

**THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III
(TNP3)
SOCRATES-ERASMUS PROGRAMME
(2003-2006)**

Sub-project Two

Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European labour market

GREEK NATIONAL REPORT

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| <p>1. An overview of the national labour market and recent changes in the labour market as a result of increasing European integration and globalisation</p> |
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Over the last years significant changes have occurred both at the level of economy as a whole and in the labour market. These changes are not only quantitative i.e. improvement of the economic and labour market indicators but also qualitative. According to the Economic Bulletin of the Bank of Greece (July 2003) for the 1981-2002 period there has been an annual rate of increase (0,82%) in the labour force for both genders; this was mainly due to the entry of women into the labour market which in turn reflects the improved position of women in Greek society.

The participation rate of the population aged 15 and over in the labour force remains almost unchanged during the 1981-2002 period. It stood at 50% of the population; a level lower than in other OECD and EU countries (see Population, Labour force and Unemployment in Greece. Economic Bulletin 2003:36)

There has been an increase of unemployment in the period 1992 -2002 mainly due to the fact that the labour force increased more than employment. In general the employment rate in Greece is considerably lower than in the EU and even lower than the target (70%) set at the European Council of Lisbon for 2010.

Unemployment in Greece despite its declining trend since 1999 (9,6% in 2002, 9,3% in 2003) remains higher than the EU average (7,6% in 2002) affecting young women and young people in particular. The unemployment rate of women is considerably higher than that of men. Young women are the main group hit by youth unemployment. It is believed that the low level of investment in vocational training and research, weaknesses in the education system as well as characteristics of the tax and social security legislation prevent an increase in labour productivity and a faster rise in the employment rates of young people, women and relatively older people. (see the Greek Economy: Development, Prospects and Policy Challenges. Annual Report 2003. Bank of Greece, Athens 2004). The highest percentage of the population of working age comes under the 45-64 age group (39,9% consists of individuals aged 30-44

and 34,1% consists of people aged 45-64 in 2002). The data depict an ageing trend for the population of working age and for the labour force. This ageing of the labour force has a negative impact on labour productivity itself and on economic growth, unless the labour force rejuvenates and life-long learning and training is generalised for the labour force total.

Over the last ten years (1992-2002) according to a survey of the labour market in Greece conducted by the Employment Observatory, the number of salaried individuals is rising significantly (from 52,65% to 60,20%) while the number of the self-employed and of assistants in the family business is decreasing. The number of people involved in new or informal patterns of employment is rising

Employment growth has been very modest during the last few years reflecting the continuing fall in agricultural employment (rate of participation especially of females decreased from 21,92% to 15,80% in the period 1992-2002) and also a downsizing of firms in the private sector. There have been gains in construction activity and business services due to preparation for the Olympic games. Employment in the branch of industry fell from 20,48% to 15,03% whereas employment in the branch of services rose from 57,72% to 69,18%.

Labour market flexibility in Greece mainly takes the form of part-time employment which is widespread especially in commercial enterprises. Part time employment in Greece in 2002 makes up 4,5% of total employment.

Over the last three years, Greece faces significant industrial capital transfer towards Balkan countries resulting in serious distortions of the Greek labour market due to the low labour costs of those countries. About 1,500 small and medium sized firms have moved to other countries, 50% of which towards Albania and Bulgaria.

The Labour Force and Education

A peculiarity of the Greek labour market is the mismatch between the education process and the labour market. Unemployment in Greece is higher for high school graduates and unemployment for university graduates is considerably higher (7,4%) compared with that for the average European university graduate (4,5%).

More specifically, over the last ten years (1992-2002) according to a survey of the labour market in Greece conducted by the Employment Observatory, employment is decreasing in the primary sector mainly in favour of the tertiary sector. The participation of individuals with an advanced educational level increased in the total number of unemployed from 17,1% in 1992 to 27% in 2002. Unemployment rates for the 25-29 age group range from 23% for university graduates to 9% for the graduates of the occupation specific upper secondary vocational curriculum (based on 1996 survey). The level of education of the employed is relatively low. In the period 2000-2002, there is an increase in the number of the employed of intermediate education.

2. New linguistic demands in the private and public sectors resulting from European integration and globalisation: languages and skills / competences

The lack of linguistic competence is an obstacle in the process towards the internationalisation of companies. It affects their ability to deal with a growing number of contracts abroad. In an increasingly competitive world this inevitably leads to a loss of their share in the international markets. Language and communication skills become a necessary precondition to act in a globalised market.

Changes occurring in the labour market bring about new conditions and new social needs. They call for a modern educational system capable of meeting contemporary social needs. According to a survey carried out by Paleokrassas et al (2002) there is significant mismatch between the skills workers possess and those required by the employers.

Based on a survey carried in 2001 amongst graduates of both general and vocational secondary education focusing on their transition from school to work (Paleokrassas et al 2002) gender, work experience acquired while in school and knowledge of a foreign language seem to be the most important factors which determine the employment status of these graduates in the Greek labour market.

The survey also showed that employment rates, income and duration of employment following graduation are differentiated for women, individuals working while in schools and those who had acquired good foreign language skills in English. Foreign language skills proved to be valuable for getting a first job in occupations which were not highly vocationalised. Foreign language skills are very important for office jobs.

Based on a survey carried out amongst graduates of the National Technical University of Athens and employers (Liagouras et al 2003), it was found that even the upper segment of the Greek higher education system is adopting rather slowly to the new mix of knowledge and skills required by the emerging knowledge-based economy. Greece forms the most notable exception in EU or OECD countries regarding the high unemployment rates of young graduates. The limited demand of the domestic economy for higher education young graduates is mainly due to the weaknesses of the business sector. Many Greek firms are SME's that are specialised in low-tech industry or service activities. Given their traditional management methods they are unwilling to hire personnel with higher educational background. As a result, some three quarters of graduates are employed in the broader public sector. The missing link is not the supply of high quality researchers but the incapacity of the economy especially of the business sector to absorb them. As most Greek firms are unwilling or unable to invest in the training of their employees, they seek young graduates who have enough experience to be immediately productive. The diminishing employment opportunities of higher education graduates induce them to accept less qualified jobs and then displace less qualified graduates.

