

TNP Languages

National Report on Curriculum Innovation - Draft Slovenia

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1. Introduction

The Republic of Slovenia has gained its independence in 1991; even before that the official language of its around 2 million inhabitants was Slovenian or Slovene, a Slavonic language differing in structure, history and culture from other southern and western Slavonic languages. Slovene is therefore being used throughout the higher education (=HE) institutions with the exception of foreign language programmes, where the taught languages are being spoken in the courses mostly from the beginning - depending of course on the level of language knowledge and competence of the students, i.e. whether that specific language had been taught in secondary schools or not.

As Slovene in comparison to other nations is spoken by a very limited number of speakers and thus belongs to the group of the less widely spoken languages, Slovenes were forced to learn foreign languages in the past and present. German was the official language of the Habsburg Empire, French the language of the upper classes, both were widely spoken by the scarce bourgeoisie till 1919, while Slovene was the language of the middle and lower classes, the peasants and increasingly of the intelligentsia, specially after the national awakening at the beginning of the 19th century. In the 20th century; after World War II and a short intermezzo of Russian, English began to spread widely and is now – similar to other European countries – the widest spread and learned foreign language. German and Italian, though being languages of neighbouring states, have been overshadowed by English similar as French, their individual situations differing however to a remarkable extent. In Yugoslavian times (before 1991) hSerbo-Croatian was probably understood and spoken by larger groups of speakers than English, though it was taught just one year in the eight grades of elementary schools. But because of its being split up into several languages and of the political situation it is being forgotten very quickly (by Slovenes with Slovene as their mother tongue). The languages of the autochthonous minorities are Italian and Hungarian.

The Republic of Slovenia has two universities, one in the capital of Ljubljana and one in the second largest town Maribor (in the Northeast), a third one in the Southwest is being established (in Koper etc). Both are funded by the state and tuition is free for fulltime students. The number of students for 1999/2000 was 66.198, 44.837 full-time and 21.361 part-time (in both professionally oriented and academic programmes).

1.1. The system of higher education

In the information package on the Diploma Supplement (for more information on the education system see <http://ius-info.ius-software.si>) the HE system is described as follows:

“In the Republic of Slovenia higher education is regulated by the Higher Education Act. The original act entered into force on 1 Jan. 1994 and its amendments on 24 Dec. 1999. Studies are divided into undergraduate and postgraduate studies.[...]

The admission requirements for undergraduate programmes of the university type is a matura examination.[...] Programmes last four to six years and, as a rule, end with the diploma examination (defence of a diploma thesis). The diploma conferred after a successful completion of studies specifies the professional title naming the field of study. A university diploma enables graduates to start work or continue their studies at the postgraduate level.” (p.3)

Postgraduate studies can be continued either as a “specialization”, a one to two years course leading to a professional title of a specialist, or as a “magisterij” and “doktorat znanosti” (doctor of sciences), both leading respectively to those two academic titles. They last two to four years, but generally, especially in the humanities, students take much longer to finish their postgraduate studies.

1.1.1 Recent changes in the system of higher education

Slovenia and her education system has always been prone to introduce reform, but rarely from bottom up. Therefore there have been numerous changes in the HE on the macro and the micro level not only in the last ten years, many of them however resulting not in an increase of quality or innovation, but in an – often only formal - adaptation to the new “rules”. The flexibility of the universities, normally rather rigid institutions, is in my opinion increasing to a remarkable extent.

The organisation of the ministries and governmental institutions for the management of educational and research matters has changed over the last ten years due to the different governments. At the moment the ministry for education and sports has been fused with the ministry for research and technology, the results are still unknown.

Until 1991 HE institutions were self-managing, thus granting large freedom in the processes of decision making to the individual members of the universities and, as a consequence, resulting in remarkable differences between them. After 1991 self-management was abolished and a much more centralised system, based on academic seniority and relatively rigid and conservative in structure, was introduced, aiming at a less dispersed and more efficient use of funds and human resources. The centralisation, which by the evaluation of the CRE was considered to be one of the most important goals for the increase of efficiency and the transformation towards European standards, was implemented to different degrees by the two universities, thus showing both the advantages and disadvantages. The much stressed autonomy of the universities is being gradually introduced, also by a changed system of financing in form of lump sum. How this will work and effect the programmes, is yet a riddle.

