enjoy the same status.

## **4. LANGUAGE PROVISION IN UNIVERSITIES FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES**

### **4.1. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes**

#### **4.1.1. Content and objectives**

Apart from the fields of Economy, Commercial Engineering, and Communication Sciences, which have been dealt with in 2.2.1., the following fields carry language programmes and/or language options. Criminology, Social and Political Science, History, Art History, Archaeology, Medical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Civil Engineering, Psychology and Pedagogy. This is not an exhaustive list because in theory most faculties provide languages as compulsory or as options. The disciplines above provide for at least one language in their curriculum.

The content of these courses is related to the discipline. Attention is mostly paid to oral and reading proficiency. In some cases courses for written scientific English are provided. Three languages are opted for most frequently: French or Dutch (depending on the community), English and German, Spanish and Italian follow.

#### **4.1.2. Structure of courses**

These courses are loosely structured. Most of the time they are organised by the language departments of the universities. The number of hours varies between 30 to 60 per year.

#### **4.1.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

Although the community programmes are well-known, only a relatively limited number of students have taken an interest. See also remarks under 2.1.3.

### **4.2. General and subject-oriented language courses accompanying non-language programmes (service courses)**

#### **4.2.1. Content and objectives**

On special demand, language centres organise subject-oriented courses. In Belgium, language courses for civil engineers, doctors, pharmacists and a wide range of other occupations exist. Often, the objective is to brush up a language or to get better acquainted with a language that turned out to be of more importance than expected. Nearly all language centres are equipped with facilities such as language laboratories and computer techniques. This allows for self-tuition. It is not uncommon to find students in the centres trying to master one of the so-called less taught languages in Europe.

#### **4.2.2. Structure of courses**

There is a great deal of variation here, ranging from classic courses in oral proficiency or reading comprehension to courses with a substantial proportion of self-tuition.

#### **4.2.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

The community programmes have been well received and each year a number of students enter them. On the whole, the feeling is that much more should be done in this area.

### **5. THE TRAINING OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS**

#### **5.1. Institutions responsible for training**

In Belgium, there are nine institutions offering training for translators and interpreters. The Dutch-speaking institutions are the "Hoger Instituut voor Vertalers en Tolken" (HIVT) in Antwerp, the "Provinciaal Instituut voor Vertalers en Tolken (PHVT) in Ghent, the "Katholieke Vlaamse Hogeschool" (KVH) in Antwerp, the "Vlaamse Economische Hogeschool" (VLEKHO) in Brussels and the "Erasmushogeschool" also in Brussels. The French-speaking institutions are the "Ecole d'Interprètes Internationaux de l'Université de Mons-Hainaut" in Mons, the "Institut Libre Marie Haps", the "Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes de la Communauté Française" (ISTI) and the "Institut Cooremans" all three situated in Brussels.

Only two of the above institutions belong to the prestigious CIUTI group, i.e. Conférence internationale permanente des directeurs d'instituts universitaires pour la formation de traducteurs et d'interprètes, namely, the HIVT from Antwerp and the Mons institute. Others have applied for membership. The HIVT and Mons institute are also incorporated within the structures of the university of Antwerp (UIA) and the university of Mons respectively.

Only four institutions limit themselves to the training of translators and interpreters. These are HIVT, PHVT, Mons and ISTI. The other institutions also offer non-language oriented programmes such as accountancy, management and human resources.

From a geographical point of view, five out of nine institutions are situated in Brussels, one in Wallonia and three in Flanders; two in Antwerp and one in Ghent.

As a rule, no entrance exam is required but there are some exceptions. In most cases foreign students whose mother-tongue is not Dutch or French are asked to pass a test. Twice each year the Mons institution organises an entrance exam. Belgian French-speaking candidates have to orally summarise a text as well as pass grammar and stylistic tests in the mother-tongue (cf. CEDIEP 1993; CSBO 1993).

#### **5.2. Content of training programmes**

The content of the programmes is relatively similar for all institutions. The translator training is basic and it is only in the last two years that specific training for interpreters is offered. In principle, translation always takes place into the mother-tongue. All institutions distinguish between different kinds of languages. First, the basic language, usually the mother-tongue; second, languages where quite a bit of prior knowledge is required, i.e. French/Dutch (depending on the community), English and German; third, languages where no prior knowledge is required, i.e. Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Italian, Greek and Danish; fourth, optional languages such as Arabic, Chinese Turkish, etc. However, the number of languages offered as well as the languages themselves differ from institute to institute. Students have to study two languages apart from the mother-tongue. Mother-tongue courses include phonetics, grammar, lexicology as well as courses on translation. Foreign language study includes the language proper, "Landeskunde", terminology and translation exercises. The programmes are complemented by courses on economy, history, law and philosophy.