Science (especially social science) graduates have greater difficulty in entering the labour market than those of applied sciences (engineers, doctors). Young people graduating from technical-vocational high schools have slightly better employment opportunities than holders of a general high school diploma. Similarly, young graduates of non-university tertiary education share the same rates of unemployment as university graduates.

According to this survey amongst graduates of the National Technical University of Athens and employers, the preferred required skills are analytical thought, adaptability, capability to learn how to learn, initiative in taking decisions. Foreign language skills were not mentioned amongst these graduates and their employers as required skills. A finding similar to the survey conducted by the Tuning project.

Based on a survey of competencies required in the IT market in Greece (1999 Leonardo da Vinci project), IT companies in Greece regarded the following competencies as important:

- ❖ Teamwork and ability to communicate
- ❖ Academic education
- ❖ Knowledge in computer science
- ❖ Language knowledge
- ❖ Awareness of new technologies
- ❖ Work experience.

As far as employment of language graduates is concerned (see table below), it seems that graduates specialising in translation and interpreting are most sought after in the labour market.

Table 1: Offer and demand for language graduates in the Greek market

| | Demand by Greek enterprises | Offer by university graduates | Difference between demand-offer |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Total | Total | Total |
| English Language and Literature | 21 | 61 | -40 |
| French Language and Literature | 8 | 115 | -107 |
| German Language and Literature | 12 | 36 | -24 |
| Italian Language and Literature | 4 | 19 | -15 |
| Foreign Languages, Translation and Interpreting | 23 | 8 | 15 |
| Greek Philology | 27 | 450 | -423 |

Source: OAED (STAGE Programme), found in Economou et al (2002: 269-275)

Language audits

After extensive research no information or data on the results of language audits carried out in Greece were found. It seems that language audits constitute an alien practice for companies in Greece.

A project funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme which is being carried out and which involves Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland and Greece aims at developing awareness of the significance of language audits. This project will result in inter alia

- ❖ A set of tools for and examples of carrying out language audits among government agencies.
- ❖ Training of 30 language auditors in Greece.
- ❖ Language audits of companies and governmental organisations carried out for free.
- ❖ A website from which audit materials and selection of language materials can be downloaded.

3. In regard to language and non-language graduates (bachelor and master) outside language-related industries and professions, what formal or informal linguistic and intercultural qualifications – languages / skills and competences - are known to enhance career prospects?

In December 2004, the authors of this report conducted a survey with 72 Greek university graduates taking a placement exam in English in order to be accepted to study for a second degree in the Faculty of English Studies of the University of Athens. A simplified version of the *Questionnaire for University Graduates* prepared by TNP3 experts was distributed (see Appendix), which included those questions which were relevant to the specific target group. The respondents were graduates from a variety of fields (Table 2), including other departments of the School of Philosophy (e.g. French Department, Greek Philology), Theology, as well as School of Science (e.g. Physics Department, Engineering) etc. All of the graduates had already entered the labour market, yet they wanted to study a second degree in

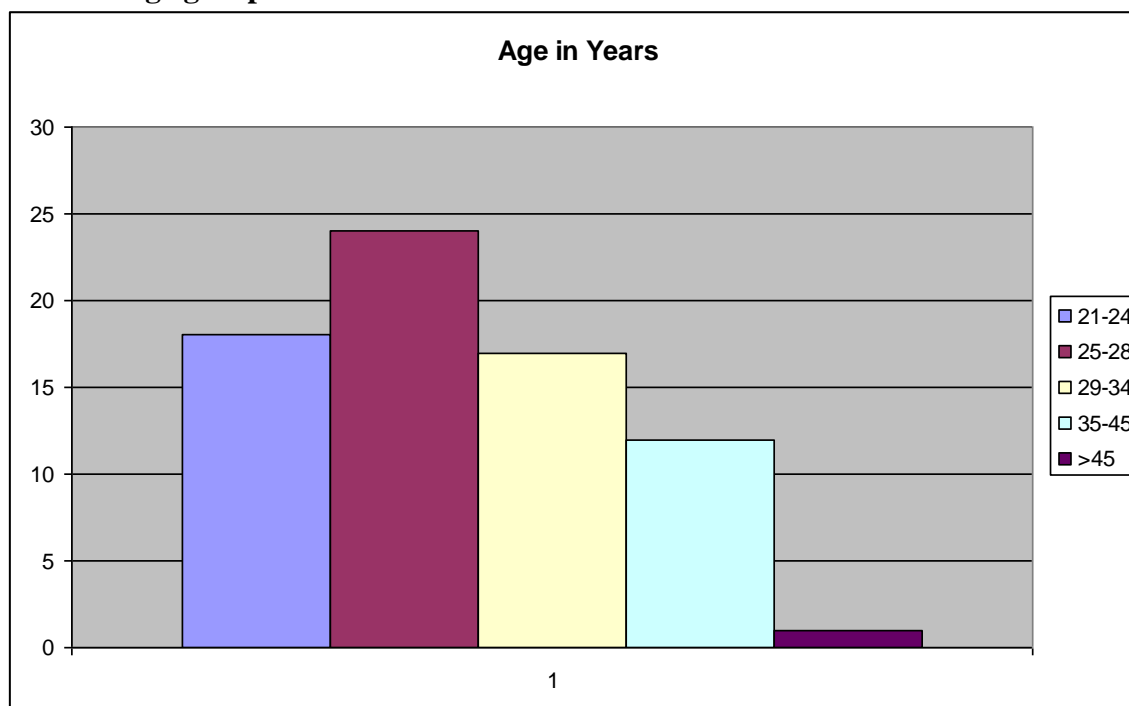
the area of English Studies mainly in order to enhance job opportunities. As it was explained in the beginning of the questionnaire, its purpose was “to survey the opinions and experiences of European university graduates regarding the kinds of language and communication skills that are needed in today’s internationalized workplaces and for career development.”