The number of students is increasing to a considerable extent in the last decade, it has doubled (from 33.565 to 66.198). New programs developed and the teaching staff has risen for a third (from 1.968 to 2.937).

An important change in HE is the financing of postgraduate studies up to 80 % instead of the former 15% since 1998, thus enabling a larger number of students to continue their studies,

while at the same time, by a shortening of the time span for the completion of the studies, guaranteeing a better output and larger conformity to other European countries. This, however, may result especially in the humanities, with their trend to focus on more general and interdisciplinary problems, on a decrease of quality.

Research funds are, especially for the humanities, very limited. A new system of allocation, not based on individual projects, but on so called “projects groups” and a problematic system of evaluation, was introduced in 1999.

1.1.2 The impact of the Bologna Declaration

The Bologna Declaration has been discussed and partly implemented on ministerial and university/institutional level. It has been the topic of various committees at institutional level, workshops at national and institutional level. An agreement between the Ministry of Education and Sports and the two universities has been signed to implement the diploma supplement, ECTS and ease of mobility. ECTS is being introduced into the programs and will influence curriculum innovation to different degrees: some institutions (on faculty and on program-level) simply transformed the existing programs and formally attributed credit points, others decided to accept it as a chance and challenge and made far reaching changes. Most programs have not yet passed through the entire confirmation/approval procedure; it can be expected, that the new programs with ECTS will start at the earliest in October 2001, most of them probably a year later, some of them are already functioning. The Ministry aimed to make the use of the Diploma Supplement mandatory in higher education for graduates after October 2001, but it is not clear, if and how the large task could be financed. Preparations, however, are intense and very concrete. A general change in the length of the programs according to the Bachelor- and Masters-degree of three and respectively five years would have – similar to other European countries – a far reaching effect on the labour market and professional organisation; the discussions on this point of the Bologna Declaration are still at an early stage. As Slovenia already has a two-cycle-system discussions and efforts are being invested in shortening the length of studies by innovating the existing curricula, especially the graduation procedures. A new national agency for the administration of European educational programs has been instituted.

1.2 Identification of relevant changes in the social, political, cultural, professional and economic environments

As the changes in all the above mentioned fields are pervasive and considerable.

LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

2. Innovations in language degree programmes offered by universities

2.1 Traditional language programmes

As was already pointed out there are two universities in Slovenia, both of them offering language programmes. The university of Maribor has a so called “Pedagogical faculty”, training teachers, and including programmes for the following languages: German and English as single and double subjects and Hungarian as minority language.

The capitol Ljubljana has a very large Faculty of Arts and Humanities with 20 departments (from archaeology to Slavonic studies) and around 6000 full time students. Among the largest are the language departments including degree- programmes for the following languages:

- English
- German
- French
- Italian
- Spanish
- Russian
- Serbian/Croatian/Macedonian
- Chinese
- Japanese
- (Latin
- Greek
- Slovene)

Languages can be studied either in teacher-training programmes or, since 1977 as normal degree-subjects.

Several other languages are offered, but they do not enable to get a degree. They are: Arab, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Bulgarian, Belorussian, Swedish, Dutch, Hungarian, Romanian, Portuguese, Catalanian, Furlanian.

The Slovene language programmes partly fit the categorisation 'traditional', i.e. language and literature, since from a very early stage (more than three decades ago) they were conceived as a tripartite combination of language skills (reading, speaking, teaching), of linguistic and literary courses. More and more, but differing from language to language, an increasing emphasis on cultural and social matters has been put, even if the curricula themselves seem to be rather traditional at first glance. One could say that courses on society and culture, often offered by native speakers or speakers socialised in the respective country/ies have become part of the 'tradition' alongside those on language and literature.

2.1.1 Content, objectives and structure of programmes

Structure: Like most other academic study areas language studies are organised on two levels as undergraduate/graduate (no difference being made between the first two years and the last two, although many language programmes offer “basics” in the first four semesters and then gradually upgrade, enlarge and deepen the studies in the following four terms, including a larger freedom of choice between subjects and orientations) and postgraduate studies. Statistics has shown for quite a long period, that two-subject-studies are normally chosen by the students with better results in secondary schools and at the general final exam, called *matura*, but nevertheless the burden of two subjects with two diplomas lengthens the time of the conclusion

of studies considerably, up to seven years. (It is true, however, that most language students get and take jobs very early, mostly during the last year of courses and also at “home”, i.e. far from the place of studies, and are thus often less motivated to finish their studies quickly.) As can be seen from the above list, not all languages are offered as single-subject-studies. Languages can be combined with most subjects of the two faculties, especially those taught in schools, but also with some subjects of the Faculty of Social Sciences (journalism and political sciences) and that of Theology.