### **5.3. Structure of programmes**

The training of translators and interpreters belongs to a "long-term" type of education. This means that two cycles of two years each have to be completed. A distinction is made between the training for becoming a translator and the training for becoming an interpreter. As has been said the translator's training is considered basic. From the third year onwards, and especially in the fourth year, specific courses and practical exercises on interpreting are offered. Since the latter training is considered difficult, there are relatively few students who opt only for the interpreter's training. A number of them first complete the translator's training and then specialise by taking an additional year to become interpreters.

Oral and written exams are used to evaluate the students. Most institutions favour "permanent evaluation" for the foreign languages, i.e. evaluation on a regular basis, each month for instance. At the end of the fourth year, a final work has to be submitted usually related to a translation or interpreter's problem.

### **5.4. Impact of community programmes to date**

The community programmes have been welcomed by these institutions. Of particular interest for Belgium is the opportunity to go abroad and study the language in the country itself since language training abroad is not traditionally part of the curriculum. Nevertheless, the remarks made under 2.1.3. are also valid here.

### **5.5. Career prospects outside the areas of translating and interpreting**

Career prospects outside the areas of translating and interpreting are diverse and numerous. The following is an overview of some of the possibilities: international commerce, public service, P.R., the media and all sorts of communication services, tourism and international organisations.

## **6. LANGUAGE STUDIES IN NON-UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **6.1. Language programmes**

#### **6.1.1. Content and objectives**

Language studies in non-university education belong to higher short-term education. The studies fall under the general heading of "management and languages". The objectives are to be able to manage secretarial departments and/or carry out translation or interpreting tasks. The foreign languages that are studied are Dutch/French (depending

on the community), English, German and/or Spanish. The content of these studies is practical language use.

### **6.1.2. Structure of courses**

Foreign languages are each studied for three years, three to four hours a week. Communicative and practical language use are required. Oral and written exams are used for evaluations.

### **6.1.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

Here again community programmes have been welcomed. But again it is felt that more should be done to implement and popularise them.

## **6.2. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes**

### **6.2.1. Content and objectives**

A number of non-language programmes offer foreign languages in Belgium. The following fields - short and long-term cycles put together - offer languages in their curriculum: higher economic education, architecture, audio-visual studies, library sciences and higher maritime education. The foreign languages studied are Dutch/French (depending on the community), English, German and/or Spanish and in some cases Italian and Russian. These language programmes are offered by approximately 100 institutions of the short-type (cf. CEDIEP 1993; CSBO 1993). The language study generally has a practical orientation.

### **6.2.2. Structure of courses**

In most cases language studies start in the first year and carry on until either the third year for the long-term type or until the penultimate year for the short-term type. The number of hours per week per language varies according to the programme and the institution but, in general, language classes last from one hour to four hours a week.

### **6.2.3. Impact of community programmes to date**

Here again, community programmes have been welcomed. Yet again, it is felt that more should be done to implement and popularise them. The remarks made under 2.1.3. apply here as well.

## **7. NEW NEEDS IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGE STUDIES**

### **7.1. In undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by universities**

#### **7.1.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies**

For a number of years now, a certain dissatisfaction with respect to some aspects of language programmes can be noted. First, despite the fact that three languages are spoken in Belgium, there is a feeling that not enough advantage is taken of this situation. This feeling of dissatisfaction goes beyond the universities and is shared by many primary and secondary school authorities. Second, university programmes have undergone quite a number of changes in recent years. There is a strong feeling now to return to basics and to get rid of more experimental approaches that may have been popular in the recent past.



In some institutions it is felt that curricula should be simple and focused on just a few specialities instead of focusing on a large number of options such as was favoured during the eighties.

In many departments across the country, there is dissatisfaction with the cuts that have been effected in the number of staff members. There is a general feeling of frustration because retiring members are not or inadequately replaced, which makes the remaining members' task more arduous.

An on-going debate is the linguistic schooling of the new students. Is it or is it not true that their foreign language proficiency decreases over time? There is conflicting evidence about this issue but there is a need for more collaboration with secondary schools in order to monitor this aspect more closely.