Table 2: Distribution of graduates who participated in the study

| First degree | No of graduates | First degree | No of graduates |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| French Language and Literature | 16 | Philosophy and Social Studies | 1 |
| Greek Literature and Linguistics | 7 | Business and Finance | 1 |
| Italian and Spanish Philology | 4 | TEI Accountant | 1 |
| Theology | 4 | Psychology | 1 |
| Tourist Business | 3 | Sociology | 1 |
| Psychology, Philosophy and Pedagogy | 3 | Political Science | 1 |
| Translation and Interpreting | 3 | Civil Engineering | 1 |
| Business Administration/Finance | 3 | Law Studies | 1 |
| Nursery | 2 | Mining Engineering | 1 |
| Hellenic Airforce | 2 | Midwife | 1 |
| Media Studies | 2 | Biochemistry | 1 |
| Theatrical Studies | 2 | Music Studies | 1 |
| History and Archaeology | 2 | Agriculture | 1 |
| Public Health Inspector | 2 | Survey Engineering | 1 |
| German Language and Literature | 2 | Human Resources | 1 |

As Table 3 below indicates, the age of these graduates ranged from 21-45. Specifically, 18 graduates were in the 21-24 age group, 24 in the 25-28 age group, 17 in the 29-34 age group and 12 in the 35-45 age group. Only one respondent replied that s/he was over 46 years old. Moreover, 64 of the respondents were female and only 7 male.

Table 3: Age group distribution



According to the information provided in Table 4, 49 of the respondents replied that a foreign language component was not included in their first degree, whereas 22 reported that they studied a foreign language as part of their undergraduate programme. The languages which are included in the undergraduate programmes are English, French, Italian and German (Table 5).

Table 4: Incorporation of foreign language component in the first degree

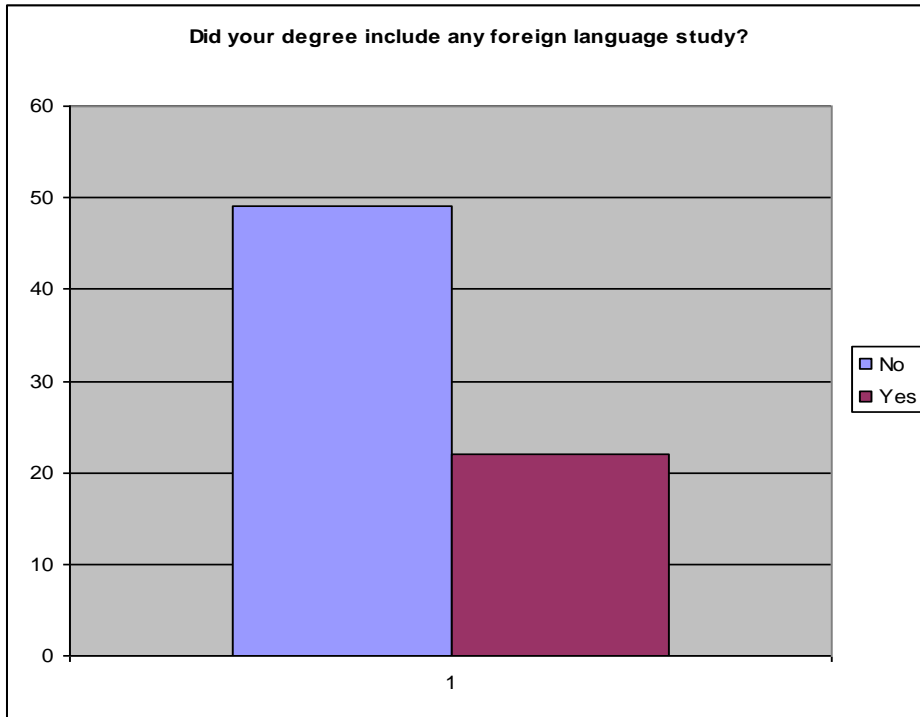
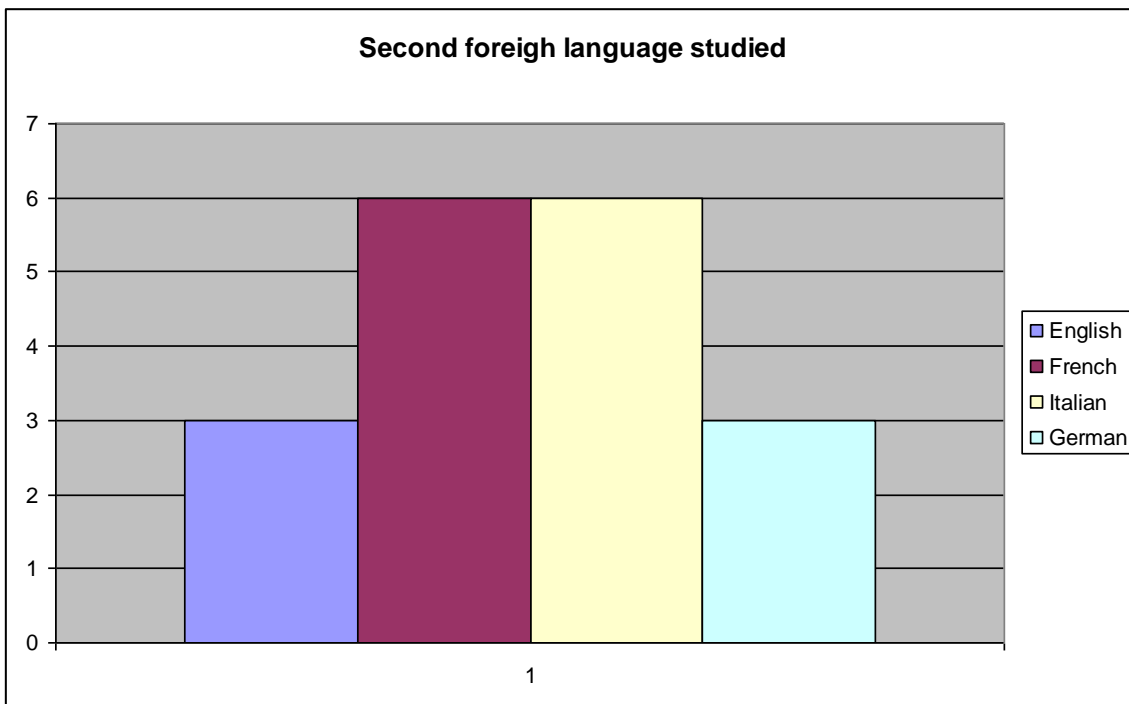
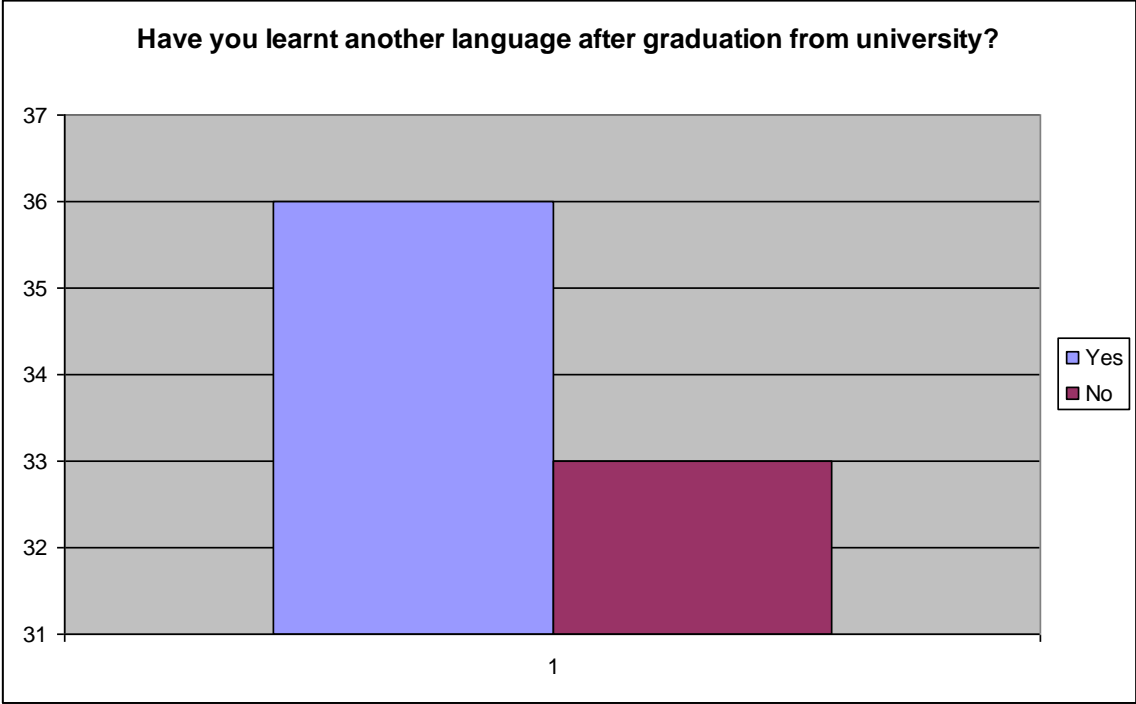