Contents: It is difficult to generalise across all offered language and their subjects, but usually programmes cover, as was pointed out before, three main areas: language (linguistics and language proper), literature and social/cultural studies. Language subjects typically include linguistic introductory courses, phonetics and pronunciation, “grammar”, various linguistic subjects, esp. contrasting grammar, language history, translation, written and oral proficiency courses on several levels etc. These lecturer courses, called *lektorati*, can offer on a higher level specific intercultural, cultural or social contents. Departments of languages which are not school subjects, such as Japanese and Chinese, or are less taught in schools, such as Spanish, may offer intensive courses in the first year.

Literature courses include surveys of literary history, introductory and advanced courses on literary analysis and theory, specific chapters of literary history, seminars in intercultural readings, literary didactics, media studies etc.

Social/cultural studies may be covered in survey courses with a stressed historical dimension, are integrated into the language proficiency courses or in special courses on “civilisation” or “Landeskunde”. The 'area studies' perspective with the presentation of the main countries, where the language is spoken (e.g. Great Britain, USA, Australia, Canada, French Canada, Austria, Latin America), and their culture is offered in English studies and partly in German and Spanish studies. Explicit area studies programmes exist only for USA (American Studies) at a postgraduate level.

On the postgraduate level three types of language studies are normally offered: in linguistics, literature and didactics. After two to three years they lead to a *magisterij*, after four to five to a “doctor of sciences”.

Objectives: tend to be formulated in general terms to provide an overall profile.

2.1.2 Careers prospects for graduates

There are no statistical data or other evaluations on what becomes of language graduates in Slovenia; this will certainly be one of the foremost objectives of future research, in order to establish what the areas of specialisation, lifelong learning moduls and curriculum innovation should be. A reason for this lack is the fact, that normally language graduates get jobs rather quickly. They have good career prospects, although most of them do not reach the highest income group. A large number, those with teacher specialisation, are employed in elementary and secondary schools. The number of private language schools offering a great diversity of courses is growing rapidly. Graduates with non-teaching degrees may work as translators, interpreters, they get jobs in the tourist industry, in trade-firms and in public administration, business and the media.

2.1.3 Recent changes in content, objectives and/or structure of programmes

Up to the seventies language programmes were all two-subject-studies with teacher specialisation; nevertheless there was little or no didactical impact in the contents of the language and literature subjects. Discussions on more specialised and job-oriented curricula began in the late sixties, in the seventies (1977) non-teacher degrees in languages were introduced. Curricula were adjusted to some extent, offering more translation and theoretical knowledge. The next larger change was in the eighties, when English and German, due to the demands of the labour market and the wishes of the students began their single-subjects programmes. These two languages introduced ten years ago additional non-teaching degrees in translation, but both specialisations were given up when the Department of Translation and Interpreting was opened in 1997. This was a major change in language studies. Moreover, two years before that the Department of African and Asian Studies was founded, focussing for the moment on Japanese and Chinese.

A quite strong impact on the heightened quality of programme-realisation is due to the “*numerus clausus*” for the entrance to the departments with a large demand from future students, such as English and German, ensuring thus students with very high results. Experience and evaluations have shown however, that high scores in secondary schools do not guarantee all those qualities of intellectual and linguistic flexibility and sensibility, needed from a language-student.

Curricula had to be adapted formally to the New Act of HE in 1995. The number of hours, a programme should consist of in the four years of study, was reduced to 3000 for single subjects and 1500 for one of two subjects. The changes in the curricula were not basic; they consisted mainly of reduction and compression of the individual subjects and a larger possibility of choice, esp. in language programs with a huge number of students like English.

A real rethinking and change in curricula with curricula innovations is to be expected in the introduction of the ECTS system, at least in the programmes of the departments, deciding to rethink and renew their study from bottom up.

While in general terms, in terms of structure and objectives there seems to be little change in recent years, contents of individual subjects have undergone quite remarkable transformations, partly due to the change of generations on the different levels, from secondary schools to HE, the wider theoretical and practical knowledge of university teachers and their deeper motivation and wider perspectives.