In Belgium, still more should be done in the field of exchange of foreign students. In Flanders, one of the problems is that Dutch is neither a popular language nor is it well-known that Dutch is spoken by nearly 60% of the population in Belgium. Exchanges with neighbouring countries are for that reason often imbalanced in that foreigners prefer to go to more popular countries. The Belgian students themselves should also be stimulated further to take advantage of the by now numerous opportunities.

There is a need for a uniform postgraduate system. A Ph.D. training programme should be worked out rapidly.

### **7.1.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

Until recently, most language students found work in the educational system. While this is still true for a number of them a large part ends up in other working environments. Syllabuses do not take into account this change. Most universities still train their students for scientific work and tend to ignore other prospects. In other words, there is a need to promote professionalization for language teachers. This is particularly necessary, since practical language teacher training at university level leaves much to be desired.

### **7.1.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe**

The creation of a federal state in recent years has led to an ambiguous attitude. On the one hand, regional identity is stressed, while on the other hand, the importance of European unity is not ignored. As has been pointed out language education is regulated by language laws. In some cases these laws hamper language teaching. For instance, it is impossible to organise language classes in infant schools because it is against the law. As a result, bilingual schools are hard to find. Traditional thinking with respect to attitudes vis-à-vis French and Dutch should be put aside in favour of a more open attitude.

## **7.2. In initial and in-service language teacher training**

### **7.2.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies**

Initial language teacher training at the universities is in need of many things. It should be intensified, it should be more specialised and a much more practical training component should be added. Furthermore, there is in most cases a need for courses on applied language study. In short, there is a need for a complete change for teacher training at the university level. As has been mentioned before, the ministries are studying a number of proposals in this respect.

In-service training is in need of reform. There is too much for too many and it needs to be better co-ordinated. Especially in Flanders, the need is felt to limit the programmes and to just focus on much more limited options which will be closely monitored by the authorities.

### **7.2.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

The previous paragraph suggests that for this aspect, needs are both various and numerous. The changes in society and the changes in the educational system as well as in the student population have not been incorporated in the professional training for language teachers. The amount of training and the practical experience after obtaining the teacher training degree is far too limited to enter professional life. In-service training cannot make up for this. OESO (1991) calls for the need to develop some kind of team spirit and the need to rethink the current situation.

### **7.2.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe**

In Belgium, few in-service programmes are organised in collaboration with other member states. There is a need for this and more attention should be paid to this opportunity.

## **7.3. In language provision in universities for students of other disciplines**

### **7.3.1. Seen in relation to language studies**

Despite the fact that quite a number of programmes offer languages in Belgium, language programmes combining language subjects with non-language subjects actually do not exist as such. More attention should be paid to the creation of interdisciplinary programmes possibly in collaboration with the community programmes. Today, many graduate students feel their language proficiency to be insufficient to enter professional life. The improvement of their individual capacities often depends on personal initiative.

With respect to this state of affairs the place of the language departments should be re-examined. There is certainly a need to revise many curricula with the learner rather than with the general study field in mind. Eventually, this will improve language proficiency.

### **7.3.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

There is a need for change with respect to the low prestige language departments enjoy in university structures. Often, students following options with a substantial amount of languages are trained in the language departments by part-time teachers or instructors who themselves have been trained in applied language study but with no background in the disciplines of their students. As a consequence, the low prestige combined with the lack of specialisation in the specific study field of the candidates do not put professional requirements in the focus of attention. This may be one of the reasons why industry frequently complains about the language proficiency of its university personnel.

## **7.4. In the training of translators and interpreters**

### **7.4.1. Seen in relation to the developments of language studies**

There is an increasing tendency to combine, even more than actually is the case, language studies and managerial subjects. It is felt that translators and interpreters should at least know as much of the languages than of subjects such as commerce, law, etc. To avoid considerable increases in study load, attention should be paid to teaching additional subjects in the target languages rather than in the mother-tongue. With respect to the training of translators and interpreters some cast some doubt on the way

the training is organised. As has been mentioned, interpreting is often taken on after the translator's training is finished. As a result the distinction between the translator's and the interpreter's training is small.

#### **7.4.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

There seems to be a need for professional training for conference interpreting. Currently, there is no specific training outside the institutions apart from the occasional demands by private companies.

#### **7.4.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe**

Despite the fact that in Belgium there are three official languages, there is still a need for collaboration with other member states. It seems that the extension of these possibilities is one of the greatest challenges for the future. Since there are nine institutions for translators and interpreters, Belgium has a role to play in these developments.