Table 5: Foreign languages taught in undergraduate programmes



The majority of the Greek graduates who participated in the survey studied in Greece and only 5 graduates responded that they studied abroad. However, the majority of the graduates were interested in learning a second foreign language and they reported that they studied a second foreign language after they graduated from university (Table 6). The languages studied were mainly French, Italian, Spanish, German and there was some interest for Arabic as well (Table 7). English is also reported among the languages studied. Granted that most of the respondents had some knowledge of English from their secondary education school years, it is suggested that those who studied English did so in order to advance their knowledge of English.

Table 6: Learning foreign languages after university graduation



Moreover, when asked whether they consider language learning important for their career development, the majority of the graduates responded positively (Table 8). A number of languages were recorded to enhance career development (Table 9) with German and Spanish being in first position. Next come Russian, Turkish and Japanese, followed by Arabic and Portuguese. Again here it is hard to evaluate the position of English which takes a very small percentage, probably because English is considered to be a prerequisite for most positions in Greece, and the respondents focused on the knowledge of other languages they consider important in addition to English.

The findings of this survey, by Greek university graduates who have already entered the Greek labour market, may be seen to indirectly indicate to a great extent the Greek labour market’s demands for language learning.

Table 7: Languages learnt after graduation from university

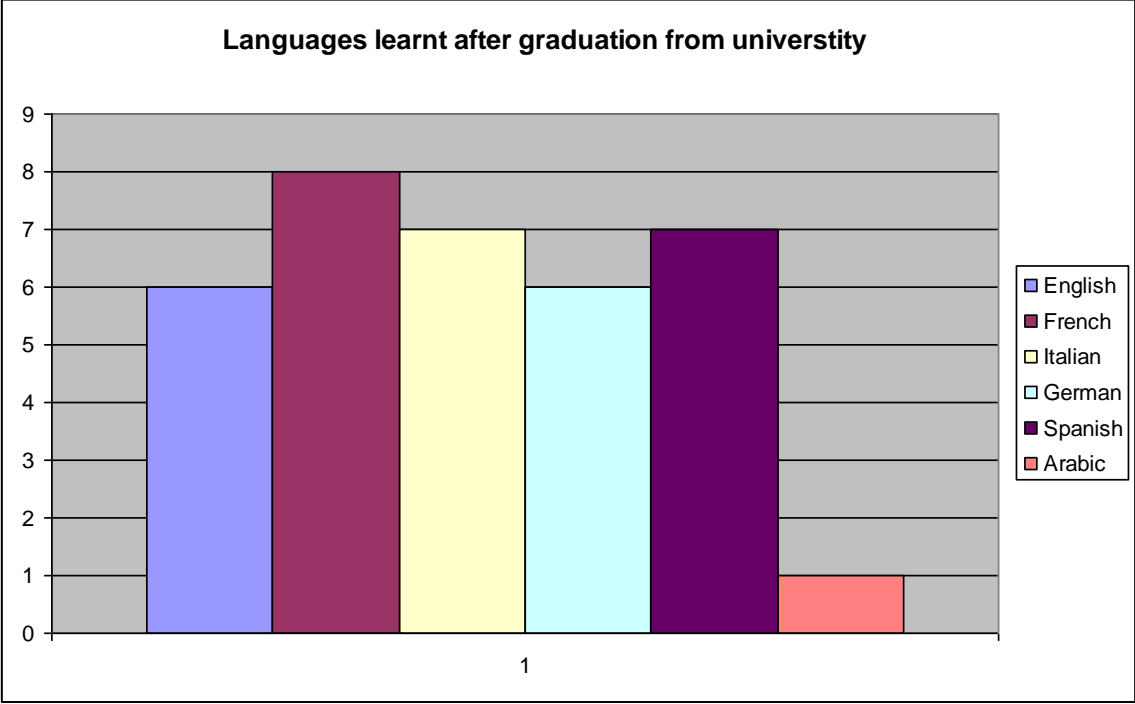


Table 8: Importance of language learning in career development

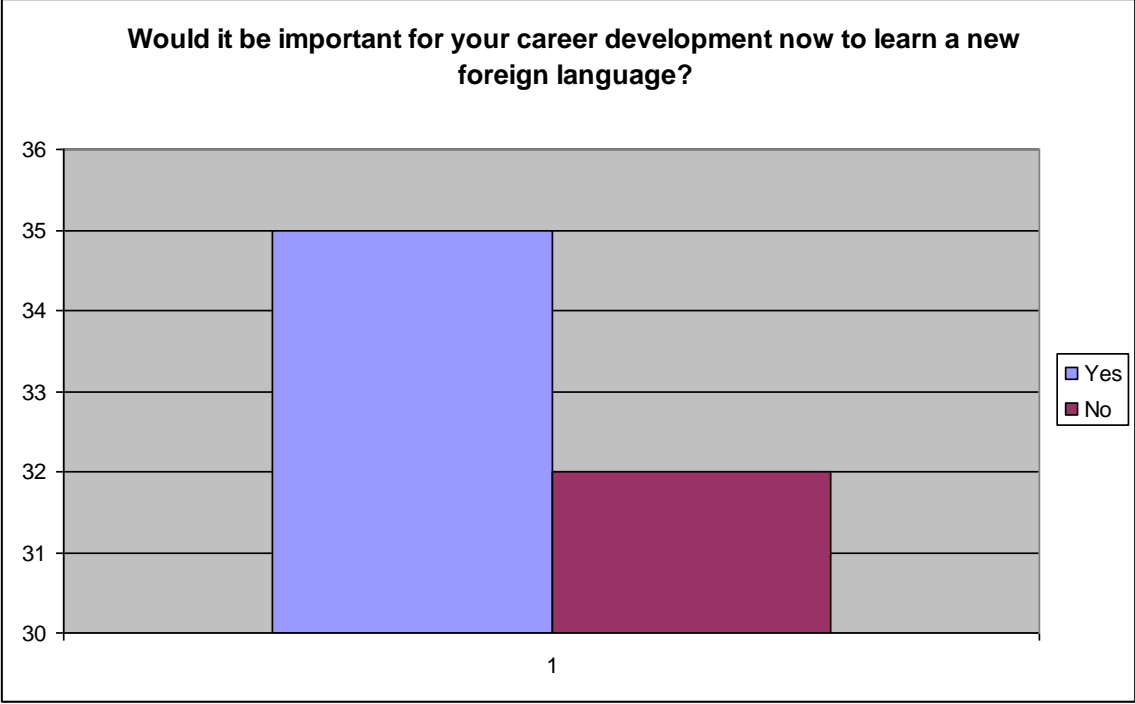
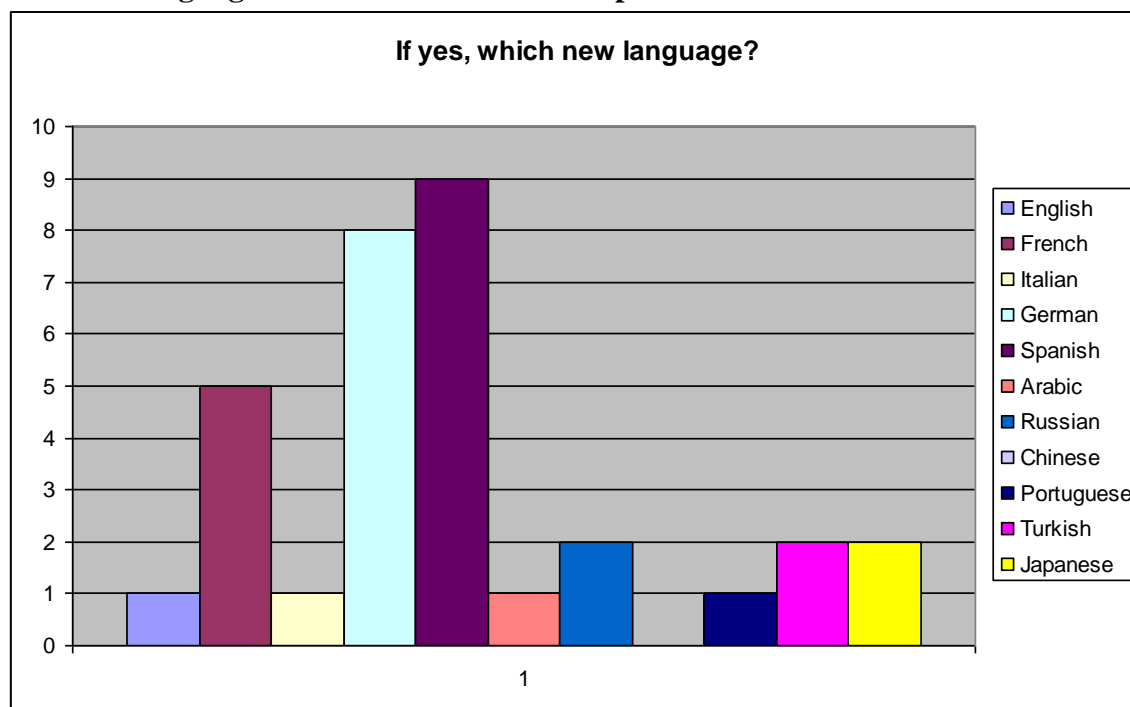