2.1.4 Examples of good practice

Likewise, examples of good practice are to be found in the contents of specific subjects and their realisation in classes. In Maribor as well as in Ljubljana there are several colleagues, giving emphasis on the intercultural and the european dimensions, its aim being to give a broad insight into modern European culture and society from a comparative and intercultural perspective. Early learning language training is offered in Maribor, both universities have courses on using computers and multimedia in schools, for educational and study purposes.

Structurally the two subject combinations with journalism and political sciences as well as geography, history, sociology and sociology of culture respond to modern needs and aim at the wider perspectives of area studies.

2.1.5 Reasons underlying changes

Although curricula tend to be revised due to new regulations in response to demands from the University and the ministries, changing generally the formal structure of programmes, number

and assessment of courses rather than the actual content, they are an incentive to curriculum innovation for those individual teachers, courses and departments, who were aware of the necessity to change and the need for it. In some of the departments curriculum innovation is a standard topic between colleagues and in meetings. (Therefore the TNP 2 will be of great help.) Another reason for change is due to the experiences of most of faculty-members in the reform of language studies on the elementary and secondary level, thus enabling them to get in contact with the needs of the teachers and students.

Though the financial situation is far from being ideal, as language-programmes are traditionally underestimated and staff is lacking, there has been yet no reduction in funds up to now. Changes in content may arise from changes in the availability of teacher expertise, student demand, poor knowledge base and abilities among students, changing social needs.

2.1.6 Identification of needs

Due to the initiatives set by the European year of languages 2001, which gives the external opportunity to collect under an umbrella the needs, sensed and established in the field of language teaching in recent years, in the hope that they will meet the understanding of the larger public and will change the attitude of society towards the simple instrumentalisation of languages towards a more holistic view of language as a set of discourses, shaping and construing the reality we live in, discussions on the identification of needs, problems, issues and the strategies to solve them are under way.

General need:

- Less lectures, more tutorial work in small groups

2.1.6.1 Seen in relation to the development of language studies

- More study programmes for less widely spoken European languages (e.g. Czech, Slovak, Polish, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish).
- Co-operation via credit-point-study with other universities to establish such programmes, realise them and add new profiles to established studies.
- Curriculum innovation on a larger and overall way due to research done on the needs of the graduates and the labour-market.
- Development of more specialization on the graduate level through choice of subjects in other faculties (e.g. law, business, medicine, ...) and specific degrees.
- Emphasis on media, communications and intercultural dimension in all languages offered.
- Establishment of Area and Cultural Studies in some languages, esp.. European dimension and thus more interdisciplinarity between different programmes, departments and language departments themselves.
- Better working and studying conditions for the staff and the students (space, equipment).
- Establishment of material and political conditions for the mobility of students – introduction of at least one semester abroad in the country of language choice.
- Larger modularity in curricula.
- Long-distance learning for programmes with small student numbers.
- Lifelong learning courses for different profiles.

2.1.6.2 Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

- Development of more courses in teaching languages for special purposes.

- More impact on the students rhetoric capacities, on the development of his personality and flexibility

2.1.7 Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national and European level to meet the needs identified

- National document on HE language policy.
- Awareness raising of the construction role of languages and discourses in the wider public and thus gaining understanding in the establishment and financing of excellent language programmes.
- Awareness raising on the necessity of a European dimension in language teaching, esp. in other disciplines.
- Introduction of more and diverse language teaching in all study fields and faculties.
- Establishment of alternative programmes.
- Appropriate climate for innovation must be created: curriculum innovation in relation to market research, staff recruitment and resource allocation.
- National bodies must ensure funding for curriculum innovation and reduction of bureaucracy .

2.1.7.1 At first-degree level

see 2.1.6.

- Institutions need to provide in-service training for staff in language departments on matters relating to 2nd language learning and teaching, as informed by recent research in the field.
- Institutions should ensure that procedures are in place to allow for easy cooperation across departments and even across institutions in relation to developing and teaching interdisciplinary and/or more 'European' courses.