### **7.5. Language studies in non-university institutions of higher education**

#### **7.5.1. In language programmes**

##### **7.5.1.1. Seen in relation to the developments of language studies**

There is a need for more information regarding the latest developments in the field of research. Closer collaboration with universities would certainly enhance the quality of the education within these institutions. In-service training may be valuable here.

##### **7.5.1.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

No specific needs are mentioned regarding this aspect.

##### **7.5.1.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe**

Again there is a feeling that much more should be done to popularise community programmes.

#### **7.5.2. In language provision for non-language students**

##### **7.5.2.1. Seen in relation to the developments of language studies**

One of the needs is certainly common objectives as far as students training is concerned. While, on the whole, communication in the foreign language is the aim it is difficult to see how this can be achieved. Instructors seem in need of in-service training here. Also, there is a need for specific teacher training in this respect.

##### **7.5.2.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements**

see 7.3.2.

##### **7.5.2.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe**

see 7.5.1.3.

## **8. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO SATISFY THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED**

## **8.1. Measures to be taken in the areas of initial and in-service language teacher training**

### **8.1.1. Measures within the responsibility of the institutions**

One of the important measures to be taken by the institutions consists of programme evaluation. While it is generally agreed that programmes have to be reformed, institutions should make an effort to monitor initial teacher training more closely. With respect to in-service training, most universities organise specific training for specific subjects. However, much more consultation between the school authorities and the institutions should take place. In-service programmes should follow a general policy instead of depending on independent initiatives by different institutions.

### **8.1.2. Measures within the responsibility of the regional and national authorities**

The regional authorities should reform initial teacher training at the higher pedagogical institutions. Collaboration with universities should be part of this reform. It is felt by all parties involved that this should be done urgently and that politicians should commit themselves to this. At the moment, various propositions are under study.

### **8.1.3. Measures within the responsibility of the European Union**

In Belgium, it is felt by many that the European Union should play a more important role. Being highly politicised, the field of education can benefit considerably from outlines by the European Union. Moreover, with respect to language teacher training the European Union might accelerate reforms. Finally, measurements by the European Union might overcome local susceptibilities. These measurements might include the number of languages to be studied and the organisation of the studies. In addition, instructions for evaluation and quality control should be mentioned.

## **8.2. Measures to be taken in universities (outside the area of teacher training)**

### **8.2.1. Measures within the responsibility of the institutions**

Universities should uprate their language departments and their curricula for non-language students. In Belgium, language knowledge has long been taken for granted. But societal changes have created a completely different language climate. In the Dutch-speaking community, measures should be taken to uprate French and German, while in the French-speaking community, the knowledge of Dutch should further be propagated. In both cases these measures should not be limited to universities but should also include primary and secondary schools.

### **8.2.2. Measures within the responsibility of the regional and national authorities**

The previous measures should go hand in hand with a more open attitude towards the language laws: in cases where early language learning is hampered by law, measures should be taken to re-interpret or eventually change the law. Regional authorities in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium should get rid of the fear for Frenchification which - by now - has become totally unwarranted. In the French-speaking part measures should be taken to propagate Dutch as the second language. These measures should suffice to create an open language attitude. By the same token, the result would satisfy the demand of industry for a better knowledge of the second language, implying Dutch or French depending on the community.

### **8.2.3. Measures within the responsibility of the European Union**

The role of the European Union is of great psychological importance. General measures issued by the Union can more easily overcome regional differences. Stressing the role of second languages in specific countries because of their availability and their economic importance, for instance, might help to implement some of the regional measures mentioned above.

### **8.3. Measures to be taken in non-university institutions of higher education (outside the area of teacher training)**

#### **8.3.1. Measures within the responsibility of the institutions**

It is clear that language programmes should be revised in the light of a more interdisciplinary approach. At the same time, in-service training is a prerequisite because much more attention should be paid to developments in the field of language teaching. The combination of subject-oriented curricula and languages should be improved.

#### **8.3.2. Measures within the responsibility of the regional and national authorities**

What has been said in 8.2.2. applies here as well.

#### **8.3.3. Measures within the responsibility of the European Union**

The role of the European Union should be strengthened. Paradoxical as it may seem, the European Union should propagate its programmes more in Belgium. While Europe seems to be taken for granted its programmes should be advertised more.

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