Table 9: Languages to enhance career development



In another part of the questionnaire, Greek graduates were asked to rate a number of communication skills which they consider important to cope well in situations of foreign language use. They were also asked to identify the level to which these skills were developed in the context of second language learning during their undergraduate years. The scale employed to specify the importance and level of language skills is given below together with the list of communication situations. The numbers next to each situation is the average of the respondents' answers.

Importance

- 1 = not important
- 2 = not very important
- 3 = quite important
- 4 = very important

Level to which it developed during university study

- 1 = not developed at university
- 2 = not developed very well at university
- 3 = developed quite well at university
- 4 = developed very well at university

Table 10: Average of Greek graduates' responses to the work-related foreign language use situations

| <i>WORK-RELATED FOREIGN LANGUAGE USE SITUATIONS</i> | Importance | Level |
|--|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work | 3.47 | 2.33 |
| 2. Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.) | 3.32 | 2.24 |
| 3. Following discussions and presentations in professional contexts | 3.39 | 2.16 |

| | | |
|--|------|------|
| 4. Giving a structured presentation on a topic within your field of work. | 3.25 | 2.31 |
| 5. Responding to follow-up questions from an expert or non-expert audience | 2.96 | 2 |
| 6. Team-working e.g. in problem-solving and project contexts in the workplace | 2.92 | 1.86 |
| 7. Participating in, and leading, meetings/negotiations | 2.88 | 1.88 |
| 8 Networking and collaborating in virtual environments | 2.96 | 1.85 |
| 9. Reading and writing e-mails and short factual texts (e.g. memos, short reports, www-pages, etc.) related to your field or work | 3.37 | 2.05 |
| 10. Reading specialised articles and reports related to your field of work and summarising or reporting on them | 3.46 | 2.4 |
| 11. Communicating to manage international relations and customer contacts | 3.01 | 2.01 |
| 12. Writing project proposals or technical documentation | 2.79 | 1.93 |
| 13. Writing a report which synthesises and evaluates information and arguments from a number of sources | 2.94 | 1.95 |
| 14. Understanding and interacting in important multicultural contexts (i.e. with an awareness of intercultural differences in communication) | 3.12 | 2.06 |
| 15. Writing for and presenting to a scientific/professional audience in your field. | 2.83 | 2.04 |
| 16. Other situations (please specify): | | |

In the next question, graduates were asked to rank the five most important skills and competences from the above list. Their answers are summarised below:

Table 11: Ranking of the five most important skills and competences

The most important skill and competence:

- Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.) (11 answers)
- Following discussions and presentations in professional contexts (9 answers)
- Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work (6 answers)
- Giving a structured presentation on a topic within your field of work (6 answers)
- Team-working e.g. in problem-solving and project contexts in the workplace (6 answers)

The second most important skill and competence:

- Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work (5 answers)
- Following discussions and presentations in professional contexts (5 answers)
- Giving a structured presentation on a topic within your field of work (5 answers)

The third most important skill and competence:

- Reading specialised articles and reports related to your field of work and summarising or reporting on them (8 answers)
- Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.) (5 answers)
- Participating in, and leading, meetings/negotiations (5 answers)

The fourth most important skill and competence:

- Reading and writing e-mails and short factual texts (e.g. memos, short reports, www-pages, etc.) related to your field or work. (6 answers)

The fifth most important skill and competence:

- Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.) (7 answers)
- Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work. (6 answers)

Finally when the graduates were asked in an open question why they have chosen to study at the English Faculty, they clearly connected it to professional prospects as the Table 12 below illustrates.

Table 12: Reasons provided for studying at the Faculty of English Studies

| | |
|---|-------|
| To enhance career development/professional prospects | 33.8% |
| To become an English teacher | 19.3% |
| To obtain a second degree / explore another field of study | 9.7% |
| To improve language proficiency | 9.7% |
| To find a job in the public sector (in a state school) | 6.5% |
| To get a degree in the language they have been teaching (e.g. in language schools) (with certificates such as CPE of Cambridge Syndicate) | 4.8% |
| To study English Literature | 4.8% |
| Important for my job (in combination with first degree) | 3.2% |
| To study English which is an international language | 3.2% |
| It is interesting | 3.2% |
| For hobby | 1.8% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

4. In regard to non-language graduates, what formal or informal linguistic and intercultural qualifications – languages / skills and competences – are sought after on the national labour market?

The Private Sector

Communications from Heads of Personnel Departments

In the context of TNP3 research, a number of representatives of international companies operating in Greece were interviewed with the purpose to identify the language policies employed by the companies and the linguistic and intercultural qualifications sought after on the Greek labour market. The following companies took part in the study: Johnson & Johnson (T&T), Nestle (NE), Nokia (NO), General Mills (GM). A summary of the main answers is offered below:

1) How important is the acquisition of a foreign language in your company? Why?