2.1.7.2 At post-graduate level

- Establish language specialisation programmes in co-operation with other universities.
- More co-operation

2.2. Alternative programmes

PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

3. Innovations in the training of language teachers

3.1. Language teaching and learning in primary and secondary school education

An extensive comparative study on *Foreign Language Teaching in Schools in Europe*, published a few days ago by Eurydice, describes the different LT-systems on the primary and secondary level. It comprises also the presentation of the aims, contents and structure of the curricula of elementary schools, while those of secondary schools can be found in the internet (<http://www.mss.edus.si>). Therefore a very condensed presentation will follow here:

“Foreign languages were first introduced as compulsory subjects on the primary and the secondary school curricula in 1951. English, German, French and Russian are offered as a first foreign language. Italian, French, German and English are an offer as second foreign languages. During the 1960s, the choice of the first foreign language was in practice reduced to English and German.

It is mainly on the upper secondary level that a major expansion of foreign language teaching took place. The reforms of 1981 introduced four-year curricula strongly focused on languages and offering a wide range of languages. The *Gimnazija* were reintroduced in 1989, with two or three compulsory languages. In 1995, the status of languages in secondary education was strengthened when a foreign language became a compulsory subject in the new school leaving examination (*Matura*).” (p.57)

Language learning starts in the 5th grade of the 8-year-primary school and continues to the final exam in any type of secondary school. Together with the parents some head of schools decided to join in a project for early language learning. Thus some schools offer languages from the start as well as some state funded or private kindergartens. Early language learning will be introduced generally in the new 9-year-primary school.

3.2. Initial teacher training

3.2.1. Institutions responsible for training

As pointed out in 2.1 the two institutes responsible for teacher training are the Faculty of Education in Maribor and the Faculty of Arts and Letters in Ljubljana. Future language teachers are trained in language degree programs as two subjects or single subjects (English and German).

The Faculty of Education in Ljubljana does not offer initial language teacher training, but organises in cooperation with the Faculty of Arts and Letters of Ljubljana a special course for generalist teachers for early language learning of English. “University faculties have recently introduced language teaching methodology modules in their training programmes, with a view to providing specialist training for the new generation of generalist teachers who have been in service in the new primary school structure since the school year 1999/2000.” (Eurydice publication, 2001, p.123)

3.2.2. Content, objectives and structures of programmes

The difference between non-teacher language degrees and language teacher education at university level consists of a special module for all teacher-degree-programmes and didactics of the studies subject. It comprises the subjects: psychology for teachers (90 hours), pedagogy, didactics and andragogy (120 hours) and didactics of the studied language (up to 180 hours) with visits to schools and discussions on the teaching methods. In 1998 an act was passed, ordering that teacher-training-programmes, either for single studies or for two subjects, should offer the above mentioned module and comprise from 360 to 450 hours with two weeks visits and practical work in schools, i.e. one semester or 30 ECTS-points. Moreover educational accents can be integrated into the curricula of other subjects as well.

Being a faculty of education Maribor university offer programs of English and German exceeding the above numbers of hours dedicated to the teaching module, prescribed by the state. Single-subject programmes have 150 hours of didactics and pedagogy as well as 90 hours of psychology in the first two years of study and 310 hours of language didactics in last years versus 110 hours in one of the two-subject-studies. They are, on the other hand, rather understaffed in advanced and proficiency language courses (so called *lektorati*).

3.2.3. Career prospects for graduates

Career prospects are good as language teaching, especially in the private sector, is spreading more and more.

3.2.4. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programme

The awareness, that teacher-training should offer special contents, as the objectives can be defined much more precisely than with other professions, spreads especially in the language-studies-sector. Because of the space, didactical subjects tend to take in the new curricula there is a collision and antagonism between non-specialised subjects and the teacher-training ones, both trainers feeling that they should be given more hours and credits. In German and English Studies several attempts at innovative contents and objectives of subjects have been made, also by trying to integrate school and pupil-oriented methods into the regular language subjects, but this is yet at a start and has to be discussed and developed at a wider range. There is yet consensus in one point: the teachers of all subjects agree that the solution to this dilemma would be the extension of one semester at least for teacher-programmes with two subjects. The state, however, is not prepared to fund the extra semester.

3.2.5. Examples of good practise

Some teachers at both universities try to integrate learning and teaching methods into their subject curricula, e.g. literary didactics, creative writing, project-work, presentation by the students etc.

Preparations for the introduction of the language portfolio on all levels.

3.2.6. Reasons underlying these changes

The greater knowledge and awareness of the university teachers is due partly to their own initiative and pursuit of the changes and the development of their subject and partly to the intense involvement into curricula development for the reform of the primary and secondary

schools. Thus and through the widespread network of in-service-training of the language teachers they get in touch with the problems, needs and wishes of the teachers. There have been quite several initiatives to improve the connections between schools and the universities.