J&J: As Johnson & Johnson Hellas is the subsidiary of a multinational (US-based) company it is important for our employees to be able to have good English skills. In management positions (from junior to senior level) this is a prerequisite for selecting employees during the recruiting process; however in manual positions (i.e. in our plant) this does not apply.

NE: It is very important due to regular communication with other European countries

NO: It is absolutely vital, as communication within a multinational company takes place in a universal language.

GM: The acquisition of a foreign language in my company is prerequisite, since it is an international company and most of the communication takes place in a foreign language, in English. So the knowledge of English is very important since not only the documentation of the company is written in English but also the employers have to use English in their written communication e.g. e-mails, and when they have to communicate with colleagues from abroad.

2) How often do your employers use a foreign language?

J&J: Very frequently. In some positions (e.g. Marketing), on a daily basis.

NE: At least twice a week.

NO: Everyday, English is the official language for internal and external communications:

- In written communication internally and with customer.*
- In the retrieval of technical or commercial information from company's centralized knowledge base/resources.*
- In verbal communication between people of different nationalities.*

NE: At least twice a week.

GM: The use of foreign language, English in particular, is very often, especially for employers in high level positions, eg. supervisors, managers, directors. English is used on a daily basis in all written communication eg. e-mails, reports, presentations, and it is also used as a contact language both written and orally in the communication with colleagues from abroad eg. e-mails, reports, conference calls, European and international meetings etc.

3) How many languages do you expect your employers to speak?

J&J: English only

NE: Fluent English, basic French

NO: At least English, local language is an asset.

GM: English is a prerequisite for the reasons mentioned above. And of course since it is an international company, the knowledge of any other language is positively valued.

4) What languages do you prefer your employers to speak?

J&J: (see answers above)

NE: English and French

NO: English

GM: English and preferably French, since most of the communication involves members of the European team of the company.

5) Do all your employers speak at least one foreign language?

J&J: Yes, with the exception of manual workers. Of course, the level of their ability to communicate in a foreign language varies.

NE: Yes, most of them.

NO: Yes.

GM: Yes, those working in higher level positions, like supervisors, managers, directors etc. Of course this is not the case for all those working in the Operations department of the factory e.g. workers.

6) Which are the certificates that you value more? (Michigan Proficiency, Cambridge Proficiency, First Certificate of English, GMAT, TOEFL etc)

J&J: We have no specific preferences, as we are not looking for certificates only but also for use of the language.

NE: Proficiency Cambridge

NO: All of them.

GM: We don't have a preference for a particular certificate. Our concern is that the employers have good knowledge of English in order to communicate effectively and cope with the problems and needs that come up.

7) Do you ask your employers to take the GMAT or TOEFL exams to confirm that they do acquire language competence?

J&J: No

NE: No

NO: No

GM: No, we don't ask them to take any language test. Since the job interview is in English we can assess their level of language competence.

8) Do you have all your job interviews in English?

J&J: No

NE: No, just some of them

NO: There is always a part of recruitment process that is done using English.

GM: Yes, except for those working in low level positions eg. workers in the factory. People who apply for managerial positions are interviewed not only by members of the Greek branch but also by executives of the European or the international team.

9) Do you give any self-assessment opportunities to your employers (in order for them to assess their own linguistic competence)?

J&J: No

NE: Yes, only if needed

NO: No

GM: Not particularly. They assess themselves in a sense in their everyday practices when they have to use daily the foreign language and communicate successfully.

10) Have you ever heard of the Common European Framework levels or the Portfolio? Do you use them in your work?

J&J: No

NE: Yes, but we don't use them

NO: No

GM: No, I haven't heard of them. We don't use them in my company.

11) Do you offer some kind of language learning possibilities to your employers? (i.e. seminars)

J&J: Yes we offer seminars in foreign languages if this is necessary for an employee to better perform to its role. (e.g. English skills for an employee that interacts with

customers from abroad; or Spanish courses for an employee who will be transferred to our affiliate in Spain)

NE: Only when the company believes that it is necessary.

NO: Yes

GM: In cases that it is needed, language seminars are offered in order to improve employers' language skills.

12) Would you like your employers to have spent some time abroad? Why?

J&J: Not necessarily

NE: Not necessarily

NO: International exposure usually helps from the experience point of view.

GM: Having spent some time abroad is not a prerequisite nor considered a qualification for the employer. Of course it is beneficial for the employer in order to improve his/her language competence.

13) What do you value more: certificates or having spent some time abroad?

J&J: Having spent some time abroad

NE: Both is ideal

NO: Having spent some time abroad

GM: As a company neither. The important thing is to have adequate language knowledge in order to deal effectively with his/her obligations derived from his/her position. But personally if I had to choose between the two, I would choose certificates.

14) Other comments on language learning in your work

GM: In order to communicate successfully in a foreign language, in this case in English, besides having good knowledge of the language itself, it is equally important to know the cultural practices as well so as to be able to convey the desired meaning effectively and to avoid misunderstandings.

From the above it becomes clear that English is by far the language mostly needed in the private sector with French following. Companies regarded knowledge of foreign languages, especially English, as extremely important especially for management positions. Foreign languages were used by employees in companies almost on a daily basis. The companies offered language training opportunities to its employees only when this was considered necessary.

A number of newspaper job advertisements were reviewed in order to identify foreign language skill requirements. Fluency and good communication skills especially in English is a prerequisite for many of the advertised jobs.

Table 13: Examples of language requirements in newspaper job advertisements:

- A well known science company with a tradition in agriculture, nutrition, electronics, communications, safety and protection, is looking for a qualified agronomist. Fluency in English is required.
- Citibank Greece is looking for Citigold Executives with very good knowledge of English.
- Advent Hellas, a subsidiary of Advent Software, servicing the South and Eastern European, Middle East and North African Markets, requires good Greek and English language skills for the position of Account Manager. Spanish or Arabic language knowledge will be an advantage. Regional travel is required.
- McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm, is looking for consultants with excellent Greek and English communication skills.

The Public Sector

The selection of regular personnel to fill in positions in the public sector of Greece takes place in the following two ways: (a) by written examinations, and (b) by a ranking system on the basis of credits accumulated per prospective public employee. The state agency responsible for public employment is the **Supreme Council for Personnel Selection (ASEP)**. The announcements for regular public employee vacancies are published in the Government Gazette (ASEP Issue) which is available free of charge by the National Printing House, the seats of Prefectures, Provinces and the Citizens' Service Centres. Interested individuals can access this information in electronic form through the web pages of the National Printing House. The summary announcements are published in the issue of the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration & Decentralization, and "Demosiographica" paper. Over the last years, most job announcements by ASEP require certified knowledge of English at an upper-intermediate level and basic knowledge of computer use.

5. Validation of learning, assessment, certification – what does the labour market recognise and value?

The TOEIC test administered by the Hellenic American Union, is recognised by ASEP (Council for the selection of employees of the public sector) as a certificate of an individual's level of English competence required for different jobs.

The newly developed and administered national KPG language certificate catering for four different languages (English, French, German and Italian) has been included in ASEP's list of approved language certificates for employment in the public sector. The KPG language examinations (funded by the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs) follow the guidelines set by the CEF (Common European Framework Of Reference for Languages) and have been specifically designed for adults (15+) responding thus to the requirements of the labour market. Two levels have been developed: B2: Independent User and C1: Advanced.

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APPENDIX

Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages III (Socrates-Erasmus Programme 2003-2006)
Sub-project Two: Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European labour market

Questionnaire for University Graduates

The purpose of this questionnaire is to survey the opinions and experiences of European university graduates regarding the kinds of language and communication related skills that are needed in today's internationalised workplaces and for career development. Your answers are extremely valuable for directing and updating language programmes offered at the university level to both language graduates and to students specialising in other fields. This is your unique chance to have an impact on how workplace communication skills could and should be developed in higher education in order to provide a good basis for developing actual workplace-specific communication skills and a competitive edge in employability.

A. Background factors

1. Age in years: 21-24 25-28 29-34 35-45
>46

2. Sex Female Male

3. Mother tongue: _____

4. Title of your university degree(s) (in the national language):

4.1 Title of your first degree: _____

5. Major subject(s) / subject area in which you graduated:

5.1 Major subject(s) / subject area of your first degree: _____

6. Did your degree include any foreign language study?

6.1 No foreign language studies were included in my degree

6.2 Yes:

a. First foreign language studied (Lang 1): _____

b. Second foreign language studied (Lang 2): _____

c. Third foreign language studied (Lang 3): _____

6.3 If yes, what kind of language study? Please select one type of study for each foreign language:

| Type of study | Foreign Language | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| | Lang 1 | Lang 2 | Lang 3 |
| a. Language as a subject | | | |
| b. General language study (eg. survival skills, basic- intermediate-advanced level studies, grammar, writing, etc.) | | | |
| c. Subject-specific language study (eg. German for engineers, Business English, French for marketing, etc.) | | | |
| d. Academic language study (eg. seminar skills, scientific writing, presentation skills, negotiation skills, etc.) | | | |
| e. Subject(s) taught through a foreign language | | | |
| f. Other (please specify): | | | |

7. Did you study abroad?

7.1 Yes

if yes, in which country? _____

7.2 No

8. Have you learnt another language after graduation from university?

8.1 Yes

if yes, which language(s) ? _____

8.2 No

9. How good are your language and communication skills in your opinion?

| In my opinion, my skills are ... | <i>survival level</i> | <i>intermediate</i> | <i>Advanced</i> | <i>excellent</i> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9.1 Lang 1: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9.2 Lang 2: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9.3 Lang 3: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Would it be important for your career development now to learn a new foreign language?

10.1 Yes

if yes, which new language? _____

10.2 No

11. Why did you choose to study at the Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Athens?

12. Please rate how important in your profession/field it is to cope well with the following situations of foreign language use. Please also rate to what level the skills needed in these situations were developed during your university study. Answer on the basis of your **second foreign language.**

second foreign language (please specify): _____

12.1 Please specify the importance and level of language skills using the following scale and circle the most appropriate answer:

study Importance

- 1 = not important
- 2 = not very important
- 3 = quite important
- 4 = very important

Level to which developed during university

- 1 = not developed at university
- 2 = not developed very well at university
- 3 = developed quite well at university
- 4 = developed very well at university

| <i>WORK-RELATED FOREIGN LANGUAGE USE SITUATIONS</i> | Importance | Level |
|--|------------|---------|
| 1. Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 2. Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 3. Following discussions and presentations in professional contexts | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 4. Giving a structured presentation on a topic within your field of work. | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 5. Responding to follow-up questions from an expert or non-expert audience | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 6. Team-working e.g. in problem-solving and project contexts in the workplace | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 7. Participating in, and leading, meetings/negotiations | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 8. Networking and collaborating in virtual environments | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 9. Reading and writing e-mails and short factual texts (e.g. memos, short reports, www-pages, etc.) related to your field or work | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |

| | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| 10. Reading specialised articles and reports related to your field of work and summarising or reporting on them | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 11. Communicating to manage international relations and customer contacts | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 12. Writing project proposals or technical documentation | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 13. Writing a report which synthesises and evaluates information and arguments from a number of sources | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 14. Understanding and interacting in important multicultural contexts (i.e. with an awareness of intercultural differences in communication) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 15. Writing for and presenting to a scientific/professional audience in your field. | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| 16. Other situations (please specify): | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |

12.2 Please rank below what you think are **the five most important skills and competences** on the above list. Please write the number of the item in the box. Put the most important in the first box, the second most important in the second box and so on:

1. Item number: _____
2. Item number: _____
3. Item number: _____
4. Item number: _____
5. Item number : _____

Many thanks for your co-operation!