3.2.7. Identification of needs

3.2.7.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies (see also 2.2.7.)

- Less lectures, more tutorial work in small groups
- It should be obligatory for all university teachers to take at least one course in HE-didactics and in-service-courses.
- Teacher-training accentuated curricula for more regular subjects.
- Stronger emphasis on intercultural and European dimensions.
- Teaching of creative, personality- and identity-building methods.
- Peer - evaluation – processes should be introduced with the emphasis on constructive criticism.
- Stronger connection between the practical needs of the teachers, theory and university level state of the art.

3.2.7.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

- Network-system of schools taking language students for their obligatory visits and practical work (up to now this is being handled by private connections and contacts of the university teachers with their colleagues in schools)
- Identification and diffusion of examples of good practice

3.2.8. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

3.2.8.1. At first-degree level

- More differentiation of the teacher-training- and regular-degree studies requires more specialised staff, extra funds and changes in the curricula as well as better working conditions (didactic equipment).
- Structural change in the HE-system from large lectures to more individual study-forms, which necessitates changes from the mentality to the law and the National Act on HE.
- Emphasis on the European dimension.
- Creation of a better evaluation system.

3.2.8.2. At postgraduate level

- Establishment of several postgraduate specialisation-programmes for language teacher topics.

3.3. Continuing teacher education (in service)

Slovenia can boast with an impressive and traditional in-service-training for language teachers at least for the last decade.

3.3.1 Institutions responsible for training

A much wider range of institutions guarantees a large and colourful spectrum of different courses, moduls etc.

- Both universities and their staff, often in cooperation with
- The National Education Institute and
- Private organisations and firms.
- Inset-training is offered also by cultural institutes of foreign countries (Institut francais, Goethe-Institut etc.) or by universities outside the country.
- Organisers of inset-training can offer courses with guests from abroad.

There is an annual advertisement for inset-courses and programmes by the state; there are two categories: the first is a group of “ordered” courses, partly or completely funded by the state, the second is not funded but nevertheless accepted by the state and published in a special yearly catalogue.

3.3.2. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

There are manifold ways of support for (language) teachers, esp. by the National Education Institute; some languages/countries send native-speaker advisers (English, German, French...). The National Education Institute deals with needs analysis, action research and works in research and development projects. The consultants for the different languages organise workshops on specific topics, e.g. for the training of teachers in the *Matura*-subject-topics, they visit schools and work in-field with the staff on specific problems and curricular innovations, e.g. assessment and grading, teaching on the levels.

The aim of the programmes and courses is to inform and confront the teachers with new developments in different subjects; to widen their horizon and integrate new dimensions; to give them the opportunity of sharing examples of good practice; to make up for what language-teaching-programmes lacked; to offer an opportunity of discussion between different levels of language teaching; to identify their needs and react to them.

The structure is more or less homogeneous: the courses last 8 to 16 hours (one or two days en bloc) and the teachers get a bonus, when they conclude the inset-training with a paper.

The themes offered are very different, usually they are more practice-oriented, in form of workshops. The emphasis is on new methods, on current topics, on alternative mediation-forms.

3.3.4. Examples of good practise

3.3.5. Reasons underlying such changes (see 3.2.6.)

3.3.6. Identification of needs

3.3.6.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

3.3.6.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

3.3.7. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

4. Innovations in the training of translators and interpreters

4.1. Description of the current spectrum of professional activities

The Department of Translating and Interpreting at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana offers the first 4 year university degree course for translators and interpreters with Slovene as the main or A language. Students combine Slovene with two foreign languages: English (as either B or C language), German (B or C), French (C language) and Italian (C language). As the department is only in its 4th year, postgraduate and specialist programmes are currently at the preparation stage (see 4.3.2.-3. below).

4.2. Institution responsible for training

Department of Translating and Interpreting at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana

4.3. Content, objectives and structures of programmes

4.3.1. At first degree level

The department offers regular, full-time study leading to a university degree qualification. In addition to compulsory Slovene (Language A) and translation subjects, students must choose two foreign languages. English and German are available as the first foreign language (Language B); whilst English, German, French and Italian are available as the second foreign language (Language C). Students are expected to have studied their B language for eight years and have gained a pass in the final school examination (matura); for their C language, four years of study are expected, plus a 'matura' pass.

The aim of the degree course is to enable students to achieve the level of awareness, knowledge and capability required for effective translating and interpreting. Whilst the main focus is on the translation process and the skills needed for translating and/or interpreting, students can choose various options within their first and second foreign languages. The base language (A) is Slovene; there are then two foreign languages (B and C). The available choice of languages is determined on the basis of the demand for translators in Slovenia and the language programmes offered by the Faculty of Arts.

The degree course in translation lasts for 8 semesters (4 years) and the number of hours involved is the same for all the possible combinations of study programmes. Students are entitled to an additional one year period in which to pass examinations, meet any other course requirements and complete their degree dissertation.

Scope of the course:

	hours per week	hours per year
General translation subjects (including Slovene)	7	210
Foreign language B	12	360
Foreign language C	6	210
TOTAL	26	780

The degree programme comprises lectures, seminars and practical classes, with the emphasis on the latter two because of the importance attached to the development of linguistic and translation skills. Students' success depends to a large measure on regular attendance at

seminars and practical classes, and upon the completion of the assignments given during the year.

In order to register in the department, candidates must either have:

a) passed the 'matura' examination;

or b) prior to 1.6.1995 completed any four year secondary programme, which included 420 hours of a first foreign language or 280 hours of a second foreign language.

For successful inclusion in courses for translating and interpreting it is recommended that students have completed the 'matura' in both foreign languages.

Students completing a translation course obtain a university degree (BA equivalent) in Translating or Translating-Interpreting for Slovene, Language B and Language C.

4.3.2. At postgraduate level

The postgraduate course will be for graduates of the Department of Translating and Interpreting as well as for graduates of various language departments. The duration of the postgraduate course will be 1 or 2 years, and it will cover topics from the fields of translation, interpreting, literary translation, subtitling, lexicology and lexicography.

4.3.3 At the level of continuing education

A 16 hour programme on translation will be offered to school teachers at the start of the academic year 2001-2002. Short, in-service courses for professional translators are also planned.

4.4 Career perspectives for graduates

Translating and interpreting within Slovene institutions, government organisations and companies; also within EU institutions. The unsatisfied demand in both these areas is great and growing.

4.5. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

4.5.1 At first degree level

The programme is still only in its fourth year and will be reviewed when the first generation of graduates complete their degrees. Future directions are currently under discussion with regard to the application of ECTS.

4.6 Examples of good practice

Active involvement of professionals from a range of institutions and organisations outside the university.

4.8. Identification of needs

4.8.1 At first degree level

Student needs: an extended period of study in a country where the foreign language is spoken would bring the greatest benefit. Exchanges are difficult to arrange because of the lack of interest in studying in Slovenia.

4.9. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and european level to meet the needs identified

4.9.1 At first degree level

We are currently discussing student exchanges with: the Institute of Translating at the University of Udine; the Institute for Translators and Interpreters at the Brussels High School; and the University in Vigo, Spain. We have established contacts with most of the European universities that offer degree courses in translating and interpreting, in particular with the universities of Vienna, Graz, Trieste, Innsbruck, Heidelberg, Germersheim and Heriot-Watt (Edinburgh).

PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES

5. Innovations in language provision for students of other disciplines

5.1. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes

There are yet no alternative language degrees integrated with other non-language studies in Slovenia. However, very close to this idea gets the two-subject study of one language and another study, esp. from the area of social sciences. On the other hand there are no non-language-programmes with very substantial programme parts, offering languages.

Languages are integrated into non-language programmes to a very different extent, often due to the identification of needs by the respective programme designers and their sometimes individual concepts of foreign languages. Some disciplines have a long and lasting tradition in offering foreign languages: Law School offers terminology of several languages (English, German, French, Italian...), Business School has quite an extensive offer of language courses, while most other faculties use languages for their special purposes (e.g. the programme of singing at the Academy of Music offers compulsory lessons of Italian and German while biology – programmes include Latin for biologists etc.). The number of hours depends largely on the importance, languages are granted in a specific discipline.

5.1.1. Content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

5.1.2.

5.1.3.

5.1.4.

5.1.5. Identification of needs

5.1.5.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

- Specialised courses in language use for special purposes
- More courses on adult education methods.
- Interdisciplinary combinations of language and specific non-language discipline

5.1.5.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

- To identify and evaluate the language needs of non-language professions.
- To create an appropriate climate and understanding for the spreading of more languages beside English